Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress.

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS AND RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

REPORT

OF THE

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS

AND

RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

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



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Royal Warrant.

WHITEHALL, DECEMBER 4TH, 1905.

The KING has been pleased to issue a Commission under His Majesty's Royal Sign Manual to the following effect :—

EDWARD R. and I.

Edward the Seventh, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, to

Our right trusty and well-beloved Councillor Sir George Francis Hamilton (commonly called Lord George Francis Hamilton), Knight Grand Commander of Our Most Exalted Order of the Star of India;

Our right trusty and well-beloved Councillor Charles Owen O'Conor (commonly called the O'Conor Don);

Our right trusty and well-beloved Councillor Sir Henry Augustus Robinson, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Vice-President of the Local Government Board for Ireland;

Our right trusty and well-beloved Councillor Charles Booth, Fellow of the Royal Society; and

Our trusty and well-beloved :—

Sir Samuel Butler Provis, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Permanent Secretary to the Local Government Board for England;

Frank Holdsworth Bentham, Chairman of the Bradford Board of Guardians;

Arthur Henry Downes, Doctor of Medicine, Senior Medical Inspector for Poor Law purposes to the Local Government Board for England;

Thory Gage Gardiner, Clerk, Master of Arts;

George Lansbury;

Charles Stewart Loch, Bachelor of Arts, Secretary the Charity Organisation Society;

James Patten MacDougall, Master of Arts, Vice-President of the Local Government Board for Scotland;

Thomas Hancock Nunn;

Lancelot Ridley Phelps, Clerk, Master of Arts;

William Smart;

Henry Russell Wakefield, Clerk;

Helen, wife of Bernard Bosanquet, Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews University;

Beatrice, wife of Sidney Webb, Bachelor of Laws; and

Octavia Hill, Spinster. Greeting!

Whereas We have deemed it expedient that a Commission should forthwith issue to enquire:—

(1) Into the working of the laws relating to the relief of poor persons in the United Kingdom;

(2) Into the various means which have been adopted outside of the Poor Laws for meeting distress arising from want of employment, particularly during periods of severe industrial depression;

and to consider and report whether any, and if so, what, modification of the Poor Laws or changes in their administration or fresh legislation for dealing with distress are advisable;

Now know ye, that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability, have authorized and appointed, and do by these presents authorize and appoint, you, the said Sir George Francis Hamilton (commonly called Lord George Francis Hamilton) (Chairman) Charles Owen O'Conor (commonly called the O'Conor Don), Sir Henry Augustus Robinson, Charles Booth, Sir Samuel Butler Provis, Frank Holdsworth Bentham, Arthur Henry Downes, Thory Gage Gardiner, George Lansbury, Charles Stewart Loch, James Patten MacDougall, Thomas Hancock Nunn, Lancelot Ridley Phelps, William Smart, Henry Russell Wakefield, Helen Bosanquet, Beatrice Webb, and Octavia Hill, to be Our Commissioners for the purposes of the said enquiry.

And for the better effecting the purposes of this Our Commission, We do by these presents give and grant unto you, or any five or more of you full power to call before you such persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this Our Commission; to call for information in writing; and also to call for, have access to, and examine all such books, documents, registers and records as may afford you the fullest information on the subject, and to enquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever.

And We do by these presents authorize and empower you, or any of you, to visit and personally inspect such places as you may deem it expedient so to inspect for the more effectual carrying out of the purposes aforesaid.

And We do by these presents will and ordain that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you Our said Commissioners, or any five or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment.

And We do further ordain that you, or any five or more of you, have liberty to report your proceedings under this Our Commission from time to time if you shall judge it expedient so to do.

And Our further will and pleasure is that you do, with as little delay as possible, report to Us under your hands and seals, or under the hands and seals of any five or more of you, your opinion upon the matters herein submitted for your consideration.

Given at Our Court at *Sandringham*, the fourth day of *December*, one thousand nine hundred and five, in the fifth year of Our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

(Signed) A. Akers-Douglas.

By Royal Warrant dated the twelfth day of February, one thousand nine hundred and six, Mr. Francis Chandler was added to the Commission; and

By Royal Warrant dated the thirtieth day of October, one thousand nine hundred and six, the Most Rev. Denis Kelly, Doctor in Divinity, Lord Bishop of Ross was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the O'Conor Don.

REPORT

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty,

May it Please Your Majesty,

1. We, the undersigned Commissioners, appointed by Your Majesty's Royal Warrant to inquire:—

(1) Into the working of the laws relating to the relief of poor persons in the United Kingdom;

(2) Into the various means which have been adopted outside of the Poor Laws for meeting distress arising from want of employment, particularly during periods of severe industrial depression;

and to consider and report whether any, and if so, what, modification of the Poor Laws or changes in their administration or fresh legislation for dealing with distress are advisable;

humbly beg to submit to Your Majesty our Report and the evidence upon which it is based.

Magnitude of the Inquiry as compared with previous Inquiries.

2. From the outset we were impressed by the immense scope of the investigation entrusted to us. Since 1834, when the operations of the Poor Laws as a whole were last brought under the consideration of a Royal Commission, there have been presented to Parliament nearly 100 Reports of inquiries into subjects connected with the Poor Law.

3. Yet these investigations, vast as they are in the aggregate, covered only isolated portions of the great domain of inquiry into which Your Majesty's Royal Warrant authorised us to enter. The Reports of previous Royal Commissions and Parliamentary and Departmental Committees dealt with particular classes of paupers or special Poor Law problems; none of them included in their purview pauperism as a whole. For the first time a Report is submitted which proposes not only large and important modifications of the Poor Law and its administration, but a revision of the methods of voluntary assistance.

4. While, therefore, we were greatly indebted to the inquiries of our predecessors, we felt ourselves bound to reconsider some of their conclusions in the light of later information and developments. We had to master, to adapt, and sometimes to supplement the results of these investigations.

5. A complete and exhaustive treatment of so large a subject, with its innumerable ramifications and side issues, must have occupied many years; and we felt that if we had thus attempted to discharge the task, the investigation entrusted to us might easily have out-lived some of the problems into which we were directed to inquire. With a view, therefore, to expediting the inquiry and reporting to Your Majesty at the earliest possible date, we resolved to adopt the following procedure.

Procedure adopted for expediting the inquiry.

6. Firstly, we resolved to direct our efforts towards laying down principles. The Poor Law regulates daily and almost hourly the lives of a heterogeneous population exceeding in size that of the city of Liverpool. To attempt to prescribe in detail the government of this multitude, differing among themselves so widely in needs and circumstances, would have consumed a life-time. We felt that we must be content to leave to administrators and officials to work out the details later on. In no other way was it possible, within the limited time at our disposal, even to touch upon the variety of questions presented to us in this part of our work.

7. Secondly, and for the same reason, we limited our inquiries in the main to a survey of the general operations of the Poor Law. Our object was to offer suggestions and guidance to Your Majesty's Government; and we have not thought it well to investigate personal charges or disputes after the manner of a judicial body.

8. Thirdly, we had to consider our position in regard to other current inquiries cognate to our own. We were aware that there had been recently conducted, or were actually proceeding, a number of inquiries, by Royal Commissions and Parliamentary or Departmental Committees, into subjects which came within our terms of reference. This specially applied to Ireland where, at the time of our appointment, a Vice-Regal Commission was actually engaged in conducting an inquiry into the provisions made for the relief of the various classes of poor in that country. With regard to these inquiries we decided to adopt the following policy. We invited no fresh evidence in regard to them, but, at the same time, we undertook to consider any serious objections to the recommendations of such Commissions or Committees which might be offered to us; and our policy has been to accept these recommendations and the evidence upon which they have been based, unless, in exceptional instances, such recommendations were opposed to our own, or were inconsistent with any general system of Poor Law administration which we might advocate.

9. The three rules of procedure which we therefore adopted with a view to limiting the scope of our inquiry were :—

(1) To consider principles and, wherever possible, to avoid details.

(2) To avoid any attempt at inculpating or exculpating individuals, or individual Boards of Guardians.

(3) To accept as far as possible the evidence and recommendations of recent or current inquiries into subjects connected with our inquiry.

10. Further we considered whether we might properly expedite our proceedings by dividing ourselves into Committees for the purpose of cross-examining witnesses on particular branches of our subject. We did not, however, propose to hear any but the more important witnesses, and, in view of the gravity of the issues involved and the intimate connection between the various branches of our subject, we deemed it advisable that the oral evidence should be heard and the cross-examination of witnesses conducted by the Commission sitting as a whole. We, however, made use of the Committee system in every way in which we thought we might legitimately do so.

Order of the Inquiry.

11. Our reference included two main subjects :—

(1) The Poor Law.

(2) Methods of meeting distress outside the Poor Law.

12. The latter of these two divisions included the relief of the unemployed, and it was recognised that, on this subject, there was a widespread public wish that we should come to an early decision. On the other hand it seemed almost impossible to express an opinion on measures confessedly supplementary to the Poor Law until we had brought under our review those defects in the Poor Law which such measures were intended to supplement. Moreover, the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, had been passed only a few months prior to our appointment.

13. It seemed, therefore, advisable that we should begin our investigation by taking up the first part of the reference relating to the working of the Poor Laws, and that we should defer the inquiry into the various means which have been adopted outside of the Poor Laws for meeting distress arising from want of employment. By so doing we allowed the authorities established under the Act to complete two winters' work before receiving any large body of evidence relating to that part of the reference. Meanwhile we proceeded systematically with our review of the Poor Law and of such other methods of assisting the poor either by charity or voluntary effort as came under our notice in connection with the Poor Law.

Information from local bodies, etc.

14. The scope of the inquiry and the limited time at our disposal rendered it expedient to adopt numerous, and, where possible, concurrent methods of collecting information.

Guardians.

15. It was natural that we should turn at the outset to the Local Authorities for guidance and information, and our first step was to invite all Chairmen of Boards of Guardians throughout England and Wales to acquaint us with any serious defects which, in their opinion, exist in the present Poor Law system, and to suggest remedies for the removal of such defects. Subsequently, and from time to time, letters were sent to all Boards of Guardians stating that we should be happy to consider any written representations

that they might wish to make "on important questions connected with the Poor Law." Out of the 645 Unions in England and Wales on 1st January, 1906, replies have been received from 439 Chairmen, and 388 Boards of Guardians,—548 Unions being represented by the two sets of replies. Copies of the letters addressed to Boards of Guardians and their Chairmen, together with a summary of the replies received, will be found in the Appendix.

Scottish Parish Councils.

16. A letter similar to that issued to Boards of Guardians was sent to every Parish Council in Scotland. A summary of the replies received will also be found in the Appendix.

Distress. Committees.

17. A list of questions as to the working of the Unemployed Workmen Act was sent to every Distress Committee in the United Kingdom. Each Committee was also invited to suggest ways in which the Act should be amended in the event of its renewal. The answers received have been printed, and will be found in the Appendix.

18. We have also received from Boards of Guardians, Distress Committees, and other public bodies, as well as from individuals, a large number of representations with regard to miscellaneous subjects connected with our inquiry.

Evidence from Witnesses.

Oral Evidence.

19. With a subject so wide as that of the poor laws and the relief of distress, and with so many persons of experience qualified to express an opinion regarding it, the selection of witnesses who should be invited to furnish us with oral evidence was not infrequently a matter of considerable difficulty. Moreover, as the inquiry proceeded, it soon became apparent that it would be impossible, within the limited time at our disposal, to obtain by oral examination of witnesses, a body of evidence which could be taken as even approximately indicative of the views of the country as a whole, or of those portions of it from which we felt that it would be specially desirable to receive evidence. We decided, therefore, to invite a large number of persons of experience, residing in different parts of the country, to furnish us with written statements of evidence on all, or any, of a number of subjects set forth in a syllabus which we forwarded to them. These invitations were readily responded to, and, as a rule, it was from among the writers of such statements that we selected witnesses for oral examination.

Written Statements.

20. The information contained in many of these statements was so fully and clearly put before us that we did not think it necessary to trouble the writers to amplify it by *viva voce* examination. Frequently, also, it happened that the statements (some full and others quite short), although containing valuable material for examination, simply reiterated views that had already been submitted to us by a number of other witnesses; and as our inquiry proceeded, it was inevitable that an increasing number of statements should fall into this category. The exigencies of the situation compelled us, therefore, to select as oral witnesses the authors of statements which contained either special features of interest or ambiguities which it was desirable to clear up. We were thus obliged to refrain from having before us as oral witnesses the authors of many written statements whom we should have examined if time had not been so pressing.

Representative character of Witnesses.

21. We have received oral or written evidence from:—

(1) The following Government Departments:—

(*a*) The Local Government Boards for England, Scotland, and Ireland (including all the General Inspectors under the English Board and all the General Superintendents of Poor under the Scottish Board),
(*b*) The Board of Trade.
(*c*) The Home Office.
(*d*) The War Office.
(*e*) The Admiralty.
(*f*) The Board of Education.
(*g*) The Charity Commission.
(*h*) The Friendly Societies Registry.
(*i*) The General Register Office.
(*j*) The Post Office.
(*k*) The General Board of Lunacy for Scotland.

(2) Representatives of the chief Poor Law and charitable associations in England and Scotland.

(3) Representatives of the British Medical Association.

(4) Representatives of Trade Unions, Friendly Societies, and Co-operative Societies.

(5) Large employers of labour.

(6) Independent witnesses experienced in the theory and practice of the Poor Law and the relief of distress.

(7) Representatives of Boards of Guardians, Distress Committees, Town and County Councils, and other Authorities, from the following districts of England and Wales :—

(*a*) The Metropolis.
(*b*) Manchester and Liverpool.
(*c*) West Yorkshire.
(*d*) The Midlands.
(*e*) South Wales.
(*f*) North-Eastern counties.
(*g*) Eastern counties.
(*h*) Western counties.
(*i*) South-Western counties.

(8) Representatives of Parish, Town, and County Councils and Distress Committees, from the chief urban, rural, and insular districts of Scotland.

(9) Representatives of Distress Committees from various towns in Ireland.

(10) Eminent officials and experts in regard to poor relief in other countries.

22. In addition to our general syllabus of evidence, we submitted a series of questions to a number of political economists, employers of labour, and other experts on the effect of industrial conditions on unemployment. The replies of these gentlemen have been included in the Appendix.

23. Altogether we have held 209 meetings, of which 159 have been spent in hearing evidence. We have examined 452 witnesses, and the questions answered orally exceed 100,000 in number. We have, in addition, received statements of evidence, or replies to questions as above described, from about 900 persons who have not been examined orally.

Relative importance of oral and non-oral evidence.

24. We ought perhaps to offer here a few words of explanation in regard to the relative importance of the oral and written evidence above described. Broadly speaking, the oral evidence has been subjected to the test of cross-examination, and the written evidence has not. A *prima facie* presumption, therefore, arises in favour of the oral evidence. But it must be remembered that, for reasons already explained, the evidence of many eminent and expert witnesses is confined to their written statements, and that we had no opportunity of orally examining them. Moreover, even when we cross-examined a witness, we accepted his written statement as his evidence-in-chief; and though in many cases a very large number of questions were put to the witness, the questions by no means invariably covered all the points set out in the statement. In no case did we recall a witness whose evidence seemed to be controverted by another witness. We had no power to impose an oath or other searching test of credibility. Our cross-examination was therefore in the main directed towards either explaining inconsistencies, filling up lacunæ, or substantiating and developing particular points in the written statements.

25. On the other hand, in regard to the written evidence, it should be pointed out that the witness in each case, when writing his statement of evidence, was aware that he might be summoned to be cross-examined on that statement, and in our letters inviting the statement of evidence, we impressed upon the writers that "in all cases an expression of opinion should be accompanied by an indication of the facts upon which such opinion is based."

26. In our opinion, therefore, the value both of our oral and written evidence consists rather in its cumulative effect than in the idiosyncrasies of individual assertion, and when these are eliminated we believe that there will be found a mass of sober and well considered opinion suggestive and on the whole consistent.

27. Certain aspects of the subject matter referred to us seemed to require for their elucidation a personal and local investigation in typical districts, which we could not ourselves undertake. From time to time, therefore, we appointed a number of "Special Investigators" who have furnished us with a series of valuable reports on the subjects of inquiry entrusted to them. The matters inquired into, and the names of the Investigators appointed to make the inquiries are as follows:— Inquiries by Investigators, etc.

Subject.	Investigators.
1. The relation of industrial and sanitary conditions to pauperism:— (*a*) In certain parts of London; and (*b*) In various typical provincial towns.	Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland, and Miss Rose E. Squire.
2. The effect of outdoor relief on wages and the conditions of employment in certain Unions:— (*a*) In London; and (*b*) In the provinces.	Mr. Thomas Jones, and Miss Constance Williams.
3. The effect of outdoor relief on wages and the conditions of employment:— (*a*) In certain rural unions in Shropshire; (*b*) In certain rural Unions in the counties of Suffolk and Cambridge; (*c*) In certain Unions in South Wales; (*d*) In certain parishes in Scotland; and (*e*) In Belfast.	Mr. Thomas Jones.
4. The effects of employment or assistance given to the "Unemployed" since 1886 as a means of relieving distress outside the Poor Law; in London and generally throughout England and Wales.	Mr. Cyril Jackson, and Rev. J. C. Pringle.
5. The effects of employment or assistance given to the "Unemployed" since 1886 as a means of relieving distress outside the Poor Law in Scotland.	Rev. J. C. Pringle.
6. The effects of employment or assistance given to the "Unemployed" since 1886 as a means of relieving distress outside the Poor Law in Ireland.	Mr. Cyril Jackson.
7. Boy labour in London and certain other typical towns.	Mr. Cyril Jackson.
8. The methods and results of the present system of administering indoor and outdoor Poor Law medical relief in certain Unions in England and Wales.	Dr. J. C. McVail.
9. The administrative relations of charity and the Poor Law; and the extent and the actual and potential utility of endowed and voluntary charities:— In certain towns and rural Unions in England; and In certain towns and parishes in Scotland.	Mr. A. C. Kay, and Mr. H. V. Toynbee.
10. The condition of the children who are in receipt of the various forms of Poor Law relief in certain Unions in London and in the provinces.	Dr. Ethel M. N. Williams.
11. The condition of the children who are in receipt of the various forms of Poor Law relief in certain parishes in Scotland.	Dr. C. T. Parsons.
12. A comparison of the physical condition of "ordinary" paupers in certain Scottish poorhouses with that of the able-bodied paupers in certain English workhouses and labour yards.	Dr. C. T. Parsons.
13. The effect of the refusal of out-relief on the applicants for such relief:— (*a*) In Bradford; and (*b*) In certain Unions in London and in the provinces.	Miss G. Harlock.
14. The overlapping of the work of the voluntary general hospitals with that of Poor Law medical relief in certain districts of London.	Miss Norah B. Roberts.

28. As regards the status of the Special Investigators, it was our intention that while on the one hand they should be persons of skill and tact, reporting to us on particular congeries of difficult facts, yet on the other hand their position should not be quite analogous to that of the Assistant Commissioners to the Royal Commission of 1832. To these Assistant Commissioners was practically delegated the whole responsibility for collecting the evidence upon which the Royal Commission should report. We felt that public opinion would not support us in so extensive a delegation of our responsibilities. Our purpose was to utilise the services of our Investigators in collecting preliminary evidence for us, and in indicating where further evidence might be obtained; but we felt that in all cases it was our duty to supplement and test by evidence of our own the evidence laid before us by them. Accordingly some reference should here be made to their general instructions, a copy of which will be found in the Appendix.

29. They were instructed "to collect, classify, and summarise evidence on the subject into which they were appointed to inquire, and subsequently to embody the results of their inquiry in a Report to the Commission." They were also informed that they "should, as far as possible, obtain their information by personal observation and inquiry, and by examination of documents"; that "it should in all cases be a fundamental part of their investigation to see and observe for themselves the facts connected with their subject as distinguished from merely receiving statements about the facts"; and that "wherever practicable, the statements of individuals should be corroborated by personal observation on the part of the investigators of the facts alleged and by their own inspection of such documentary proof as is available." The Special Investigators were further instructed to draw up their Reports in two parts, the first part to contain statements of the facts as ascertained by them, and the second part such conclusions as might properly be drawn from the facts so ascertained.

30. In so extended and difficult an inquiry it is hardly to be expected that these reports will pass unchallenged on one point or another. But in view of the precautions taken by us to ensure that the information obtained by the Special Investigators should be collected in a scientific manner, and should be duly authenticated, we have confidence in accepting generally the statement of facts which they have submitted to us. We have also frequently accepted the conclusions which the Investigators have drawn from the facts, but occasionally, in the light of fuller knowledge, we have felt it our duty to differ from them.

31. It is only just to the Investigators to explain that the conditions under which we worked compelled us, in the case of each inquiry, to fix a definite period by which it should be completed, although some of the wider subjects might well have engaged the attention of an Investigator for a much longer period of time than we could allow. Moreover, on some subjects, direct evidence was not easily obtainable. Great discrimination was, therefore, required on the part of the Investigators to pursue only those lines of investigation which would yield the most profitable results. Subject to these reservations, we think that their reports bear witness to the care, zeal, and ability with which the inquiries have been carried out, and we feel that the Commission and the nation are indebted to them for their patient and difficult researches.

32. In the course of our inquiries we found that we had no statistical data to enable us to form an opinion as to whether the earnings of the labouring classes are sufficient to enable them unaided to make provision for the ordinary contingencies of life. With the object of throwing some light upon this question we obtained the services of Mr. T. G. Ackland, Mr. George King, and Mr. F. G. P. Neison, all of whom are Fellows of the Institute of Actuaries, for the purpose of carrying out an actuarial inquiry into the cost of insurance against the risk of the various misfortunes which tend to drive persons to seek assistance from the Poor Law, *e.g.*, unemployment and sickness of themselves and of those dependent on them. We have to express our appreciation of the great obligation under which these gentlemen have placed us by their kindness in undertaking the inquiry and furnishing us with valuable reports on a subject in regard to which no trustworthy information was available. Their reports have been printed and will be found in the Statistical Appendix. (Part XVI.)

33. Representations having been made to us that pauperism varies considerably, not only in different parts of the country, but also in different parts of the same Union

or parish, we asked Mr. E. J. Mott, the Clerk to the Guardians of the Fulham Union, if he would, with the assistance of the relieving officers for the parish, prepare and furnish us with a map of the parish showing the situation of the residence of each out-relief case and of the previous residence of each in-relief case. This he readily assented to, and the map, with the observations of the relieving officers concerning it, was then submitted to Dr. J. C. Jackson, the Medical Officer of Health for the Borough of Fulham, who furnished further information upon the character of the houses included in the areas in which pauperism is most prevalent. We are therefore under a deep obligation to these gentlemen for the inquiries which they were good enough to undertake on our behalf. The results of the inquiry have been printed and will be found in the Statistical Appendix. (Part XVII.)

Visits.

34. In order that we might compare the different methods of poor relief adopted by various Boards of Guardians, and at the same time obtain a more intimate knowledge of social and industrial conditions in various parts of the country, we paid a large number of visits to Unions in different parts of England and Wales. After having received the written statements of evidence from a district, our general practice was to visit it, and, thereafter, to examine the witnesses whom we had invited to give evidence respecting it. In each district we formed ourselves into small Committees for the purpose of visiting institutions. This enabled us to cover a good deal of ground in a limited time. We endeavoured, where practicable, to attend meetings of Boards of Guardians, Relief Committees, and Distress Committees. We interviewed as many of the local Poor Law guardians and officials as possible. We visited workhouses, labour yards, infirmaries, Poor Law schools, cottage and scattered homes for children, and other Poor Law institutions. We also took the opportunity of seeing at their own homes persons in receipt of outdoor relief and boarded-out children. For the purpose of comparing Poor Law with charitable or other methods of relieving poverty and distress, we visited a large number of miscellaneous institutions such as voluntary hospitals, orphanages, reformatories, industrial schools, prisons, labour colonies, lunatic asylums, homes for the aged, institutions for the blind, the deaf and dumb, etc. We also attended meetings of various branches of the Charity Organisation Society. We paid similar visits in Scotland and Ireland. Altogether in the course of our inquiry, we have visited about 200 Unions in England and Ireland, and 50 parishes in Scotland; we have attended about 160 meetings of local bodies, and visited some 400 institutions.

35. The printed reports of these visits will be found in the Appendix. We attach considerable importance to them, for, although as will be gathered on perusal, they are mostly informal accounts of visits compiled from rough notes jotted down *in situ*, and intended primarily for circulation among ourselves only, yet they are the actual evidence of our eyes and ears, and very frequently we were thus enabled to appreciate the evidence of witnesses. Moreover, in the aggregate, they furnish a fairly complete picture of the Poor Law administration as we found it, here full of blemishes, there with striking excellences, and there again most depressingly mediocre. We have, therefore, thought it right to publish these reports with our other evidence; but at the same time, as the information they contain was often given to us informally and in our capacity as visitors, we have by striking out names concealed the identity of the particular places and people to which the reports relate. These reports are the most graphic evidence we have of the actual working of the Poor Law.

36. A small Committee of our members have visited certain labour colonies in Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Switzerland, and inquired into the administration of relief in Hamburg. Their report will be found in the Appendix.

Foreign Poor Law systems.

37. In addition to the evidence submitted to us by various witnesses regarding the methods of public relief or assistance in other countries, we have obtained information from officials and other accredited persons residing in Australia, in New Zealand, in Canada, in several European countries, and in the United States. This information was received in answer to two series of questions drawn up by us and transmitted to these Colonies and countries through the medium of the Colonial and Foreign Offices. One series of questions dealt with the relief of the poor generally, and the other more particularly with the methods adopted for supplying poor persons with medical assistance. The replies have been annotated and classified. Some of the more important foreign Poor Laws and regulations have been translated, and memoranda have been prepared explaining the chief features of the various systems. This information is printed in a separate volume, which contains also a memorandum as to the preparations for famine relief and its administration in India.

Statistical Inquiries.

38. With regard to the classes of persons relieved by the Poor Law Authorities, we found it necessary to obtain fuller statistical information than was supplied by the published official returns. We therefore undertook two special statistical inquiries. One was a census of the persons relieved in every Poor Law area in the United Kingdom on March 31st, 1906. This census states the number of those persons, their sex, age, physical condition, and occupation or former occupation, if any; the manner of their relief, whether it be outdoor or indoor; if it be outdoor, whether it is medical relief only, and if indoor, in what class of institution the person is maintained. The other inquiry was designed to collect statistical information from certain selected Unions as to the nature of the diseases from which sick paupers are suffering. The results of these two inquiries have been tabulated, and are printed in the Statistical Appendix with prefatory memoranda.

39. While the census of pauperism, above referred to, supplied us with much valuable information—a great deal of which was comparable with the available statistics of pauperism—it gave us only the results of a day count. In this respect it failed, as do nearly all the published statistics, to provide any measure or analysis of the total volume of pauperism dealt with during a definite period. The weakness of a day count lies in this, that it cannot distinguish sufficiently between those relieved continuously and those relieved only occasionally, and that it fails to record those persons whose relief fell wholly within the interval between two day counts. We made representations to this effect, to the Local Government Boards of England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and they moved for returns relating to their respective countries, showing the total number of persons relieved during the course of twelve months, and the periods and recurrence of their relief. These returns have now been published as Parliamentary Papers and the results are also included in the Statistical Appendix.

40. Other statistical returns which we have obtained give particulars as to :—

(*a*) The extent to which Boards of Guardians in England and Wales were on January 1st, 1908, exercising the rights of parents over children adopted under the Poor Law Acts of 1889 and 1899.

(*b*) The number of young persons assisted by Boards of Guardians in England and Wales during the period devoted to the acquisition of a trade, so far as that period fell within the year 1907.

(*c*) The extent to which paupers were removed from one Union in England and Wales to another during 1907.

(*d*) The work and cost of labour colonies.

41. The Local Government Board for England has furnished us with an elaborate return showing the extent to which Boards of Guardians have, since 1886, resorted to exceptional measures for the relief of distress arising from want of employment.

42. The Scottish Local Government Board has furnished returns as to :—

(*a*) The extent to which in certain typical parishes persons are relieved from the payment of rates on the ground of poverty.

(*b*) The extent to which compounding for rates prevails in such parishes.

(*c*) The classes of persons assisted out of the ordinary church door collections in parish churches in Scotland.

(*d*) The proportion of electors who voted at the Parish Council elections of 1907. (This return was published as a Parliamentary return.)

Parochial Inquiry.

43. Through the courtesy of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of the various dioceses in England and Wales, and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, we were enabled to secure the appointment of small committees of most of the Diocesan Conferences and of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

to carry out an inquiry in each parish of Great Britain (on lines similar to those adopted in an inquiry which had already been undertaken in the Diocese of Winchester) regarding *inter alia* :—

(1) The extent and causes of poverty.

(2) The question whether poverty is or is not increasing in intensity.

(3) The method of administering charitable assistance.

(4) The questions whether and to what extent there is overlapping of relief between voluntary agencies, and between these and the Poor Law, and if so, what steps were taken to prevent it.

(5) The question whether any appreciable amount of distress is due to :—

(*a*) Reluctance on the part of destitute persons to apply for poor relief ; and

(*b*) The inadequacy of the relief granted by the Poor Law authority.

44. The reports of the various inquiries will be found in the Appendix. They are based on the replies of the parochial clergy, and give us an interesting account of the condition of different parts of the country in respect to poverty. The reports also contain independent and valuable criticisms of the efficacy of the existing methods and agencies for relieving distress. In making use of these reports it should, however, be observed that the terms used in the questions to the clergy were not identical in all dioceses, and in some cases were rather indefinite. Hence, a different interpretation may not infrequently have been placed upon them by different clergymen. This especially applies to such questions as deal with the intensity of poverty in the parish, and the adequacy of the relief given by the Poor Law Authorities, in regard to both of which no precise definition would be applicable. But with these slight qualifications, the reports of the parochial inquiries form a most valuable body of independent local evidence which may be used for the purpose of correcting the point of view of those actually engaged in the local Poor Law administration.

45. At our suggestion, the Local Government Board for England very kindly undertook to conduct, by means of certain of their General Inspectors, an inquiry into the condition of the outdoor poor in certain districts of England and Wales. Their Reports will be found in the Appendix.

46. The Board of Trade have furnished us with a series of very valuable Memoranda dealing with :— Memoranda by Government Departments.

(1) The method of compilation of the Board of Trade percentages of unemployed, and the extent to which they may be taken as a measure of unemployment.

(2) Amount of time lost by workpeople through want of employment, and other causes.

(3) Cyclical trade depressions.

(4) The numbers of wage-earners grouped according to wages earned, and an account of the movements in the wages in certain groups of industries, and in the cost of living over a period of twenty years.

(5) The extent to which female labour has displaced adult labour in the last twenty years.

(6) Seasonal industries and industries carried on by casual labour, and the number of persons employed by railway companies, gas, water, and tramway companies and undertakings.

(7) Country born men in large towns.

(8) Emigration from the United Kingdom.

(9) Alien immigration.

(10) Labour bureaux.

(11) The growth of Trade Unions, with particular reference to the payment of unemployed benefit.

(12) Insurance against unemployment in foreign countries.

(13) Labour colonies on the Continent.

47. The Local Government Boards of England, Scotland and Ireland, the Home Office, the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office, the War Office, the Admiralty, the Civil Service Commissioners, the Board of Education, the Registrar-General for England, the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, the Charity Commissioners, and the Post Office have all assisted us by supplying a number of Memoranda, etc., on miscellaneous subjects and have placed at our disposal other facilities which have enabled us to obtain information with reference to the subject-matter of our Inquiry.

48. Lastly, we have to express our sense of gratitude :—

(1) To the Boards of Guardians throughout England and Ireland, the Parish Councils throughout Scotland, the Distress Committees, and other bodies, throughout the country for the courtesy with which they have invariably received us at their meetings, and for the readiness with which they have facilitated our inquiries either by providing us with information or by allowing us to visit the various institutions, etc., within their control ; and

(2) To the many thousands of local officials, members of local Boards, and others, who have supplied us or our Investigators with information, often at the cost of much time and trouble. Without their assistance and hearty co-operation, we could not have carried through our long and arduous inquiry.

Inquiries by individual Commissioners.

49. We are also indebted to some of our members for reports and memoranda which they have submitted to us. The following reports and memoranda have been received :—

(1) From Mr. Loch :—

Poor Relief during the period 1601–1834.

(2) From Professor Smart :—

The Report of the Commission of 1832.

The Principles of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

The Poor Law Commissioners, 1834–1847.

The Poor Law Board, 1847–1871.

The First Six Years of the Local Government Board—the Crusade against Outdoor Relief.

The History of the Scots Poor Laws prior to 1845.

(3) From Mrs. Webb :—

The Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907.

The Medical Services of the Poor Law and the Public Health Departments of English Local Government in their relation to each other, to the public, and to the prevention and cure of disease.

The History of Poor Law Administration in Bradford, 1838–1906.

The History of Poor Law Administration in Poplar 1837–1906.

We are much indebted to the Right Hon. Charles Booth for an elaborate analysis of the Poor Law statistics and for the preparation of various tables, charts, and maps, which were especially helpful to us in the early stages of our inquiry, and have been of the utmost value to us in the preparation of our Report.

50. We are far from contending that the information obtained by us is complete or that our researches have been in all cases exhaustive. On certain subjects we soon obtained evidence sufficient for the purpose of our Report, but, we felt that there was much more which might from a sociological standpoint be advantageously diagnosed,

especially where the inquiry related to changes in our industrial methods and system. Again, we found that it was impossible to exclude subjects which at first sight seemed outside the terms of our reference, and so we were compelled to extend somewhat widely our search for evidence and information. Our difficulty was not only to decide where to begin, but where to end such investigations. Though some of the evidence is extravagant, much of it controversial and contradictory, and a good deal of it based on impressions rather than experience, yet we may fairly claim that, through the procedure and methods adopted, we have accumulated a unique mass of information relating to the condition and environment of those who seek public relief or who are unable to maintain themselves out of their own resources. The evidence thus obtained cannot fail to be of use in promoting legislative measures and administrative reforms, and we hope that where it is incomplete it may lead to yet further inquiries into social and industrial problems.

51. Finally we would express to Your Majesty our deep sense of the loss which we have sustained in the death of the late O'Conor Don, and more recently by the resignation of Mr. Charles Booth. In the O'Conor Don we lost a colleague of ripe experience and wide administrative knowledge. To Mr. Charles Booth we are indebted not only for continual assistance in our difficulties and in the examination of witnesses, but also, as we have above indicated, for a most valuable body of statistics which, at his own expense, he compiled for our information and enlightenment. We deeply regret that towards the end of our inquiry illness should have deprived us of a colleague whose guidance and counsel had been so valuable to us in all our proceedings, and whose name carries so much weight with the public, and we trust that freedom from the responsibility of this very arduous inquiry will materially assist towards his complete restoration to health.

52. The description and criticism of the Poor Law system contained in the following Chapters refer solely to England and Wales. We have considered it expedient to deal with Scotland and with Ireland in separate reports which we intend to present to Your Majesty subsequently.

PART II.

STATISTICAL SURVEY OF POOR LAW PROBLEMS.

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PART II.

STATISTICAL SURVEY OF POOR LAW PROBLEMS.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS AND RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

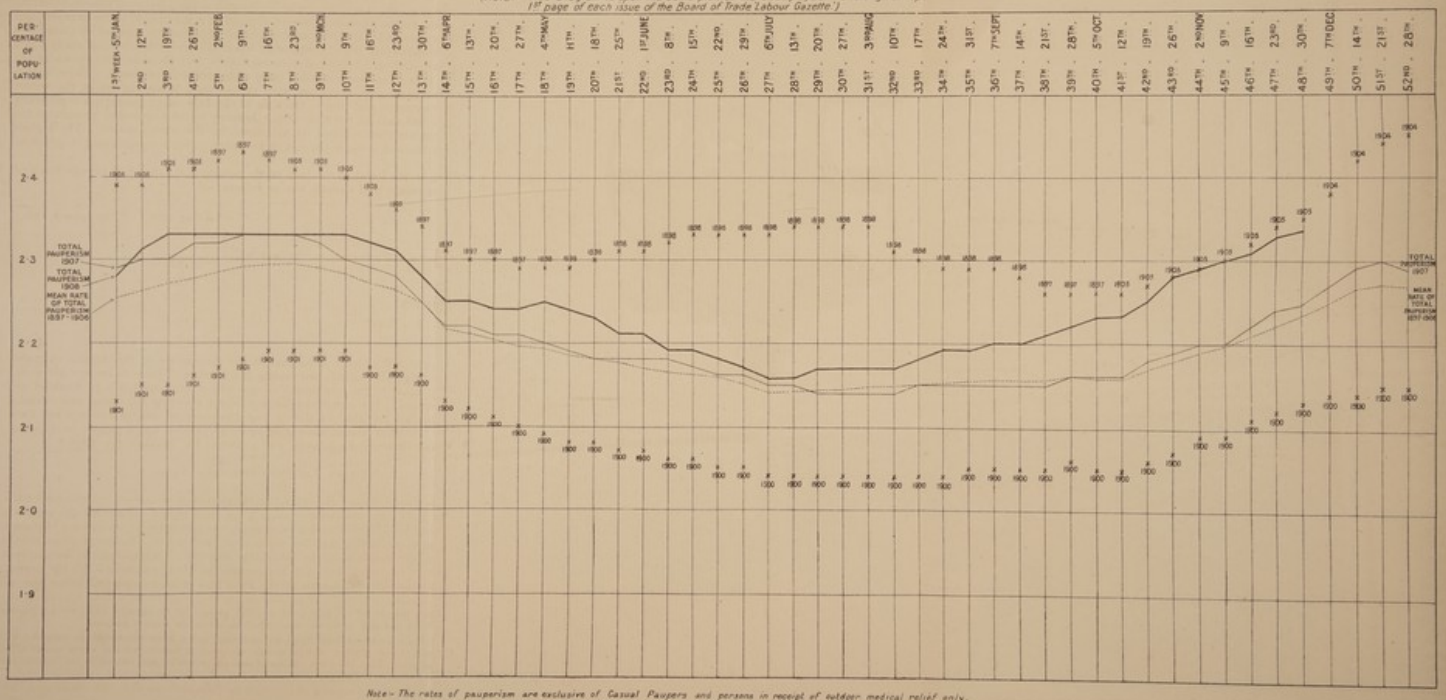
DIAGRAM A.

SEASONAL CHANGES IN PAUPERISM.

FLUCTUATIONS IN THE RATE OF TOTAL PAUPERISM IN ENGLAND AND WALES WEEK BY WEEK DURING THE YEARS 1907 AND 1908 WITH THE MEAN OF THE RATES AND THE MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM POINTS REACHED, FOR THE TEN WEEKS CORRESPONDING TO EACH OTHER IN THE TEN YEARS 1897 TO 1906 INCLUSIVE. (SEE TABLE VI. OF PART I OF STATISTICAL APPENDIX)

(1.) The rate of Total Pauperism week by week is represented by (1908 ——— / 1907 ———)
(2.) The mean rate of Total Pauperism week by week for the 10 years 1897-1906 inclusive is represented by ----------
(3.) The maximum and minimum points reached for the corresponding weeks for the 10 years 1897-1906 inclusive are represented by x

(Note.- This Diagram is upon the same plan as the Unemployment Chart given upon 1st page of each issue of the Board of Trade Labour Gazette.)



Note- The rates of pauperism are exclusive of Casual Paupers and persons in receipt of outdoor medical relief only. They include Insane Paupers in Workhouses and in receipt of out-relief, but not other Insane Paupers.

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PART II.

STATISTICAL SURVEY OF POOR LAW PROBLEMS.

Object of Chapter.

1. The object of this chapter is to show statistically the dimensions of the problems with which we are called upon to deal, the statistical changes which have taken place in those problems, and the extent to which the existing system of administration has succeeded or failed as shown by statistics.

Numbers Relieved as shown by Day Counts.

Statistics regularly obtained.

2. For many years the statistics regularly obtained of the number of persons receiving poor relief have shown the number in receipt of relief on a given day. The days selected have been January 1st and July 1st in each year, and the numbers relieved on these days are analysed in considerable detail. Statistics have also been obtained for many years of the numbers relieved on a certain day in each week, but these are not shown in the same detail, and they have been compiled upon a slightly different basis. These weekly returns show that pauperism fluctuates with the seasons, being highest in the winter and lowest in the summer, and that at the time of the July count pauperism is generally at its lowest ebb, but that at the time of the January count pauperism, though on the upward grade, has not then reached its maximum for the winter season. The highest point is generally reached towards the end of February. (See accompanying Diagram A.)

Total number of persons relieved.

3. According to the latest of the half-yearly returns the number of persons relieved, distinguishing the insane and casuals was as follows:—[1]

—	1st July, 1907.	1st January, 1908.
Insane paupers in Asylums, Workhouses, &c., &c., and in receipt of outdoor relief	111,074	112,690
Casual paupers	11,408	17,083
All other classes of paupers*	745,794	798,898
Total*	868,276	928,671

Proportion of persons relieved to population.

4. These figures will convey some idea of the dimensions of the inquiry entrusted to us. Even omitting the casuals and insane the number of paupers on any given day is approximately equal to the population of the largest provincial city in England and Wales, viz., Liverpool. The numbers represent (again omitting the insane and casuals), 21·3 per 1,000 on July 1st, 1907, of the estimated population, and on January 1st, 1908, 22·9 per 1,000. In other words, one out of every 47 persons was a pauper on July 1st, 1907, and one out of every 44 persons was a pauper on January 1st, 1908.†

Number Relieved During a Year.

Number of persons relieved during year ended September 30th, 1907.

5. But these figures do not give an adequate idea of the numbers brought under the influence of the Poor Law authorities within a specified period. They are the numbers relieved on a given day and they take no account of the persons who, though not in receipt of relief at the moment, may have been relieved at other times. In any given period the work of inquiry, the decisions to be taken, the number of admissions to institutions, and the revision of cases, are not fully represented by these numbers. All the persons who have passed through the portals of the Poor Law must be counted before the full

* Deducting 569 persons on 1st July, 1907, and 741 persons on 1st January, 1908, who are counted twice by reason of being reckoned for various reasons both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

† In order to obtain a representative figure for each year, and a figure which may be compared with the financial statistics of poor relief, it is usual to take the mean of the summer and winter counts falling within each financial year. Thus, the mean number of sane paupers other than casuals for the financial year 1907–8 is reckoned as 772,346, or 22·1 per 1,000 of the estimated population.

1 Half-yearly Statements of Pauperism (H.C. 108–I), 1st July, 1907, and (H.C. 130), 1st January, 1908.

extent of the labours of the Poor Law authorities can be gauged. Any period may be taken, but the year is the natural period. It embraces the four seasons and is convenient when making comparisons with other statistics. A return of this nature for the year ended September 30th, 1907, was obtained by the Local Government Board on our initiative and it shows that the number of persons (excluding lunatics in asylums and casual paupers) under the care of the guardians, or having come under their care during that year, was 1,709,436 * or 2·15 times greater than the mean of the numbers relieved on January 1st 1907 and July 1st, 1907.[1] At one time or another during each year the guardians have under their care, therefore, a population equal not only to that of Liverpool, but almost equal to that of the three largest provincial cities, viz., Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. In relation to the population estimated to have been living in England and Wales during the year 1906–7 † the rate of pauperism thus becomes 47·7 per 1,000, as against 22·7 per 1,000 shown by the day counts for the same year.[2]

Number of Adults and Children Relieved.

Number of adults and children relieved on January 1st, 1908, and excess of female pauperism.

6. Taking men, women, and children separately, it is found that nearly one-half of the paupers on any day are women, the other half including both men and children. There is a larger number of women than men in England and Wales, the excess of women in 1901 being upwards of one million, but the excess of women paupers is greater than can be explained by the excess of female population. On January 1st, 1908, the number of men, women and children in receipt of relief and the proportion to the total number of persons relieved, and to the population in each group were :—[3]

	Number.	Per cent. of total number of persons relieved.	Per 1,000 of estimated population in each group.
Men	221,022	27·6	19·8
Women	343,825	43·0	27·8
Children under 16	234,792	29·4	20·6
Total	798,898‡	100·0	22·9

Number of adults and children relieved during year 1906–7.

7. Turning to the year's count it is found, however, that the excess of women relieved during the course of a year is not so great as would appear from the day count. Of the 1,709,436 persons relieved during the year 1906–7, only 618,673, or 36 per cent. were women. The year's count for women was only 1·77 times greater than the day count, whilst the year's count for men was 2·42 times greater than the day count.[4] Consequently the rate of pauperism for women was, on the year's count, only slightly in excess of the rate for men. In tabular form the results of the year's count were :—

	Year's count.	Mean of two day counts of 1907.	Ratio of year's count to day count.	Ratio of year's count to estimated population in middle of year.
				Per 1,000
Men	526,449	217,210	2·42	47·2
Women	618,673	350,308	1·77	50·0
Children under 16	564,314	226,674	2·49	49·4
Total	1,709,436	793,519‡	2·15	49·5

* The Union of Bridgnorth failed to make a return, and the persons there relieved are not included. The population of this Union was 14,485 in 1901, and the mean of the day counts of persons relieved (excluding lunatics in asylums, registered hospitals and licensed houses, and vagrants) was 330 in the year 1907.

† Omitting purely temporary residents.

‡ Deducting persons who are counted twice by reason of being reckoned for various reasons both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2, pars. 8 and 18. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2, par. 16. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 30. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2, par. 29.

8. It is clear, therefore, that, from whatever reason, the average duration of relief is longer amongst women than amongst men. A possible explanation is that men, more frequently than women, resort to the Poor Law for the purpose of tiding themselves over periods of temporary disability or unemployment.

Causes of the higher rate of pauperism amongst women.

9. The causes of the higher rate of pauperism amongst women than amongst men are various, and some of them readily occur to the mind. Perhaps the principal cause is that of widowhood. The death of the husband if it occurs at the early ages of manhood may leave the wife with a young family which she is unable to support, and if it occurs at a later period the wife is too often left unprovided for and has no occupation to which she can turn other than domestic service. No such disability comes to a man upon the death of his wife, although there may sometimes be difficulties in adequately providing for the up-bringing of his children. The occupation statistics of the 1901 Census show that 73·5 per cent. of unmarried women aged twenty to twenty-five years were returned as engaged in occupations, and that the corresponding proportion for unmarried women aged forty-five to fifty-five years was only 57·2 per cent., whereas in the case of men at those age groups the proportions returned as engaged in occupations were 97·4 per cent., and 96·1 per cent. respectively.[1]

10. To whatever cause a woman's appeal to the Poor Law may be due, the relief would generally be required for a lengthened period, whereas except in cases of permanent invalidity and of old age no man would ordinarily be allowed to remain permanently in the workhouse or be given out-relief for protracted periods. Further light is thrown upon the question by the statistics of the ages of persons relieved, which will now be considered.

Classification of Pauperism by Age.

Number of persons relieved on March 31st, 1906, classified by ages.

11. From the Pauper Census of March 31st, 1906*, the following Table classifying by ages the persons relieved has been obtained :—[2]

Age Groups.	Number of persons relieved (not including lunatics in asylums, &c., or casuals.)	Per 1,000 of estimated population at same ages.
Under 5 years	51,767	13·6
5 years and under 15 years	179,854	26·0
15 „ „ 25 „	22,583	3·3
25 „ „ 35 „	38,189	6·6
35 „ „ 45 „	58,401	13·3
45 „ „ 55 „	56,252	17·9
55 „ „ 65 „	91,530	43·3
65 „ „ 75 „	183,125	163·0
75 „ „ 85 „	117,231	275·9
85 years and upwards	18,080	353·1
Total number of persons relieved and rate per 1,000 of estimated population	817,012	23·6

12. Dealing with adults only it will be seen that, whilst the number of persons living at each group diminishes, of course, with advancing years, the number of persons relieved increases at each group, except one, up to the age of seventy-five. After this age death more than counterbalances the incoming stream. The exception noticed is at the age-group forty-five to fifty-five, and it is found that the decrease in the numbers at those ages is wholly amongst women, and largely amongst able-bodied widows. It would seem that at those ages the widows, to some extent, again become self-supporting or are

* This was a special inquiry which we undertook as to the number of persons relieved on March 31st, 1906. (*See* Part I., par. 38.)

[1] General Report on 1901 Census [Cd. 2174], p. 77. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 50.

otherwise removed from the necessity of obtaining relief. Their children have reached an age when the presence of the mother in the house is no longer essential, and the mother is thus enabled to take work outside. Moreover, the children are then beginning to earn, and can assist, if necessary, towards the maintenance of their mother.

Rate of Pauperism to population at different age groups.

13. The Table also shows, as would be expected, that although the number of persons relieved during the period of adolescence and the earliest ages of manhood is considerable, yet the rate of pauperism to population at those ages is the lowest. The rate increases rapidly as the age advances, until at ages fifty-five to sixty-five there are forty-three persons per 1,000 of the population at the same ages in receipt of relief, and at ages over eighty-five one out of every three persons is relieved.

Excess of rates for women over those for men.

14. Taking the rates for men and women separately, it is found that those for women exceed those for men at every age-group. The excess increases up to the ages of thirty-five to forty-five, and then diminishes up to ages fifty-five to sixty. It again increases up to ages seventy to seventy-five and again subsides during the remainder of life. The oscillation at the earlier ages is produced by the changing circumstances of widows with children which have been already noticed. The increasing excess in the women's rate after the age of sixty, whilst it is also partly due to the question of widowhood, appears to be partly due to the earlier ages at which women are displaced in the industrial world, and the diminution in the excess after seventy-five years of age to the greater number of men who, having continued to work up to that age, are finally incapacitated.[1]

Methods of Relief.

Indoor and outdoor relief.

15. Turning now to the method of relief, the broad distinction is between indoor relief and outdoor relief. The extent to which the guardians make themselves responsible for the recipients varies under the two systems, and in consequence whatever the ultimate effect of the pursuit of any particular policy, the immediate cost of outdoor relief is, case for case, less than the immediate cost of indoor relief.

Day and year counts for in and out relief respectively.

16. The number and proportion of indoor and outdoor paupers on January 1st, 1908, and during the year ended September 30th, 1907, were[2] :—

——	Indoor Relief.	Outdoor Relief.	Total.
Day Count.			
Persons relieved on 1st January, 1908 :—			
Number	252,618	547,021	798,898*
Proportion	31·6	68·4	100·0
Year's Count.			
Persons relieved during year ended 30th September, 1907 :—			
Number	573,929†	1,206,684†	1,709,436
Ratio to Day Counts of 1907	2·26	2·23	21·5

Number of adults and children receiving indoor and outdoor relief.

17. It will be seen that the persons in receipt of outdoor relief outnumber those receiving indoor relief by more than two to one, but the proportion is different for men, women and children taken separately. In the case of men the number in receipt of indoor relief is approximately equal to the number receiving outdoor relief, but of women four-fifths, and of children three-fourths of the number are in receipt of outdoor relief. The number of men, women and children in receipt of each form of relief on January 1st, 1908, was as follows[3] :—

* Deducting 741 persons who are counted twice by reason of being reckoned for various reasons both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

† Including under both heads 71,177 persons who received both forms of relief during the year.

1 Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 54. 2 Statistical Appendix, Part IV., section 2, par. 20.
3 Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 36.

1st January, 1908.	Indoor.		Outdoor.		Total.	
	Number.	Per cent.	Number.	Per cent.	Number.	Per cent.
Men - - - - - -	116,463	52·7	104,559	47·3	221,022	100·0
Women - - - - - -	73,729	21·4	270,096	78·6	343,825	100·0
Children under 16 - - -	62,426	26·6	172,366	73·4	234,792	100·0
Total - - - -	252,618	31·6	547,021	68·4	798,898*	100·0

18. This difference between the methods adopted for the relief of men and women is found at all ages. Widows with children are mostly given outdoor relief, and in the case of older persons left alone, a woman can more often manage for herself, and is given outdoor relief, where a man could not, and is consequently drawn into the Poor Law institution. Moreover, in the case of younger persons there is often greater danger of encouraging idleness in giving out-relief to men than to women. And in the case of incapacitating sickness a man is more likely to seek infirmary treatment than his wife would be. So long as the wages are assured it is possible for the wife's illness, with the assistance she can obtain, to be treated at home.

Duration of indoor and outdoor relief.

19. The similarity shown in the former of these two Tables between the ratios of the year's count to the day count for indoor relief and outdoor relief would suggest that the degree of permanence was much the same for both forms of relief, but if the cases in which the persons received medical relief only be omitted from the outdoor totals it is found that the ratio of the year's count to the day count for outdoor relief becomes only 1·76, thus showing the greater permanence of outdoor relief, and the more temporary purposes for which indoor relief is obtained.†[1]

Changes in Number of Paupers.

Statistical information obtained in past years.

20. We may now turn to the changes which have taken place in the number and constitution of the pauper population during the last generation. All the statements which have been made from time to time of the number of persons relieved previous to the Act of 1834 must be regarded as estimates only. There was then no machinery for the systematic and regular collection of statistics, which with the 15,000 separate administrative bodies must have been no easy task. Such statistics as were obtained related chiefly to Poor Law finance. After the year 1834, the Poor Law Commissioners obtained certain statistics showing the numbers relieved during the first quarter of each year. This system was found to be unreliable and was abandoned in 1848 in favour of the day count. From that date we know the numbers relieved on January 1st and July 1st in each year, but even then the statistics were not complete, and it was not until the year 1872 that returns were received from the whole of England and Wales.[2] It will be convenient, therefore, to commence this survey at the year 1871. In that year the Poor Law Board was superseded by the Local Government Board. About this time also there was a revival of public interest in Poor Law questions after a period of comparative slackness following upon the great upheaval of 1834. As we have mentioned elsewhere, the Central Authority was engaged in an active campaign against the mis-use and waste of outdoor relief, and the record of this action is seen in the statistics of pauperism relating to the period. A system of national education had been established in 1870, and therefore from that date onward a new agency calculated to diminish pauperism has been in continuous operation throughout the whole country. Again, although employment had been improving for one or two years previously, the number of paupers attained the highest point of the period in the year 1870–1.

* Deducting 741 persons who are counted twice by reason of being reckoned for various reasons both as indoor and outdoor paupers.

† In 1907 there were 52,673 deaths in Poor Law institutions (Annual Report of the Registrar-General for 1907. [Cd. 4464] p. 227), and to a slight extent the difference in the duration of indoor and outdoor relief would be due to the cases which only enter the institutions shortly before death.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., section 2, par. 24. [2] Appendix to Vol. I. of Evidence, Appendix, No. II., par. 6.

Cycles of Pauperism.

Similarity of cycles of pauperism and cycles of employment.

21. An examination of the statistics for the period since 1871 shows that pauperism moves in cycles of similar duration to the cycles of employment (see accompanying Diagram. B), but that the turning points are from one to two years later than the turning points in the cycles of employment.[1] In examining the figures it is desirable, therefore, to arrange them in the cycles into which they naturally fall. By this process we arrive at a trustworthy result, and the real trend of the figures is revealed. Conclusions drawn from isolated years are apt to mislead unless the position of the years in the general movement is indicated.

Number of persons relieved in the cycles since 1871.

22. In the following Table the numbers are arranged in the four cycles ending with the year 1905–6. In the two years 1906–7 and 1907–8 the numbers have oscillated, and as it is not yet clear what place they will occupy in the general movement, they are given separately[2] :—

Cycles.*	Mean number of persons relieved.	Mean of the annual rates per 1,000 of estimated population.	Decrease in rate as compared with preceding cycle.
1871–2 to 1879–80 (9 years) - -	747,936	31·2	—
1880–1 to 1887–8 (8 years) - -	711,625	26·6	4·6
1888–9 to 1895–6 (8 years) - -	694,094	23·8	2·8
1896–7 to 1905–6 (10 years) - -	718,444	22·2	1·6
1906–7 } latest years - - - {	769,160	22·3	—
1907–8 }	772,346	22·1	—

Movement in Pauperism.

Increase in cycle of 1896–1905.

23. It may be observed that in the second and third cycles given in the table above, an appreciable reduction occurred in the number of persons relieved. The policy developed by the late Viscount Goschen in 1869 had a marked effect and the impetus then given to more careful administration, though its vitality had gradually diminished, was evident until almost the end of the nineteenth century. The reaction came, however, in the latest cycle, which was of longer duration than any of the three preceding cycles, whilst the mean number of persons relieved on each day throughout the period embraced was approximately 24,000 in excess of the corresponding number for the preceding cycle, and some 7,000 in excess of that for the cycle 1880–7. Some satisfaction may be derived from the reduction in the ratio of pauperism to population since the early seventies, but it should not be allowed to obscure the facts that the amount of the decrease is rapidly diminishing, that from 1901–2 to 1905–6 there was a continuous increase in the ratio, and that the number of persons relieved has considerably increased during the cycle of the last ten years.

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* Brief reference may be made to some of the industrial conditions existing during these years. The years 1871–1875 were marked by great industrial activity, partly owing to the payment of the French indemnity after the Franco-German War, to reduced taxation, and to a boom in railway construction abroad. The income-tax was reduced to 2d. in 1874, and in the same year the sugar duties were abolished. In 1875 trade commenced to decline. There were heavy commercial failures and the depression increased rapidly. In 1878 the harvest was described as the worst of the century, and the depression in this year was, beyond question, worse than at any period since, and the unemployment percentage as estimated by the Board of Trade rose to 10·70.

The fluctuation of pauperism in the cycle of 1880–1887 was not very considerable. Tariff changes abroad were frequent, and the year 1886 was marked by great depression and the "unemployed" riots.

In the succeeding cycle of 1888–1895 pauperism reached a lower level than in 1880–1887. There was the London Dock strike during the improving years, and coal, cotton, and other strikes occurred during the declining years.

The cycle 1896–1905 was of longer duration than its immediate predecessors. During its improving years the progress of pauperism was checked by the South Wales coal strike (1898). Employment reached the apex of activity in 1899, and pauperism its lowest level in 1900. The turn came with the South African War, which broke out in 1899. Taxation rose to a high level, the income-tax reaching 1s. 3d. in 1902. The sugar duties were re-imposed in 1901, and other taxes were imposed. Declining trade continued until 1905, after which there was some improvement in employment, but the improvement has hardly shown itself upon the statistics of pauperism, whilst employment commenced to decline in 1907, and at the end of 1908 was worse than at the end of any year since 1892.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part I., pars. 12 and 13. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 16.

24. Looking into these figures more closely it is found that the increase in the number of persons relieved in the cycle 1896–1905 was chiefly due to the larger number of men coming under the Poor Laws. Comparing this cycle with that of the years 1871–9 the following results are obtained[1]:— This increase chiefly due to larger number of men relieved.

	Total Population. (Census of 1901 compared with estimate for 1875.)	Number of Paupers. (Cycle of 1896–7 to 1905–6 compared with Cycle of 1871–2 to 1879–80.)
	Increase +, or Decrease −:	
	Per cent.	Per cent.
Men	+ 42·2	+ 18·4
Women	+ 44·1	− 2·4
Children under 16	+ 21·3	− 18·4
All classes	+ 34·8	− 3·9

25. The circumstances which have contributed to produce this result are no doubt various. It may be noted that the increase in male pauperism occurred chiefly during the cycle commencing in 1896. This period coincides approximately with the passing of two important measures of social reform. The Local Government Act of 1894 changed the character of the Poor Law authorities by the abolition of the property qualification for membership of boards of guardians and of the *ex officio* members whose influence had previously been considerable. And in 1896 the first of the series of Workmen's Compensation Acts was passed which, we are told by a large number of witnesses, has made it more and more difficult for a man to obtain work when thrown out in the later years of his working period of life. No statistics could be obtained to show to what extent these measures have contributed to the increase in the number of paupers. It is, moreover, during this same period that, as we shall presently show, there has been a great development in the provision and cost of Poor Law institutions, and especially of infirmaries, and it is also in this branch of relief work that the increase in the numbers has taken place. There has, indeed, been an increase in the number of indoor paupers in every cycle, though it is specially marked in the period 1896–1905, whilst the number of outdoor paupers shows a continuous decline over the whole of the four cycles.[2] It would appear that the Poor Law institutions are becoming more congenial and less unpopular with certain classes who are content to regard them as supplementary domiciles. An examination of the statistics of child pauperism shows that, at any rate during the latest cycle, the number of indoor children relieved with their parents has diminished, so that the increase in adult indoor pauperism must be accounted for by persons relieved without children.[3] Causes of increase in male pauperism. Increase in number of persons receiving indoor relief.

Changes in Numbers at Different Ages.

26. So far as statistics of ages of persons relieved are available for past years there would appear to have been a slightly greater proportionate increase at ages between sixteen and sixty-five than at ages above and below that group. The available information is shown in the following Table, but it should be borne in mind in considering the figures that the years 1892 and 1900 were years of low pauperism, whilst 1906 was a year of high pauperism. In the years 1899 and 1903 the level of pauperism was nearer the normal.[4] Increase in number of persons relieved at different ages.

Age Groups.	Increase per cent. in estimated population between		Increase per cent. in number of persons relieved between			
	1891 and 1899.	1891 and 1906.	1892 and 1900.	1900 and 1906.	1892 and 1906.	1899 and 1903.
Under 16 years	3·1	4·5	−8·5*	13·4	3·7	—
16 and under 65	13·9	21·5	10·7	16·0	28·4	6·9
65 and upwards	8·4	12·8	8·4	9·5	18·6	2·5
Total	9·6	14·8	3·5	12·6	16·6	—

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 35. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 26. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table XVIII. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 66.

* Decrease.

Increase in numbers in receipt of indoor relief at different ages.

27. For indoor paupers only there is more detailed information, and the greater proportionate increase in the number of paupers at the working years of life is more pronounced. Between 1891 and 1901 the number of youths between fifteen and twenty years of age appears to have declined, but there was an increase in the number of men at every age group above twenty-five, and the rate of increase grew at successive age groups up to the age of sixty-five. Between 1901 and 1906 every age group shows an increase, which is proportionately greatest at the ages from fifteen to sixty-five. The numbers for women and girls show very similar movements, but the rates of increase are much smaller.[1]

Earlier ages at which men obtain indoor relief.

28. The numbers of paupers at each age group in 1891, 1901, and 1906 are given in the Memorandum on the Census of Paupers, and are illustrated in the accompanying Diagram C, from which it will be seen that, since 1891, men have resorted to the Poor Law institutions at earlier ages than formerly. Not only has there been a progressive increase in the number of men over twenty in receipt of indoor relief, but the rate of male indoor pauperism to male population of same ages was higher in 1901 than in 1891 at every age from forty-five onwards, and the breach widens as age increases. The rate for 1906 is higher than that for 1901 at every age group, but the difference is only slightly marked at ages thirty-five to forty-five, though it again becomes more prominent at ages from forty-five to fifty-five, and continues to increase at the later periods of life.[2] We are unable to say how far this tendency may be due to a larger number of acute sick treated in Poor Law institutions, for there are no comparative statistics as to the number of sick at different ages.

Occupations or Former Occupations of Persons Relieved.

Occupations in which rates of pauperism are highest.

29. Included in the information obtained by the Census of Paupers taken on March 31st, 1906, were the occupations or former occupations of the persons relieved. In the tabulation of this information we adopted the classification used for the General Census of 1901, in order that the results might be compared with the occupation statistics of the population generally. The results obtained by this comparison show that some industries contribute to pauperism to a greater proportionate extent than others. The groups of occupations in which the rates of male pauperism are highest are those which afford only casual and precarious employment. Thus, the six groups of occupations with the highest rates of male pauperism are[3]:—

	Per 1,000.
General and undefined workers and dealers	84·9
Fishing	40·3
Agricultural: on farms, woods, and gardens	39·7
Dress	24·0
Building and works of construction	22·1
Conveyance of men, goods, and messages	20·3
General rate for all male adults	21·3

In four out of these six groups permanent employment is the exception rather than the rule. Pauperism among agriculturists is largely one of old-age, for whilst the general ratio of the number of not able-bodied male paupers to the number of able-bodied male paupers in health was 9·3 to one, in the agricultural industry it was 21·6 to one.[4] The numbers included under "dress" are largely made up of boot and shoe makers, in which trade alien immigration, the introduction of machinery, and insanitary conditions of employment have made this industry a fruitful source of pauperism.[5]

Lower rates of pauperism in skilled trades.

30. The industries in which skilled workmen are largely employed show lower rates of pauperism, but nevertheless an appreciable proportion of their workers come upon the Poor Laws. For instance, the group of industries classed as "metals, machines, implements, and conveyances," has a rate of 14·0 per 1,000, and workers and dealers in "wood, furniture, fittings, and decorations," a rate of 19·0 per 1,000.[3]

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[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II. par. 77. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table B. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table F. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 16. [5] Report by Mr. Steel Maitland and Miss Squire on London, pp. 33–4, and Report by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, pp. 64 and 66.

Period and Recurrence of Relief.

31. We must now refer to the important results of the return showing the number of persons relieved during the course of the year ended September 30th, 1907. In this return the persons relieved were classified according to the aggregate length of time, and the number of separate occasions on which each individual was relieved during the year. It was desired to ascertain how far the persons in receipt of relief were permanently enrolled upon the lists and how far they were merely relieved for temporary periods during sickness, unemployment or other misfortunes. It was also desired to ascertain to what extent the persons relieved repeated their applications, and thus to show how far the methods of the Poor Law authorities were restoring the applicants to independent life or were merely tiding them over periods of stress with no other result than to educate them in the habit of accepting the Poor Law as their support in every emergency. The results obtained from the return are sufficiently startling. They are contained in the following Table:[1]—

Persons relieved during year ended September 30th, 1907, classified according to recurrence and aggregate duration of relief.

Aggregate Duration of Relief.		Persons relieved once.		Persons relieved twice.		Persons relieved three times.		Persons relieved four times.		Persons relieved five times or oftener.		Total.	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Not exceeding one week	No.	198,009	13·8	5,025	3·1	663	1·2	155	0·7	57	·2	203,909	11·9
	%	97·1	—	2·5	—	·3	—	·1	—	—	—	100·0	—
Over one week and not exceeding four weeks	No.	268,660	18·7	45,100	26·2	9,564	17·6	2,413	10·8	790	3·0	326,527	19·1
	%	82·3	—	13·8	—	2·9	—	·8	—	·2	—	100·0	—
Over four weeks and not exceeding thirteen weeks	No.	185,429	12·9	54,989	31·7	20,666	37·9	8,653	38·7	8,027	30·7	277,764	16·3
	%	66·8	—	19·8	—	7·4	—	3·1	—	2·9	—	100·0	—
Over thirteen weeks and not exceeding twenty six weeks	No.	108,837	7·6	25,800	14·9	10,705	19·7	5,406	24·2	7,357	28·1	158,105	9·2
	%	68·8	—	16·3	—	6·8	—	3·4	—	4·7	—	100·0	—
Over twenty six weeks, but less than the year	No.	137,535	9·6	39,664	23·2	12,523	23·0	5,415	24·2	9,314	35·6	204,451	12·0
	%	67·3	—	19·4	—	6·1	—	2·6	—	4·6	—	100·0	—
For the whole year *	No.	536,359	37·4	1,063	·9	303	·6	321	1·4	634	2·4	538,680	31·5
	%	99·5	—	·2	—	·1	—	·1	—	·1	—	100·0	—
Total	No.	1,434,829	100·0	171,641	100·0	54,424	100·0	22,363	100·0	26,179	100·0	1,709,436	100·0
	%	83·9	—	10·0	—	3·2	—	1·3	—	1·6	—	100·0	—

32. It will first be seen that the great majority of the persons were relieved on only one occasion, but that there were, nevertheless, 274,607 persons who made application to the guardians on more than one occasion during the year.

Persons relieved on more than one occasion during the year.

33. In the second place, it may be observed that 538,680 persons, or nearly one-third of the total, were practically permanent paupers, and the number in this class is probably greater than the table shows, for persons who died whilst in receipt of relief and aged persons who newly obtained relief during the year and may become permanent paupers would be included under other heads. The class is made up chiefly of the aged, the chronic sick, and orphan and deserted children. For the two former classes there is, so far as the persons now in receipt of relief are concerned, little chance of restoration to independent life. It may be expected, however, that the number of the aged applying for relief will diminish in the future in consequence of the establishment of the system of old-age pensions. The children who are physically and mentally sound will, in due course, pass out into the world, but their places will be taken by others, although the up-bringing of orphans is a matter which appeals very strongly to the charitable.

"Permanent" paupers.

34. The third point which may be noted is the large number of persons who were relieved for very short periods. Over 200,000 persons were relieved for less than one

Persons relieved for short periods.

* For explanation of recurrent cases in this class see pars. 37—8.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2, par. 38.

week and a further 320,000 for less than a month. The two groups comprise nearly one-third of the total number of persons relieved, and embrace cases of very differing character. The vast majority are cases of the most temporary destitution and were relieved but once during the year, but a considerable minority were relieved for short periods on two or more occasions. If any appreciable and permanent reduction in pauperism can be effected it should be more easily accomplished amongst the persons included in these groups.

Persons relieved for lengthened periods, but not continuously.

35. We may next refer to the persons whose relief exceeded one month in duration but was not continuous over the whole year. Counting those only who were relieved not more than once, there were 431,801 persons included under this head. Amongst them are those who are generally in receipt of relief, but who manage in one way or another, probably during the summer months, to regain a precarious independence for a very limited period. Some again are seasonal paupers, persons whose occupation lasts for a portion only of the year, and who, owing to improvidence or low wages, resort to the Poor Law during the vacant periods. Some of these persons may be supported during their intervals of independence by relatives, but in other cases the fact that the persons are able to maintain themselves for so long a period as they do shows that they are still fit for some kinds of work, though they will not, or cannot, find it.

Recurrent cases of relief. Ins-and-outs.

36. Two smaller classes may receive brief mention here. There were 26,179 persons who received relief on at least five different occasions, and those of them who were relieved in the workhouses belong to the class known as "ins-and-outs." Cases have been brought to our notice of persons who have been in and out of the workhouse more than fifty-two times during the year notwithstanding the existence of the week's detention sanctioned to meet such cases by the Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act, 1871, as amended by the Poor Law Act of 1899. Mr. Lockwood mentions two cases, one of a woman of eighty-one who had been in and out of the workhouse 163 times in the year 1901, and the other of a man who has been in and out 593 times since 1884.[1] These are obviously very extreme cases, but the number of persons ascertained to have been relieved five times or oftener during the year shows the existence of a troublesome class who make a convenience of the workhouse and whose improvidence is born of the knowledge that that institution is always at hand.

Permanent paupers who occasionally take their discharge.

37. The other class consists of persons who are practically chargeable throughout the year, but who sometimes take their discharge without the slightest prospect of maintaining themselves. These persons are entered in the returns as relieved "for the whole year," and on more than one occasion. They do not remain outside for long, and frequently return the next, or even the same day. The power of detention given to the guardians appears to be insufficient in these cases, and the labour incidental to the frequent discharges and re-admissions adds appreciably to the work of the officials. The return gives some idea of the magnitude of this class and of the unnecessary labour they cause, for the re-admission of a person so discharged would be recorded as a new period of relief, although, if the re-admission occurred on the same day as the discharge, or even the day after, the person would still be recorded as relieved for the whole year because he had been relieved on every day in the year.

38. It will be seen from the Table above that the class to which reference is made do not form a large proportion of the total number of permanent paupers, but as their actions involved a large number of discharges and re-admissions they are obviously the cause of much additional work. Moreover, it should be observed that when the interval between discharge and re-admission was more than two days the pauper would be classified in the group of persons relieved for over twenty-six weeks, but less than the year, and the numbers relieved for the whole year and more than once do not, therefore, represent the whole of the class.

Period and Recurrence of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.

Returns as to period and recurrence of indoor and outdoor relief.

39. It should be observed that the figures given in the above Table include both adults and children as well as both indoor and outdoor paupers. In order to throw further light upon the questions raised by the above statistics special returns from certain unions were asked for, and the officials were good enough to respond to our request. These returns

[1] Vol. I. of Evidence, Q. 4151.

relate to urban and rural unions comprising a population of 2,352,052, or 7·2 per cent. of the population of England and Wales, and they give particulars relating to 207,844 persons relieved during the year, or 12·2 per cent. of the total number.

Recurrent cases of indoor and outdoor relief.

40. It is found that in these unions the recurrent cases of relief are fairly equally distributed between indoor and outdoor relief. It is also the case with the persons relieved five times or oftener. The proportions for the different forms of relief are given in the following Table :—[1]

	Indoor relief.		Outdoor medical relief only.		Other outdoor relief.		All forms of relief.*	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Persons relieved once	57,213	83·7	24,070	83·9	80,026	80·7	165,811	79·7
Persons relieved 2 to 4 times	9,172	13·5	4,499	15·7	17,604	17·8	37,722	18·2
Persons relieved 5 times or oftener	1,933	2·8	110	0·4	1,515	1·5	4,311	2·1
Total	68,318	100·0	28,679	100·0	99,145	100·0	207,844	100·0

Duration of indoor and outdoor relief.

41. These returns, as will be seen in the next Table, confirm the conclusion previously drawn that outdoor relief is more permanent than indoor relief, for it is found that of the outdoor cases (omitting cases of medical relief only) 30·6 per cent. were relieved for the whole year, whilst only 26·5 per cent. of the indoor cases were continuous throughout the year.†

Short cases of medical relief.

42. With regard to the very short cases of relief, of which there are such a large number in the total, the returns show a high proportion of cases of "medical relief only," as many as 77·3 per cent. of such cases having lasted for less than four weeks. It is clear, therefore, that there is less reluctance on the part of the poor to applying for medical relief, and on the part of the guardians to granting it.

Short cases of indoor and outdoor relief.

43. In the case of indoor and other outdoor relief the proportion of cases relieved for less than one month is 30·0 per cent. and 27·4 per cent. respectively. Whether some more suitable method of dealing with these persons could not be found we shall consider hereafter. Here it need only be observed that a new light is thrown upon the problem of pauperism, when we find that, assuming the unions selected for this inquiry are representative of the whole of England and Wales, nearly one-third of the persons relieved in institutions, *i.e.*, one-third of 502,752, and upwards of one-quarter of those granted outdoor relief, *i.e.*, one-fourth of 1,135,507, were relieved for such very short periods. The figures are given below :—

Aggregate period of relief.	Number of persons who received the undermentioned forms of relief for the aggregate periods mentioned in the first column.							
	Indoor relief.		Outdoor medical relief only.		Other outdoor relief.		All forms of relief.*	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Not exceeding 4 weeks	20,480	30·0	22,167	77·3	27,208	27·4	71,703	34·5
Over 4 weeks and not exceeding 13 weeks	12,665	18·5	5,126	17·9	18,778	19·0	40,386	19·4
Over 13 weeks but less than the year	17,071	25·0	1,187	4·1	22,821	23·0	46,113	22·2
For the whole year	18,102	26·5	199	0·7	30,338	30·6	49,642	23·9
Total	68,318	100·0	28,679	100·0	99,145	100·0	207,844	100·0

* Including 11,702 persons who received both indoor and outdoor relief during the year.

† *See* note to par. 19 as to deaths in Poor Law institutions.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2.

Cost of Relief.

Growth of expenditure since 1775–6.

44. We must now consider the cost of poor relief, for which statistics are available for upwards of a century. In the year ended Lady Day, 1834, the year in which the Royal Commissioners reported, the expenditure was £6,317,255, or 8s. 10d. per head of the estimated population. It had grown to this amount from £1,556,804 in the year 1775–6. In 1784–5 the expenditure was two millions, in 1802–3 it rose to four millions and in 1812–3 to six and two-thirds millions. The highest point of this time was reached in the year 1817–8, when an expenditure of £7,870,801, or 13s. 10d. per head of the estimated population, was recorded. The close of the great war had thrown large numbers of men into the already over-supplied labour market, and in this year "the Government advanced £750,000 for the employment of the labouring poor in the completion of public works in progress or to be commenced."[1] With the improvement in trade which followed the unemployed labour was absorbed and poor relief expenditure diminished to £5,736,900 in 1823–4. During the next ten years it moved up and down, and, as already stated, the Royal Commissioners found it at £6,317,255 in 1833–4. A considerable reduction followed upon the establishment of the new Poor Law, and in 1836–7 the expenditure was again only just in excess of four millions. The increase which followed caused the Poor Law Commissioners some uneasiness, and they attributed it partly to an increasing laxity with respect to the relief of the able-bodied in some unions and to evasions of the prohibitory regulations. In 1842–3 we find the expenditure was £5,208,027, after which year it oscillated between five and six millions for twenty years.[2] In 1871–2, when the complete statistics commence of the number of paupers, it was just upon the upward side of eight millions, or almost exactly 7s. per head of population, and since that date there have only been seven years in which a decrease has been recorded, four of which immediately followed the year 1871–2 during the campaign then being waged against out-relief. During the thirty years immediately succeeding the year 1834, there was thus no permanent change in the amount of poor relief expenditure, but the forty years which have since elapsed have seen the annual expenditure more than doubled. In the year 1905–6, the latest for which the figures have been published, the expenditure was £14,035,888, and the amount per head of the estimated population was 8s. 2¾d. Compared with the population, therefore, the expenditure is only 7¼d. per head below the 8s. 10d. of 1833–4. In the following Table we give the expenditure and amount per head of the estimated population for the years marking the highest points of pauperism since 1871–2 :—[3]

Expenditure, and amount per head of population, for selected years since 1871–2.

Years.	Poor Relief Expenditure.	Amount per head of estimated population.
	£.	s. d.
1871–2	8,007,403	7 0¼
1879–80	8,015,010	6 3¾
1887–8	8,440,821	6 0¾
1895–6	10,215,974	6 8½
1905–6	14,035,888*	8 2¾
	14,685,983	8 7¼

45. The great increase in expenditure has thus occurred chiefly since the year 1887–8, and if we look into the statistics for separate years it really commenced in the year 1889–90.

Increase in cost of Indoor Relief.

Changes in amount of expenditure under various heads.

46. As with the number of paupers the greatest increase in expenditure has occurred in connection with indoor relief, but the expenditure has outstripped the numbers and certain items of indoor relief have increased more rapidly than others. Between 1871–2 and 1905–6, the number of indoor paupers increased by 76·4 per cent., but the cost of in-maintenance rose by 113 per cent., the debt charges multiplied four times, and the amounts expended in the remuneration of officers trebled. The amounts expended on

* The expenditure of the Metropolitan Asylums Board on fever and small-pox hospitals and ambulance service is omitted from this figure, but is included in all the other figures given in the Table.

1 "A Sketch of British Economic History," by Prof. Smart, Chapter 1. (*See* Appendix, Vol. XII.).

2 Return. "Local Taxation" by the late Viscount Goschen, Reprint H. C., 201 of 1893.

3 Annual Reports of the Local Government Board [Cd. 292] 1899–1900, p. 432, and [Cd. 3665], 1906–7, p. 407.

the different items are given in the following Table, the years selected being again those in which the number of paupers was highest[1]:—

Years in which number of paupers was highest.	In-maintenance.	Out-relief.	Maintenance of Lunatics in County and Borough Asylums, Registered Hospitals, and Licensed Houses.	Workhouse and other Loans repaid and Interest thereon.	Salaries and Rations of Officers (and superannuation allowances).	Other expenses of or immediately connected with Relief.	Total.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
1871–2 - - - -	1,515,790	3,583,571	742,483	278,566	871,402	1,015,591	8,007,403
1879–80 - - -	1,757,749	2,710,778	994,204	319,426	1,053,218	1,179,635	8,015,010
1887–8 - - - -	1,855,304	2,537,686	1,167,765	585,660	1,342,079	952,327	8,440,821
1895–6 - - - -	2,254,350	2,644,650	1,556,133	738,237	1,739,264	1,283,340	10,215,974
1905–6* . - -	3,229,122	3,374,427	2,355,212	1,189,603	2,491,373	1,977,196	14,616,933
Increase (+) or decrease (−) between years 1871–2 and 1887–8 (16 years) - - -	+ 339,514	− 1,045,885	+ 425,282	+307,094	+ 470,677	− 63,264	+ 433,418
1887–8 and 1905–6 (18 years) - - -	+1,373,818	+ 836,741	+1,187,447	+603,943	+1,149,294	+1,024,869	+6,176,112
Increase (+) or Decrease (−) per cent. in 1905–6 as compared with 1871–2 - -	+ 113·03	− 5·84	+ 217·21	+ 327·05	+ 185·90	+ 94·68	+ 82·54

Cost of In-maintenance.

47. The cost of maintaining the persons relieved in Poor Law institutions (with which is also included the cost of heating, cleansing, and lighting the institutions) shows the lowest proportionate increase of the three items mentioned above. It should, however, be remembered that prices of food and drink are generally much lower now than they were thirty to forty years ago, although the price of coal is rather higher than it was then. The Board of Trade index number of prices of food and drink was 144·6 in 1871, and 105·1 in 1907, and the corresponding index numbers for coal were 58·3 and 76·5.[2] It seems clear, therefore, that the cost of maintenance has increased to a much greater extent than the expenditure shows, but in the absence of fuller details of the expenditure it is impossible to say to what extent this is the case.

Greater increase in cost of in-maintenance than in number of indoor poor.

Cost of Remuneration of Poor Law Officials.

48. Some of the increased cost of remunerating Poor Law officials must necessarily be due to the substitution of paid nurses for pauper nurses. [3]We show in Part IV., Chapter 3, that the number of nurses has risen from 1,406 in 1872 to 6,094 in 1906. The rate of increase in the expenditure on remuneration of officials has been considerably greater

Causes of increase in expenditure on salaries, etc.

* The figures for 1905–6 exclude the expenditure of the M.A.B. on fever and small-pox hospitals and ambulance service, which amounted to £650,095. The corresponding expenditure is included in the figures for the earlier years. The figures for 1905–6 also differ from those for earlier years in so far that they are gross figures and include £581,045, representing transfers from productive accounts and receipts on account of non-settled poor. Deductions were made in earlier years in respect of these items.

[1] Annual Reports of the Local Government Board [Cd. 292] 1899–1900, p. 436, and [Cd. 3665], 1906–7, p. 403. [2] Twelfth Abstract of Labour Statistics [Cd. 4413], pp. 80–1. [3] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Q.* 3376.

since 1895–6 than before that date.[1] The Superannuation Act of 1896 contributed to some extent to this acceleration,* but one of the most potent factors has probably been the development in specialised institutions which has taken place during the last ten years.[2] The erection of large infirmaries and separate institutions for children, and the adoption of the system of scattered homes have all demanded a larger number of officials with superior qualifications.

Debt Charges and Capital Cost of Institutions.

Increase in debt charges compared with increase in number of indoor poor.

49. The enormous proportionate increase in the debt charges is a matter to which we have given much consideration. It is due to many causes, and is obviously very largely independent of the increase in the number of indoor poor, which, as already stated, has been 76·4 per cent. since 1871–2. Between the years 1887–8 and 1892–3, in which years the number of indoor paupers was much the same, and in the intermediate years was lower, expenditure exceeding two and a half millions was sanctioned for buildings, and similarly between the years 1895–6 and 1900–1, in both of which years the number of indoor paupers was nearly 214,000, additional expenditure on buildings to the amount of seven and a half millions was sanctioned.[3]

Cost per bed of workhouses, infirmaries, cottage homes, and casual wards.

50. Again, Mr. Davy has furnished us with certain Tables showing the cost per bed of workhouses, infirmaries, and cottage homes (exclusive of sites) the erection of which was approved by the Local Government Board during the twenty years ended 1904.[4] In order to show the increasing cost per bed we have divided the total period into four quinquennial periods and calculated the average cost per bed of the institutions erected in each of them. The results are shown in the following Table, which also includes particulars of casual wards compiled from corresponding information supplied to the Vagrancy Committee by Mr. Kitchin[5] :—

Classes of Poor Law Institutions.	1885–9.		1890–4.		1895–9.		1900–4.	
	No. of beds provided.	Cost per bed.	No. of beds provided.	Cost per bed.	No. of beds provided.	Cost per bed.	No. of beds provided.	Cost per bed.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Workhouses † - - -	1,873	69 2 0	1,468	116 6 0	7,431	184 4 0	1,893	222 10 0
Infirmaries - - - -	484	70 2 0	2,481	200 5 0	4,712	234 10 0	2,272	158 4 0
Casual wards:								
London - - - -	59	107 16 0	168	188 8 0	247	245 11 0	136	159 16 0
Extra-Metropolitan - -	—	—	—	—	621	79 6 0	438	103 16 0
England and Wales - -	59	107 16 0	168	188 8 0	868	126 12 0	574	117 2 0
Cottage homes:								
London - - - -	337	182 0 0	—	—	80	164 0 0	2,704	235 10 0
Extra-Metropolitan - -	1,310	105 17 0	365	106 5 0	1,935	148 8 0	1,904‡	121 2 0
England and Wales - -	1,647	121 8 0	365	106 5 0	2,015	149 1 0	4,608	188 4 0

* In 1905–6 the contributions under the Act amounted to £55,472, and the superannuation allowances under the Act to £124,285. Superannuation allowances amounting to £20,665 were paid in addition, but not under the provisions of the Act.

† Many of the institutions included under this head also comprise infirmaries, but cases of this kind are included in every period.

‡ Including three small groups of cottage homes approved by the Local Government Board in 1905.

[1] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Q.* 1668 and 2006. [2] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Q.* 1928. [3] Appendix to Vol. I. of Evidence, Appendix, No. V. (1). [4] Appendix to Vol. I. of Evidence, Appendices, Nos. V. (2–5). [5] Report of the Vagrancy Committee [Cd. 2892], pp. 153 *et seq.*

51. The growing cost of workhouses and the London cottage homes is specially noticeable. In the case of infirmaries there has been a slight check, but the cost of those buildings the erection of which was approved in 1895–9, averaged £235 per bed, exclusive of the site.

52. Causes for the increased expenditure must be sought in several directions. One factor appears to have been an actual increase in the cost of construction. Wages in the building trades have increased considerably, and in 1874 they were only 81 per cent. of the rates current in 1907.[1] Causes of increased expenditure on Poor Law institutions.

53. On the other hand, the price of some of the principal building materials has considerably diminished, *e.g.*, lead and timber. The price of bricks has fluctuated, but on the whole there has also been a diminution.[2]

54. We are disposed, however, to attribute much of the increasing charges for buildings to other influences. The first is the extension of the present system of classification within institutions. Classification within a single institution involves a large number of separate blocks which add appreciably to the cost of the building as a whole.

55. The extension of infirmary accommodation apart from the workhouse has been another important factor in the expenditure upon buildings. Not only have these institutions generally been fitted with all modern conveniences, but with each it is usual to erect special buildings for the medical superintendent, the nurses, and other officers. In this way a certain amount of expenditure is recorded under debt charges which is really in the nature of salaries. The increase in the number of nurses must, of itself, have involved a large increase in the provision of accommodation.[3] The whole standard of efficiency and comfort in these institutions has been forced up by the improvement of the general hospitals, and it is not possible even if it were advisable for the Poor Law infirmaries to be markedly inferior in the accommodation and treatment they offer to their inmates to that given in general hospitals. Increased expenditure on infirmaries.

56. Of the total expenditure on buildings in 1904, amounting to £752,000, Mr. Kitchin informed us that £329,500 or 44 per cent. was in connection with accommodation for the sick, and £176,500, or 23·5 per cent. was expended upon administrative buildings.[4]

57. Again, we may refer to the change in the system of bringing up Poor Law children from the school with large residential buildings to the cottage home. This was a very costly change in public opinion. Mr. Kitchin put in Tables showing that expenditure to the extent of £655,000 was incurred in the provision of cottage homes to take the place of the schools belonging to the Forest Gate and South Metropolitan school districts. The number of children accommodated was 2,728, and the cost per head was, thus, £240.[5] Receiving homes, costing £50,145, had also been built by the constituent unions or parishes since the dissolution.* Expenditure on cottage homes following upon closing of district schools.

58. The Local Government Board inspectors have generally stated that it is difficult to induce some boards of guardians to initiate a scheme for improving their accommodation, but that once it has been decided to proceed they seem to lose sight of economy. This may be due to some extent to the influence of the architectural profession,[6] for naturally an architect desires to put up a building that will do him credit, and, moreover, as he is generally paid for his services a percentage upon the total cost of the building erected, there is direct pecuniary inducement to secure as large an expenditure as possible. The guardians often lose sight of the total cost of the buildings they are erecting. They find that the cost for interest and sinking fund is only 5 per cent. or 6 per cent. per annum and that the immediate increase in the rates will not be large.[7] Other influences increasing the cost of Poor Law buildings.

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* Against the expenditure thus incurred in the provision of cottage homes, etc., there should be set the sum of £260,000 derived from the sale of the buildings formerly belonging to the Forest Gate and South Metropolitan School Districts.

[1] Twelfth Abstract of Labour Statistics [Cd. 4413], p. 54. [2] Twelfth Abstract of Labour Statistics [Cd. 4413] pp. 81 and 89 [3] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Qs.* 3575–7. [4] Appendix to Vol. I. of Evidence, Appendix No. VI. (G). [5] Appendix to Vol. I. of Evidence, Appendix No. VI. (F). [6] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Qs.* 10976–8. [7] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Q.* 1642.

Central control over expenditure.

59. The question of curtailing unnecessary expenditure on buildings is one to which the Local Government Board attach considerable importance. In 1870, the Board stated that they were compelled to check expenditure in the more ornamental parts of workhouses, and the matter was reverted to in 1900.[1] Mr. Kitchin mentions a case in which £15,000 was saved upon a total estimate of £52,000 by the action of the Local Government Board.[2]

Responsibility of guardians.

60. Whilst, therefore, some of the increase in debt charges has been caused by circumstances over which the guardians have no control, *e.g.*, cost of wages and material, and changes in public opinion as to the best forms of treatment, yet these elements of increased cost are not sufficient to account for the heavy augmentation of expenditure which the figures quoted show.

Cost of Out-Relief.

Increase in amount of out-relief per pauper.

61. It was shown in the Table, in paragraph 46 that the expenditure on out-relief has diminished since 1871–2 by 5·84 per cent. This compares with a decrease of 31·1 per cent. in the number of persons in receipt of such relief, and consequently the average amount granted to each person relieved must have increased. It is shown in the Table, moreover, that up to 1887–8 the expenditure decreased by £1,046,000 since which year it has again increased by £837,000. This increase may perhaps be attributed to two new factors. In 1895, the Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor was issued, and amongst the recommendations made it was urged[3] :—

> "That boards of guardians, in dealing with applications for relief, should inquire with special care into the antecedents of destitute persons whose physical faculties have failed, by reason of age and infirmity; and that outdoor relief should in such cases be given to those who are shown to have been of good character, thrifty according to their opportunities, and generally independent in early life, and who are not living under conditions of health or surrounding circumstances which make it evident that the relief given should be indoor relief."

62. About this time the expenditure upon out-relief commenced to rise. The amount granted per pauper had been practically stationary since 1881, and in the six years ended with 1899–1900, the amount increased from £4 13s. 11d. to £5 6s. 10d.*[4]

63. Then in 1900, Mr. Chaplin's circular regarding adequate outdoor relief was issued, and we find that of the increase of £837,000 since 1887–8, in the expenditure on out-relief, no less than £677,000 has accrued since 1899–1900, whilst the amount granted per head has risen from £6 13s. 1d. in 1900–1 to £7 2s. 7d., in 1905–6.†[5]

Inter-relation of Indoor and Outdoor Relief.

Comparison of changes in indoor and outdoor pauperism.

64. The administrators of the Poor Law have been changing the character of their system. It has become more and more an indoor system. In 1871–9, the outdoor poor outnumbered the indoor poor by 4·5 to 1. In 1896–1905 this proportion had been reduced to 2·6 to 1. We may reasonably inquire in what way this has affected the general results. Taking the figures of the first and last of the four cycles we find that outdoor pauperism decreased by 94,000, whilst indoor pauperism only increased by 65,000. The removals from the outdoor lists did not thus result in a corresponding addition to the indoor lists. But if we compare all the cycles, one with another, it is found that this result is not always achieved.[6]

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* These sums are the expenditure upon out-relief only, and do not include salaries of relieving officers, etc.
† These amounts include all expenditure on out-relief.

[1] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Q.* 1633. [2] Vol. I. of Evidence, *Qs.* 3659 and 3699 [3] C. 7684, pp. lxxxiii. and lxxxiv. [4] Annual Report of the Local Government Board [Cd. 2214], 1903–4, p. lxxxvii. [5] Annual Report of the Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1906–7, p. 405. [6] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 26.

	Decrease in mean number of outdoor paupers.	Increase in mean number of indoor paupers.
Between—		
1871–9 and 1880–7	64,591	28,124
1880–7 and 1888–95	26,833	9,188
1888–95 and 1896–1905	3,035	27,585

Thus, comparing the two last cycles, the reduction in outdoor pauperism was more than counterbalanced by the increase in indoor pauperism. How far the one was the result of the other we are not prepared to say, but it is obvious that the increase in indoor pauperism in 1896–1905 could have been due only very partially to a transference from the outdoor lists.

65. It is equally important to examine these figures from the financial standpoint. In 1905–6 the total cost of each indoor pauper averaged £27 15s. 10d.; of each outdoor pauper it averaged £7 2s. 7d.[1] Indoor pauperism is thus, approximately, four times as expensive, case for case, as outdoor pauperism. The proportion may have changed since 1871, but we have no figures for years before 1900–1. Accepting the proportion as applicable to the whole period from 1871 to 1905, we find that the addition to the indoor numbers is far in excess of one-fourth of the reduction in the outdoor numbers. Thus— Financial effect of change in form of relief.

	One-fourth of decrease in outdoor numbers.	Increase in indoor numbers.
Between—		
1871–9 and 1880–7	16,148	28,124
1880–7 and 1888–95	6,708	9,188
1888–95 and 1896–1905	759	27,585

66. The proportion we have taken is undoubtedly affected by the inclusion of the sick and the children, and the relative cost of indoor and outdoor relief would probably not be so divergent in the case of other classes. Moreover, the comparative cost may vary from district to district. But, upon the whole, the statistical evidence shows that the financial effect of the change in policy over the last thirty-five years has not been to lighten the burden of poor relief.

Review of Growth of Expenditure.

67. Summing up the general situation in regard to the increase in expenditure, we find that, whilst the expenditure per inhabitant has increased from 7s. 0¼d. to 8s. 2¾d. since 1871–2, and is only 7¼d. less than it was in 1834, the expenditure per pauper has increased from £7 12s. 1d. to £15 12s. 6d. in the same period.[2] The country is maintaining a multitude of paupers not far short of the numbers maintained in 1871–2, and is spending more than double the amount upon each individual. The increased expenditure has done little towards diminishing the extent of pauperism. Such advance as the nation has made has been accomplished at an enormous cost, and absorbs an annual amount which is now equivalent to nearly one-half of the present expenditure upon the Army. It may be urged that the rate of pauperism has diminished from 31·2 per 1,000 in 1871–9 to 22·2 per 1,000 in 1896–1905, and this is certainly a matter for congratulation, but it has been the result of the large increase in the population rather than of any considerable reduction in the number of paupers. Indeed, the number of paupers in the cycle of 1896–1905 has been greater than in the two preceding cycles. Moreover, the period of the greatest increase in the expenditure per pauper corresponds with the period of increasing numbers, as the following figures show[3]:— The increase in expenditure has not diminished pauperism.

[1] Annual Report of the Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1906–7, p. cxlviii. [2] Annual Report of the Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1906–7, p. 404. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 16, and Annual Report of the Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1906–7, p. 404, and similar information from previous reports.

Cycles.	Mean Number of Persons relieved.		Mean of Annual Rates of Expenditure per Pauper.	
	Number.	Increase (+) or decrease (−) as compared with previous Cycle.	Mean.	Increase as compared with previous Cycle.
			£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1871–2 to 1879–80	747,936	—	9 11 8½	—
1880–1 to 1887–8	711,625	− 36,311	10 12 0½	+ 1 0 4
1888–9 to 1895–6	694,094	− 17,531	11 14 4¼	+ 1 2 3¾
1896–7 to 1905–6	718,444	+ 24,350	14 13 10¾	+ 2 19 6½

68. It may also be observed that the extent of the diminution in the rate of pauperism has been lessening, and has been nearly halved with each successive cycle, so that the greatest increase in the expenditure per pauper has also been accompanied by the smallest diminution in the rate of pauperism. And whilst there has been little falling off in the numbers since the apex of the last cycle was reached, the latest statistics convey little hope that any further reduction is imminent.

Distribution of Pauperism.

ates of auperism in ounties.

69. So far we have only dealt with the question of poor relief in England and Wales as a whole. It is important to consider the distribution over different districts. We find that the extent of pauperism varies in different parts of the country, and especially as between towns and rural areas.

70. Taking the rates of pauperism for the different counties, we find that on January 1st, 1908, they varied from 15·7 per 1,000 of the estimated population in the West Riding of Yorkshire to 38·5 per 1,000 in Norfolk.*[1] Generally speaking, the rates are lowest in the northern counties, five out of the seven counties having rates below 20 per 1,000 being found in this group. Thus:—

	Per 1,000.
Northumberland	19·5
Westmorland	19·4
Chester	19·3
Warwick	18·7
Lancaster	17·6
Middlesex	16·7
Yorks, W.R.	15·7

71. The highest rates occur in different parts of the country, east, south and west, thus:—

	Per 1,000.
Norfolk	38·5
Dorset	37·3
Anglesey	36·5
Suffolk	36·4
Hereford	34·7
Oxford	33·3

nions with ighest and west rates of auperism.

72. The extremes in the case of individual unions are obviously still wider apart. Thus, on March 31st, 1906, for which date we have the figures, the rates varied from 8·5 per 1,000 of the population in 1901 in the Fylde Union (Lancashire) to 73·1 per 1,000 in the Strand Union.† Special considerations apply, no doubt, in the latter case, and the next

* These rates include insane in workhouses and on out-relief, and vagrants, but not insane in asylums, etc.
† These rates include insane in workhouses and on out-relief, but not insane in asylums, etc., or vagrants.

[1] Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, January 1st, 1908 (H. C. 130).

highest were 56·8 per 1,000 in the Poplar Union and 56·7 per 1,000 in the Thingoe Union (Suffolk). We give, in the following Table, the six unions with the highest rates and the six with the lowest rates[1]:—

Highest Rates per 1,000.	Lowest Rates per 1,000.
Strand (London), 73·1.	Saddleworth and Todmorden (both in Yorks., W.R.), 10·3.
Poplar (London), 56·8.	Lunesdale (Lancs.), 9·9.
Thingoe (Suffolk), 56·7.	Haslingden (Lancs.), 9·8.
Mildenhall (Suffolk), 55·1.	Lancaster (Lancs.), 9·3.
Dore (Hereford), 53·7.	Hampstead (London), 8·7.
Cosford (Suffolk), 53·2.	Fylde (Lancs.), 8·5.

Urban and Rural Pauperism.

73. This extraordinary divergence in the rates of pauperism is a matter into which we have made further statistical investigation, and we find that, generally speaking, the rates are lowest in urban unions and highest in rural unions. The results of this investigation are given in the following Table[2]:— Pauperism in urban and rural unions.

Pauperism in Urban and Rural Areas (excluding Insane and Casuals).

Groups of Unions (arranged in order of rate of increase in population between 1891 and 1901).	Estimated population in middle of 1905.	Rate per cent. of increase in population between 1891 and 1901.	1891–2 (a good year).		1895–6 (a bad year).		1900–1 (a good year).		1905–6 (a bad year).		Increase (+) or Decrease (−) in rate per 1,000 of population.	
			Mean Number of Paupers.	Rate per 1,000 of estimated population in 1891.	Mean Number of Paupers.	Rate per 1,000 of estimated population in 1895.	Mean Number of Paupers.	Rate per 1,000 of estimated population in 1900.	Mean Number of Paupers.	Rate per 1,000 of estimated population in 1905.	Between 1891–2 and 1900–1.	Between 1895–6 and 1905–6.
Unions of which the following proportions of the population are comprised in boroughs or urban districts:—												
1. 75 per cent. and under 100 per cent.	9,783,000	18·33	141,019	18·4	160,350	19·6	157,396	17·6	188,011	19·2	− ·8	− ·4
2. 100 per cent. (extra Metropolitan unions wholly urban).	8,685,000	17·11	132,955	19·3	151,846	20·6	143,763	17·9	177,047	20·4	−1·4	− ·2
3. 50 per cent. and under 75 per cent.	4,565,000	12·52	95,619	24·4	99,769	24·4	93,010	21·7	102,174	22·4	−2·7	−2·0
4. 100 per cent. (London) - - -	4,685,000	7·29	86,570	20·5	98,738	22·5	96,637	21·1	117,466	25·1	+ ·6	+2·6
5. 25 per cent. and under 50 per cent.	3,505,000	3·48	109.470	31·8	111,991	32·3	97,618	28·2	100,470	28·7	−3·6	−3.6
6. Nil (unions wholly rural) - -	1,324,000	2·09	40,576	31·1	40,922	31·3	36,529	28·0	38,348	28·9	−3·1	−2·4
7. Under 25 per cent. but not wholly rural.	1,606,000	− ·48	56,183	33·8	57,490	34·8	50,857	31·1	51,349	32·0	−2·7	−2·8
England and Wales - - - - -	34,153,000	12·17	662,392	22·8	721,106	23·7	675,810	21·0	774,865	22·7	−1·8	−1·0

74. It will be noticed, in the first place, that the lowest rate occurs in the group of unions in which the population increased most rapidly, and that, without exception, the rates for 1905–6 become higher as the rate of increase in the population falls. It is probable that, to some extent, the reason for the higher rate in rural unions is that the movement of the working section of the population to the towns leaves behind a mass of pauperism which will obviously bear a large proportion to the remaining population. In the urban unions, on the other hand, the accretion of population tends to diminish the ratio of pauperism to population. The relative extent of pauperism in different areas is, therefore, influenced, in an important degree, by circumstances over which the guardians have no control.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 14. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 85.

75. Within the groups, however, the limits of variation are almost as wide as those for the whole country, and the variations appear to depend not only upon the efficiency of the administration, but upon the economic conditions prevailing in the unions. From the Census of Paupers, it is found that the lower limits in the groups of unions in the above table range from 8·5 to 14·6 per 1,000, and the higher limits from 44·8 to 73·1 per 1,000.[1]

76. Secondly, comparing the years of similar industrial activity, the Table shows that in London alone of the seven groups has the ratio of pauperism to population increased during the last fifteen years. In the other six groups the decrease in the ratio is least in the two groups of urban unions in which the population is most rapidly increasing. Whilst the unions with a declining or only slightly increasing population have been able to effect considerable reductions in their pauperism, both in number and in relation to population, the rapidly growing unions are supporting a larger number of paupers and show a diminution in the ratio incommensurate with their industrial progress.

Increase of adult pauperism in urban areas.

77. The position in the urban areas is even worse than that disclosed by the Table, for an examination of the statistics for men, women, and children separately shows that, although the movement in male pauperism is everywhere more unsatisfactory or less favour able than the movement in pauperism amongst women and children, yet the increase in adult pauperism, both male and female, has wholly occurred in London and the other urban areas. Moreover, the decrease in child pauperism has been confined almost wholly to the rural areas, where enormous reductions have taken place.[2]

Other unsatisfactory features of urban pauperism.

78. We have also examined the age statistics of the population living in these different groups of unions and of the persons chargeable to the unions. As might be expected, the proportion of old people amongst the population is higher in the rural and mainly rural groups than it is in the urban and mainly urban groups. To some extent this would also explain the higher rates of pauperism in the rural unions, and the greater extent to which outdoor relief is given. We also find that the proportion of old people relieved is higher in the rural unions than in the urban unions, and this may perhaps be explained by the lower rates of wages current in the rural areas, though, somewhat strangely, the proportion in London is higher than in any other group. The figures, taken from the Census of Paupers, are given in the following Table, to which have been added the crude and corrected pauperism rates on March 31st, 1906,[3] the rates per 1,000 of the population of the number of persons relieved during the year ended 30th September 1907, the ratios of the year's count to the day count, and the proportions of paupers who were relieved five times or oftener and for periods not exceeding one week[4]:—

Groups of Unions.	Persons over 60 per 1,000 of population in 1901.	Paupers over 60 (March 31st, 1906) per 1,000 of population over 60 in 1901.	Total number of Paupers per 1,000 of population, on March 31st, 1906.		Persons relieved during year ended 30th Sept., 1907, per 1,000 of estimated population.	Ratio of Year's Count (1906–7) to mean of Day Counts of 1907.	Proportion per cent. of Persons relieved five times or oftener to total. (Year 1906–7).	Proportion of Persons relieved for a period not exceeding 1 week (Year 1906–7.)
			Crude rates.	Corrected rates.†				
Unions in London	66·9	187·1	27·8	29·83	71·3	2·79	3·7	14·0
Extra-Metropolitan Unions:—								
1. Unions wholly urban	63·0	152·8	23·2	25·33	49·7	2·47	1·7	14·8
2. Unions partly urban and partly rural of which the following proportions of the population are comprised in boroughs or urban districts:—								
(*a*) 75 per cent. or upwards	64·3	142·8	21·5	22·98	40·7	2·12	·8	11·8
(*b*) 50 per cent. and under 75 per cent.	81·6	148·3	24·7	23·29	40·6	1·79	·6	10·0
(*c*) 25 per cent. and under 50 per cent.	98·6	166·4	30·3	25·46	49·2	1·71	·6	7·7
(*d*) Under 25 per cent.	107·0	171·3	33·2	26·74	52·0	1·58	·6	6·3
3. Unions wholly rural	104·8	160·9	30·3	24·28	50·7	1·74	·4	7·3
England and Wales	74·0	157·7	25·1	25·11	48·9	2·15	1·5	11·9

† These are the rates *at all ages* that would have resulted from the rates prevailing at the separate age groups if the sex and age constitution of the population in these areas, severally, had been identical with that of the population of England and Wales, as enumerated at the Census of 1901.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 14. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 89. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 13. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2, pars. 49 and 52.

79. From whatever standpoint we look at the statistics for the urban areas they suggest a very unsatisfactory condition regarding the persons relieved. Not only has the reduction in their rate of pauperism been small, and the increase in the number of men relieved been large, but the recurrence of relief is frequent, and a large proportion of persons resort to the Poor Laws for very temporary and trivial reasons.

80. It is true that the rates of pauperism corrected for age distribution are still higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas outside London, but the movement of the more capable section of the population from the country to the town, to which reference has already been made, would largely, if not wholly, account for the difference. In the Report upon the Census of 1901 it is shown that the loss of population by migration in Registration Districts wholly or almost wholly rural amounted to 9·1 per cent. in the decade 1891 to 1901 [1].

Serious position of London pauperism.

81. We have dealt more fully with the position in London in the Statistical Appendices to our Report, but in addition to what has been shown above, we may mention that London is maintaining 15,800 more paupers than it was in the eighties, that the rate per 1,000 which was generally below that for the rest of England and Wales has risen above it that the larger numbers maintained in London chiefly consist of men relieved indoors, the increase being relatively greater than elsewhere, and that this increase is not due to a transference from the outdoor lists. [2] There is, thus, abundance of statistical evidence to show that the present position is more serious in London than in any other part of the country.

82. We now propose to make a brief reference to the various classes of persons in receipt of relief, viz., widows, the aged, children, the able-bodied, the sick and vagrants.

Widows.

Number of widows relieved.

83. The question as to the relief of widows is, generally speaking, only differentiated from that of relief to single persons when there are dependent children. There are no statistics showing the total number of widows relieved, but the number of widows with children relieved on January 1st, 1908, was 36,166, and the number of children of widows was 100,986. [3] During the year ended September 30th, 1907, relief was given to 91,649 women who were described as heads of families, and it may be estimated that three-fourths of these, or say 70,000, were widows with children. [4]

Widows in receipt of indoor relief.

84. From the Census of Paupers it has been ascertained that 34,832 widows were in receipt of indoor relief on March 31st, 1906. They were classified as follows :—

Ages.	Able-bodied Widows.		Widows.
	In health.	Temporarily disabled.	Not able-bodied.
20 to 44	662	761	334
45 to 59	1,056	1,907	1,693
60 and upwards	48	231	28,140
Total	1,766	2,899	30,167

85. Of the temporarily disabled 586, or 20·2 per cent., were in separate infirmaries or sick asylums, whilst of the not able-bodied 3,566, or 11·8 per cent., were relieved in those institutions.

86. On January 1st, 1907, there were 1,240 widows with children in receipt of indoor relief, and their children numbered 2,998, an average of 2·4 children to each widow.

[1] Report upon Census of 1901 [Cd. 2174], p. 26. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., pars. 65, 66, 68, 69, and 70. [3] Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, January 1st, 1908 (H. C. 130), p. vii. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part. IV., Section 2, par. 32.

Widows in receipt of outdoor relief.

87. The total number of widows in receipt of outdoor relief cannot be stated, but for the years since 1884 we have annual statistics of the number of able-bodied widows, and of their children, receiving outdoor relief. For January of the years 1905–7 we also know the number of widows with children, and of their children, receiving outdoor relief, and a comparison of the two series suggests that the two classes are practically identical. Assuming that this is so it appears that the outdoor widows with children have diminished considerably.

Out-relief.	1st January.		
	1884.	1907.	1908.
Able-bodied widows	41,486	33,664	32,773
Percentage to total number of women in receipt of out-relief	16·8	12·4	12·1
Children of able-bodied widows	119,451*	93,051	92,344
Average number of children to each widow	2·88	2·76	2·82
Widows with children	—	34,749	—
Their children	—	96,342	—

Decrease in number of able-bodied widows receiving out-relief.

88. The decrease in the number of able-bodied widows accounts for nearly the whole of the decrease in the number of able-bodied women in receipt of outdoor relief, whilst during the same period the number of outdoor female paupers who are not able-bodied has increased. Amongst the general population the proportion of widows to women aged twenty years and upwards, has fallen from 137 per 1,000 in 1881 to 126 per 1,000 in 1901, and this would partly explain the decrease in the number of able-bodied widows relieved.[1] It would not appear that the guardians are refusing relief more frequently than heretofore in cases where the number of children is small, for the average number of children to each widow has hardly changed during this period.

Ages of able-bodied widows receiving out-relief.

89. An examination of the ages of able-bodied widows shows that as their children become self-supporting and able to contribute towards the support of their mothers the widows cease to be chargeable. The ages of able-bodied widows in receipt of out-relief on 31s 1906 were as follows:[2]—

	Able-bodied widows in receipt of out-relief.
20 years and under 25 years	287
25 „ „ „ 35 „	7,173
35 „ „ „ 45 „	16,242
45 „ „ „ 55 „	9,412
55 „ „ upwards	1,912
	35,026

The Aged.

Available statistics as to aged pauperism.

90. The regular statistics of pauperism do not distinguish the aged from other classes of adults, and such statistical information as is available is contained in various special Returns, the Decennial Censuses of 1891 and 1901, and the Pauper Census of March 31st, 1906.[3] These Returns have not been compiled upon a uniform basis, and even as regards age some of the Returns draw the line between the "aged" and other adults at sixty years, and others at sixty-five years. Comparisons are, therefore, difficult.

* From 1884 to 1901 the heading was "Children dependent on widows."

[1] General Report on Census of 1901 [Cd. 2174], p. 68. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 1.
[3] H.C. 36, 1890; H.C. 265, 1892; H.C. 113, 1904; Census 1891, C. 7058, p. lxiii.; Census 1901 [Cd. 1523], p. 184; Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1899–1900 [Cd. 292], p. lv. and 1900–1 [Cd. 746], p. lvi.

91. The statistics of old-age pauperism have a special bearing upon the question of Old-Age Pensions. The benefits of the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908[1] are confined to those persons over seventy years of age who have not received since January 1st, 1908, any "poor relief," though medical relief and the maintenance of dependants in asylums, infirmaries, or hospitals, are not regarded as "poor relief" for the purposes of the Act. The statistics have, thus, a double interest. Old-Age Pensions Act and pauperism.

92. According to the Pauper Census the number of persons over sixty (omitting lunatics in asylums, etc., and vagrants) in receipt of relief on March 31st, 1906, was 379,902, or 46·5 per cent. of the total number of persons relieved.[2] This number was made up as follows:— Persons over sixty years of age relieved on March 31st, 1906.

AGES OF PAUPERS OVER 60 (INDOOR AND OUTDOOR), MARCH 31ST, 1906.

Ages.	Males.			Females.			Total.	
	Number.	Percentage to estimated male population of same ages in 1906.	Proportion relieved in Institutions.	Number.	Percentage to estimated female population of same ages in 1906.	Proportion relieved in Institutions.	Number.	Percentage to estimated population of same ages in 1906.
			per cent.			per cent.		
60 years and under 65 years	25,654	5·81	66·6	35,812	6·92	21·7	61,466	6·41
65 „ „ „ 70 „	33,793	11·45	56·6	55,169	15·03	17·4	88,962	13·43
70 „ „ „ 75 „	35,475	17·67	42·9	58,688	22·51	16·0	94,163	20·40
75 „ „ „ 80 „	30,354	25·39	37·8	46,486	28·54	17·8	76,840	27·21
80 „ „ „ 85 „	15,744	27·57	36·2	24,647	28·87	21·7	40,391	28·35
85 „ „ upwards -	6,525	34·39	40·7	11,555	35·85	28·9	18,080	35·31
Total, pauper adults 60 and upwards - - -	147,545	13·02	48·3	232,357	16·30	18·8	379,902	14·85

93. The increasing proportion of persons relieved as age advances, the excess of the proportions for women over those for men, and the preference shown for the outdoor method of relief in the case of women have already been mentioned. In the total the excess of aged women relieved amounts to 85,000.

94. The method of relief adopted for the aged is shown by the following figures for March 31st, 1906[3]:— Persons over sixty in receipt of indoor and outdoor relief

	Paupers 60 years of age and upwards.		
	Men.	Women.	Total.
In receipt of			
Indoor relief - - -	71,263	43,701	114,964
Outdoor relief - - -	76,282	188,656	264,938
Total - - -	147,545	232,357	379,902

95. Comparing old-age pauperism with the aged population we have also shown that between 1892 and 1900 the number of paupers over sixty-five increased at much the same rate as the aged population, but that since 1900 the increase in the numbers over sixty-five has probably been more rapid than the increase in the aged population. Taking indoor paupers alone the number of aged paupers in proportion to aged population has greatly increased since 1891. It would thus appear that indoor relief is now adopted more frequently for the treatment of the aged. Aged pauperism compared with aged population.

96. On the other hand the number of persons over sixty-five receiving outdoor relief has increased, between 1892 and 1906, in a slightly smaller proportion than the

[1] 8 Edw. VII., c. 40. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 47. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Tables C. and D.

aged population. The increase between 1891 and 1906 in the estimated population at those ages was 12·8 per cent. In the number of outdoor paupers over sixty-five the increase between 1892 and 1906 was 11·4 per cent. whilst the increase in the number of indoor poor over sixty-five between 1892 and 1906 amounted to 42·2 per cent. The actual numbers and rates to population are as follows :—

	1892.	1900.	1906.
Number of Adults in receipt of outdoor relief :—			
16 to 64 years - -	125,756	137,175	153,527
65 years and upwards -	205,045	212,913	228,346
Ratio to estimated population per cent.			
16 to 64 years - - -	0·7	0·7	0·7
65 years and upwards - -	14·9	14·3	14·3

97. It would seem, therefore, that although the financial effect of Mr. Chaplin's circular of 1900 may have been to increase the expenditure upon out-relief there has been no increase in the proportion of the aged population on the out-relief lists.

Unions with the highest rates of aged pauperism.

98. As in the case of the ratios of the total number of paupers to population, the ratios of aged paupers to aged population vary considerably. In the counties, the rates varied on 31st March, 1906 from 86·9 per 1,000 in Westmorland to 209·2 per 1,000 in Monmouth, and in the unions from 37·8 per 1,000 in the Fylde Union (Lancashire) to 561·5 per 1,000 in the Strand Union (London).[1] The rates were high in many of the central unions of London. Of the six unions with the highest rates of aged pauperism five were in London :—

	Per 1,000.
Strand - - - - - - - - - -	- 561·5
Holborn - - - - - - - - - -	- 439·2
City of London - - - - - - - -	- 401·3
Poplar - - - - - - - - - -	- 372·7
Bermondsey - - - - - - - - -	- 347·2
Liverpool - - - - - - - - - -	- 340·1

Aged pauperism in urban and rural unions.

99. In the following Table we give the proportion of aged persons over sixty to the total population for urban and rural groups of unions, and the proportion of such persons in receipt of poor relief[2] :—

Groups of Unions.	Persons over 60 per 1,000 of population (1901) of both sexes.			Male and female paupers over 60 on 31st March, 1906, per 1,000 of male and female population at same ages in 1901.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Unions of London - - -	27·9	39·0	66·9	186·3	187·8	187·1
Extra-Metropolitan Unions :—						
1. Unions wholly urban - -	27·1	35·9	63·0	137·6	164·3	152·8
2. Unions partly urban and partly rural of which the following proportions of the population are comprised in boroughs and urban districts :—						
(*a*) 75% and upwards -	28·3	36·0	64·3	124·2	157·4	142·8
(*b*) 50% and under 75%	37·1	44·5	81·6	126·1	166·7	148·3
(*c*) 25% and under 50%	45·8	52·8	98·6	136·4	192·5	166·4
(*d*) Under 25% - -	50·2	56·8	107·0	135·6	202·8	171·3
3. Unions wholly rural - -	50·2	54·6	104·8	131·7	187·7	160·9
England and Wales - - -	32·9	41·1	74·0	137·7	173·8	157·7

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Tables 11 and 14. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 13.

100. This Table shows that the proportion of aged persons is much higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas, and it also shows that the rate of pauperism is higher amongst the aged population in rural areas than amongst the aged population in extra-Metropolitan urban areas. In London the rate of aged pauperism amongst males is considerably higher than in any other group, and amongst females it is much higher than in other urban areas. The movement outwards of the residential population no doubt tends to produce this result, but the increase which has occurred in the numbers relieved in London shows that the higher rates of pauperism there cannot be wholly attributed to this movement.

Population over seventy years of age and estimated number disqualified under Old-Age Pensions Act.

101. The number of persons in England and Wales over seventy years of age in 1901 was :—[1]

	Men.	Women.	Total.
70 and under 75	195,465	250,868	446,333
75 „ „ 80	113,096	151,384	264,480
80 „ „ 85	52,137	76,631	128,768
85 „ upwards	17,971	30,528	48,499
Total	378,669	509,411	888,080

102. The number of paupers at these ages is given in the Table in paragraph 92, but those figures only relate to the day count, and a much larger number of persons over seventy years of age would have received such poor relief in 1908 as would disqualify them for the receipt of old-age pensions under the Act. After the introduction of the measure into the House of Commons persons over seventy who had not so far during the year 1908 received relief would, no doubt, make every effort, and would be assisted by others, to avoid applying for relief, in order that they might not incur disqualification for the pension on January 1st, 1909.

Children.

Number of children relieved on January 1st, 1908, and during year 1906–7.

103. The up-bringing of Poor Law children probably affords more opportunity for the exercise of preventive influences than any other branch of Poor Law work. The question is no less important from the statistical point of view, for children under sixteen years of age form nearly one-third of the total number of persons in receipt of relief. On January 1st, 1908, relief was given to 234,792 children (omitting insane and casuals), a number which represents 20·6 per 1,000 of the estimated child population of the same ages. During the year 1906–7 the number of children relieved was 564,314 (omitting lunatics in asylums, etc., and casuals), or 2·49 times more than the mean number for the day counts of that year.

Ages of Children relieved on March 31st, 1906.

104. Classified by age the children are grouped as follows[2] :—

Poor Law Children on 31st March, 1906 (omitting Lunatics in Asylums, etc., and Casuals).

Age Groups.	Indoor. Number.	Indoor. Per 1,000 of estimated population of same ages in middle of 1906	Outdoor. Number.	Outdoor. Per 1,000 of estimated population of same ages in middle of 1906.	Total. Number.	Total. Per 1,000 of estimated population of same ages in middle of 1906.	Total (Quinquennial age groups). Number.	Total (Quinquennial age groups). Per 1,000 of estimated population of same ages in middle of 1906.
Under 1 year	2,799	3·4	4,616	5·6	7,415	9·1		
1 year and under 3 years	3,712	2·5	14,827	9·9	18,539	12·4	51,767	13·6
3 years „ „ 5 „	4,913	3·3	20,900	14·1	25,813	17·4		
5 „ „ „ 10 „	19,990	5·7	69,278	19·7	89,268	25·3	89,268	25·3
10 „ „ „ 13 „	15,706	7·7	46,473	22·8	62,179	30·5		
13 „ „ „ 14 „	5,332	7·9	12,894	19·1	18,226	27·0	90,586	26·7
14 „ „ „ 15 „	3,903	5·7	6,278	9·2	10,181	14·9		
15 „ „ „ 16 „	2,636	3·9	3,46	5·1	6,100	9·0	(15 and under 20) 12,485	(15 and under 20) 3·7
Total	58,991	5·2	178,730	15·7	237,721	20·9	—	—

[1] Summary Tables, Census 1901 [Cd. 1523], p. 139. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Tables C. and D, and par. 47.

Ages at which children commence work.

105. The decrease from 90,586 at ages ten to fifteen to 12,485 at ages fifteen to twenty is due, of course, to the boys and girls being sent to work and becoming self-supporting, but in the more detailed figures in the other columns it is shown that the decline due to this cause commenced at an earlier age than fifteen. Up to ages between ten and thirteen the proportion to population increases continuously, but thereafter diminishes. It is clear, therefore, that many pauper children commence their industrial careers at thirteen years of age, if not earlier. A closer examination of the rates for indoor and outdoor pauper children respectively shows, however, that whilst the rate for outdoor pauper children commences to diminish at thirteen, the indoor rate does not decline until the age of fourteen years has been reached. At thirteen years of age, indeed, the indoor rate shows an increase over that for ages ten to thirteen. It is not amongst the indoor children, therefore, that work commences at such early ages.

Cause of larger ratio of child pauperism at higher ages.

106. The increasing proportion of pauper children to population at ages up to the group ten to thirteen may probably be due to the fact that as children grow older, there is a greater risk of their losing one or both of their parents. Upwards of 60 per cent. of the pauper children are orphans or are dependent on widows, and it will easily be seen how great an influence this factor must have upon the number of children relieved at different ages.[1]

Children maintained in workhouses.

107. In regard to the provision of special institutions, children have received more attention than any other class, and of the indoor children few are now left in the workhouses. Out of the 237,721 Poor Law children tabulated above only 18,558 were maintained in workhouses, and out of that number upwards of 4,000 were in wards for the sick. In the ordinary wards of the workhouses there were, thus, only 14,439 children, and of these 3,367 were infants under three years of age[2].

Children relieved in institutions not under control of Poor Law authorities.

108. The advance which has been made in this respect during the last few years will be seen in the statement that, whilst on January 1st, 1899, workhouses and infirmaries housed 48·7 per cent. of the indoor children, on January 1st, 1908, the corresponding percentage had been reduced to 36·0. On January 1st, 1904, workhouse wards other than the infirm wards contained 27·5 per cent. of the indoor children, whilst on January 1st, 1908, the percentage was only 24·1. There appears to be a growing inclination to send children to certified and other institutions, not under the control of the Poor Law authorities, the number maintained in such institutions having risen from 7,274 on January 1st, 1899, to 9,369 on January 1st, 1908.[3] The total number of paupers maintained in non-Poor Law institutions has risen from 4,877 on January 1st, 1886, to 11,509 on January 1st, 1908, and, as will be seen, the greater proportion of persons maintained in such institutions are children.[4]

Decrease in number of children in receipt of indoor and outdoor relief.

109. There has been a considerable reduction in the number of children in receipt of Poor Law relief since the year 1871. In that year the number approached 400,000. It is now, as we have shown, less than 250,000. The reduction has taken place wholly in the outdoor section, and, as nearly three-fourths of the Poor Law children receive this form of relief the small increase in the numbers relieved indoors has no appreciable effect on the total. Arranged in the usual cycles the statistics are as follows[5] :—

Cycles.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.
1871–2 to 1879–80 - - -	47,814	220,765	268,579
1880–1 to 1887–8 - - - -	54,863	205,330	260,193
1888–9 to 1895–6 - - - -	51,002	184,439	235,441
1896–7 to 1905–6 - - - -	52,661	166,475	219,136

110. Comparing the first and last cycles it was shown in paragraph 24 that the child population had increased by 21·3 per cent., whilst child pauperism had decreased by 18·4 per cent.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 1. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 135, [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table XVII. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table XII. [5] Statistical Appendix, Part I, par 42.

111. Children, other than orphans and deserted children, have been classified in the regular Returns according to the physical condition of their parents, and since 1894, also according to the condition of their parents as to marriage. The first classification is as follows :—[1] Classification of children relieved and changes in numbers in certain classes.

January 1st, 1908.	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.
Children relieved with parents:			
i. Children of able-bodied widows relieved -	25,853	92,344	188,541
ii. Other children relieved with one or both parents being able-bodied - - - -		50,656	
iii. Children of not able-bodied parents relieved		19,688	
Orphans or children relieved without parents -	36,573	9,678	46,251
	62,426	172,366	234,792

112. And the 188,541 children with parents, are re-classified under the following heads :—[2]

	Number.
Children of married couples relieved - - - - - - - - -	51,985
,, widowers relieved - - - - - - - - -	2,966
,, widows relieved - - - - - - - - - -	100,986
,, married men relieved without wives - - - - - -	5,095
,, deserted and other married women relieved without husbands - -	20,774
,, (illegitimate) relieved with mothers - - - - - - -	6,735
	188,541

113. It may be noted that the children of widows form the largest group, and we have already shown that since 1884 a considerable decrease has occurred in this class. Children of other able-bodied parents in receipt of out-relief number upwards of 50,000 and have in recent years increased considerably. Orphans and children relieved without parents are chiefly in receipt of indoor relief, and this class accounts for the whole of the increase in the number of indoor children in the cycle of 1897–1906 as compared with that of 1889–96. The number of illegitimate children, whose mothers are in receipt of relief, has fallen from 8,569 on January 1st, 1884, to 6,735 on January 1st, 1908.[3]

114. Child pauperism varies between district and district in much the same way as total pauperism. For instance, whilst the rates for all classes varied from 8·5 to 73·1 per 1,000 on March 31st, 1906, those for children under 16 varied from 4·7 per 1,000 in Lutterworth (Leicestershire) to 48·4 per 1,000 in Alston-with-Garrigill in Cumberland.[4] The rural unions have a higher proportion of children amongst their population, but the rate of child pauperism to child population does not greatly vary between the different groups. London, however, has the lowest proportion of child population, and the highest ratio of child pauperism to child population. Moreover, whilst the decrease since 1871–2 in the number of outdoor children in London has been largely discounted by an increase in the number of indoor children, outside London the number of children in receipt of both forms of relief has diminished. Since 1891–2, there have been large reductions in the number of children in receipt of relief in rural unions, whilst in London and the groups of urban unions, the reductions have been much smaller or there have been considerable increases. Rates of child pauperism in various districts.

115. The question of child pauperism differs from that of adult pauperism in that no degree of responsibility for their condition of dependence attaches to the children. Except in regard to orphans, both causes and treatment must be considered from the point of view taken up in regard to the parents. The reduction in child pauperism, in Conclusions regarding child pauperism.

[1] Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, January 1st, 1908 (H.C. 130), p. xiv. [2] Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, January 1st, 1908 (H.C. 130), p. vii. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table XVIII. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Tables 13 and 14.

so far as it represents greater independence of the parents, is therefore a matter for congratulation, but it should be borne in mind that the reduction has been chiefly in the number of widows' children, whilst the number of children of other able-bodied parents receiving out-relief has increased, and that the reduction during the last fifteen years has been effected principally in the rural unions.

The Able-Bodied.

Changes in number of able-bodied persons relieved.

116. We refer in the Statistical Appendix to the uncertainty of the statistics regarding able-bodied pauperism.[1] The term is applied not only to the persons who are ordinarily able-bodied in health but also to those who are ordinarily able-bodied but temporarily disabled, and it is only in comparatively recent years, *i.e.*, since 1891–2, that these two classes have been distinguished. Taking the two together we find that there are about 110,000 able-bodied persons, *i.e.*, about one-fifth of the adult paupers are so classified. The proportion has diminished considerably since 1871–2, but the diminution has been wholly in the outdoor section, the proportion of indoor paupers classified as able-bodied having risen from 21·7 per cent. in 1871–9 to 25·6 per cent. in 1896–1905.[2] Moreover, the proportion of the able-bodied to the total number of adults has risen in the case of men, whilst it has diminished in the case of women. The increase in the number of indoor able-bodied has, at all events since 1891, been chiefly in the numbers who are sick, but during the last ten years there has also been an appreciable addition to the number of healthy able-bodied men in receipt of relief. The figures for the latter class are as follows[3] :—

Years.	Mean number of ordinarily able-bodied in health.		
	Males.		Females (indoor only).
	Indoor.	Outdoor.	
1891–2 (first year available—a good year) - -	5,070	4,201	7,094
1895–6 (a bad year) - - - - - -	8,158	4,769	8,869
1900–1 (a good year) - - - - - -	5,399	3,009	7,475
1905–6 (a bad year) - - - - - -	9,884	7,147	8,563
1906–7 } latest years available - - - - -	9,047	5,464	8,086
1907–8 } latest years available - - - - -	9,164	5,660	8,248

Number and classification of healthy able-bodied men relieved.

117. Healthy able-bodied men in receipt of outdoor relief are classified under different heads, and it appears that the greater number are "relieved on account of the sickness, accident, or infirmity of some member of the family, or on account of a funeral." The number fluctuates with the cycles of trade, but does not vary greatly. On the other hand the number "relieved on account of want of work or other causes" has varied since 1884 between the minimum of 297 reached on January 1st, 1900, and the maximum of 7,872 on January 1st, 1905. The numbers on January 1st, 1908, were :—

Relieved on account of :—

Sudden and urgent necessity - - - - - - -	482
Sickness, etc., of family - - - - - - -	3,952
Want of work or other causes (except man's own sickness) -	2,732

Ages of able-bodied persons in health relieved on March 31st, 1906.

118. In the following Table the ages of the able-bodied are given, and it will be seen that a large proportion are young persons and persons in the prime of life who might be expected to make independent provision for themselves and their families[4] :—

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 45. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 53. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 57. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 1.

ORDINARILY ABLE-BODIED IN HEALTH ON 31ST MARCH, 1906.

Age Groups.	Indoor.		Outdoor.		
	Men.	Women.	Men.*	Single women without children (healthy and sick).	Other women (healthy and sick)†.
16 and under 20	525	729	70	500	40
20 „ „ 25	351	790	261	436	1,133
25 „ „ 35	1,097	2,270	2,198	546	13,008
35 „ „ 45	2,153	2,465	2,914	537	23,351
45 „ „ 55	3,499	1,894	1,780	437	12,697
55 „ „ 65	2,319	903	743	249	2,719
65 „ „ 75	105	28	126	27	325
75 „ „ 85	11	4	11	7	72
85 „ upwards	–	–	–	–	5
Total	10,060	9,083	8,103	2,739	53,350

119. An important change in regard to the relief of the able-bodied is concealed by the total figures. If an examination be made in urban and rural unions separately it is found that whilst the numbers have diminished in rural unions they have increased in urban unions. This important change is brought out in the following Table[1] :— Changes in number of able-bodied men relieved in urban and rural unions.

INCREASE OR DECREASE PER CENT. IN NUMBER OF ABLE-BODIED MEN IN HEALTH.

Groups of Unions.	Indoor.		Outdoor.	
	Between 1891–2 and 1900–1.	Between 1895–6 and 1905–6.	Between 1891–2 and 1900–1.	Between 1895–6 and 1905–6.
Unions in London	+ 0·7	+38·4	+ 6·6	+137·9
Extra-Metropolitan Unions:—				
1. Unions wholly Urban	+12·8	+24·4	– 5·5	+133·8
2. Unions partly Urban and partly Rural of which the following proportions of the population are comprised in Boroughs and Urban Districts:—				
(*a*) 75 per cent. and upwards	+34·0	+19·2	–32·6	+ 56·3
(*b*) 50 per cent. and under 75 per cent.	– 3·5	+ 2·3	–48·9	– 18·5
(*c*) 25 per cent. and under 50 per cent.	– 6·4	+ 8·4	–45·0	– 39·3
(*d*) Under 25 per cent.	–26·1	–19·0	–44·2	– 34·4
3. Unions wholly Rural	–30·0	–33·7	–41·0	– 37·7
England and Wales	+ 6·5	+21·2	–28·4	+ 49·9

120. The consideration of these statistics leads to the conclusion that it is in regard to the able-bodied that least progress has been made. Indeed it would appear that there has recently been a considerable retrogression in this branch of the Poor Law. Either the urban population is becoming less fitted for maintaining their independence, or the facility with which relief may be obtained and the immunity from labour which it confers are enticing a larger number of persons to avail themselves of Poor Law relief. Conclusions regarding able-bodied pauperism.

* Excluding men relieved on account of their own sickness, accident, or infirmity.

† Wives of men receiving out-relief are classified as able-bodied if their husbands are able-bodied, but not otherwise.

1 Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 96.

The Sick.

Regular statistics of sick persons relieved.

121. The regular statistics of pauperism give no comprehensive account of the number of paupers who are sick. They have, since 1891, distinguished the able-bodied indoor paupers who are sick from those in health, and a similar distinction has been made since 1884 as regards able-bodied men in receipt of outdoor relief. The numbers in receipt of outdoor medical relief only have been shown since 1893.

Number of able-bodied sick.

122. The increase in the number of the able-bodied sick relieved indoors is shown in the following Table :—[1]

Years.	Mean number of ordinarily able-bodied who are sick.		
	Males.		Females (indoor only).
	Indoor.	Outdoor.	
1891–2 (first year available, a good year) - -	7,304	8,748	6,923
1895–6 (a bad year) - - - - - -	10,281	8,831	8,370
1900–1 (a good year) - - - - - -	11,449	6,950	9,257
1905–6 (a bad year) - - - - - -	15,913	8,901	12,187
1906–7 (latest years available) - - - - - -	15,913	9,028	12,338
1907–8 (latest years available) - - - - - -	16,061	8,569	12,661

123. The increase has been fairly general in both urban and rural areas, but still it has been highest in some of the urban groups of unions.[2] The development of separate Poor Law infirmaries has, probably, rendered the receipt of indoor medical treatment less distasteful, and many who would not previously have accepted such treatment now take advantage of the new institutions. The numbers under treatment in infirmaries and infirm wards of workhouses has risen from 78,319 on January 1st, 1904, to 91,738 on January 1st, 1908.[3] There has been nothing like the same expansion in the number of able-bodied in receipt of outdoor medical relief, or in the number of outdoor paupers of all classes in receipt of medical relief only.

Persons under medical treatment in certain unions on April 13th, 1907.

124. Realising the incompleteness of this information, we obtained a return from 128 unions giving statistics of the persons under medical treatment at noon on April 13th, 1907. From this return we find that nearly one-third of the persons in receipt of relief are under medical treatment, and that this proportion rises to nearly one-half in the case of the indoor poor, and falls to one-fifth in the case of the outdoor poor. For men under fifty years of age the proportion reaches three-fifths, and for men of these ages relieved indoors it rises to two-thirds. The proportion of women under medical treatment is smaller than that of men, especially in the case of out-relief.[4]

Most important diseases amongst persons relieved.

125. The five most important groups of the specified diseases amongst the persons relieved, and the proportions under medical treatment for each of them, are[5] :—

(1) Bronchitis and pneumonia, 44·0 per 1,000 of the total number of persons relieved.

(2) Rheumatism and gout, 19·9 per 1,000 of the total number of persons relieved.

(3) Pulmonary tuberculosis, 15·8 per 1,000 of the total number of persons relieved.

(4) Heart disease, 13·9 per 1,000 of the total number of persons relieved.

(5) Ulcerated legs, 12·1 per 1,000 of the total number of persons relieved.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 57. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 96. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table XII. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part III., pars. 5 and 7. [5] Statistical Appendix, Part III., Table III.

126. Over three-fourths of the poor under medical treatment in London are relieved in Poor Law institutions, whilst less than one-half are so relieved outside London.

127. In the following table we give the proportions under medical treatment for London and the extra-Metropolitan unions respectively[1]:— Proportion of paupers receiving indoor and outdoor medical treatment.

		Proportion under medical treatment per 1,000 Indoor and Outdoor Paupers (taken together) at each age group.					
			Men.		Women.		
	—	Children under 16 years of age.	Under 50 years of age.	50 years of age and upwards.	Under 50 years of age.	50 years of age and upwards.	Total.
London (31 unions)	I.	174·0	603·2	318·7	393·8	261·7	292·9
	O.	54·0	92·0	56·7	118·2	120·9	85·0
	T.	228·0	695·2	375·4	512·0	382·6	377·9
Extra-Metropolitan unions (97 unions)	I.	41·7	313·7	183·7	156·3	117·7	126·8
	O.	58·8	215·2	127·7	152·7	172·9	131·4
	T.	100 5	528·9	311·4	309·0	290·6	258·2

128. Notwithstanding the large number of medical charities in London, the London proportions for indoor and outdoor paupers taken together are higher than the provincial proportions in every group, and it will be seen that the excess is wholly due to the larger numbers under treatment in institutions. In the case of children and of men and women under fifty the excess of the London proportion over the provincial proportion is very considerable.[2] Excess of London proportions under medical treatment.

	Excess (+) or deficit (−) of London proportions under medical treatment over provincial proportions.		
	Indoor.	Outdoor.	Total.
Children	+ 132·3	− 4·8	+ 127·5
Men under 50	+ 289·5	− 123·2	+ 166·3
Men 50 and upwards	+ 135 0	− 71·0	+ 64·0
Women under 50	+ 237·5	− 34·5	+ 203·0
Women 50 and upwards	+ 144·0	− 52·0	+ 92·0

129. These figures show to what an abnormal extent the young and those of middle age avail themselves of the London Poor Law infirmaries, for the difference between the London and provincial proportions can hardly be attributed solely to a difference in the sickness rates. The excess is not nearly so great in the case of men and women over fifty. Moreover, the "uncorrected" death rate for London in 1907 (viz., 14·7 per 1,000) was lower than that for the whole of England and Wales, viz., 15·0 per 1,000.[3]

130. In this connection we may also refer to the occupation statistics of persons relieved, from which it would appear that, comparing the healthy able-bodied men relieved indoors with the able-bodied men who are sick, those engaged in the more highly-paid and more regular employments take advantage of the Poor Law medical service Advantage taken of Poor Law medical institutions by more highly paid and regular workers.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part III., par., 14. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part III., par. 15. [3] Annual Report of the Registrar General, 1907 [Cd. 4464], page xxxvii.

to a greater proportionate extent than persons in other industries. The proportion of sick to healthy able-bodied indoor paupers was, in the total for England and Wales, 1·75.

131. In the following groups of occupations the proportion was in excess of the general average[1]:—

Groups of Occupations.	Ordinarily Able-bodied males relieved who were returned under the occupations given in the 1st column.	
	Total Number.	Proportion of Sick to Healthy.
Defence of the country	75	4·8
General or Local Government of the country	37	3·6
In and about and dealing in the products of mines and quarries	700	3·3
Precious metals, jewels, watches, instruments and games	158	3·2
Gas, water, and electricity supply	69	2·8
Fishing	84	2·7
Professional occupations and their subordinate services	226	2·6
Metals, machines, implements and conveyances	2,070	2·5
Brick, cement, pottery and glass	241	2·4
Paper, prints, books and stationery	348	2·3
Chemicals, oil, grease, soap, resin	119	2·1
Conveyance of men, goods, and messages	4,041	2·0

Casual Paupers.

No complete statistics of casual paupers.

132. No precise statistics of the number of casual paupers at any given moment can be obtained, for the simple reasons that they are never all in receipt of relief at the same time, and that their peregrinations frustrate any attempt to spread the enumeration over a period.

Estimate of total number of vagrants.

133. The Vagrancy Committee considered the question, and after referring to the various estimates which had been put forward of the total number of vagrants, concluded as follows[2]:—

> "The only conclusion from the figures at which we arrive is that the number of persons with no settled home and no visible means of subsistence probably reaches, at times of trade depression, as high a total as 70,000 or 80,000, while in times of industrial activity (as in 1900) it might not exceed 30,000 or 40,000. Between these limits the number varies, affected by the conditions of trade, weather, and economic causes. In our Inquiry, we are more concerned with the habitual vagrant, that is, the class whom trade conditions do not affect. Of this class there is always an irreducible minimum, though successive depressions of trade may increasingly swell the numbers. No definite figures as to this permanent class can be obtained, but we are inclined to think that the total number would not exceed 20,000 to 30,000."

Difficulty in obtaining complete statistics of casuals.

134. The numbers obtained from our Census of Paupers are those of casuals relieved at midnight between March 31st and April 1st, 1906, that is to say, they are the numbers relieved at a given moment. The number of people who are habitually tramping from place to place will be much larger than this, for they will not all be in receipt of relief at the same time. The statistics obtained by the Local Government Board have shown the number relieved at any time during the day of the half-yearly counts, though the number relieved on one night only has been added in recent years. The total number relieved during the course of the day includes twice over those casuals who slept in different casual wards on the two nights forming part of the day of the count, and it appears that, taking the half-yearly counts between July 1st, 1898, and January 1st, 1908, inclusive—a period of ten years—the number has exceeded the number relieved on one night only by a mean percentage of 74·9 for the winter counts, and of 71·0 for the summer counts. It is obvious that no count of the number of casuals during a period of time embracing more than one

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 16. [2] Report of Vagrancy Committee [Cd. 2852] p. 22.

night can claim to avoid duplicate reckonings, and though an accurate count of the casuals relieved at a given moment may be obtained it is much smaller in relation to the total number of casuals than in the case of other classes of paupers.[1]

135. The number of casual paupers at the date of the Census was 10,927, all but 110 of whom were relieved in the workhouse, casual wards, or infirmaries. Their ages were as follows :[2]— Casual paupers on March 31st, 1906.

Children under sixteen years of age	245
Adults, sixteen years and under sixty years	8,645
Adults, sixty years and upwards	2,037
Total	10,927

136. The particulars obtained did not include the sex of casuals, but according to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy the sex and age of the vagrants relieved on January 1st, 1905, were :—[3] Sex and age of casuals on January 1st, 1905.

	Men.	Women.	Children.
Under 16 years of age	–	–	188
16 years and under 35	2,156	132	–
35 „ „ „ 65	6,143	660	–
65 „ „ upwards	394	95	–
	8,693	887	188

The number of women and children amongst the vagrant population is thus comparatively small.

137. It may be observed that the number of casuals appears to fluctuate to some extent with the cycles of trade, for the lowest numbers on the night of January 1st were in the years 1891 and 1900. Since the year 1900 there has been a considerable increase and the number on January 1st, 1908, was the highest on record, viz., 10,436. The numbers shown by the day count, in which many will be counted twice over, have risen from 3,378 on January 1st, 1872, to 17,083 on January 1st, 1908. Changes in number of casuals relieved since 1872.

138. During the last ten years the number of casuals relieved on the day and night respectively of January 1st was[4]:—

Year.	Casual Paupers Relieved.	
	At any time during the 1st January.	On the night of 1st January.
1899	13,366	7,499
1900	9,841	5,579
1901	11,658	6,795
1902	13,178	7,840
1903	14,475	8,266
1904	15,634	8,519
1905	17,524	9,768
1906	16,823	9,708
1907	14,957	8,346
1908	17,083	10,436

1 Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 87. 2 Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 85. 3 Report of Vagrancy Committee [Cd. 2852], p. 18. 4 Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, January 1st, 1908 (H.C. 130), p. xv

Ineffectiveness of Expenditure on Education in reducing Pauperism.

Pauperism not reduced by increased expenditure upon education.

139. The position which we have thus shown to exist becomes still less satisfactory when we consider the vast sums which are, and have been, spent in connection with education and the public health. In the early part of the nineteenth century the system of elementary education was in its infancy and sanitary legislation was practically unknown. Now we have free education in the elementary subjects for every child in the Kingdom, and large sums are spent annually from public funds in secondary and technical instruction. No boy or girl physically and mentally capable of learning may now go out into the world without, at any rate, a fair educational knowledge, and with the increasing facilities for obtaining all forms of instruction it might reasonably be expected that the people would more readily command employment and higher remuneration. In the year 1871, the expenditure upon elementary education was slightly in excess of two millions, of which some £550,000 was met by school fees.[1] In 1905–6, the latest year for which the particulars are available, the expenditure had risen to about twenty millions, whilst approximately another three millions were expended upon various forms of higher education.[2] A generation has elapsed since elementary education became universal, and the benefits to be derived from the system should now be accruing to the nation. Persons now above fifty years of age have not, it is true, participated in the advantages conferred in 1870, but of persons below that age we have shown that there is no diminution in the number coming upon the Poor Laws.

Movement in Wages.

Paucity of statistical information with regard to wages.

140. Whether wages have increased upon the whole is a question to which no definite answer can be given, for there is a great paucity of statistical information for earlier years, and we are still without any reliable data of the average earnings in many trades, especially those of an unskilled or casual nature. The Board of Trade is, we understand, engaged upon an inquiry into wages, the results of which will be invaluable in the consideration of this question, though we shall still be without reliable comparisons for former years. That Department has, however, constructed index numbers of wages in certain trades for the years since 1874, and the comparison may be carried back to 1860 by the aid of estimates made by Mr. A. L. Bowley.[3]

Increase in wages.

141. The trades covered by these index numbers are the building trades, coal-mining, engineering, textile and agricultural industries. In these trades the general level of wages has risen from about 67 in 1860 to 102 in 1907, if the level of the year 1900 be taken as 100.[4] There are well-defined fluctuations corresponding with the cycles of trade, but except during the booming years of the early 'seventies, when Mr. Bowley estimates that the level rose to about 96, wages have never since 1860 been at the level of the opening years of the present century. In his book "Wages in the United Kingdom," Mr. Bowley writes:—

> "The study of the period 1830–60 has been much neglected. In it wages in the cotton industry increased about 2s. on 10s., although there was a falling off until 1845–6. Building trades and town artisans did not improve their earnings by so large a percentage. The wages of seamen increased over 10 per cent. between 1840 and 1860, but the percentage of increase between 1830 and 1840 cannot be accurately measured, except for one port, where they appear to have been stationary. Compositors' wages in small towns increased rapidly, but in large towns were stationary, and the average increase was 10 per cent.; those of agricultural labourers increased from 10s. to 11s. 7d., and of miners diminished."
>
> "Between 1860 and 1891 increases were very general and averaged about 35 per cent., but the increase was not uniform throughout the period, and the money wages and real wages took very different courses through the stormy period of the 'seventies. Between 1891 and 1898 wages on the whole were stationary, except that they have fluctuated in the mining industry, and that in the building trades their rate of increase has come up to the general average. In many cases it is likely that the money wages paid in some year of the inflation of the seventies was greater than any wage since; but owing to the very rapid fluctuation of wages and prices at that time it is not easy to make any useful comparison. It is better to say that money wages in the 'nineties were 10 per cent. above those of the 'eighties, and 30 per cent. above those of the 'sixties."

Movement from the lower paid occupations to the higher paid industries.

142. Taking the wage-earners as a class they have, moreover, benefited in another way. There has been a considerable movement from the lower paid occupations to the

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[1] Appendix to Report of Local Taxation Commission [Cd. 1221], p. 21.

[2] Statistics of Public Education [Cd. 3886], p. 335, and Local Taxation Returns, 1905–6, Part VIII. (H.C. 276—III.) of 1908, p. 8.

[3] British and Foreign Trade and Industry, Cd. 1761, 1903, pp. 259 *et seq*

[4] Twelfth Abstract of Labour Statistics 1906–7 [Cd. 4413], page 54.

higher paid industries. Thus, men engaged in agriculture in England and Wales fell from 138 per 1,000 males above ten years in 1881 to 95·5 per 1,000 in 1901, whilst men employed in the coal-mining industry rose from 41 per 1,000 to 53 per 1,000 in the same period, and men engaged in shipbuilding from 5·8 per 1,000 to 7·1 per 1,000.[1] The point is put concisely by Mr. Bowley in "National Progress in Wealth and Trade." He writes:—

> "Wages have risen during the last twenty years from two causes, of which the latter has been ignored in recent discussions: First, the weekly rates for nearly all occupations have risen; secondly, there has been a very considerable flow from low-paid to better-paid trades. If there had been no change of employment, our records would show an increase of about 15 per cent. in average rates of wages when 1902 is compared with 1882 in this case there is nothing invidious in the choice of these two years); but when the transference of labour is allowed for, the increase is 30 per cent. This result is mainly but not entirely due to the diminution of the number of agricultural labourers. In 1886 the average weekly wage of English agricultural labourers, *when all their special earnings and allowances through the year were included*, was about 14s. 6d.; that for the great bulk of other trades was 24s. The purchasing power of money in the country cannot be considered to be much (if at all) greater than in the town; and the greater rent in towns cannot, however reckoned, be held to neutralise more than a fraction (say one-third, or less) of the difference. The other main factor in the above result is the great increase in the number of coal-miners, whose wages have increased very rapidly in the last fifteen years. In addition to these main causes, there has been on the whole a very natural and considerable flow of labour to those industries where wages were rising with special rapidity."

143. We may also refer to the Memorandum on the movements in wages prepared for us by the Board of Trade, in which it is concluded that, allowing for trade cycles, a general tendency of wages to rise is perceptible through the last thirty years, and that the number of persons employed in those trades in which the advance has, on the whole, been the greatest, has increased more rapidly than the occupied population as a whole. The conclusion is, however, qualified by the following passage[2]:—

> "It is mainly as regards labour in organised industries, and especially skilled workers, that any exact data with regard to wages are available. While there is reason to believe that unskilled and even casual labour is generally remunerated at a higher rate than formerly, it is possible that the large mass of casual time labour is not making any substantial advance in weekly or yearly earnings."

144. If then, wages have increased, the extent of the classes who are without sufficient resources wherewith to maintain their independence should have diminished, and we should have expected to find this diminution reflected in the statistics of pauperism. That the pauperism statistics have not responded to this influence we have already shown. Higher wages have not reduced the number of paupers.

Changes in Cost of Living.

145. But the increase in wages is not the only way in which the independence of the working classes has been rendered more secure. The cost of living, which is just as important as the workman's wages, has undoubtedly diminished during the last thirty or forty years. Reference has already been made to the decrease in the cost of food and drink, and taking the four principal items of workman's expenditure, viz., food, rent, clothing, and fuel and lighting, the Board of Trade have constructed a series of index numbers based upon the prices of 1900 which show that the cost of living has fallen from 121·7 in 1880 to 101·4 in 1903.[3] Decrease in the cost of living.

146. The Board of Trade point out, however, that housing and fuel have increased in cost, and that these items form a larger part in the budgets of the lower paid workers than in those of the higher paid workers, and that the poorest classes, whose retail purchases are made in very small quantities, also gain least from the lower prices of other commodities than housing and fuel.[2]

Development of Thrift.

147. The working classes would thus appear to be better off both as regards their income and their expenditure than they were in the middle of the nineteenth century, Progress of friendly societies, trade unions, and savings banks,

[1] General Report on Census 1901 [Cd. 2174], pp. 270 *et seq.* [2] Vol. IX. of Evidence, Appendix No. xxi. (E).

[3] British and Foreign Trade and Industry (Second Series) [Cd. 2337], p. 33.

and it may be counted to their credit that they have taken advantage of their improved position to further strengthen their independence by a variety of forms of thrift. Provident societies of all kinds have sprung up and flourished. For statistical evidence of this we may refer to the progress of friendly societies, trade unions, and savings banks. In 1905 the membership of registered friendly and benefit societies was 14,595,528, and their funds amounted to £52,619,392. Comparative figures are not available for years before 1897, but even then the membership was only 10,934,144, and their funds £35,736,250.[1] No complete statistics of the membership of trade unions can be given over a long period but Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb show, in their "History of Trade Unionism" that the membership of fifteen societies for which the figures are available increased from 24,737 in 1850 to 184,948 in 1890, and from statistics supplied to us by the Board of Trade it appears that the membership of 100 principal trade unions rose from 915,545 at end of 1892 to 1,273,995 at end of 1906,[2] whilst their funds increased from £1,580,397 at end of 1892 to £5,198,536 at end of 1906.[3] The aggregate membership of Trade unions known to the Labour Department of the Board of Trade to be in existence at the end of each of the fifteen years from 1892 to 1906 inclusive, rose from 1,513,647 at end of 1892 to 2,106,283 at end of 1906.[4] And the number of depositors in the Post Office and trustee savings banks rose from 1,277,873 in 1854 to 12,094,000 at end of 1906, whilst the amounts due to them increased from £33,700,000 to £209,000,000.[5] It is clear, therefore, that amongst a large and growing section of the working population of the country habits of thrift are more and more to be observed. But it is equally clear that there is another section who have not the ambition or the ability to establish out of their wages a fund to which they may turn in times of stress, and thus in 1896–1905 we still had half a million adult paupers—a larger number than in the period 1871–9.

Ineffectiveness of Public Health Expenditure in Reducing Pauperism.

Absence of reduction in pauperism notwithstanding sanitary improvements.

148. The incongruity is no less remarkable when we consider the developments in the public health services. On more than one occasion the Central Authority has referred to the effects of epidemics of infectious diseases upon pauperism. Thus, in the Report of the Poor Law Board for 1867–8 we read that :—

> "The cholera which prevailed in the summer and autumn of 1866, added still further to the distress thus caused, carrying off in the East of London many of the heads of families, whose wives and children were left almost entirely dependent upon the poor rates."

In its First Report (1871–2) the Local Government Board attribute the increase in poor relief expenditure in 1870–1 partly to the expenses consequent upon the epidemic of small-pox. And Mr. Rawlinson, C.B., Government Engineer, in his Report to the Poor Law Board in 1869, says :—

> "An increasing of permanent pauperism is also the usual result of any epidemic disease, such as fever or cholera, aggravated by defective sanitary arrangements."

Although no reference is made in the Reports of the Central Authority to the effects upon pauperism of the previous outbreaks of cholera we find the General Board of Health, in a circular issued in 1854, referring to the outbreaks of 1831, 1849, and 1854, and pointing out "the permanent expense entailed on towns both by public rates and private contributions for the maintenance of widows, orphans and others pauperised by the epidemic." The advance of sanitary and medical science has brought these epidemics largely under control, and the country has been spared the repetition of the devastating outbreaks which were recorded in the first half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, sanitary legislation and administration have effected a marked improvement in the public health generally. The first move in sanitary reform was prompted by the outbreak of cholera in 1831, but as late as 1871 the Royal Sanitary Commission[6] reported that their evidence disclosed a very imperfect condition of local government for sanitary purposes in the extra-

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[1] Twelfth Abstract of Labour Statistics, 1906–7 [Cd. 4413], p. 179. Of the membership in 1897, 5,826,420, and of that in 1905, 8,695,610, members belonged to Collecting and other special classes of Friendly Societies. The Collecting Societies "are societies purely for insuring burial money," in the numbers for which "every infant member of the family whose life is insured" is counted. Brabrook, 35, 158. [2] Vol. IX. of Evidence, Appendix No. xxi. (C.) Table iv. [3] Twelfth Abstract of Labour Statistics, 1906–7, [Cd. 4413], p. 133. [4] Vol. IX. of Evidence, Appendix No. xxi. (C.) Table I. [5] Statistical Abstract for United Kingdom, 1907 [Cd. 4258], pp. 316 *et seq.*, and British and Foreign Trade and Industry [Cd. 1761], p. 459. [6] 281, p. 15.

Metropolitan parts of England and Wales, and that "a considerable portion of the working classes is debilitated, and thrown into sickness and poverty, by a tainted atmosphere and unhealthy dwellings." Some progress had already been made in the Metropolis under the Metropolis Management Act of 1855, and the passing of the Public Health Act of 1872, and of its successor of 1875 gave a great stimulus to sanitary improvements elsewhere. The directions in which the sanitary authorities now endeavour to promote the public health are legion. Amongst the matters claiming their attention are the stamping out of infectious diseases and the provision of hospitals for such diseases, the removal and destruction of house refuse, sewerage, water supply, the provision and control of parks, baths, cemeteries and slaughter-houses, and the housing of the working classes. Vaccination and the registration of births and deaths may also be mentioned. An approximate estimate of the expenditure incurred in the year 1904–5 upon what may be described as "sanitary services" gives a total of nearly sixteen millions, and this does not include the scavenging or lighting of streets, or the full cost of the remuneration of officers whose duties are not confined to particular branches of sanitary administration. What the expenditure may have been in the early years of the nineteenth century we are unable to say, but it may be pointed out that in the year 1841 only £8,101,000 was raised by local rates, of which sum nearly five millions was absorbed in poor relief.[1] It is obvious, therefore, that, at that date, little could have been spent upon sanitary services.

Decrease in Death Rate.

Decrease in death rate.

149. We are far from suggesting that the vast increase in sanitary expenditure has not been justified by its resuults, for the annual death rate has diminished from 21·4 per 1,000 in the five years 1841–5 and 23·3 per 1,000 in the five years 1846–50 to 16·0 per 1,000 in the five years 1901–5, and it may be noted that the greater part of the decrease has occurred since the passing of the Public Health Act of 1875. In the five years 1871–5, the death rate was still 22·0 per 1,000. Moreover, the corrected death rate for phthisis, perhaps the most pauperising disease, has fallen from 2·7 per 1,000 in 1857, to 1·14 per 1,000 in 1907.[2]

150. It may, of course, be argued that in so far as the decrease in the death rate has prolonged life in old age, it has added to the number of persons who most frequently come upon the Poor Laws, and may thus be counteracting, to some extent, the improved economic position of the working classes. How far this may be the case could hardly be estimated, but we think that the greater earning power conferred upon persons at the working period of life by the improvement in the public health would far outweigh any tendency towards the creation of old-age pauperism by a diminution in the death rate. Moreover, so far as statistics of old-age pauperism are available, we do not find that aged persons in receipt of relief have increased more rapidly than other adult paupers.

Illegitimacy.

Decrease in illegitimacy.

151. The effect of the advance in education and sanitation upon the question of illegitimacy may here be mentioned. The influence of illegitimacy upon pauperism is well understood, and we refer to it elsewhere. Here we need only point out that, by whatever standard the illegitimate births be measured, there has been a considerable decrease. We give the rates in tabular form[3]:—

Period.	Annual Illegitimate Birth Rates.		
	Per 1,000 Persons living.	Per 1,000 Births.	Per 1,000 Unmarried and Widowed Females aged 15–45 years.
1846–50 - -	2·2	67	—
1876–80 - -	1·7	47·5	14·4
1901–5 - - -	1·1	39·5	8·4
1906 - - -	1·1	40·0	8·1
1907 - - -	1·0	39·4	7·8

[1] Return—"Local Taxation," by the late Viscount Goschen (Reprint 201 of 1893), pp. 8 and 69.

[2] Annual Report of Registrar-General, 1907 [Cd. 4464]. p. ci. Supplement to 65th Annual Report of Registrar-General, 1891-1900, Part I. [Cd. 2618], chart facing p. xciv.

[3] Annual Report of Registrar-General, 1907 [Cd. 4464], pp. xxxi., 5, 6.

Conclusion.

Conclusion.

152. It is very unpleasant to record that, notwithstanding our assumed moral and material progress, and notwithstanding the enormous annual expenditure, amounting to nearly sixty millions a year, upon poor relief, education, and public health, we still have a vast army of persons quartered upon us unable to support themselves, and an army which in numbers has recently shown signs of increase rather than decrease. To what is the retrogression due? It cannot be attributed to lack of expenditure. Is this costly and elaborate machinery we have established defective, and if so where does it fail to accomplish its end? Is the material upon which this machinery operates becoming less amenable to the remedies applied?

153. The recommendations we shall make in later stages of this Report will furnish the reply to these interrogations, but the statistical review of the expenditure incurred and of the results attained by it prove that something in our social organisation is seriously wrong, and that whatever may be the evils, they are not of such a nature as to be improved or removed by the mere signing of cheques or the outpouring of public funds.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS AND RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

DIAGRAM B.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAUPERS.

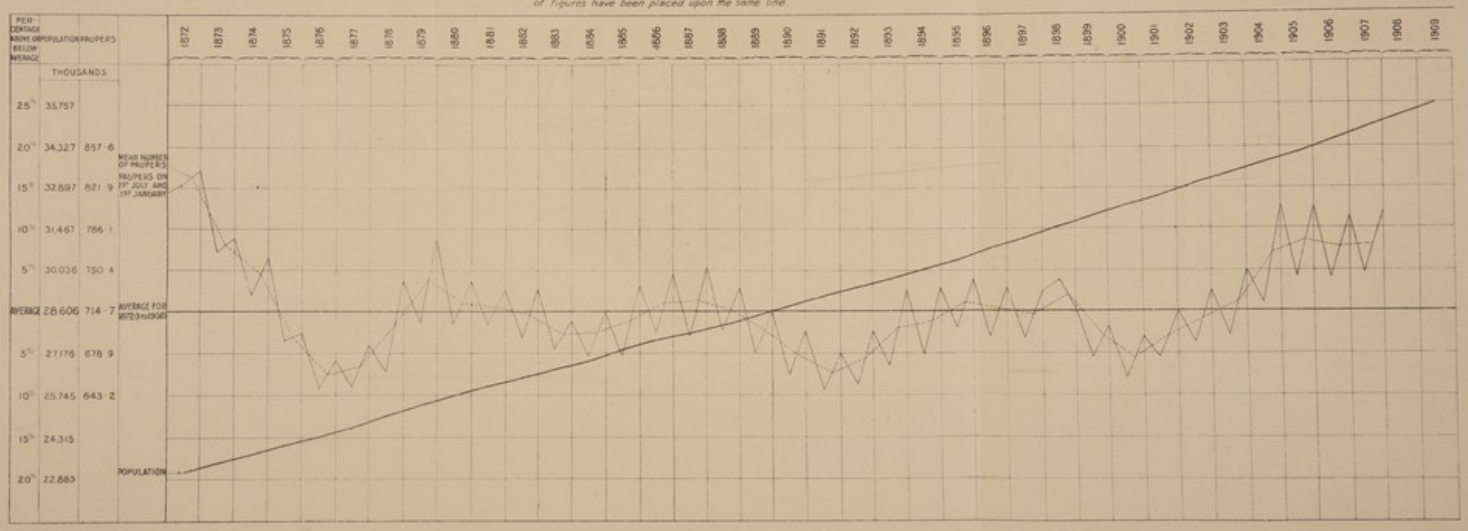
FLUCTUATIONS IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PAUPERS (EXCLUDING CASUAL AND INSANE PAUPERS) IN ENGLAND AND WALES FROM 1872-3 TO 1907-8, COMPARED WITH THE INCREASE IN POPULATION. (SEE TABLES I AND II OF PART I OF STATISTICAL APPENDIX.)

(1.) The Estimated Population in the middle of each calendar year is represented by _____

(2.) The Total Number of Paupers on 1st July and 1st January respectively in each year from 1872-3 to 1907-8 is represented by _____

(3.) The Mean Number of Paupers on 1st January and the preceding 1st July for the same years is represented by .....

Note.—In the construction of the diagram the Average numbers for the different series of figures have been placed upon the same line.



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ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS AND RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

DIAGRAM C.

DIAGRAM SHOWING THE NUMBER OF MALE & FEMALE INDOOR PAUPERS AT CERTAIN AGE GROUPS, IN THE YEARS 1891, 1901 & 1906, AND THE PROPORTION TO MALE & FEMALE POPULATION RESPECTIVELY, AT THE SAME AGE GROUPS. (SEE TABLE B OF PART II OF STATISTICAL APPENDIX.)

DIAGRAM N° 1.

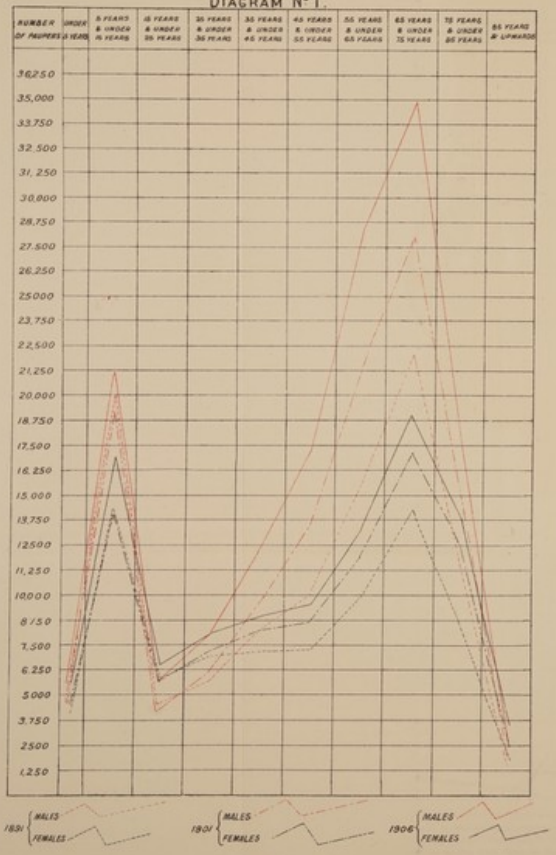
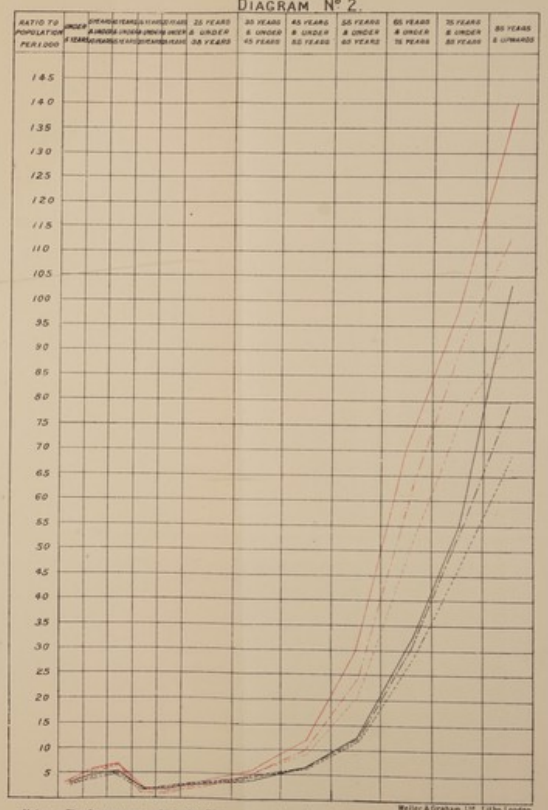


DIAGRAM N° 2.



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Notes — The figures upon which the Diagrams are based include vagrants, but do not include paupers maintained in institutions not belonging to Poor Law Authorities. The ratios of paupers to population in 1906 are calculated upon estimates of the population at each age group in the middle of 1906.

PART III.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE POOR LAWS DOWN TO 1834.

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PART III.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE POOR LAWS DOWN TO 1834.*

1. The Royal Commission of 1832†, its Report, and the legislation promoted by that Report, mark the beginning of a system of administration which has without serious break or sudden change continued down to this day. We do not, therefore, intend to push our inquiries further back than the appointment of that Commission, except for the purpose of obtaining a synopsis of the Acts of Parliament under which a regularised system of the relief of the poor was gradually established. Such a review is interesting historically, and is useful in showing whether there was a continuity of idea running through all this legislation, or whether the different Acts were suggested by the needs of the time and embody inconsistent theories.

2. Mr. Adrian, the Legal Adviser of the Local Government Board, gave us a succinct and luminous account of the origin, development, changes, and objects of this earlier legislation,[1] and we cannot do better than epitomise the evidence so given.

3. He pointed out that so much attention has been given to the famous 43 Eliz., c. 2, that it is sometimes assumed that it is the foundation of our Poor Law system of relief. But the practice of regulating the relief of the poor has a much older origin, being of common law genesis. According to a passage quoted from Horne's "Mirror" in Coke's Institutes, Part III., Chapter 40, folio 103, it was ordained by kings before the Conquest that the poor should be sustained by parsons, rectors, and parishioners, "so that no one should die from lack of sustenance."

4. This enunciation of the common-law principle, even if we put the production of the "Mirror" as late as the reign of Edward II., precedes by two centuries the earliest Tudor legislation. The various methods by which effect was given to the common-law rule may be assumed to have established parochial responsibility.

THE POOR LAW BEFORE AND AFTER 1601.

Origin and Antiquity of Poor Law.

5. In order that its true place and value may be assigned to the Poor Relief Act 1601 (43 Elizabeth c. 2), it is necessary to take cognisance of the working of the Poor Law before and after that date. The Act of 1601 was a temporary measure. It was according to Lord Coke "a probationer."[2] Its details were largely a reproduction of an earlier Act—39 Elizabeth, c. 3. The chief purposes of the Act of 1601 were, in the words of the statute :—

(*a*) "For setting to work the Children of all such whose Parents shall not by the said Churchwardens and Overseers, or the greater Part of them, be thought able to keep and maintain their children ;

(*b*) "And also for setting to work all such persons, married or unmarried [as][3] having no Means to maintain them, use no ordinary or daily Trade of Life to get their Living by ;

(*c*) "And also to raise weekly or otherwise (by taxation of every Inhabitant, Parson, Vicar and other, and of every Occupier of Lands, Houses, Tithes Impropriate, Propriations of Tithes, Coal Mines or saleable Underwoods in the said parish, in such competent Sum and Sums of Money as they shall think fit) a convenient Stock of Flax, Hemp, Wool, Thread, Iron, and other Ware and Stuff, to set the Poor on Work ;

(*d*) "And also competent Sums of Money for and towards the necessary Relief of the Lame, Impotent, Old, Blind, and such other among them being Poor and not able to work ;

(*e*) "And also for the putting out of such Children to be Apprentices, to be gathered out of the same Parish, according to the Ability of the same Parish ;

* A summary of the work of the Royal Commission of 1832 will be found in Professor Smart's two Memoranda in the Appendix, entitled, "The Report of the Commission of 1832," and "The Principles of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834."

† *Note.*—Throughout the Report, the expressions "Royal Commission of 1832" and "Royal Commission of 1834" have been used to denote the Royal Commission which inquired into the working of the Poor Laws and reported in 1834 ; the expressions "Poor Law Commission" and "Poor Law Commissioners" refer to the Authority appointed to administer the Poor Laws under the Act of 1834.

1 Adrian, 74 to 79. 2 Adrian, 75. 3 *Cf.* Adrian, 78.

(*f*) "And to do and execute all other Things, as well for the disposing of the said Stock, as otherwise concerning the Premises, as to them shall seem convenient."*

6. The Act indeed closed a series of experimental legislation which throughout the Tudor period was concerned with those whom at one time it was usual to class as the impotent poor.

7. The Tudor Acts which thus culminated in the Statute of 1601, as well as those preceding them, had largely in view the prevention and regulation of begging. The well-known authority, Dr. Burn, in his History of Poor Law, writes :—

Regulation and restriction of begging.

"First, the poor were restrained from begging at large, and were confined to beg within certain districts (11 Henry VII., c. 2; 19 Henry VII., c. 12; 22 Henry VIII., c. 12). Next the several hundreds, towns corporate, parishes, hamlets, or other like divisions were required to sustain them with such charitable and voluntary alms, as that none of them of necessity might be compelled to go openly in begging, and the churchwardens or other substantial inhabitants were to make collections for them, with boxes on Sundays, and otherwise by their discretions. And the minister was to take all opportunities to exhort and stir up the people to be liberal and bountiful (27 Henry VIII., c. 25). Next houses were to be provided for them by the devotion of good people, and materials to set them on such work as they were able to perform. Then the minister after the Gospel every Sunday was specially to exhort the parishioners to a liberal contribution (1 Edward VI., c. 3). Next the collectors for the poor on a certain Sunday in every year, immediately after Divine Service, were to take down in writing what every person was willing to give weekly for the ensuing year; and if any should be obstinate and refuse to give, the minister was gently to exhort him. If he still refused, the minister was to certify such rrefusal to the bishop of the diocese, and the bishop was to send for and exhort him in like manner. If he stood out against the bishop's exhortation, then the bishop was to certify the same to the justices in session and bind him over to appear there; and the justices at the said sessions were again gently to move and persuade him; and finally if he would not be persuaded then, then they were to assess him what they thought reasonable towards the relief of the poor. And this brought on the general assessment in the 14th year of Queen Elizabeth (5 and 6 Edward VI., c. 2; 5 Elizabeth, c. 3)."

8. In 1567 Thomas Harman published a book "A Caveat or Warening for Common Cursetors," and, according to the statements it contained, the beggar's trade was at that time thriving. Twenty years later, Harrison, in his "Description of England," published in 1586, estimated that, though not quite sixty years had passed since the trade began, the beggars numbered about 10,000.

9. The last Statute in Dr. Burn's Summary—the 14 Eliz., c. 5—aimed at the suppression of the roaming beggar by a measure also designed for the local care of the aged, decayed, and impotent. The Justices by Sec. 16 were empowered to appoint meet and convenient places for the habitations and abidings of the latter class. Those who refused to be bestowed in the appointed abiding places or left them to beg were to be punished as rogues or vagabonds (sec. 18). The Act may also deserve mention as recognising the principle of non-resident relief. It seems that Bath and Buxton were the resorts of a great number of the poor, who repaired "to the baths there for ease of their grief." These persons were to be not only licensed by Justices, but also "provided for by the inhabitants of such hundreds, parishes or places from whence they shall so be licensed to travel."

10. It should be added that the 14 Eliz., c. 5, was shortly afterwards amended by the 18 Eliz., c. 3, and that the later Act required provision to be made of a competent stock of wool, hemp, flax, iron, or other stuff to be delivered to the poor, who might work the stock into yarn or other matter, and receive payment according to the desert of the work. For those who refused or spoilt work or went abroad begging or lived idly, houses of correction were to be provided.

11. The Act of 1601 was, as we have said, passed for a limited period. It was, with other Acts, renewed at the beginning of the reigns of James I. and Charles I. In the reign of Charles I. (1641) it was made perpetual. Each occasion saw a new development. Thus on the first renewal an amendment to facilitate apprenticeship was introduced;

* For full text of the Act in its original form and apart from subsequent amendments see Appendix.

while on the second renewal this amendment was coupled with the provision that the churchwardens and the overseers of the poor in the said Act made in the three and fortieth year [of Queen Elizabeth] may, "with the consent of justices," set up, use, and occupy any trade mystery or occupation, only for the setting on work and better relief of the poor of the parish, town or place, of or within which they shall be churchwardens or overseers, any former statute to the contrary notwithstanding.[1] Even after 1641 there is ground for the belief that the operation of the Statute of Elizabeth was for many years partial.

12. These extracts seem to show that :—

(1) Parochial chargeability ;
(2) Repression of begging, except where authorised ;
(3) The provision of employment as a means of assistance ;
(4) The care of the lame, the impotent, the old and blind who are poor, and are unable to work ;
(5) The setting to work and apprenticeship of children ; and
(6) The free use of the house of correction for the idle and the petty offender ;

were the principles dominating the Acts passed for the relief of the poor. It may be noted that the appointment to the office of Overseer under the Act was compulsory, and that the office was unpaid.

LEGISLATION IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

13. As regards Poor Law, the eighteenth century was one of experiment and criticism. Everyone is familiar with Adam Smith's exposure of the effects of the Law of Settlement in obstructing the mobility of labour, and with his denunciation of the law as "an evident violation of natural liberty and justice."[2] An Act of 1795 removed the principal hardship by forbidding the removal of persons from any parish until they became actually chargeable to the rates. But, apart from this, two marked and opposite policies emerged during the century.

14. The 9 Geo. I., c. 7 (1722) had two notable effects. First, it limited the power of the Justices, who appear to have formed the habit of ordering relief to any applicants who came to them, without the knowledge of the parish officers, by enacting that no one should receive relief from the Justices until oath were made before such Justice of some matter that he should judge to be a reasonable cause, and until the person had applied to a Vestry or to two of the Overseers and had been refused relief. Second, it went far to establish a workhouse test. Parishes, either singly or in combination, were empowered to provide houses and contract with any persons "for the lodging, keeping and maintaining, and employing" of poor persons, and "to take the benefit of their work, labour and service." And "no poor who refused to be lodged and kept in such houses should be entitled to parochial relief."

15. The immediate result of this was a diminution of expenditure. But returns to Parliament, some fifty years later, in 1776, and again in 1786, showed that, judging from the state of several parishes "the charge of maintaining their poor had advanced very rapidly, notwithstanding the aid of workhouses, and perhaps, as rapidly as in those parishes which have continued to relieve the poor by occasional pensions at their own habitations.[3] According to the data available at the time, it was estimated that poor relief expenditure, which in 1701 amounted to about £900,000 for the year, had increased to £1,250,000 in 1760.[4]

16. The 22 Geo. III., c. 83 (1782), known as Gilbert's Act, insisted on the failure of the previous Act, both as regards the increase of expenditure and the increased sufferings of the poor. Power was now given to adjacent parishes to unite by voluntary arrangement into a Union or Incorporation and build a workhouse for the combined parishes. And the 29th section provided that no persons should be sent to such poor house except such as were become indigent by old age, sickness, or infirmities, and were unable to acquire a maintenance by their labour . . . and orphan children. For the able-bodied, the Guardians were ordered to find suitable employment near their own homes. Under this Act, power was again handed back to the Justices ; they were to appoint and control

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[1] 1 Charles I., IV. 22 (8). [2] Wealth of Nations, 1776. [3] Eden, I., p. 270. [4] "History of the English Poor Law," Nicholls, Revised Edition, Vol. I., p. 354, and Vol. II., p. 55.

visitors and paid Guardians; and by these visitors and Guardians poor relief was to be administered. Under this Act, sixty-seven Incorporations were formed, and their disinclination to come under the new Poor Law was one of the chief obstacles which the Commissioners of 1834 experienced. Poor Law expenditure continued to grow, however, and in 1785 it amounted to £2,000,000.[1]

17. The period between 1793 and 1815 was one of almost continuous war, and during this time there was great distress in the country. The price of food was high and employment in the agricultural districts scarce. The poor rate rose very rapidly. During this period occurred the great change in the method of giving and regulating relief to the able-bodied, and the rise of the alleged malpractices connected with the changes in administration to which we shall presently allude.

18. In 1796, an Act[2] was passed repealing the earlier Statute of 1722 which restricted out-relief. This reversal of policy which encouraged out-relief to poor persons in their own homes and empowered Justices of the Peace at their own discretion to order such relief to any industrious poor person, gave a great impetus to this class of poor relief. The cost of relief rose with frightful rapidity. In 1802–3 it amounted to £4,077,000, in 1813 to £6,656,000, and ultimately it rose to the dimensions in 1818 of £7,870,000. Though the expenditure of 1818 was the highest recorded until late in the nineteenth century, and considerable fluctuations occurred in subsequent years, still in 1832, the cost of poor relief stood at the figure of £7,036,000.[1] It is difficult to estimate the exact proportion of this vast development of public expenditure which was due to the attempt to relieve distress by creating employment out of the poor rate, but that the increase was largely due to this policy is indisputable. In the House of Commons in 1817, Lord Castlereagh, who was then Leader of the House and who had given special attention to the subject, upon presentation of a petition by Mr. Calvert complaining of the burden of the poor rates, stated his conviction that "in cases where 19s. or 20s. in the £ was paid for poor rates, 15s. would be found to be wages paid in the shape of poor rates."[3] Petitions to Parliament, debates in Parliament, and Committees in both Houses during this period were constantly investigating and making suggestions for the alleviation of an almost intolerable burden, but nothing was done to ease appreciably the financial strain or reduce the vast amount of pauperism associated with the system of relief then in operation.

POOR LAW COMMISSION OF 1832.

19. In 1832 a Commission, composed of:

The Bishop of London (Dr. Blomfield),
The Bishop of Chester (Dr. Sumner),
W. Sturges Bourne,
Nassau W. Senior,
Henry Bishop,
Henry Gawler,
W. Coulson,
James Raill,
Edwin Chadwick,

was appointed to inquire into the practical operation of the laws for the relief of the poor in England and Wales, and into the manner in which those laws were administered, and to report whether in their opinion any, and what, alterations, amendment, or improvements might be beneficially made in the said laws, or in the manner of administering them, and how the same might be best carried into effect.

20. The method of investigation adopted by the Commission was to prepare and circulate questions in the rural districts, and afterwards in the towns. For the better prosecution of local inquiries Assistant Commissioners were appointed to visit the several districts and report the practices which they found to prevail, the different modes of

[1] Return "Local Taxation," Goschen, 1870, reprint H.C. 201 of 1893, p. 69. [2] 36 Geo. III., c. 23.
[3] "History of the English Poor Law," Nicholls, Revised Edition, Vol. II., p. 164.

relief which were in force, and the effects produced[1] Owing to the difficulty of obtaining the services of suitable persons, however, some districts were left altogether unvisited, among them South Wales. Individual Assistant Commissioners made inquiries also in Scotland and Guernsey, and some valuable information regarding the public provision made for the poor in Flanders, France, and other countries of the Continent and in America was printed in the Appendix.[2]

21. The evidence thus came from every county and almost every town, and from a very large proportion of even the villages in England. It was:

> "Derived from many thousand witnesses, of every rank and of every profession and employment Members of the two Houses of Parliament, clergymen, country gentlemen, magistrates, farmers manufacturers, shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants, differing in every conceivable degree in education, habits, and interests, and agreeing only in their practical experience as to the matters in question, in their general description both of the mode in which the laws for the relief of the poor are administered, and of the consequences which have already resulted from that administration, and in their anticipation of certain further consequences from its continuance . . . the most extensive, and at the same time the most consistent, body of evidence that was ever brought to bear on a single subject."[3]

22. After a short introduction, containing the substance of the principal enactments from 12 Rich. II. (1388) down to the 39 Eliz. (1598),[4] omitting, as unnecessary, any account of the 43 Eliz. c. 2—"the basis but certainly not the origin of our present system"[5]—or of any subsequent Acts, the Report abruptly began:—

> "It is now our painful duty to report, that in the greater part of the districts which we have been able to examine, the fund, which the 43rd of Elizabeth directed to be employed in setting to work children and persons capable of labour, but using no daily trade, and in the necessary relief of the impotent, is applied to purposes opposed to the letter, and still more to the spirit of that Law, and destructive to the morals of the most numerous class, and to the welfare of all."[6]

23. The first section of the Report dealt with Outdoor Relief and begins thus:—

> "The great source of abuse is the Outdoor Relief afforded to the Able-bodied on their own account, or on that of their families. This is given either in kind or in money."[7]

24. As relief of the able-bodied at the present moment forms not the least important or difficult of the questions referred to us, it will be well to state at considerable length the systems of able-bodied relief which the Commission found in extensive operation in most parts of the country.*

Outdoor Relief of the Able-bodied in Kind.

25. The "most usual form" of this relief was that of "relieving the applicants, either wholly or partially, from the expense of obtaining house room."[8]

26. One form of this was the exemption from rates given, "almost always" in the case of parishioners, "frequently," in the case of non-parishioners.[9] One evil effect of this was, in some places, a speculation in building small tenements—yielding the owner a rent heightened by the exemption—and these of the worst and most unhealthy kind:—"In order to make out a case for the non-payment of rates, it is necessary to have inconveniences and defects."[10]

27. But in many places the rent of the parish paupers was paid out of the parish fund. In Surrey and Sussex, and even in North Wales—"a district of comparatively good administration"—the payment of rent was "nearly universal."[11] Paupers had thus become a very desirable class of tenants.

Outdoor Relief of the Able-Bodied in Money.

28. When the outdoor relief of the able-bodied was afforded in money—the more prevalent system—this was generally effected by one of five expedients.

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* The exigencies of space forbid more than a very brief summary of the leading points in the famous report. But we have tried to keep as close to the original as possible, and to preserve the *ipsissima verba* even where we do not quote in inverted commas.

[1] Report of Royal Commission of 1834: Reprinted, Cd. [2728], 1905, p. 1. [2] Report, p. 2. [3] Report, p. 5. [4] Report, pp. 5–12. [5] Report, p. 13. [6] Report, p. 13. [7] Report, p. 14. [8] Report, p. 14. [9] Report, p. 14. [10] Report, p. 15. [11] Report, pp. 15–16.

(1) *Relief without Labour.*

29. In many districts this was so common as to have acquired the technical name of "relief in lieu of labour," and was favoured as saving trouble and expense.[1]

30. The sums were sometimes small—"insufficient for complete subsistence"—and given under the condition that the applicant should shift for himself and give the parish no further trouble.[2]

> "But it is more usual to give a rather larger weekly sum, and to force the applicants to give up a certain portion of their time by confining them in a gravel-pit or in some other enclosure, or directing them to sit at a certain spot and do nothing, or obliging them to attend a roll-call several times in the day, or by any contrivance which shall prevent their leisure from becoming a means either of profit, or of amusement."[3]

(2) *Allowance.*

31. This form of relief, known in Berkshire as "make-up" or "bread-money," was the parochial relief which a person employed by individuals at the average wages of the district obtained on account of his children; sometimes a sum to meet occasional wants, sometimes a certain weekly sum or, more frequently, the value of a certain quantity of flour or bread, to each member of the family. In some places this had matured into a system, forming the law of a whole district, sanctioned and enforced by the Magistrates, and promulgated in the form of local statutes under the name of "scales."[4] By the use of these scales the amount of relief was increased or reduced according to the price of bread. For instance, in the county of Cambridge, in December, 1821, a single woman received the price of three quartern loaves per week; a man, wife, four children, and upwards, the price of two quartern loaves per head per week. This, however, was a minimum. It was added to, not only in all cases of sickness or other kind of distress, but "particularly" as commendation and reward in the case of those who "deserved encouragement by their good behaviour." In the town of Cambridge the scale was half a loaf per head higher than in the county.[5]

32. To use a modern term, the weekly sum thus calculated was considered the "living wage" which each household, according to its constitution and numbers, should earn, and, when wages came short of this, they were supplemented according to the scale.

33. There were two ways, however, of calculating the "make-up."

> "In perhaps a majority of the parishes in which the allowance system prevails, the earnings of the applicant, and, in a few, the earnings of his wife and children, are ascertained, or at least professed or attempted to be ascertained, and only the difference between them and the sum allotted to him by the scale is paid to him by the parish."[6]

This system existed in the southern counties, and was extending itself in Yorkshire, Durham, and the north of England generally. But in other parishes the labourer was not supposed to be earning more than a given sum, and if that were less than the size of the family entitled him to, the parish made up the difference.[7]

34. No consideration was given to the amount of wages earned over the year—only to those earned in the current or the previous week or fortnight. Thus:

> "Many of those who at particular periods of the year receive wages far exceeding the average amount of the earnings of the most industrious labourer, receive also large allowances from the parish."[8]

35. The effect of placing married and unmarried on a different footing as to relief, was, of course, to encourage early and improvident marriages.[9] A child very soon came to be considered as an independent claimant for relief, and entitled to it, though residing with his parents, and though the parents might be in full work at high wages.[10]

(3) *The Roundsman System.*

36. Under this system the parish sold pauper labour to the occupiers of property at a certain low price, and made up the difference between that and the scale allowance.[11] Sometimes the paupers were sold to the farmers at auction: at Yardley, Hastings, *e.g.*, all the unemployed men were put up to sale weekly, and the clergyman on one occasion

[1] Report, p. 19. [2] Report, p. 19. [3] Report, p. 20. [4] Report, p. 21. [5] Report, pp. 21–2. [6] Report, p. 24. [7] Report, p. 28. [8] Report, p. 29. [9] Report, p. 30. [10] Report, p. 31. [11] Report, pp. 31–2.

saw a lot of ten men knocked down to one of the farmers for 5s.[1] In a village in Dorset:

> "In 1821–22 the overseers had been in the habit of sharing out the pauper labourers amongst the farmers (including themselves) and of paying for the work done by them *wholly* out of the poor's-rates."[2]

(4) *Parish Employment.*

37. Although the 43rd of Elizabeth did not authorise relief to be afforded to any but the impotent except in return for work, payment for work appeared to be "the most unusual form" in which relief was administered.[3] Out of over £7,000,000 expended in the year ending March 26th, 1832, for the relief of the poor, less than £354,000, or scarcely more than one-twentieth part, was paid for work, including work on the roads and in the workhouses.[4]

38. This was easily accounted for:—

(1) When work was paid for, superintendence had to be provided, and this was costly and inefficacious.

(2) Collecting the paupers in gangs for the performance of parish work was found to be more immediately injurious to their conduct than even allowance or relief without requiring work.

(3) Parish employment did not afford direct profit to any individual.[5]

39. The "work" provided was generally on the roads—sometimes for part of the week, or part of the day, with the intention of inducing and enabling the paupers to find work for themselves. In some of the agricultural districts, the prevalent mismanagement in this respect was found to have created in the minds of the paupers a notion that it was their right to be exempted from the same degree of labour as independent labourers.[6] Hence the adoption in some parishes of eight till four as the hours of work, with one hour off for dinner. "It was a thing unknown before," said the paupers of Great Farringdon, "in this parish, or any other, that parish labourers should work as long or as hard as the other classes of labourers."[7]

40. In many places, while the labour exacted was trifling, the parish pay equalled or exceeded the average wage of the district, and wives of the independent labourers were heard regretting that their husbands were not paupers.[8] "If a man did not like his work he would say: I can have 12s. a week by going on the roads, and doing as little as I like."[9] Without adequate supervision, of course, this work turned into a farce; men who bestirred themselves a little were laughed at by their companions.[10]

(5) *The Labour-Rate System.*

41. This was the sharing out of the labourers who had settlements in the parish by agreement among the ratepayers, each ratepayer employing a certain number, and paying them, not according to the real demand for labour, but according to rental, or acreage, or number of horses kept for tillage or contribution to rates, or some other scale. In default of employment, the ratepayer paid a corresponding sum to the overseer.[11]

42. There were considerable differences of method and distribution, varying almost with each parish adopting this system.[12] But, generally, the practice seemed to be, "not a sharing in fair proportions of the burthen amongst all, but a shifting of the burthen from one class to some other"; sometimes from the farmers to those in trade, and sometimes from large occupiers of land to small, or from arable to grass farmers; while in some cases a strong desire was shown to place it upon the tithes.[13] Hence the peculiar injustice of tradesmen and small farmers being saddled with labourers whom they had no means of employing—"working out the labour rate" as it was called—and having to pay in default. The small occupier who, by himself or with his children, was able to perform all the labour necessary for his little farm, was in the great majority of cases, the severest sufferer.[14]

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[1] Report, p. 32. [2] Report, p. 35. [3] Report, p. 35. [4] Report, p. 36. [5] Report, p. 36. [6] Report, p. 38. [7] Report, p. 39. [8] Report, p. 39. [9] Report, p. 38. [10] Report, p. 39. [11] Report, p. 42. [12] Report, p. 195. [13] Report, p. 197. [14] Report, p. 210.

43. The "indirect and unrecorded loss" sustained by the ratepayers in this way was illustrated by the case of a farmer of 500 acres, paying a poor rate of 10s. per acre, who had constantly to employ four or five more labourers than he required—costing him another £100—to say nothing of the damage done by worthless labour.[1]

Outdoor Relief of the Impotent.

44. This—as no profit could be made out of it by individuals—was subject to less abuse :—

> "Even in places distinguished in general by the most wanton parochial profusion, the allowances to the aged and infirm are moderate."[2]

45. Outdoor relief of the sick was usually effected by contract with a surgeon, but the contract generally included only those who were parishioners. On the whole, medical attendance seemed to be adequately supplied, and economically, if only the price and the amount of attendance were considered.[3]

46. The Commission noticed, in passing, that great good had been done in one place by the establishment of dispensaries, for the purpose of enabling the labouring classes themselves to defray the expense of medical treatment. But they were "not prepared to suggest any legislative measures for their encouragement."[4]

47. At this point, the Commission, under the heading of "General Remarks on Outdoor Relief," explained why they had dwelt at such length on this subject. It was because it appeared to be the relief then most extensively given, and to contain in itself the elements of an almost indefinite extension :—

> "Among the elements of extension are the constantly diminishing reluctance to claim an apparent benefit, the receipt of which imposes no sacrifice except a sensation of shame quickly obliterated by habit, even if not prevented by example ; the difficulty often amounting to impossibility on the part of those who administer and award relief, of ascertaining whether any and what necessity for it exists,* and the existence in many cases of positive motives on their parts to grant it when unnecessary, or themselves to create the necessity."[5]

48. It was the impossibility of checking imposture and fraudulent claims by the closest diligence and supervision, that suggested, on the part of two officials, the words from which the Commission may have got its chief inspiration :—

> "The only test of these cases is making their condition more severe than that of the lowest class of labourers who obtain their livelihood by honest industry. . . . The only protection for the parish is to make the parish the hardest taskmaster and the worst paymaster that can be applied to."[6]

Indoors Relief.

49. Workhouse relief also, the Commission found to be subject to great mal-administration. Mr. Chadwick, in the "Extracts"—a volume issued by the Commission in 1833 containing part of the information then received[7]—had given a description of the management of the Reading Workhouses, which, it might be thought, must be an exception to the rule. As a fact, these were merely fair specimens of the ordinary workhouses in thriving towns. The chief evils were absence of classification, discipline, and employment, and the extravagance of allowances. Children were herded with older people, and soon acquired their bad habits—particularly was this the case with young girls obliged to associate with the many prostitutes among the inmates ; paupers were allowed to leave the workhouse one day a week, and return intoxicated without punishment ; prostitutes came in to recruit their health, and returned to their trade, etc., etc.[8]

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* P. 44. It was observed that, in the large towns, the ease of obtaining relief was spreading the malady of pauperism to those who had no need of it. In St. George's, Southwark, respectable mechanics, petty manufacturers, and the like, were applying, in consequence of having witnessed the ease with which others who might have provided for themselves obtained relief. One of the applicants was discovered to be in receipt of relief from six different parishes administering relief on six different days of the week. From observations made, the assistant overseer calculated that £30 out of every £100 of the money given as outdoor relief was spent in the gin shops during the same day.

[1] Report, p. 55. [2] Report, pp. 42–3. [3] Report, p. 43. [4] Report, p. 43. [5] Report, p. 44. [6] Report, p. 47. [7] Extracts, p. 216. [8] Report, pp. 51–2.

50. In some very few instances, indeed, among which Southwell, in Nottinghamshire, was pre-eminent, the workhouse appeared to be a place where the aged and impotent were maintained in comfort, and the able-bodied supported, but under such restrictions as to induce them to prefer a life of independent labour.[1]

> "But in by far the greater number of cases, it (the workhouse) is a large almshouse, in which the young are trained in idleness, ignorance, and vice; the able-bodied maintained in sluggish sensual indolence; the aged and more respectable exposed to all the misery that is incident to dwelling in such a society, without government or classification, and the whole body of inmates subsisted on food far exceeding both in kind and in amount, not merely the diet of the independent labourer, but that of the majority of the persons who contribute to their support."[2]

51. In view of the important place among remedial measures subsequently assigned to the workhouse, it is a little remarkable that so little consideration should be given to the state of the existing workhouses, and that it should be broadly stated that there were only a "very few instances" which might serve as models. The Report, indeed, returns at a later point to emphasise the horrible condition of the workhouses in provincial towns and in the rural districts, particularly with regard to absence of classification and promiscuous meeting.

52. This section of the Report concludes by expressing the conviction of the Commissioners that the abuses of which they had so far given a short outline, though checked in some instances by the extraordinary energy and wisdom of individuals, were, on the whole, steadily and rapidly progressive.

Effect of the Relief upon those affected by it.

53. The Report then goes on to state at some length the effects of the existing system upon the three classes affected by it, viz., the labourers, the employers, and the owners of property liable to poor rates.

(1) *Effects on Labourers.*

54. Of all the classes affected by the system, the severest sufferers were those for whose benefit the system was supposed to have been introduced and to be perpetuated, viz., the labourers and their families.[3]

55. First, as regards those not actually relieved. The allowance system produced the monstrous result of penalising the thrifty worker. Many instances were given where, in pauperised districts, those who preserved their independence were likely to lose their employment. Paupers were preferred. Farmers said that they could not afford to employ those for whom they were not bound by law to provide.[4]

56. Under the system, again, men who prudently deferred the period of marriage were punished either by being refused employment, or by receiving wages estimated on the basis of their not having a family to support:[5] "If a man has not a family, he has a bad chance of getting steady work in his own parish."[6] In Suffolk the policy of most parishes was to employ the married men in preference to the single, and when the single were employed, their wages were generally less.[7] In other words, the rate of wages was regulated, not by the economic value of workers to employers, but by the parish, and as the parish gave more to a labourer with a family—in order to keep the family off the parish—than to single men, the farmers did the same.

> "Can we wonder if the labourer abandons virtues of which this is the reward? . . . Can we wonder if, smarting under these oppressions he considers the law, and all who administer the law, as his enemies, the fair objects of his frauds or his violence? Can we wonder if, to increase his income and to revenge himself on the parish, he marries, and thus helps to increase that local over-population which is gradually eating away the fund out of which he and all the other labourers of the parish are to be maintained?"[8]

57. Second, as regards those actually relieved. Here the injury done was even more certain:—

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[1] Report, p. 53. [2] Report, pp. 53–4. [3] Report, p. 77. [4] Report, pp. 77–80. [5] Report, p. 80. [6] Report, p. 84. [7] Report, p. 81. [8] Report, p. 86.

"No man's principles can be corrupted without injury to society in general; but the person most injured is the person whose principles have been corrupted. The constant war which the pauper has to wage with all who employ him or pay him is destructive to his honesty and his temper; as his subsistence does not depend on his exertions, he loses all that sweetens labour, its association with reward, and gets through his work, such as it is, with the reluctance of a slave. His pay, earned by importunity or fraud, or even violence, is not husbanded with the carefulness which would be given to the results of industry, but wasted in the intemperance to which his ample leisure invites him. It is a striking fact that, in Cholesbury, where, out of 139 individuals, only thirty-five persons of all ages, including the clergyman and his family, are supported by their own exertions, there are two public-houses."[1]

58. One witness could decidedly state that, when once a family had received relief, it was to be expected their descendants for some generations would receive it also :—

"The child remembers his father's actions, and the hereditary pauper increases his ranks by instruction as well as by example."[2]

59. Another witness said :—

"Whoever comes to us, and swears before a magistrate that he has neither work nor money, we are obliged to relieve, because we can neither give them work, nor prove that they have constant employment; and paupers now understand the law, and also the practice of magistrates so well from the many hours that they spend in police offices applying for summonses, etc., that they claim relief, not at all as a matter of favour, but as a matter of right."[3]

60. But worse remained to be said. The effect of allowance was to weaken, if not to destroy, all ties of affection between parent and child. Whenever a lad came to earn wages, or to receive parish relief on his own account (and this one must recollect was at the age of fourteen), although he might continue to lodge with his parents, he did not throw his money into a common purse, and board with them, but bought his own loaf and piece of bacon, which he devoured alone. The most disgraceful quarrels arose from mutual accusations of theft; and, as the child knew that he had been nurtured at the expense of the parish, he had no filial attachment to his parents. Even mothers and children would not nurse each other in sickness unless they were paid for it.[4]

(2) *Effects on Employers of Labourers.*

61. Pointing out very forcibly how responsible a person the labourer was in agri—that nothing could save the farmer from loss, or perhaps ruin, unless the labourers were not only intelligent and diligent, but honest enough to resist the temptation to plunder when the act was easy and the detection difficult—the Commission went on to say :—

"The tendency of the allowance system is to diminish, we might almost say, to destroy, all these qualities in the labourer. What motive has the man who is to receive 10s. every Saturday, not because 10s. is the value of his week's labour, but because his family consists of five persons, who knows that his income will be increased by nothing but by an increase of his family, and diminished by nothing but by diminution of his family, that it has no reference to his skill, his honesty, or his diligence—what motive has he to acquire or to preserve any of these merits?"[5]

62. Unhappily the evidence showed that in the pauperised rural districts the labourer was becoming not merely idle and ignorant and dishonest, but positively hostile to his master; not merely unfit for his service, and indifferent to his welfare, but actually desirous to injure him. The answers to the scheduled question whether the labourers in the neighbourhood were supposed to be better or worse workmen than formerly, varied according to the Poor Law administration of the district. Where the administration was good, labour was "never better."[6] Where the allowance system prevailed, the labourers were degenerate, disaffected, wasteful, lazy, fraudulent, and constantly changing their service. The general result was that, while capital "after having choked all the professions, and overflowed in all the channels of manufactures and commerce" was "still seeking employment, however hazardous and however distant," one business alone was described as ill supplied with capital, and that was the business "of all others the most healthy the most independent, and the most interesting."[7]

63. The effects of the system on the manufacturing employer were very different. The tending of machinery diminished the need for moral and intellectual qualities. In its oftentime "narrow routine of similar operations," the least error and delay were capable

[1] Report, p. 87. [2] Report, p. 94. [3] Report, p. 95. [4] Report, p. 96. [5] Report, pp. 67–8. [6] Report, p. 68. [7] Report, p. 71.

of immediate detection. Judgment or intelligence was not required for purely mechanical processes. Honesty was not endangered where all the property was under one roof, and diligence was insured by the presence of a comparatively small number of overlookers, and by the almost universal adoption of piecework. Here, then, the allowance system was not so mischievous, inasmuch as it did not necessarily destroy the efficiency of the manufacturing labourer.[1]

64. But in another direction the allowance system bore heavily on such employers. The manufacturer who induced or forced others to pay part of his wages was actually a pure gainer; he really could obtain cheap labour, and the loss fell principally on his competitors who did not enjoy the same advantages.

> "A manufactory worked by paupers is a rival with which one paying ordinary wages, of course, cannot compete, and in this way a Macclesfield manufacturer may find himself undersold and ruined in consequence of the mal-administration of the Poor Laws in Essex."[2]

65. Instances were given from the hosiery trade of Leicestershire, the ribbon-weaving of Coventry, and the stocking manufacture in Nottinghamshire, where the level of wages had been brought down by this "aid," enabling the employers of pauper labour to undersell employers paying full wages:[3]—

> "Whole branches of manufacture may thus follow the course not of coal mines or of streams but of pauperism; may flourish like the funguses that spring from corruption, in consequence of the abuses which are ruining all the other interests of the places in which they are established, and cease to exist in the better administered districts in consequence of that better administration."[4]

(3) *Effects on Owners of Property.*

66. As far back as 1817, a Select Committee of the House of Commons had stated as their opinion:—

> "That unless some efficacious check were interposed, there was then every reason to think that the amount of the assessment would continue to increase, until at a period more or less remote, according to the progress the evil had already made in different places, it should have absorbed the profits of the property on which the rate might have been assessed, producing thereby the neglect and ruin of the land, and the waste, or removal of other property, to the utter subversion of the happy order of society so long upheld in these kingdoms."[5]

67. Although for six years there was a progressive diminution in the amount of the Poor Law assessment, yet, after March, 1824, the increase set in again, and the amount of relief in 1834, estimated in commodities, was greater, both absolutely and in proportion to population, than in 1817.[6]

68. Happily not many cases of the actual dereliction of estates had been stated to the Commission: some, however, had occurred. They referred to a passage in the "Extracts," ong since classic, narrating how, at Cholesbury in Buckinghamshire, where the population had been almost stationary since 1801, and "in which, within the memory of persons now living, the rates were only £10 11s. a year, and only one person received relief, the sum raised for the relief of the poor rose from £99 4s. a year, in 1816, to £150 5s. in 1831; and in 1832, when it was proceeding at the rate of £367 a year," it was found to be impossible to continue its collection, the landlords having given up their rents, the farmers their tenancies, and the clergymen his glebe and his tithes.[7]

Administrative Machinery.

69. The Report then went on to examine how far the character of the persons by whom relief was awarded and distributed was likely to be favourable or unfavourable to the due administration of the Poor La[illegible].

Without going in detail into all the charges made against the various classes, the conclusions may be summed up as follows:—

(1) *Overseers.*

70. The Overseers—generally farmers in the rural districts, shopkeepers or manufacturers in towns—were empowered by law to make, assess, collect, and distribute the fund

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[1] Report, pp. 73–4. [2] Report, p. 74. [3] Report, pp. 74–5. [4] Report, p. 76. [5] Report, p. 63. [6] Report, pp. 63–4. [7] Report, p. 64.

for the relief of the poor. Serving compulsorily for three, four, six, or twelve months, they might be indicted or fined if they refused or neglected to serve, but they received no remuneration for serving. On the other hand, if they refused relief, or granted less than the applicant thought himself entitled to, they might be summoned before the justices—if indeed recourse was not had to more summary forms of remedy, viz., personal violence and arson.[1] As a fact, in many districts, the principal obstacle to improvement was the well-founded dread of these atrocities.[2]

71. Evidence, said the Commissioners, was scarcely wanted of the bad results of such a system :—

> "What could have been expected from functionaries almost always reluctant, unless indeed when their object is fraud; who neither come to their office with knowledge, nor retain it long enough to acquire knowledge; who have little time, and still less motive, for attention to its duties; on whom every temptation to misconduct has been accumulated; who have to give or to refuse public money to their own workmen, dependants, customers, debtors, relations, friends, and neighbours; who are exposed to every form of solicitation and threat; who are rewarded for profusion by ease and popularity, and punished for economy by labour, odium, and danger to their properties, and even their persons."[3]

72. The powers vested in the Overseers, it is said in another part of the Report, by the statutes of Elizabeth, could only be accounted for on the supposition that the distribution of the poor's rates was little more than an occasional distribution of alms from the poor's box, too small in its amount and influence to be regarded.[4] But now the duties and responsibilities of Overseers were so many and various that a system where many of the existing officers were ignorant, stupid, and illeterate—some indeed not able to write or read—where their private interests were often at variance with their public duties and where intimidation was often openly resorted to, was self-condemned.

(2) *Assistant Overseers.*

73. The 59 Geo. III., c. 12 authorised the appointment of Assistant Overseers, who were paid, and permanent officers, and the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners were unanimous as to their efficiency, activity, and intelligence. In 3,249 parishes there were such officers in 1831. But the adoption, nomination, continuance, and salary of these officers depended on the Vestry, and the Vestry, moreover, not the Law, determined and specified their duties. Under this perfect state of subserviency, they could not be expected to make much headway against an extravagant or jobbing Vestry. But "in the worst parishes" an Assistant Overseer was not appointed.[5]

(3) *Open Vestries.*

74. The Open Vestries consisted exclusively of the ratepayers, *i.e.*, occupiers of land and houses only—owners having no right even to be present—and were open to all ratepayers who chose to attend. The relation of the Overseers to their Vestry was that they were members of it, voting with the others, and submitting to be controlled by the majority. But, as the 43 Eliz. vested the whole power and responsibility in the Overseers, the Report said :—

> "It is very difficult to say what is the legal authority as to matters of relief of an open vestry, or whether such a body has now in fact, on such matters, any legal authority at all."[6]

75. But whatever the legal position might be, the Vestry formed, in fact, the ruling authority of the parish. Almost everywhere its practical influence was very great.[7]

76. Thus, the administration of poor relief being vested almost exclusively in those who were most tempted to pervert it for their own advantage, the result might be expected :—

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[1] Report, pp. 98–9. [2] Report, p. 100. [3] Report, p. 104. [4] Report, p. 288. [5] Report, p. 106. [6] Report, p. 107. [7] Report, p. 107.

"They form the most irresponsible bodies that ever were entrusted with the performance of public duties, or the distribution of public money. They render no account; no record need be kept of the names of the persons present, or of their speeches or their votes; they are not amenable, whatever the profusion or malversation which they have sanctioned, or ordered, or turned to their own advantage. On the other hand, they have all the motives for mal-administration which we have ascribed to the overseers. Each vestryman, so far as he is an immediate employer of labour, is interested in keeping down the rate of wages and in throwing part of their payment on others, and above all, on the principal object of parochial fraud—the tithe-owner; if he is the owner of cottages, he endeavours to get their rent paid by the parish; if he keeps a shop, he struggles to get allowance for his customers or debtors; if he deals in articles used in the workhouse, he tries to increase the workhouse consumption; if he is in humble circumstances, his own relations or friends may be among the applicants; and since the unhappy events of 1830, he feels that any attempt to reduce the parochial expenditure may endanger his property and person."[1]

(4) *Representative (or Select) Vestries.*

77. These were bodies authorised by the 59 Geo. III. c., 12, consisting of householders elected by the inhabitants of the parish, together with the ministers, churchwardens, and Overseers, meeting every fortnight or oftener and keeping minutes. Their functions were to inquire into and determine the proper objects of relief, and the nature and amount of the relief to be given. The Overseers were desired to conform to their directions: and, where such a Vestry existed, the Magistrates were forbidden to order relief until it had been proved, to the satisfaction of two Justices, that the applicant was in want, and had been refused adequate relief by the Select Vestry.[2]

78. The weak point here was that, if the Overseers refused to "conform to the directions" of their Vestry, as "desired" by the Act, the Vestry had apparently no power to compel obedience. Hence, while Representative Vestries were admittedly superior to Open Vestries, the Commission was inclined to believe that the superiority arose principally from their comparative freedom from magisterial interference, the presence of the clergyman, and the regular minutes kept of their proceedings. They were subject to the same corrupting influences, and equally irresponsible.[3]

79. The Select Vestry of Morpeth, *e.g.*, consisted of twenty persons, of whom one was a brewer, two were brewers' clerks, five were publicans, two beer-shop keepers, and one a porter-seller; so that eleven, or the majority of the whole number, were interested in the sale of beer; and the mother of one, the wife of another, and the uncle, aunt, and cousins of a third were paupers. Consequently the better class of vestrymen retired in disgust from the interested clamour of their colleagues, and very often the Representative Vestry relapsed into an Open one.[4] Thus the Select Vestries, during the previous six years, had diminished steadily from 2,868 to 2,391.[5]

(5) *Self-Appointed Vestries (also called Select).*

80. It was possible, either by prescription or under some local Act, for Vestries to be self-elected. These, as might be expected from the absence of any representative control, were the worst of all.[6]

(6) *Magistrates.*

81. But there was another local authority which had powers as regards poor relief. The 3 and 4 Will. and Mary c. 11, after reciting that many inconveniences did daily arise by reason of the unlimited powers of the Overseers, who did frequently, upon frivolous pretences, but chiefly for their own private ends, give relief to what persons and numbers they thought fit, prescribed that the poor in each parish should be registered, with date of first receiving relief, and of the occasion which brought the applicants under that necessity; that the register should be produced to the Vestry yearly in Easter-week, when there should be a call over of the persons receiving collections, and a new list made of such persons as the Vestry should think fit to allow to receive collection; and that no other person should receive collection, but by authority under the hand of one Justice of the Peace residing within such parish, or, if none were there dwelling, in the parts near or next adjoining, or by order of the Justices in Quarter Sessions, except in cases of pestilential disease.[7]

82. But owing to loose drafting of subsequent amending Acts, a Justice was enabled, on the pauper's statement of some matter which the Justice should consider to be a

[1] Report, p. 108. [2] Report, pp. 113–4. [3] Report, pp. 114–5. [4] Report, p. 115. [5] Report, p. 117. [6] Report, p. 117. [7] Report, p. 118.

reasonable cause or ground for relief, to summon the Overseers to show cause why relief should not be given, and to order such relief as he should think fit. And against this order there was no appeal.[1]

83. The great interference of the Magistrates began at Speenhamland in 1795, at the time of the high prices. Up to that date parochial relief appears to have been given chiefly through the workhouses, and not to have been extended to many besides the impotent.[2] But in that year the Berkshire Magistrates, instead of advancing wages as they were empowered to do, began a scale system—under the sanction, it must be admitted, of public opinion—and issued a table of relief, "making up" wages to a certain income corresponding with the supposed necessities of each family, and varying with the price of the gallon loaf.[3]

84. But though the scale was the worst form in which the influence of Magistrates could be exerted, great evils arose from their interference even when less systematically exercised.

85. In the first place, the very mode in which their jurisdiction was enforced seemed intended to destroy all vigilance and economy on the part of those who administered relief, and all sense of degradation or shame on the part of those who received it. The Overseer was summoned, perhaps, six or seven miles from his business, or his farm, to defend himself before the tribunal of his immediate superiors against a charge of avarice or cruelty. He seldom had any opportunity to support his defence by evidence; the pleadings generally consisted of the pauper's assertions on the one side, and the Overseer's on the other. The Magistrate might admit or reject the evidence of either party at his pleasure; might humiliate the Overseer in the pauper's presence, with whatever reproof he might think that the Overseer's frugality deserved, and finally pronounce a decree, against which, however unsupported by the facts of the case or mischievous in principle, there was no appeal. It must be remembered, too, that the pauper had often the choice of his tribunal. All the Overseers of a district were, therefore, at the mercy of any two Magistrates, and, it might be, even at the mercy of any one. The pauper might select those Magistrates whom misdirected benevolence, or desire of popularity, or timidity, led to be profuse distributors of other people's property, and bring forward his charges against the Overseer, secure of obtaining a verdict. He appeared in the character of an injured man dragging his oppressor to justice. If he failed he lost nothing, if he succeeded he obtained triumph and reward. And yet persons were found expressing grave regret that the parochial fund was wasted, that relief was claimed as a right, and that pauperism had ceased to be disgraceful.[4]

86. Supposing that such a power to "enforce charity and liberality by summons and fine" ought to exist, there were strong grounds for thinking that the existing Magistrates were not the best persons to be entrusted with it. In the first place, they were men of fortune, unacquainted with the domestic economy of the applicants for relief, and as unfit, from their own associations, "to settle what ought to be the weekly incomes of the industrious poor" as the industrious poor would be to regulate the weekly expenditure of the Magistrates.[5]

87. And, secondly, the Magistrate, even if he had a general knowledge of the subject, seldom had and seldom could acquire a knowledge of the individual facts on which he had to decide. A pauper claimed 3s. on the ground that his family consisted of five persons, and that he had earned during the last week only 7s. The Overseers believed that he had, in fact, earned more, or that he might have earned more if he had thought fit to exert himself, or that the lowness of his acknowledged earnings was the result of a collusion between him and his employer, in order to throw part of his wages on the parish. The Vestry agreed in opinion with the Overseer and the pauper appealed to the Magistrate.[6]

88. Can it be expected, said the Commissioners, that questions like these will be properly decided by Magistrates who give a few hours a week to the affairs of twenty parishes, who live at a distance from the scene of the dispute, and know little more than the names of the parties to it, and perhaps not even so much?[7]

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[1] Report, p. 120. [2] Report, p. 129. [3] Report, pp. 121–4. [4] Report, p. 133. [5] Report, p. 134. [6] Report, 137. [7] Report, p. 138.

89. It was little wonder that the Overseers complained bitterly of the obstruction given to their exertions by decisions of Magistrates.[1] As one said :—

> "The greatest evil of which I am aware is the facility with which every plan of the vestry or overseer is brought into question on the complaint of the pauper, who selects a kind and often inconsiderately liberal magistrate as his patron."[2]

90. In the towns, again, where investigation into cases was much more necessary and much more difficult, the jurisdiction of the Magistrates was still more objectionable. Summonses were granted indiscriminately, and relief ordered almost as indiscriminately.[3] One ridiculous case was quoted where fifty paupers in a body came to the Overseer and demanded immediate relief on a Magistrate's order, and where the Overseer insisted on the whole fifty cases being gone into separately before the Magistrate, only to receive the reply that :—

> "To examine into these cases of fifty paupers, at five minutes per case, would take four hours and ten minutes, which is impossible to be done, and unnecessary, inasmuch as it was the duty of the overseer to have enquired into the cases himself, and relieved the deserving, and rejected the undeserving."[4]

91. On the whole subject, the Commissioners declared that the legislature evidently did not intend that the jurisdiction of the justice should form part of the routine of the administration of the Poor Laws. It was to be exercised *in case of emergency*. If its exercise were to be habitual, they said, every populous parish must have its peculiar Magistrate, as well as its peculiar Overseers :[5]

> "A more dangerous instrument cannot be conceived, than a public officer, supported and impelled by benevolent sympathies, armed with power from which there is no appeal, and misapprehending the consequences of its exercise."[6]

Remedial Measures.

92. Reviewing the evidence thus presented, one may well understand the statement of the Commission that the most pressing of the evils described were those connected with the relief of the able-bodied, and that these were the evils, therefore, for which they would first propose remedies.[7]

93. If evils such as these—or evils resembling or even approaching them—were necessarily incidental to the compulsory relief of the able-bodied, they would not, they said, have any hesitation in recommending its entire abolition.

94. But they did not believe those evils to be its necessary consequences ; they believed that, under strict regulations, adequately enforced, such relief might be afforded safely and even beneficially. In all extensive communities circumstances would occur in which an individual might be exposed to the danger of perishing from want. To refuse relief, and at the same time to punish mendicity when it could not be proved that the offenders could have obtained subsistence by labour was repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind ; it was repugnant to them to punish even depredation, apparently committed as the only resource against want. In all extensive civilised communities, therefore, the occurrence of extreme necessity was prevented by almsgiving, by public institutions supported by endowments or voluntary contributions or by a provision partly voluntary and partly compulsory, or by a provision entirely compulsory, such as might exclude the pretext of mendicancy.

95. But in no part of Europe except England had it been thought fit that the provision, whether compulsory or voluntary, should be applied to more than the relief of *indigence*, the state of a person unable to labour, or unable to obtain, in return for his labour, the means of subsistence. It had never been deemed expedient that the provision should extend to the relief of *poverty* ; that is, the state of one, who, in order to obtain a mere subsistence, was forced to have recourse to labour.

96. From the evidence collected, they were induced to believe that a compulsory provision for the relief of the indigent could be generally administered on a sound and well defined principle.[8]

97. This then was the foundation of the recommended abolition of out-door relief of the able-bodied, and the establishment of the "self-acting test"—the offer of the workhouse.[9]

98. It appeared to the Commission that the abolition of partial outdoor relief to the able-bodied, and particularly of money payments, should come into universal operation at the end of two years, and, as respected new applicants, at an earlier

[1] Report, p. 139. [2] Report, p. 142. [3] Report, p. 142. [4] Report, p. 146. [5] Report, p. 150. [6] Report, p. 151. [7] Report, p. 227. [8] Report, p. 227. [9] Report, p. 264.

period,[1] and that the chief remedy should be the reception of the able-bodied paupers in a well-managed workhouse."[2]

99. As to how such workhouses could be provided and the requisite management enforced, the Commissioners had no difficulty in showing that this could be obtained only if parishes were amalgamated and incorporated for the purpose.

100. At least four classes of inmates required to be distinguished:—(1) The aged and really impotent; (2) the children; (3) the able-bodied females; (4) the able-bodied males. Of these classes, the two latter would, it was trusted, be the least numerous.[3]

101. It appeared to the Commissioners that both the requisite classification and the requisite superintendence might be better obtained in separate buildings than under a single roof. If effected in the latter mode, large buildings would have to be erected, since few of the existing buildings were of the requisite size or arrangement; and, as very different qualities, both moral and intellectual, were required for the management of such dissimilar classes, each class would require to have its separate superintendent. Nothing would be saved, therefore, in superintendence, and much expense would have to be incurred in buildings. But if a separate building were assigned to each class, and if parishes were incorporated for the purpose, the existing workhouses might, in most cases, be made use of.[4] In many instances, at least, classification would not involve the addition of new workhouses, as, by assigning one class of paupers to each house, a greater number might be received. The proper objects of relief might be accommodated temporarily in ordinary dwelling houses, and the existing workhouses might be utilised for the able-bodied.[5] As regards the dreaded evil of congregating "large bodies of sturdy paupers together in workhouses," this might be avoided by better management and superintendence:—[6]

> "Each class might thus receive its appropriate treatment; the old might enjoy their indulgences without torment from the boisterous; the children be educated, and the able-bodied subjected to such courses of labour and discipline as would repel the indolent and vicious."[7]

And, it was added, such a system might secure the co-operation of much voluntary service.[8]

Comments upon these Extracts.

102. We have dwelt at some length upon these portions of the Report of the Royal Commission because they are the foundation of their main conclusions. The Commission maintained that the evils, especially of profuse and unchecked able-bodied relief, were due not to the spirit or direction of the Acts regulating poor relief in England, but to a misinterpretation of their object and meaning. They further proved, by an elaborate analysis, that the local administration in charge of the relief of the poor was wholly unsuited for the duties imposed upon it. Moreover, the conditions surrounding it, and the pressure to which it was subject, rendered it incapable of discharging impartially, intelligently, and fearlessly the duties of a relief authority. That the intention of the Statutes authorising relief to the poor was wrongly construed, and that the agencies in charge of that relief were incapable, were two allegations that had been made time after time, and were reiterated with increasing force by the Royal Commission. Their recommendations were in accord with those two allegations. As regards the principles of relief they proposed no change, but they laid down conditions to be attached to the relief of able-bodied applicants, which in their opinion gave effect to the intention and spirit of the statutes, but which were contrary to the existing practice, and would, they knew, be unpopular in many localities. They foresaw that, if such conditions were to be effectual in regulating the local distribution of relief, it was essential that a system of administrative machinery should be set up, which would not be set in motion by every gust of local popular opinion. They concentrated their attention upon the construction of that machinery, and the reforms which have been made since that date are in the main the effect of its working.

103. Even in this early stage of our Report we desire to express our agreement in this respect with the Commission. It is useless to frame laws and regulations if there is no power of continuously enforcing them. This elementary platitude, true as it is of all legal enactments, has a special force when applied to the laws relating to the relief

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[1] Report, p. 237. [2] Report, p. 262. [3] Report, p. 306. [4] Report, pp. 306–7. [5] Report, p. 313.
[6] Report, pp. 307–8. [7] Report, p. 307. [8] Report, p. 313.

of the poor. There is a subtle and constant influence, fostered by the kindly instincts of impulsive humanity, which is ever at work sapping and undermining restrictions upon the grant of public relief. This influence may sometimes seem to be in abeyance, but it is always in existence, and at times of stress or turmoil is capable of exerting a powerful emotional force which breaks down the resistance of all but the firm and convinced administrator. No doctrines, however sound or beneficent, can themselves be made the foundation of a system of national relief if they are liable at any moment to be rooted up. Improvement in administration by subordinating the local authority to a central tribunal, and a clearer definition of the intention and object of the Poor Law, are the two great changes made by the Act of 1834.[1]

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE POOR LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1834.[1]

104. There is no expression more in vogue amongst those interested in Poor Law administration than that of "The Principles of 1834."

105. This frequent reference to the Principles of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, as suggesting a standard by which to judge of "strict administration" or of "lax administration," seems to make it desirable to state, so far as possible, *ipsissimis verbis*, what these principles were. First fourteen sections of Act.

106. An examination of the Act itself does not give much information. It is called: "An Act for the Amendment and better Administration of the Laws relating to the Poor in England and Wales," and is dated 14th August, 1834. The first fourteen Sections provide for the appointment or removal, at the pleasure of the Crown, of three Commissioners, who, or any two of whom, may sit as a Board for carrying the Act into execution. These Commissioners are empowered to summon witnesses and examine them upon oath upon any matter relating to the poor or their relief, and to require the production of books and documents. They may appoint Assistant Commissioners (to whom the Commissioners may delegate any of their powers except that of making General Rules), and also a Secretary, Assistant Secretary or Secretaries, clerks, and other officers. No Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner is to be capable of sitting in Parliament, and all appointments are to be limited to five years. The Commissioners are to make an annual Report, to be laid before Parliament and to give to the Secretary of State any information respecting their proceedings which he may require.[2] Fifteenth Section.

107. In the 15th Section are laid down the functions of the three Commissioners:—

> "The administration of relief to the poor throughout England and Wales, according to the existing laws, or such laws as shall be in force at the time being, shall be subject to the direction and control of the Commissioners."[3]

For this purpose they are authorised and required to make and issue all such Rules, Orders, and Regulations for the management of the poor, for the government of workhouses and the education of children therein, for the management of parish poor children and the superintending, inspecting, and regulating of the houses wherein such poor children are kept and maintained; for the apprenticing of poor children, and for the guidance and control of all Guardians, Vestries, and parish officers, so far as relates to the management or relief of the poor and the keeping, examining, auditing, and allowing of accounts, and making and entering into contracts in all matters relating to such management or relief, or to any expenditure for the relief of the poor, and for carrying this Act into execution in all other respects, as they shall think proper, and they may suspend, alter, or rescind the same:—

> "provided always that nothing in this Act contained shall be construed as enabling the said Commissioners, or any of them, to interfere in any individual case for the purpose of ordering relief."[3]

108. It would seem, then, that the administration of the laws for the relief of the poor, from the 43rd of Elizabeth down to and including the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 itself, so far as these laws, or portions of them, were not repealed, as well as the administration of any future laws on the subject, was put under the direction and control of the three Commissioners.

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[1] 4 & 5 Will. IV. Cap. 76. [2] Sec. 1–14. [3] Sec. 15.

109. In succeeding Sections of the Act, the general power of administration thus given is defined as regards the following matters :—

All the powers and authorities of any Acts, general as well as local, relating to workhouses or relief of the poor.[1]

The building and alteration of work-houses and making Rules and Regulations to be observed in the same.[2]

The declaring of unions of parishes, the alteration and dissolution of Unions, and the classification of the poor in the Union workhouses.[3]

The number, duties, and (within certain limits) qualifications of Guardians, and the regulation of their election.[4]

The ascertaining of the average expenditure for three years of the parishes in a Union, with a view to the assessment of parishes to a common fund.[5]

The appointment and regulating the qualifications, salaries, and duties of officers and their tenure of office, and the dismissal of the same.[6]

The making of contracts.[7]

The regulation of relief to the able-bodied or their families out of the workhouse, by such Rules, Orders, or Regulations as they may think fit.[8]

The determination of such relief as is to be considered as given by way of loan.[9]

The raising of money for emigration and its application for that purpose;[10]

The borrowing of money from the Exchequer Bill Commissoners on the security of the Poor Rate, for purchasing, building, or altering workhouses or for purchasing land for the purpose, or for defraying emigration expenses.[11]

The audit of accounts.[12]

The apprenticeship of children.[13]

The calling for and publishing accounts of trusts and charities applicable to the relief of the poor.[14]

110. But certain other provisions were positively enacted. Such, *e.g.*, are these :—

That no inmate of a workhouse shall be obliged to attend any religious service celebrated in a mode contrary to his religious principles, nor any child be educated in a religious creed to which its parents or surviving parent shall object, or, in the case of an orphan, to which the godfathers or godmothers shall object ;[15]

That no dangerous lunatic, insane person, or idiot, shall be detained in any workhouse (not being also a county lunatic asylum) longer than fourteen days ;[16]

That all relief given to or on account of the wife, or children under sixteen not being blind or deaf or dumb, shall be considered as given to the husband or father, and any relief to children under sixteen of any widow shall be considered as given to the widow ;[17]

That two Justices may order relief to a poor person out of the workhouse, provided one of them certifies of his own knowledge that such poor person is, from old age or infirmity, wholly unable to work ;[18]

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1 Sec. 21. 2 Sec. 22–3, 25. 3 Sec. 26, 32. 4 Sec. 38–41. 5 Sec. 28–9. 6 Sec. 46, 48. 7 Sec. 49–51. 8 Sec. 52. 9 Sec. 58. 10 Sec. 62. 11 Sec. 63. 12 Sec. 47. 13 Sec. 61. 14 Sec. 85. 15 Sec. 19. 16 Sec. 45. 17 Sec. 56. 18 Sec. 27.

The ordering of relief, which (subject to the powers of the Commissioners) is expressly vested in the Boards of Guardians or Select Vestries except in cases of sudden and urgent necessity, when temporary relief in kind is required to be given by the Overseers and, in default, may be ordered to be so given by any Justice in articles of absolute necessity, but not in money; any Justice to have the power of ordering medical relief in sudden and dangerous illness;[1]

The new bastardy regulations;[2]

The new settlement regulations, including abolition of settlement by hiring and service, or by serving an office, and a requirement that, in the case of a settlement acquired by the occupation of a tenement, poor rate should be paid for one year;[3]

The new regulations regarding the introduction of spirituous liquors into the workhouse.[4]

That the Rules, Orders and Regulations of the Commissioners are removable only by writ of *certiorari* to the Court of King's Bench, aud are to continue in force until declared to be illegal.[5]

No new principles enunciated in the Act.

111. Such, then, were the provisions of the Act, and such the powers created by the legislature and confided to the Commissioners in 1834. Whether or not it be the case, as has been asserted, that "no new principle was then introduced into the law,"* it seems clear that no principle was actually enunciated in the Act. The relief of the poor was put, as regards administration, regulation, and control, into the hands of a new board of salaried public servants, but no definite principle was laid down, by preamble or otherwise,† to guide the Commissioners in that administration.

112. The question then presents itself; was it left to the Commissioners to formulate their own principles, and is it their formulation which constitutes the "principles of 1834"?

113. The answer is found in the first Annual Report, presented at the end of their first year of office. There we find an almost casual reference to the Workhouse System: "Under these circumstances, we proceeded to direct our chief attention to the general introduction of the Workhouse System." A few pages further on, we find that "the principles of Poor Law administration which are sanctioned by Gilbert's Act and by most of the local Acts of incorporation of the same period," are at variance with "the principles established under the Poor Law Amendment Act"; the chief of the Gilbert Act principles being that the Guardians were required, on the application of those professing themselves unemployed and willing to work, to agree for the labour of such poor persons at any work or employment suited to their strength and capacity, not in the workhouse, but in any parish, township, or place near the place of their residence, and to cause such persons to be properly maintained, lodged, and provided for until such work could be procured.

114. From these statements we seem bound to infer that certain principles had been laid down somewhere, and were so definite and recognised as to have deserved the name of the "Workhouse System."

Report of Commission of 1832.

115. The fact is that there was an actual preamble to the Act of 1834, which was so much in everybody's knowledge at the time that it did not seem necessary to repeat it as

* Reference to the Report of 1832–4 and to the Annual Reports of the Commissioners shows that it was conceived that the provisions of the Poor Law Amendment Act only carried out the spirit and intention of the 43rd of Elizabeth, and that these had been violated by the old system.

† The only preamble is: Whereas it is expedient to alter and amend the Laws relating to the Relief of Poor Persons in England and Wales: Be it therefore enacted, etc. Section LII., however, which deals with the outdoor relief of able-bodied persons or their families, is introduced by the words: And whereas a practice has obtained of giving relief to persons or their families, who, at the time of applying for or receiving such relief, were wholly or partially in the employment of individuals, and the relief of the able-bodied and their families is in many places administered in modes productive of evil in other respects. And whereas difficulty may arise in case any immediate and universal remedy is attempted to be applied in the matters aforesaid; be it further enacted, etc.

[1] Sec. 54. [2] Sec. 69–76. [3] Sec. 64–6. [4] Sec. 92–4. [5] Sec. 105.

preface to the Act. It was the Report of the Commission of 1832–4 which we have just been considering and the administration of the Act was put into the hands of men who were prominently identified with that Report and imbued with its spirit.

116. On referring to this Report, we find certain principles, and the system which logically grew out of them, stated with the utmost clearness and force : —

> "From the evidence collected under this Commission, we are induced to believe that a compulsory provision for the relief of the indigent can be generally administered on a sound and well-defined principle; and that under the operation of this principle, the assurance that no one need perish from want may be rendered more complete than at present, and the mendicant and vagrant repressed by disarming them of their weapon—the plea of impending starvation.
>
> It may be assumed that, in the administration of relief the public is warranted in imposing such conditions on the individual relieved as are conducive to the benefit either of the individual himself, or of the country at large, at whose expense he is to be relieved.
>
> The first and most essential of all conditions, a principle which we find universally admitted, even by those whose practice is at variance with it, is, that his situation on the whole shall not be made really or apparently so eligible as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class. Throughout the evidence it is shown, that in proportion as the condition of any pauper class is elevated above the condition of independent labourers, the condition of the independent class is depressed; their industry is impaired, their employment becomes unsteady, and its remuneration in wages is diminished. Such persons, therefore, are under the strongest inducements to quit the less eligible class of labourers and enter the more eligible class of paupers. The converse is the effect when the pauper class is placed in its proper position, below the condition of the independent labourer. Every penny bestowed that tends to render the condition of the pauper more eligible than that of the independent labourer is a bounty on indolence and vice."[1]

117. This "the main principle of a good Poor Law administration, namely, the restoration of the pauper to a position below that of the independent labourer" was put more succinctly in the words of a witness, thus :—

> "To let the labourer find that the parish is the hardest taskmaster and the worst paymaster he can find, and thus induce him to make his application to the parish his last and not his first resource."[2]

118. From the mass of evidence adduced, continues the Report : —

> "It appears that, wherever the principle which we have thus stated has been carried into effect, either wholly or partially, its introduction has been beneficial to the class for whose benefit Poor Laws exist. We have seen that in every instance in which the able-bodied labourers have been rendered independent of partial relief, or of relief otherwise than in a well-regulated workhouse :
>
> (1) Their industry has been restored and improved.
> (2) Frugal habits have been created or strengthened.
> (3) The permanent demand for their labour has increased.
> (4) And the increase has been such that their wages, so far from being depressed by the increased amount of labour in the market, have in general advanced.
> (5) The number of improvident and wretched marriages has diminished.
> (6) Their discontent has been abated, and their moral and social conditions in every way improved"[3]

* * * * *

We therefore submit, as the general principle of legislation on this subject, in the present conditions of the country :—

> *That those modes of administering relief which have been tried wholly or partially, and have produced beneficial effects in some districts, be introduced, with modifications according to local circumstances, and carried into complete execution in all.*[4]

The chief specific measures which we recommend for effecting these purposes, are :—

> FIRST, THAT EXCEPT AS TO MEDICAL ATTENDANCE, AND SUBJECT TO THE EXCEPTION RESPECTING APPRENTICESHIP HEREINAFTER STATED, ALL RELIEF WHATEVER TO ABLE-BODIED PERSONS OR TO THEIR FAMILIES, OTHERWISE THAN IN WELL-REGULATED WORKHOUSES (*i.e.*, PLACES WHERE THEY MAY BE SET TO WORK ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT AND INTENTION OF THE 43RD OF ELIZABETH) SHALL BE DECLARED UNLAWFUL, AND SHALL CEASE, IN MANNER AND AT PERIODS HEREINAFTER SPECIFIED ;* AND THAT ALL RELIEF AFFORDED IN RESPECT OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF SIXTEEN SHALL BE CONSIDERED AS AFFORDED TO THEIR PARENTS.[5]

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* The "hereafter specified" refers to p. 297, where it was said that it appeared to the Royal Commission that this prohibition should come into universal operation at the end of two years, and, as regards new applicants, at an earlier period. "No doubt can be entertained that it was the deliberate intention of Parliament, in framing the Poor Law Amendment Act, that all outdoor relief to the able-bodied should cease at the earliest possible period that it could safely, and with propriety, be put an end to; and the question we have to successively decide as to each union is whether this time may be fairly deemed to have arrived." (Second Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, p. 7.)

[1] Report of Royal Commission of 1832, pp. 227–8. [2] Report, p. 229. [3] Report, p. 261. [4] Report, p. 261. [5] Report, p. 262.

It is true that nothing is necessary to arrest the progress of pauperism, except that all who receive relief from the parish should work for the parish exclusively, as hard and for less wages than independent labourers work for individual employers, and we believe that in most districts useful work, which will not interfere with the ordinary demand for labour, may be obtained in greater quantity than is usually conceived. Cases, however, will occur where such work cannot be obtained in sufficient quantity to meet an immediate demand; and when obtained, the labour, by negligence, connivance, or otherwise, may be made merely formal, and thus the provisions of the legislature may be evaded more easily than in a workhouse. A well-regulated workhouse meets all cases, and appears to be the only means by which the intention of the statute of Elizabeth, that all the able-bodied shall be set to work, can be carried into execution.[1]

* * * * *

And although we admit that able-bodied persons in the receipt of outdoor allowances and partial relief, may be, and in some cases are, placed in a condition less eligible than that of the independent labourer of the lowest class; yet to persons so situated, relief in a well-regulated workhouse would not be a hardship: and even if it be, in some rare cases, a hardship, it appears from the evidence that it is a hardship to which the good of society requires the applicant to submit. The express or implied ground of his application is that he is in danger of perishing from want. Requesting to be rescued from that danger out of the property of others, he must accept assistance on the terms, whatever they may be, which the common welfare requires. The bane of all pauper legislation has been the legislating for extreme cases. Every exception, every violation of the general rule to meet a real case of unusual hardship, lets in a whole class of fraudulent cases, by which that rule must in time be destroyed. Where cases of real hardship occur, the remedy must be applied by individual charity, a virtue for which no system of compulsory relief can be or ought to be a substitute."[2]

119. To sum up: What the original Report of the Commission of 1832–4 called "the first and most essential of all conditions," and what the Commissioners under the Act of 1834, in Report after Report, called "the fundamental principle of the Poor Law Amendment Act" was that the situation of the able-bodied pauper * should be, really or apparently, less eligible than the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class. And, while this might be secured by a very carefully administered outdoor relief system, it could only be effectually secured by the offer of relief in a workhouse, where by labour, discipline, and restraint, as well as by dietary, the inmate's situation would be definitely and ascertainably less eligible than that of the poorest class of those who contributed to his support. This was the workhouse system, and, against such a system, all criticism which spoke of the Act as erecting workhouses for the imprisonment of those who could not find work outside fell pointless. The workhouse was not an end so much as a means. In the last unhappy resort it was a provision for the really destitute; primarily, the offer of it was a "self-acting test" of the reality of the claim on relief.†

120. To secure the carrying out of the principle, two things were necessary: that the wide discretionary powers hitherto exercised by the 15,500 Authorities should be taken out of their hands and put under the control of one strong Central Board, and that the administration should be uniform over the country. Hence the succeeding recommendation:— Machinery necessary to give effect to principles laid down.

"We recommend, therefore, the appointment of a Central Board to control the administration of the Poor Laws, with such assistant Commissioners as may be found requisite; and that the Commissioners be empowered and directed to frame and enforce regulations for the government of workhouses, and as to the nature and amount of the relief to be given and the labour to be exacted in them, and that such regulations shall, as far as may be practicable, be uniform throughout the country."[3]

* It is rather remarkable that no definition of "able-bodied" is given in the Report except the negative one on p. 42, that aged, sick, and infirm (grouped under the expression "impotent") are not able-bodied. Hence the difficulty in which the Commissioners found themselves as regards relief to the partially disabled. They spoke of the inexpediency of continuing to give partial relief in these cases, and the injustice of thus enabling them to compete with and lower the value of the labour of the able-bodied man. "We feel the injustice and impolicy of this course so strongly that, although not desirous of urging or insisting on the application of the workhouse to all cases of this nature, we are of opinion that it is desirable that persons incapable of wholly maintaining themselves should not be suffered to receive partial relief, but should be entirely supported by the guardians, and should either be set to work by the guardians in such manner as may be suitable to their condition, or should not be suffered to do any work on their own account." ("Continuance Report," of Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, p. 43.)

† Thus modern readers are apt to think of the Report and of its remedy as "hard," even harsh, forgetting that the Commissioners had to deal with a demoralised England, where "more than one half or two-thirds of the cases of able-bodied labourers in towns were cases of indolence or imposture," and where "it rarely appeared that five or six in a hundred claimants sustained the test." We have it, however, on the authority of Mr. Mackay that Sir Edwin Chadwick always objected to the expression "workhouse test." The idea of the workhouse, he always insisted, was derived from the practice of the working classes themselves with regard to their own friendly societies. Their rule was "all or nothing." The friendly societies prohibited their members from working when in receipt of sick pay, and enforced their rule by a system of inspection. This was not practicable for the public authority, which was therefore obliged to offer all or nothing in some other form. (*History of the English Poor Law*, Vol. III., p. 126.)

[1] Report, p. 262. [2] Report, pp. 262–3. [3] Report, p. 297.

121. The Commissioners were sworn into office August 23rd, 1834, and at once set to work, under the dominance of the workhouse principle, to concert such preparatory and temporary measures as seemed necessary to check the "master evil," as they called it, of relief to the able-bodied.

122. The first measures taken temporarily to apply this principle are contained under the heading "Relief," in "Orders and Regulations for the Guidance and Government of the Boards of Guardians of Unions," issued by the Commissioners :—

> "*Firstly.*—No relief shall be given in money (except in cases of sickness or accident) to any able-bodied male pauper who is in employment (the same not being parish work) and in the receipt of earnings; nor to any part of his family who shall be dependent on him, or for whose relief and maintenance he shall be liable.
>
> *Secondly.*—If any able-bodied male pauper shall apply to be set to work by the parish, one-half at least of the relief which may be afforded to him or to his family shall be in kind.
>
> *Thirdly.*—One-half at least of the relief which may be afforded to widows or single women, not being aged or infirm, shall be in kind.
>
> *Fourthly.*—No relief shall be given to any able-bodied male pauper by payment or payments of, for or on account of, the rent for his house or lodging, or for the house or lodging of any part of his family who shall be dependent upon him and for whose relief and maintenance he shall be liable, or by allowance towards such rent.
>
> *Fifthly.* Except in case of accident, sickness, or other urgent necessity, no relief shall be afforded from the poor-rates of any parish or place comprised in the said Union, to any pauper between the ages of sixteen and sixty, belonging to any such parish or place comprised in the said Union, who shall not be resident therein: provided always that this regulation shall not extend to any person, not being an able-bodied male pauper, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, who shall, on the day herein appointed for the first meeting of the guardians, be in the receipt of relief from any parish or place comprised in the said Union, although not resident in such parish or place, and although such person shall continue a non-resident; but in every case due inquiry shall be made as to the propriety of such relief being continued." [1]

Employment of able-bodied paupers.

123. The same subject is expanded in a document issued by the Central Board, dated September 21st, 1835, entitled: "Suggestions as to the most eligible Modes of providing Outdoor Employment for Able-bodied Paupers, in Cases where there is not an Efficient Workhouse, and preparatory to the establishment of the Workhouse System." This purports to be :

> "A statement of the general principles which ought to govern them (Union and parish authorities) in providing employment for paupers . . . bearing in mind always, that the best form of outdoor labour at task work on account of the parish, however well-devised and enforced, is but secondary to the application of the workhouse system, and can only be sanctioned as a palliative for a time, and until adequate and efficient workhouse accommodation shall be provided.
>
> The two great principles to be kept constantly in view, in providing employment for paupers, are these: Firstly, that parish work should be of such a nature as to discourage applications from all who are not really necessitous, and thereby to stimulate labourers to independent exertions in seeking after and obtaining employment for themselves; and, Secondly, that pauper labour ought likewise to be of such a nature as to hold out no temptation to the employer to resort to it through an abuse of the poor-rates, rather than seek for independent labourers to perform his work.
>
> It follows, therefore, that the work to be provided for paupers, should be of a laborious and undesirable nature in itself, and that the remuneration should be less than would be paid for work of equal quantity, if performed by independent labourers; and, further, that such work should not be of the kind in which the independent labourers of the district are ordinarily employed, neither should it be much regarded as to its profitable results; but it should be viewed merely as a condition on which that relief, which their necessities require, and which the law allows, is to be administered to paupers.
>
> If these principles are applied to the different kinds of parish employment usually resorted to, there will be little difficulty in determining which is the least objectionable."[2]

Nature of work to be provided.

124. The document then discusses the "most usual method of setting able-bodied paupers to work," the repair of roads, or the preparation of materials for that purpose; notes that the use of corn mills gets rid of the ordinary difficulty of superintending outdoor labour, etc., and continues :

> "It will be perceived from the foregoing observations, that the Commissioners consider that the question whether the work performed by paupers is profitable in a pecuniary sense, is altogether secondary to the main question, namely, whether as a condition of obtaining relief it operates to discourage pauperism. From misapprehension on this point, it has been sometimes attempted to obtain a profit for the parish, not only by cultivating parish farms, but by setting

[1] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners; 500, 1835, App. A, p. 52.
[2] Second Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners; 595, I., 1836 App. A, p. 41.

up various sorts of manufactures, to be carried on by pauper labour. Such efforts, however, have always proved abortive, and have invariably entailed a loss upon the parish, as well as caused injury to the independent labourer, by interfering with the labour market. The Board, therefore, must decidedly discourage all such attempts on the part of parishes or unions."[1]

125. But all such suggestions for outside employment were explicitly provisional and temporary, for the guidance of Guardians till sufficient time had been given to make the transition and to furnish adequate workhouse accommodation. Thenceforward all that remained for carrying out the principle was to determine the labour which should be employed inside the workhouse, labour, of course, being one of the conditions relied on for making the situation of the pauper less eligible than that of the independent worker.

126. Here the principle laid down by the 1832–4 Report was that:

"It ought to be useful employment. Parish officers . . . have resorted to the expedient of sending paupers on fictitious errands, with baskets full of stones, or blank paper directed as letters, and other devices of the same nature, obviously intended to torment them. Such contrivances are pernicious in the revengeful feelings which they generate in the minds of the paupers themselves, and they are also pernicious in exciting sympathy in behalf of the indolent and vicious, and in the obstacles which they create to the use of legitimate labour and salutary discipline. We believe that they ought to be carefully prevented. The association of the utility of labour to both parties, the employer as well as the employed, is one which we consider it most important to preserve and strengthen; and we deem everything mischievous which unnecessarily gives to it a repulsive aspect. At the same time, we believe that in extended districts the requisite sources of employment will be easily found. The supply of the articles consumed in workhouses and prisons would afford a large outlet for the manufactures carried on in the house."[2]

127. In the "Continuance Report" of 1840, the Commissioners say:

"The justice and expediency of requiring it (the labour to be performed in the workhouse) are so universally acknowledged that we deem it unnecessary to say more than that we have endeavoured to devise such modes of employment as shall interfere the least with the field of industry open to the independent labourer."[3]

128. Such then, are the "fundamental principles" constantly referred to in successive Annual Reports of the Commissioners from 1835 to 1847. It is obvious that they relate only to the able-bodied poor. This, indeed, is what might be expected. To quote the "Continuance Report" of 1840: Applicable only to able-bodied poor.

"The amount of the poor rates had become grievously oppressive in most parts of the country, and in some places had become nearly intolerable, so as to threaten the abandonment of the land by the proprietors. But the heavy taxation was not so oppressive to the ratepayer as the mode of distributing the rates was pernicious to the paupers and the rest of the community. Various contrivancies for confounding relief with wages had enabled the predominant interest in each locality to force their weaker neighbours to contribute to a common fund from which they did not derive an equal benefit, and had converted the state of the labourer into a condition little superior to that of predial servitude. The consequences of this perversion of the natural relations of employer and workman were developed in the agrarian disturbances and fires of 1830 and 1831, and in a general feeling of insecurity and alarm throughout the southern and eastern counties of England."[4]

129. And again:

"In no part of Europe except England has it been thought fit that the provision (against the danger of perishing), whether compulsory or voluntary, should be applied to more than the relief of *indigence*, the state of a person unable to labour, or unable to obtain, in return for his labour, the means of subsistence. It has never been deemed expedient that the provision should extend to the relief of *poverty*; that is, the state of one who, in order to obtain a mere subsistence, is forced to have recourse to labour."[5]

But, so far had England departed from any such sound principles, that the first work set before the Commissioners was "the *restoration* of the pauper to a position below that of the independent labourer."

130. In such circumstances it may well be conceived that a Commission, however desirous of thinking out the whole question of the theory of a Poor Law and its proper administration, must have felt that it must hurry out a report. The "Extracts"—published a year before the Report—had shown that the system was not only bad in itself, but tended to "constant and indefinite increase" of the evils, by the "irresistible temptations to fraud" which it presented. £7,000,000 a year, in fact, were being spent in a way that was manufacturing able-bodied pauperism.*

* The maximum of the period was in 1817–18, when the expenditure on relief amounted to £7,870,801, or 13s. 10d. per head of population.

[1] *Ibid.*, App. A, p. 43. [2] Report, p. 324. [3] "Continuance Report," 226, 1840, p. 30. [4] Report, p. 6. [5] Report, p. 227.

Limitation of Report of 1832.

131. Thus the Report should be read in its historical context.* It does not lay down, or proceed on, any philosophical theory of the place of poverty in the social organism, of "rights" to life or to work, even of the duty of the State towards its less fortunate members, except in one particular that, where the State gives relief, it should make the situation of the able-bodied recipient less eligible than that of the independent labourer. It does not ask if and how far the very perfecting of the organisations by which wealth is produced leaves certain of the producers outside the organisation, and whether charity is the only or the best means of dealing with these. It does not, indeed, mark out the sphere of charity from that of public relief. And the legislature, taking the Report as the foundation, simply took the whole body of law relating to the subject, and passed an Amendment Act, putting the administration into the hands of a small body of experts with somewhat wide and unusual powers. The Report, then does not profess to be a complete statement of the principles of poor relief. It is rather an exposition of what a Poor Law should not do—that is, interfere with the ordinary industry of the country by giving relief on terms more eligible than men could get by their own labour. In a circular sent to Parish Officers in some Counties on November 8th, 1834, it is said:—

> "The Poor Law Amendment Act was passed, not for the purpose of abolishing the necessary relief to the indigent, but for preventing various illegal and injurious practices, which had by degrees grown up in the administration of such relief."[1]

132. Understanding this, we find, as we might expect, that, while there is a "fundamental principle," clearly thought out and proved by masses of evidence, as regards the able-bodied, there is no very clear guidance for the administration of the Act as regards the other classes with which the Commissioners had to deal.

Branches of relief other than able-bodied.

133. In the Report of 1832–4, no change was suggested in the care of the sick poor. They were, presumably, to receive outdoor relief and medical attendance as before and there is no hint of making their situation less eligible than that of the sick independent labourer.† Indeed, the clause in which the workhouse principle itself is laid down is prefaced by the words: "except as to medical attendance."[2] In the separate workhouses which the Commissioners advised, while classification is

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* It should, moreover, be read in the light of the personality of its authors. As is well known, the Report was almost entirely the work of two men, Nassau William Senior and Edwin Chadwick. In after life each of them asserted that he had written the whole of it, with some little assistance from the other. Senior was Professor of Political Economy in Oxford, with all the prepossessions of an orthodox economist of his day. Chadwick—"that juvenile theorist of thirty-four, the sucking Solon of the Benthamite breed," as *The Times* contemptuously called him—had been for several years secretary and friend of Jeremy Bentham, and the remedial measures of the Report were certainly due to him. Nicholls—one of the original "Three Kings of Somerset House," or, "Pinch-pauper Triumvirate," and afterwards historian of the Poor Law—on retiring from the service of the East India Company, had become overseer for the parish of Southwell, in Nottinghamshire, in 1821, and had there put in successful practice the principles which he was subsequently the means of extending over England. In 1836 he was sent by Lord John Russell to Ireland, to inquire into the possibility of introducing there a Poor Law on the English model, and the Irish Poor Relief Act of 1838, which introduced the workhouse system into Ireland, was founded on his Report.

† "Previously to the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act, there existed no statute expressly authorising the parish authorities to provide medical relief for the poor. In the statute of Elizabeth no allusion to any such relief is to be found, and in the subsequent Acts of Parliament relating to the poor the Legislature has been entirely silent on this subject. In the absence of any positive provisions, medical aid has, nevertheless, been supplied to the poor, and, as might have been expected from the uncontrolled discretion of parish officers of 15,000 districts, the arrangements for the purpose have been almost infinitely various, both as to the mode of selecting the medical attendants and the amount of their remuneration. Almost all, however, had the same defect—the absence of all effective control over the medical officer, as well as respects his due attendance on the sick, as with regard to the amount of his charges. . . . We must premise that the objects which we desire to attain are—to provide medical aid for all persons who are really destitute, and to prevent medical relief from generating or encouraging pauperism." (Continuance Report, 1840, pp. 44–5.) We learn from Assistant Commissioners' Reports that, before 1834, there had been much undiscriminating medical aid, and its dangers, as tending to dependence on the parish, are often dwelt on. "The parish authorities," said Dr. Kay, of Suffolk and Norfolk, "exercised no discretion concerning the persons who were entitled to be attended at the expense of the parish. . . . In the matter of relief by medicine almost all the rural labourers were paupers." (Second Report, App., p. 180.)

[1] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 500, 1835, p. 45. [2] Report, p. 262.

recommended, for, amongst others, the "aged and really impotent," there is no specific mention of the advantages which would accrue to the sick from medical treatment in a workhouse hospital.[1]

134. Nor, curiously enough, is there any more specific mention of the aged. As just stated, separate buildings were recommended for the reception of different classes of the poor among whom were mentioned "the aged and really impotent," where "the old might enjoy their indulgences without torment from the boisterous."[2] The expression "indulgences" seems to suggest that the ineligible situation test was not to apply to them.*

135. It may be presumed that the Commissioners saw no objection to the aged continuing to receive outdoor relief, on the ground that, "even in places distinguished in general by the most wanton parochial profusion, the allowances to the aged and infirm are moderate."†

136. As regards children, still less is said, save as regards apprenticeship—"a mode of relief expressly pointed out by the 43rd of Elizabeth, and interwoven with the habits of the people in many districts"—and even this was relegated to a subsequent special inquiry.[3] Children, indeed, formed one of the four classes for which separate workhouse accommodation was recommended.[4] There they were to be educated, and mention is made of the necessity of an adequate salary "to a person properly qualified to act as a schoolmaster."[5] Beyond this, the assumption is that children were to fare with their parents. There is no specific mention of orphans.‡

137. Women, as a class separate from men, are not mentioned, except that separate workhouse accommodation was recommended for "the able-bodied females";[6] presumably they were to be treated, whether able-bodied, sick, or aged, and whether in the workhouse or outside, on the same footing as men.§

138. What is more surprising still is the treatment of widows by the Report. In the first part—that dealing with outdoor relief under the old system—it is noted under a separate heading that

> "A class of persons have, in many places, established a right to public support, independently of either of these claims (want of employment or of insufficient wages). These are widows who, in

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* In the "Continuance Report" of 1840, however, there is a strong protest against the idea that a workhouse should be placed on the footing of a almshouse. "If the condition of the inmates of a workhouse were to be so regulated as to invite the aged and infirm of the labouring classes to take refuge in it, it would immediately be useless as a test between indigence and indolence or fraud—it would no longer operate as an inducement to the young and healthy to provide support for their later years or as a stimulus to them, whilst they have the means, to support their aged parents and relatives. The frugality and forethought of a young labourer would be useless if he foresaw the certainty of a better asylum for his old age than he could possibly provide by his own exertions; and the industrious efforts of a son to provide a maintenance for his parents in his own dwelling would be thrown away, and would cease to be called forth, if the almshouse of the district offered a refuge for their declining years, in which they might obtain comforts and indulgences which even the most successful of the labouring classes cannot always obtain by their own exertions." (p. 5.)

† "It has always been our wish that the principles of the law should be applied without severity to aged persons." (Second Report, 1836, p. 8.) "We do not require aged and infirm paupers to be relieved *only* in the workhouse." ("Continuance Report," 1840, p. 32.)

‡ The Second Report, 1836, says: "The appropriate treatment of the children in the workhouse the larger proportion of whom are orphans, must be progressive with the arrangements for the classification and treatment of the paupers within the workhouse; as yet, the regulations with respect to them are general and may be found in the rules for the management of the workhouse. Acting upon the principle of the statute of Elizabeth, which provides that 'order shall be taken from time to time for setting to work the children of all such whose parents shall not be able to maintain them,' we have endeavoured to direct the exertions of the local officers, as early as possible after the rudiments of education were obtained by the children, to gain for them independent employment out of the workhouse" (p. 28). "We do not require or permit the separation of children under seven years old from their mothers." ("Continuance Report," 1840, p. 32.)

§ In the Second Report, 1836, it was said that the rule prohibiting outdoor relief to the able-bodied had so far been "applied only to able-bodied men." The application to paupers of the other sex had been "deferred," although the indiscriminate allowances which had been habitually granted, almost as a matter of course, to widows (and to persons advanced in life) had, since the passing of the Act, "led many boards of guardians to scrutinise the lists of paupers of this description, and to put to the proof the actual destitution of many long-established pensioners on the rates." (p 8)

[1] Report, p. 306. [2] Report, p. 307. [3] Report, p. 338. [4] Report, p. 306. [5] Report, p. 307. [6] Report, p. 306

> many places, receive what are called pensions, of from 1s. to 3s. a week on their own account, without any reference to their age or strength, or powers of obtaining an independent subsistence, but simply as widows."

receiving, in addition, if they have children, an allowance per child generally about 1s. 6d. a week in the rural districts, "unless the child be illegitimate, in which case it is more frequently 2s. or more."[1]

But in the second part of the Report—that which deals with "Remedial Measures"—widows are not mentioned.

139. As regards mothers of bastards, drastic change was, indeed, recommended—"even among the laws which we have had to examine, those which respect bastardy appear to be pre-eminently unwise"—and the change was carried into effect by the Act; but the matter in dispute was only the chargeability of the child—not the relief of the mother.[2] As the Continuance Report of 1840 put it; "the Act does not repeal the right of the *mother* to relief, but merely limits the remedy of the *parish* against the putative father."[3] In short, such mothers were put in the same position, as regards poor relief, as widows with legitimate children.*

140. As to vagrants, the Commission obtained much evidence, but they despaired of any remedy from detailed statutory provisions, and instanced "the tendency of legislation respecting the poor to aggravate the evils which it was intended to cure." They felt "convinced that vagrancy would cease to be a burden, if the relief given to vagrants were such as only the really destitute would accept."[4] The remedy for pauperism was, in fact, the remedy for vagrancy. But they felt that this remedy could not be applied unless the system were general, nor by parochial officers unless under strict superintendence and control. They accordingly recommended: "That the Central Board be empowered and directed to frame and enforce regulations as to the relief to be afforded to vagrants."[5] The Poor Law Act of 1834, however, made no special reference to vagrants, and several years passed before any regulations were made in respect of this class.

141. None of these recommendations evidently can be considered as "principles" in the same sense as the "fundamental principle" on which the workhouse system was based.

SUMMARY OF POOR LAW REPORT OF 1834.

142. From this examination of the so-called principles of the Poor Law reform of 1834, it is evident that the two main principles, so far as relief is concerned, apply to the able-bodied and the able-bodied alone, viz.:—

> *Firstly.*—That relief should not be offered to able-bodied persons and their families otherwise than in a well-regulated workhouse.
>
> *Secondly.*—That the lot of the able-bodied should be made less eligible than that of the independent labourer outside.

143. The recommendations as to the treatment of other classes of the poor were meagre, but they suggest classification, the impropriety of aggregating all classes of indoor paupers under one roof, the advisability of a more uniform treatment, and a greater utilisation of charitable effort.

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* "It is satisfactory to observe that the practice which was at one time almost universal, of dealing with the mothers of bastard children differently from other paupers, is rapidly giving way; and the sounder course of giving them relief only according to the measure and character of their wants is more generally adopted." (Second Report, 1836, p. 15.)

[1] Report, p. 42. [2] Report, p. 178. [3] "Continuance Report," 226, 1840, p. 18. [4] Report, p. 340. [5] Report, p. 340.

PART IV.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENT CONDITION OF THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE POOR LAW.

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INTRODUCTION.

1. The problem by which the Royal Commission of 1832 was confronted presented a comparatively broad and simple issue: it was a problem of able-bodied and—to a large extent—rural pauperism. Since that time the situation has been constantly and progressively changing; not only in the sense that the type and causes of pauperism change as new social and industrial conditions emerge, but also in the sense that there has been a continuous development of charitable and other agencies which hardly existed in 1834.

2. Two changes more especially are significant in their relation to Poor Law administration. The first is the restored independence of the agricultural labourer; which, when taken together with the concentration of population in cities, means that what remains to us of able-bodied pauperism is almost entirely urban. The second, and hardly less noteworthy, is the disappearance under improved sanitary conditions of diseases which were formerly among the most potent causes of destitution. To these two changes it is mainly due that in tracing the development of Poor Law administration during the last century we find that it has been continuously in the direction of clearer differentiation of the problem and closer adaptation of treatment to the needs of different classes. This could become possible only with the gradual lifting of the overwhelming burden of able-bodied pauperism. Rashly assumed responsibility for the maintenance of large numbers of able-bodied and their dependents had, prior to 1834, swamped the more delicate and discriminative work of dealing with the infirm, the sick and the children, in much the same way as the presence of an epidemic demands drastic and general treatment and distracts attention from more individual and subtle ills. It is the great merit of the early Poor Law and of early sanitary reformers to have checked the overwhelming evils of their day, and so to have cleared the way for the progressive treatment of difficulties which were then thrown into the background.

3. Granting that the position has changed, the question arises how far the law and its administration are now adequate to deal with it. It cannot be assumed that a Poor Law system which has done good work in the past, calls therefore for no change; indeed, just so far as the system has succeeded in modifying the conditions of the poor it has changed its own problem, and it may well be that corresponding changes are called for in itself—that after the first rough work is done a constantly finer instrument is needed to carry out the more specialised branches. To a large extent this specialisation of work and improvement of the instrument was foreseen and intended by the early administrators, and has been steadily progressing during the last seventy years, and indeed most of the demands for further change lie in the same direction. The question for us to-day is how to satisfy those demands without incurring any risk of reversion to the evils of administration before 1834. It would be quite possible for a Centralised Authority to-day, to do elaborately and at great expense just the same mischief as was done crudely and ignorantly by the Local Authorities before 1834.

4. The same development which we shall trace in Poor Law administration has proceeded at even a greater rate in voluntary institutions. Thus it happens that the administrator often finds himself competing or co-operating with rival agencies, some of which may be better adapted for the work he is trying to do, while others may be hindering him at every turn. It seems impossible at the present day to determine the functions of the Poor Law without also considering and determining its relations to these other agencies; and, in the following Chapters, brief reference will be made to the principal external circumstances which from time to time have affected the various branches of Poor Law work.

Chapter 1.

THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY.

The Poor Law Commissioners 1834–1847.

5. The Report of 1834 led to immediate and decisive action on the part of Parliament. It is noteworthy that in the Act which was passed in the same year[1] attention was concentrated mainly upon the improvement of administration; but Parliament practically endorsed the recommendations and principles laid down in the Report, by authorising the appointment of a Central Authority with powers of control and uper-vision so strong as to enable it to carry out those recommendations throughout the country. This Central Authority was to consist of three fit persons to be Commissioners with the style of Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales.[2] The Act was passed on the 14th August, and on the 23rd August Commissioners were appointed as a responsible authority for carrying its recommendations into effect. They were empowered to sit as a Board;[3] they were to have a seal;[4] they were to be incapable of sitting as members of the House of Commons;[5] and they were to hold office for a limited period of time.[6] They were authorised to make general rules for the administration of relief, but their powers of control were limited, on the one hand by the existing laws, on the other hand by the express provision that they should not be enabled to interfere in any individual case for the purpose of ordering relief.[7] They were also empowered to appoint Assistant-Commissioners,[8] Secretaries and other officers.[9] To the Assistant-Commissioners they might delegate any of their powers except that of making general rules.[10] They were to make an Annual Report to be laid before Parliament.[11] It is from these Annual Reports that the history of their work is to be gathered, and as the expenditure upon the Commissioners and their staff was defrayed out of the Consolidated Fund,[12] the Annual Reports served to inform the House officially of the policy which they were adopting. The fact that the Commissioners were not represented in Parliament was so far advantageous in that they were almost entirely removed from the sphere of party politics; on the other hand, it was difficult both for the Commissioners to defend their actions and for Parliament to keep in touch with them. Recourse was had to the expedient of Committees of Inquiry, and in 1837 and 1838 Committees of the House of Commons, and in 1838 also a Committee of the House of Lords, reported upon the manner in which the Board was carrying out the Act.

6. In 1847 the Commissioners were superseded by a new set of Commissioners comprising as *ex officio* members the President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, the Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.[13] One of the Commissioners was to be President,[14] and the President and one of the Secretaries might sit in the House of Commons.[15] The essential features of the change were that now the Board was closely connected with the Government through its *ex officio* members, and was represented in Parliament.[16] Another important feature was the enlargement of the powers of the President. Hitherto the Commissioners had acted as a Board, but, while they might still continue thus to act, the President himself was now authorised to carry into execution any of the powers vested in the Commissioners. "The transfer of central authority was not due to any national change of opinion as to the principles on which the Poor Law should be administered. It was not even to any great extent a change of *personnel*, for the former Assistant Commissioners became Inspectors, and Sir George Nicholls, who represented all that the opponents of the Poor Law most disliked, was made Secretary."[17] In 1849 this body received authority to use the name of Poor Law Board,[18] and in 1867 it was placed upon a permanent footing.[19]

The Poor Law Board, 1847–1870

The Local Government Board, 1871.

7. A further fundamental change in the Central Authority was made by the Act of 1871,[20] which transferred all the powers and duties of the Poor Law Board to the Local Government Board,[21] a body consisting of a President, and, as *ex officio* members, the Lord President of the Council, all the principal Secretaries of State, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.[22] The only active member of

[1] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76. [2] Sec. 1 and 2. [3] Sec. 2. [4] Sec. 3. [5] Sec. 8. [6] Sec. 10. [7] Sec. 15. [8] Sec. 7. [9] Sec. 9. [10] Sec. 12. [11] Sec. 5. [12] Sec. 9. [13] 10 & 11 Vict., cap. 109, Secs. 1 and 2. [14] Sec. 4. [15] Sec. 9. Adrian, 5. [16] Adrian, 5–6. [17] Memorandum by Professor Smart. "The Poor Law Board," 1847–71, p. 1. [18] 12 & 13 Vict., cap. 103, Sec. 21. [19] 30 & 31 Vict., cap. 106. [20] 34 & 35 Vict., cap. 70. [21] Sec. 2. [22] Sec. 3.

this Board is the President, for the *ex officio* members are never consulted, and their consent is not required to an order issued by the President ;[1] while the President, on the other hand, has almost autocratic powers,[2] and by means of Orders and Circulars may and does initiate far-reaching changes in methods of relief both under the Poor Law and outside.[3] Thus the final effect of the re-constitution of the Central Authority since 1834 has been that the ultimate responsibility for Poor Law administration has ceased to rest with a body of experts as were the Poor Law Commissioners appointed solely for the purpose, and has been assigned to a President who enters on office and leaves it with his party, and has many other duties of a very varied nature. It seems almost inevitable under these circumstances that Poor Law administration should be exposed to the influence of political pressure.[4]

Powers of the Local Government Board.

8. It will have been gathered from the preceding narrative that under the Act of 1834,[5] the Central Authority was vested with apparently supreme control over the whole of the administration of the Poor Laws and, in particular, over the conditions under which both indoor and outdoor relief should be administered. It had also conferred upon it great but not quite such unfettered powers in regard to the erection and alteration of workhouses,[6] and the dissolution and alteration of Unions.[7] Since 1834 the tendency of legislation has been rather in the direction of increasing than of diminishing the powers of the Central Authority, with the result that the Local Government Board now occupies a position, probably unique among Government Departments, for the amount of discretionary control it exercises over an administration which is mainly paid for out of local rates.

9. There are seven chief methods by which the Central Authority normally seeks to direct local administration :—

1. By the issue of Orders and Circulars.

2. By control over local officers.

3. By the power to sanction loans.

4. By audit.

5. By the power to compel Local Authorities and their officers to furnish information and returns.

6. By official Inquiries.

7. By the influence of Inspectors.

(1) Orders and Circulars.

10. The legislative decrees of the Local Government Board are embodied in Orders. An Order of the Local Government Board has the force of law, and is binding upon all the Unions to which it is issued. If issued to one Union only, it is known as a Special Order, if to two or more Unions at the same time, it is a General Order.[8] These are officially published in the Gazette.[9] Until 1842 the Commissioners worked chiefly by means of Special Orders issued to separate Unions,[10] but at that date, " when nearly the whole of England had been brought under the operation of the Poor Law Amendment Act," they rescinded the separate Orders and substituted general rules.[11] In 1847 these rules were brought together in the General Consolidated Order.[12] This, together with the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order of 1844 and the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order of 1852, practically regulates the whole administration of relief throughout the country. The General Consolidated Order consists of detailed regulations concerning the procedure and duties of Guardians, the government of the workhouse, the appointment, remuneration and duties of officers, etc. But, in addition to these dominant Orders, there are a very large

[1] Adrian, 439–43. [2] Adrian, 11. [3] 34 & 35 Vict., cap. 70, Sec. 5. *Vide also* Adrian 445. [4] Davy, 2033, 2037; Fleming, 8967–8, Adrian, 444. [5] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76. [6] Sec. 23–25. [7] Sec. 32–33. Davy, 3061–3; 10 & 11 Vict., c. 109, Sec. 15. [9] Davy, 3065. Adrian, 437. [10] Eighth Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 389, 1842, p. 1. (5). [11] *Ibid.*, p. 2 (6). [12] Adrian, 165.

number of additional and amending Orders; and we have received many representations to the effect that codification[1] and simplification[2] are urgently called for. Mr. Jenner-Fust, General Inspector, states :—

> "Guardians and their officers have the greatest difficulty, as things are, in ascertaining what Acts and orders are actually in force; they are scattered about, and there are a large number of amending Acts and orders which are apt to be overlooked." [3]

We think that the Poor Law Statutes and Orders should be revised in accordance with the recommendations which we make in this Report and, where necessary, repea ed, and we would urge that the work of consolidation and revision should be taken in hand as soon as possible. It would also seem desirable that there should be some simple handbook available, such as that issued by the Scottish Local Government Board, which would contain a clear code of Regulations and statement of policy.

Circulars.

11. To some extent the Circulars issued by the Local Government Board may be regarded as declarations of policy[4]; but too often they represent only the policy of the President for the time being, and impart neither permanence nor consistency to the general policy of the Board. And though a Circular is only an "exhortation" and cannot be enforced,[5] it has hardly less influence than an Order, especially if it chimes in with the popular feeling of the moment.

12. Such documents as that of Mr. Goschen in 1869 on outdoor relief, that of Mr. Chamberlain in 1886 on the unemployed, and that of Mr. Chaplin in 1900 on the aged poor,* have exercised a great and sometimes unfortunate effect upon local administration; the very fact that they cannot be enforced by law leaves the interpretation of them to the Local Authority, and tends to misunderstanding and diversity of practice. The Circular of 1900 above referred to, which followed as the almost necessary corollary to the Reports of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor and the Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill,[6] furnishes a striking example of the misinterpretation which may be put upon the intention and even the meaning of a Circular. With regard to that Circular Mr. Bagenal says:—"The paragraph with regard to differential treatment of the aged and deserving poor has been largely twisted into a general recommendation to extend the scope of out-relief, and it has been so interpreted frequently in my presence";[7] and Mr. Baldwin Fleming, Mr. Bircham, Mr. Herbert, Mr. Jenner-Fust and Mr. Wethered also gave evidence practicallyto the same effect.[8]

(2) Control over local Officers.

13. The Orders above referred to are binding not only on the Local Authority but also, where so indicated, on the officers of the Local Authority, and perhaps in the majority of instances it is upon the officers that the administrative execution of the order depends. Accordingly the Local Government Board may prescribe the qualifications and duties of all Poor Law officers: and, in the case of the more important posts, each individual appointment must be reported to it, and the salary is sanctioned by it.[9] Every officer is liable to direct dismissal by the Local Government Board[10] and, *per contra*, none of the higher officers can be dismissed by the Local Authority except with the Local Government Board's consent.[11] This direct control over the initiation and termination of the local officers' careers tends to ensure that the level of Poor Law executive administration shall not fall below a certain minimum standard. The Board cannot in practice secure the appointment of the best man by the Guardians,[12] but it can and does prevent the appointment of a man with known disqualifications.[13]

14. Moreover, the power to prescribe duties, and to dismiss or to prevent from dismissal, is a considerable guarantee against the policy of deliberate and persistent disregard of the Board's regulations. In the larger part of the executive work, the Guardians can only act through their officers. The officers know that persistent disobedience

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* For full text of these Documents, *Vide* Appendix.

[1] Fell, Vol. VII., App. cxvi. (10*a*); Waite, 43247 (18*d*); North, Vol. IV., App. cxlv. (17*a*); Thomas, 50096 (13*i*); Curtis and Battersby, 28796 (3); Fewster, Vol. V., App. lxxx. (12). Grey, 15573, 15580; Foster, 16223 (46), 16302; Kendrick, 22136 (11), 22200, 22286-9; Thompson, 22535 (11). [2] Louch, Vol. VII., App., lvii. (15); Grounds, Vol. VII., App. clxxvii. (8); Coleman, Vol. IV. App. lx. (9); Thompson Vol. IV., App. clvi. (14*e*); Howliston, Vol. V., App. lxxxiv. 15-16; [3] Jenner-Fust, 10843. [4] Adrian, 458. [5] Adrian; 456, Davy, 3060. [6] Davy, 3344. [7] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (A), (176). [8] Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (A) (13), 9128-30; Bircham, Vol. I., App. x. (A) (32-33); Herbert, Vol. I., App. xvii. (A) (7); Jenner-Fust, 11086-7; Wethered, Vol. I., App. xi. (A) (105-7), 5538-45. [9] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, sec. 46; *Vide also* Adrian, 94. [10] Adrian, 94. [11] Davy 1666, 1995-6. [12] Preston-Thomas, 4590. [13] Davy, 1874.

to the Board's Regulations may entail dismissal, while, on the other hand, they are immune from dismissal on the ground of obedience to these Regulations, even where such obedience is distasteful to the Guardians. Further, the Local Government Board has the power to compel the Guardians to appoint officers or in cases of default to appoint them itself.[1] It is true that the Board but rarely uses these drastic powers: it is no less true that the legal procedure required to give effect to them is cumbrous. In our view it is right that they should be used with reluctance, having regard to the importance of maintaining not only the prestige of the Local Authority but also a sense of responsibility for detailed administration.

(3) Power to sanction loans.

15. Control over the capital expenditure of the Local Authorities is obtained by the Central Authority's power to sanction or withhold sanction to loans.[2] Loans may be sanctioned for a number of Poor Law purposes, but, practically, they are almost invariably required in connection with buildings. Hence is derived one of the chief influences of the Central Authority over the methods and developments of indoor relief. For, in addition to the fact that no new institution, or structural alteration of an institution, can be undertaken by the Local Authority without the Central Authority's sanction,[3] the possession of a discretion as to the amount of the loan for the improvement, or as to granting any loan at all,[4] gives the Central Authority an enormous influence in improving the methods by which the Guardians administer indoor relief. If the Local Authority is considering the erection of alternative institutions, the Central Authority can prevent the adoption of a less desirable institution by refusing to approve the plans or to sanction a loan in respect of it. Similarly it can often secure the adoption of a desirable institution by undertaking beforehand to grant a loan for it.[5] The control of the Local Government Board over buildings is exercised chiefly on the advice of their Architect.[6] In the Section dealing with Indoor Relief, we shall point out some defects in the functions and usefulness of the Architect's department; but, even as it stands, the Board's architectural supervision coupled with the power to sanction loans, is a very strong weapon of control over the capital expenditure of the Local Authority.

(4) Audit.

16. The control over the current expenditure of the Local Authority is obtained chiefly through audit. Prior to 1834 the audit of Poor Law accounts rested with the Justices, and from 1834 to 1844 the Auditor was appointed by the Board of Guardians whose accounts he audited. By the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1844, the Poor Law Commissioners were empowered to combine parishes and Unions into audit districts and the Auditor of the Poor Law accounts was elected in each district by the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Boards of Guardians in the district. Until 1846 (when Parliament first voted a grant for the payment of Auditors), the remuneration of the Auditors thus appointed, was paid by the Unions whose accounts they audited.[7] In 1868 the provision in the Act of 1844 was repealed and power was given to the Poor Law Board to appoint District Auditors,[8] and in 1879 the District Auditors Act empowered the Local Government Board to appoint such Auditors as they might deem necessary.[9]

17. Vacancies among the Auditors are usually filled by persons who have had experience in audit work, either as Assistant Auditors or as Auditors' clerks. To be qualified for appointment as an Auditor or Assistant, a person must be a Chartered or Incorporated Accountant, Barrister or Solicitor, or have undergone a course of training with a District Auditor, or have served in the Department of the Local Government Board.[10]

18. The abolition of the present audit system as regards the accounts of "Corporations, County Councils and Urban District Councils" was recommended by the Select Committee on Municipal Trading who proposed that accountant auditors should be appointed by the Local Authorities subject to the approval of the

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[1] 31 & 32 Vict., cap. 122, sec. 7. *Vide* Preston-Thomas, 4292; Davy, 2501–3, 3086–7. [2] 52 & 53 Vict., cap. 56, sec. 2; Adrian, 316. [3] Davy, 1642, 1649; Kitchin, 3573. [4] Davy, 1652–3; Kitchin, 3556. [5] 52 & 53 Vict., cap. 56, sec. 2. [6] Davy, 1630. [7] Burd, Vol. I., App. ix. (A) (3). [8] 31 & 32 Vict. cap. 122, sec. 24. [9] 42 & 43 Vict., cap. 6. [10] Burd, Vol. I., App. ix. (A) (22).

Local Government Board.[1] Apparently the main argument in favour of the proposed change was that the District Auditors are unfitted as a class for auditing the accounts of municipal trading concerns, which are "really great commercial undertakings."[2] Obviously this argument does not apply to the accounts of a Poor Law Authority, whose concerns are not, and cannot possibly be, run upon a commercial basis. In addition to a thorough knowledge of accounting, an Auditor should, in our judgment, be an expert both in the law and in the practice of the Poor Law. Qualifications such as these will not, we think, be so readily forthcoming in an Accountant in private practice as in an official who, while possessing the necessary accounting knowledge, has served a preliminary period of training as an Assistant Auditor, and devotes his whole time to the work. We recommend, therefore, that the present system should be maintained, on the understanding that persons appointed as Auditors should, as a rule, have in the first instance served as Assistant Auditors, and that Assistant Auditors should, before appointment, be required to show that they have definite qualifications for that post, both by reason of their knowledge of the general administration of the Poor Law and by reason of their professional ability as Accountants; and we think that as a rule the possession of such qualifications should be tested by examination or otherwise.

19. Mr. Burd, Inspector of Audits, informs us that the audit staff is insufficient to undertake a thorough audit of all the accounts to be dealt with, and we think that it should be increased. It is understood that this matter is under the consideration of the Local Government Board.[3]

20. The Auditor has to judge not only of the correctness of the account, but also of the legality of the expenditure.[4] In this connection he has had, since 1844, certain powers of disallowance and surcharge.[5] That is to say, he can strike any illegal payment out of the account, and "surcharge" the amount on the person or persons responsible for the payment, from whom the amount can thereupon be recovered at law, unless the surcharge is declared of no effect or is remitted after appeal to the High Court or to the Local Government Board. The Auditor can also, with similar results, surcharge the person submitting an account with any amount which has not, but should have been, entered as a receipt.[6] He may also disallow extravagant or unreasonable expenditure, but, owing to the difficulty of establishing a case which will satisfy a Court of Justice, he often does no more than report to the Local Government Board, who may then remonstrate.[7] Appeals against the disallowances and surcharges are less frequently made to the High Court than to the Local Government Board, because appeals to the latter body involve no expense, and because the Board has an equitable jurisdiction which the Court has not. The Board can, and frequently does, even where a payment is illegal, decide that repayment need not be enforced, the ground for such remission being either that the payment was made in good faith, or that a warning is sufficient to put a stop to the irregularity.[8] This power of surcharge, though not frequently enforced,[9] is regarded by the Local Government Board as its chief safeguard in Poor Law administration, but it would seem that its efficacy is more against actual fraud or illegality than against bad administration.

21. There is a minor matter, however, in regard to which we think that the powers of the Local Government Board might with advantage be curtailed. The Local Authorities (Expenses) Act, 1887, 50 & 51 Vic. cap. 72 enacts that "expenses paid by any Local Authority whose accounts are subject to audit by a District Auditor shall not be disallowed by that Auditor if they have been sanctioned by the Local Government Board." The Board's sanction under this Act does not make the expenditure legal, and consequently it would not oust the power of the High Court to issue an injunction restraining the Local Authority from including the expenditure in their accounts, if application was made to them for the purpose, but it does preclude the Auditor from disallowing the expenditure at the audit.

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[1] Report of Select Committee on Municipal Trading, 1903, par. 15–16. *Vide* also p. 418 (8). [2] Report, par. 15. [3] Burd, 4765. [4] Burd, 4808–9. [5] 7 & 8 Vict., cap. 101, sec. 32. [6] Burd, Vol. I., App. ix. (a) (53–7, 59). [7] Davy, 2120–1, 2185–8. [8] Davy, 2030, 2086–7. [9] Davy, 2091.

22. We understand that the Act was intended, and has in fact been largely used by the Local Government Board, for the purpose of avoiding technical and trivial disallowances, and the consequent needless friction and trouble which would be involved in obtaining remission of the disallowance on appeal.[1] In this way doubtless the Act has been of considerable utility. We are also informed that the Local Government Board does not consider that it was intended under the Act to sanction recurrent expenditure.[2] The Act, however, has been interpreted by the Board as enabling it to sanction not only past but also prospective expenditure.[3] It is in this connection that we think some limitation should be placed on the powers which the Act gives. As it stands, the Local Government Board is enabled to encourage a Local Authority to undertake expenditure not authorised by law. Thus for instance, the Board was able beforehand to assure Local Authorities that they would sanction under this Act contributions to the Central Unemployed Fund set up under Mr. Walter Long's scheme for the unemployed in London, and the powers under the Act have been used on other occasions to sanction prospective illegal expenditure by Local Authorities.

23. We doubt if this power to sanction beforehand the incurring of illegal expenditure by Local Authorities is a wise one. The possession of the power must without doubt be occasionally embarrassing to the Central Authority and we do not think it in the public interest that it should be possible for a Government Department without the consent of Parliament, to allow a Local Authority to initiate a new, illegal, and perhaps doubtful policy involving the expenditure of public money.

24. We think, therefore, that the powers of the Local Government Board under the Local Authorities (Expenses) Act, 1887, should be strictly limited to sanctioning expenditure after it has been incurred.

(5) Power to compel information, &c.

25. An important feature in the direction of administration by the Local Government Board consists of the almost unlimited power which it possesses to compel Local Authorities and their officers to furnish it with information.[4] The information thus required may either be of a general kind and relate to England as a whole, or of a particular kind relating to one individual Union. The general information which is obtained as a matter of routine consists for the most part of returns of statistics as to the numbers of paupers, the cost of relief, etc. These, when collated, are very useful, if not essential, to the Central Authority as a guide to the variations in policy of individual Boards of Guardians. When the returns show a striking divergence from the normal in regard to a particular Union or Unions, obviously it may be a case for further Inquiry by the Board into the causes of such divergence. We understand that this method has recently been considerably developed, and with much success in connection with Inquiries which have been undertaken in the Metropolitan district.

(6) Official Inquiries.

26. For the purpose of obtaining information from a particular Union, the Board has power to institute a sworn Inquiry on any matter affecting the administration of the Poor Law. This power to obtain evidence on oath, coupled as it is with the right to compel the attendance of witnesses, is frequently used as a basis for administrative action on the part of the Board. The knowledge that such sworn Inquiries may be held must, without doubt, enhance the authority of the Central Authority in the view of the Local Authorities and their officers. These Inquiries are held by the General Inspectors, whose functions are dealt with in the following paragraphs.[5]

(7) Inspection.

27. For the purpose of bringing about improvements in policy and uniformity in administration the Local Government Board relies mainly upon its inspectorate; the country being divided into fourteen districts, each of which is assigned to a General Inspector.[6] There are, in addition, two Assistant Inspectors in London and one in Lancashire, while there is also in London an Assistant (lady) Inspector for the inspection of certain Poor Law institutions.[7] Moreover, for Poor Law medical purposes, the Board has two Medical Inspectors, whose functions will be dealt with in the part of our Report relating to medical relief; and there are in addition three lady Inspectors of boarded-out children, to whose duties reference will be made when we deal with

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1 Pitts, 4254. 2 Pitts, 4255. 3 Adrian, 1044. 4 Pitts, 1463–4; Davy, 2540. 5 Davy, 1598. Davy, 1598. 7 Davy, 1604.

the question of children.[1] The duties of a General Inspector are to attend a meeting of every Board of Guardians in his district at least once a year; to inspect and report upon workhouses and all other Poor Law institutions; to advise as to any communication bearing on the current Poor Law work which may be received from his district; to hold Inquiries as to the conduct of officers, parish property, etc.; and generally to act as agent of the Board.[2] The position of Inspectors in relation to Boards of Guardians in their districts is merely advisory; as they have no power to alter any decision which may be taken by the Guardians, and no vote at the meetings which they attend. Moreover, in consequence of the clause in the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, which prohibits the Local Government Board from interfering in particular cases, it is generally held that the Inspectors should not advise on the treatment of any particular case.[3] Their position, however, enables them to exercise considerable influence—

> "An efficient Inspector should be looked upon by the Guardians as their confidential adviser and friend. He should so direct his conduct that they should turn to him in case of any emergency, and if he does that he is able as a matter of fact to settle a great many questions on his own initiative without troubling the Board."[4]

28. The Local Authorities themselves seem to recognise the value of the Inspectors as a factor in good administration;[5] indeed, we found evidence of a desire for more frequent and thorough inspection and supervision than the existing system always permits.[6]

29. An Inspector is, as we have said, required to attend a meeting of every Board of Guardians in his district once in each year, and he will visit a particular Board more frequently if necessary; but an annual visit is the rule,[7] and several Inspectors questioned the advisability of multiplying these attendances at Guardians' meetings.[8] We doubt, however, whether a single visit in the year can give an Inspector an intimate knowledge of the manner in which Guardians administer relief, or any considerable influence upon their policy.

30. A wider view seems to have been taken of the duties of the Assistant Commissioners to whose position the Inspectors have succeeded. In a Circular issued in 1840, they were urged to avail themselves of the means at their disposal to investigate the causes of pauperism with a view to their removal;[9] but such considerations appear to be outside the scope of the present Inspector's work. Mr. Bagenal states:—

> "The longer I am in the business, the less I think of the institutional side of it, because it is defined, and it is there, and you know exactly what it is. But you have got this enormous mass of pauperism outside, and the inspector really does not know anything about it. He has not time to devote to the examination of the causes—and we are not asked to report upon the causes—of pauperism; we have to deal with the result of pauperism, which is destitution."[10]

31. The real crux of Poor Law problems lies in the treatment of the individual case at the Relief Committee and more especially of those cases which are dealt with by out-relief. With this part of the work the Inspectors are little in touch. Very largely, this is due to the pressure of other work. To quote Mr. Bagenal again:—

> "I want an assistant inspector now, because I have 144 institutions to inspect every year, besides attending Boards of Guardians. My time at the present moment is very largely taken up with inspecting children's homes. . . . I should like to devote my time a great deal more to the supervision of outdoor relief, which is a great national problem."[11] "We are absolutely out of touch with the details of out-relief in the country."[12]

32. This view is strongly reinforced by evidence from the representative of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association.

> "One suggestion that we make is that, if possible, the relieving officer should be in closer touch with the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. It would strengthen our hands considerably if we had more frequent visits from the inspector."[13] "I have been eight years in London now, and I have only seen an Inspector once."[14]

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[1] Davy, 1605–6. [2] Davy, 1598. [3] Davy, 1599–1600, 2082–3; Fleming, 9472. [4] Davy, 1602. [5] Cleaver, 35887 (27); Coulson, 52687–8. [6] Hincks, Vol. IV., App. cxxxiv. (17*b*); Kevill-Davies, 72808–12; Cooke, 45234; Ayles, 45786 (19k). [7] Davy, 1598, 1758. [8] Dansey, 6055–7; Wethered, 5631–2; Court, 6337–8. [9] Seventh Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 1841, p. 42 (53). [10] Bagenal, 7408. [11] Bagenal, 6920. [12] Bagenal, 6933. [13] Thompson, 22645. [14] Thompson, 22888.

33. The evidence would, therefore, seem to point to the necessity of increasing the General Inspectors' grasp of the Poor Law administration in their districts, by affording them generally the help of Assistant Inspectors, to whom they might depute some of their routine and less important duties, and by giving them the assistance of experts when needed.

34. Of recent years Inspectors have received no general instructions from the Local Government Board, either upon taking up their work or subsequently.[1] Each is left within certain limits to act for himself, and as they seldom meet for conference,[2] it is not to be expected that they are working on entirely the same lines in their different districts. They are appointed by the President of the Local Government Board, no special qualifications being laid down;[3] but in recent years it has been the practice to appoint men who have had some Poor Law experience either as members of Boards of Guardians, Assistant Inspectors, or permanent officials of the Local Government Board.[4]

35. We think that definite qualifications should be laid down. Persons who are appointed Inspectors should have studied the history of the Poor Law and the causes of pauperism, and should, during a period of probationary work, have given evidence of practical administrative ability. Prior to their appointment as Inspectors, they should, as a rule, be appointed Assistant Inspectors, and in that capacity they should have opportunities of learning the character of the administration of relief, both legal and voluntary.

Scope of Local Government Board's powers and limits thereto.

36. It will be gathered from the foregoing paragraphs, that, as a result of historical developments, there are vested in the Local Government Board powers, both operative and latent, of a wide and far-reaching character. Legally speaking, if it appeared to the Board to be expedient for rectifying or simplifying the areas of management, or generally, for the better administration of the relief of the poor, it could, in its administrative capacity, dissolve all the Unions in England and Wales together with their Boards of Guardians, and reconstitute the Unions into areas many times larger than their present size, thus transforming the whole aspect and character of Poor Law administration in England.[5] Legally speaking, the Board could transfer to the Metropolitan Asylums Board, the whole of the administration of indoor relief at present exercised by London Boards of Guardians, or again, could make the conditions for granting out-relief to destitute able-bodied men so stringent as to abolish it almost entirely or so lax as to allow of abuses similar to those which obtained before 1834.[6]

37. But, in practice, these drastic powers are limited by two efficient checks. In the first place, there is the political check of the House of Commons. The President of the Board is subject to the control of Parliament, and the estimates for the expenditure of the Board are voted by the House of Commons, often after sharp criticisms and debate; in some cases its Orders become operative only when confirmed by Parliament; the Board must also draw up an Annual Report which is presented to Parliament.[7] There is no doubt, therefore, that the Board must be, and is, susceptible to the changes of political opinion in the House of Commons.[8]

38. The second check on the power of the Local Government Board is the inherent unwillingness of Local Authorities to accept bureaucratic rule. The Board has, theoretically, unlimited power to prescribe and to prohibit; but the duty of complying with these prescriptions and prohibitions falls, not on paid officials

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[1] Davy, 1607, 1617, 1761–2, 1875. [2] Davy, 1607; Lockwood, 13789–94. [3] Davy, 1608, 1764 [4] Davy, 1609, 1764; Long, 78553–4; Parliamentary Return, 350, November 15th, 1906. [5] 7 & 8 Vict., cap. 101, sec. 66. 39 & 40 Vict., cap. 61, sec. 11. *Vide also* Adrian, 38–41, 523–4. [6] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, sec. 52. [7] 10 & 11 Vict., cap. 109, sec. 13; Adrian, 9 [8] Davy, 2033, 2037, 2041; Baldwin Fleming, 8967 and 8968.

Scope of Local Government Board's powers and limits thereto.

of the Central Authority, but on a Local Authority.[1] Moreover, these Local Authorities have, by law, a very large discretion with which even the Board is unable to interfere.[2] This discretion may be exercised in a sense hostile to the policy of the Board, and yet in such a way as to make it difficult to prove legal contravention of particular Regulations.

39. In considering the enforcement upon Guardians of penalties for disobedience, it must not be forgotten that the persons to be punished are more or less free agents, upon whom alone the Local Government Board will in future have to rely for the carrying out of its wishes and its policy.

40. It is clear therefore that, though a large responsibility for good administration rests upon the Central Authority, and is recognised by it, its powers for enforcing good administration are limited. If a Board of Guardians neglects or refuses to obey its advice or even its instructions, it is often the case that "the only means of enforcing them is by mandamus, which is a process only to be resorted to in matters of moment and is useless for everyday administration."[3]

41. Hence, despite the unquestioned legal powers of the Central Authority, in practice it finds itself in a position where its powers of prohibition are great but its powers of initiation small. As Miss Sellers has said:—"The Local Government Board . . . although it can restrain them [the Local Authorities] from acting, is in practice . . . powerless to force them to act. It has no effective machinery indeed through which it can . . . force them to do anything they are determined not to do."[4]

In Scotland the Poor Law Act of 1845, enacts that if a Parish Council "shall refuse or neglect to do what is herein or otherwise by law required of them, or in case any obstruction shall arise in the execution of this Act, it shall be lawful for [the Local Government Board] to apply by summary petition to the Court of Session . . . which Court, . . . are hereby authorised and directed in such case to do therein as to such Court, . . . shall seem just and necessary."[5]

In Ireland the Local Government Board can supersede a Board of Guardians which is not carrying out its duties properly.[6]

42. But in England such an end could be attained only by the indirect method of dissolving a Union and reconstituting it.[7] The want of direct power has been most felt in connection with the institutions of the Guardians. The Local Government Board can close a building as being unsatisfactory, but cannot enforce the building of an institution.[8] Mr. Baldwyn Fleming considers that "The Board should have much greater practical power to require obviously proper work to be carried out. . . . The Board should be able to order such things to be done, and to do them and recover the cost from the Guardians if they refuse to act."[9]

43. Under such circumstances, as those above mentioned, supervision of one authority by another, especially when the inspected authority has independent and executive duties of its own to discharge, is a task which can be satisfactorily carried out only by the exhibition of personal qualities which cannot be provided by regulation. The Poor Law Inspectors and the Department they represent have been very successful in securing the good will of the majority of those whom they supervise and inspect, and, thanks to this good will, they have succeeded in getting changes and improvements effected, which otherwise would not have been carried through.[10]

44. Moreover, in larger matters the Local Authorities appear to have confidence in the control of the Central Department and display a willingness to increase rather than diminish such control. Mr. Brown, President of the Poor Law Unions Association says:—"The Guardians throughout the country have practically unquestioned confidence" in the management of the Central Authority in all matters of discipline.[11]

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[1] Davy, 2041. [2] Preston-Thomas, 4575; Bagenal, 7324–6. [3] Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (A) (18) Adrian, 718–22. [4] Sellers, Vol. IX., App. lxxxii. (1); *Vide also* Davy, 1946–7. [5] Poor Law [Scotland] Act, 8 & 9, Vict., cap. 83, sec. 87. [6] 1 & 2 Vict., cap. 56, sec. 26; 10 Vict., cap. 31, sec. 18. [7] Davy 1705–6. [8] Davy, 1704. [9] Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (a) (18). [10] Davy, 1603; Brown, 24781–2; Cleaver, 35887 (27); Coulson, 52687. [11] Brown, 25248.

Mr. Booker is of opinion that in large affairs the control is very judicious.[1] Mr. Cleaver says that "The supervision . . . by the Local Government Board . . . is productive of much good: . . . it should be retained and, with the exception of the few minor matters, should be increased."[2] Mr. Prescott would allow and welcome an increase of the central influence of the Local Government Board in order to secure uniformity.[3]

45. On the other hand, there are many matters on which the control of the Board gives rise to irritation on the part of Local Authorities, who are apt both to resent what they consider interference, and to blame the Central Authority if anything goes wrong.[4] It is thought that this question of control on minor points, as distinguished from general policy, might be much simplified, and friction diminished, by devolving some of the responsibility on a new Authority. Thus Mr. Jenner-Fust says:—

> "I am in hopes that if the extension of areas should take place, such as I venture to suggest, the minute control which is now exercised by the Local Government Board would, to a great extent, disappear. You would not require the detailed duties to be so minutely laid down as they are in the Consolidated Order.[5] . . . There would be the new centre for local administration as between the Local Government Board and the Guardians, and to that all these questions would go?—I think to a certain extent they would. As to the control of officers for instance, you would not require a county Board of Guardians to submit every appointment for approval to the Local Government Board."[6]

46. But apart from the complaint of over-control as regards details, the cry from many parts of the country seems to be not for less, but for more and clearer guidance on questions of principle from the Central Authority. Amongst the recommendations received by the Commission from Boards of Guardians are a considerable number to the effect that the Local Government Board should do more to lay down general principles for the guidance of Guardians. Representative Boards and Chairmen of Boards of Guardians say that "the policy of the Poor Law is not at present defined with sufficient clearness, and an authoritative statement of its general principles is urgently called for, as the basis of all subsidiary reform."[7] Canon Bury thinks that experience is large enough to authorise the Local Government Board to state a definite policy.[8] Mr. Thomas would wish general principles to be laid down in a clearer way.[9] Mr. Everest thinks that:—"with . . . . clear orders and guidance from the Local Government Board there should arise a more uniform and intelligent administration."[10] Miss Sellers is of the opinion that the higher Poor Law authority should be strengthened without weakening the sense of responsibility of the Local Authority.[11] Mr. Willink says:—"It is to be hoped that the Central Authority would be able through their Inspectors and regulations to ensure that such principles as might be laid down from time to time were clearly understood."[12] Sir William Chance attributes the rise of pauperism during the last fifteen years to the fact that "no definite policy or guiding principles" have been laid down by the Local Government Board.[13] Miss Mary Clifford thinks that "absence of directing power in the Local Government Board" is the main cause of the present defective administration.[14]

Need for a more direct position of guidance and initiative.

47. We strongly endorse the opinion that it is desirable for the Central Authority, in future, to assume a more direct position of guidance and initiative in regard to the Local Authorities. There are various methods (some of which we have indicated) by which this increase of influence could be secured: first, by the simplification and consolidation of the numerous existing Statutes and Orders; second, by strengthening the position of the Board and its Inspectors; third, by increasing the number and efficiency of Inspectors themselves so that, as the agents of the Central Authority, they may more effectively imprint its policy upon the local administration; fourth, by giving the Board power to withhold a part or the whole of any subvention from Imperial sources granted in relief of local rates, unless it is satisfied with the administration of the services towards which these grants go.

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1 Booker, 40998. 2 Cleaver, 35886 (26) 3 Prescott, 21812. 4 Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (A) (16–17); Wilson, 40085 (25–26), 40149; Brown, 24741 (11); Beavan, Vol. V., App. xii. (17*a*); Williams, 45464 (22), 45679–82, 45695; Davis, Vol. VII., App. cx. (9); Morgan, Vol. VII., App. cxxxvi. (8*b*); Keeble, Vol. VII., App. clxxxiv. (19); Sharman, 74986 (2*g*), 75074–5; Affleck, Vol. V., App. lxiv. (3), (11); Booker, 40996–7; Manton, 43626 (35); Tebb, Vol. V., App. cxii. (12). 5 Jenner-Fust, 11089. 6 Jenner-Fust, 11090. 7 *Vide* Appendix, Representations from Boards and Chairmen of Boards of Guardians, p. 1. 8 Bury, 48102. 9 Thomas, 50103. 10 Everest, Vol. VII., App. cxv. (9). 11 Sellers, Vol. IX., App. lxxxii (7). 12 Willink, Vol. VII., App. ccxi (26). 13 Chance, 27059 (20*a*) 14 Clifford, Vol. IX., App. lx. (4).

Parliamentary influence on Poor Law policy.

48. We shall amplify these suggestions subsequently, but we cannot leave this part of our subject without pointing out that, in endeavouring to shape a consistent policy the Board has been greatly hampered. The House of Commons has recently influenced the policy of the Board, not so much by checking its action as by altering intermittently and in detail the conditions under which the Poor Law is administered, sometimes with little or no regard to what may be termed the Poor Law side of the question. The Medical Relief Disqualification Removal Act, the Unemployed Workmen Act, the Elementary Education (Provision of Meals) Act, the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, and the Old Age Pensions Act, have all radically affected the conditions under which Poor Law relief is administered throughout the country. In these circumstances the action of the Board is strongly influenced by the changes of political opinion reflected in the House of Commons, and it is increasingly difficult for the Board to pursue a stable and continuous policy.

Proposal to substitute term "Public Assistance" for "Poor Law."

49. It has been impressed upon us in the course of our inquiry that the name Poor Law has gathered about it associations of harshness, and still more of hopelessness, which we fear might seriously obstruct the reforms which we desire to see initiated. We are aware that a mere change of name will not prevent the old associations from recurring, if it does not represent an essential change in the spirit of the work. But in our subsequent criticism and recommendations we hope to show the way to a system of help which will be better expressed by the title of Public Assistance than by that of Poor Law. The general aim will remain, as it always has been, the independence and welfare of the people, but as a means towards that end we desire to introduce into all branches of the work a spirit of efficiency and hopefulness. We think that this object will be made more easy of attainment, and that the work will be more accurately described by a change of title. Accordingly, we recommend that the Division of the Local Government Board which has hitherto dealt with "the Relief of the Poor," should, in future, be known as the Public Assistance Division.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 1.

(1) *The Poor Law Statutes and Orders should be revised in accordance with the recommendations which we make in this Report, and, where necessary, repealed; and we would urge that the work of consolidation and revision should be taken in hand as soon as possible. It would also seem desirable that there should be some simple hand-book available, such as that issued by the Scottish Local Government Board, which would contain a clear code of Regulations and statement of policy.* (10.)

(2) *The present system of audit should be maintained, on the understanding that persons appointed as Auditors should be experts, both in the law and in the practice of the Poor Law, and should, as a rule, have served, in the first instance, as Assistant Auditors; Assistant Auditors should, before appointment, be required to show that they have definite qualifications for the post, both by reason of their knowledge of the general administration of the Poor Law and by reason of their professional ability as Accountants; and as a rule the possession of such qualifications should be tested by examination or otherwise.* (18.)

(3) *The Audit Staff should be increased.* (19.)

(4) *The powers of the Local Government Board under the Local Authorities (Expenses) Act, 1887, should be strictly limited to sanctioning expenditure after it has been incurred.* (24.)

(5) *The General Inspectors should have afforded them the help of Assistant Inspectors, to whom they might depute some of their routine and less important duties, and should be given the assistance of experts when needed.* (33.)

(6) *Definite qualifications should be laid down for the office of Inspector, and, prior to their appointment as Inspectors, they should, as a rule, be appointed Assistant Inspectors, and in that capacity should have opportunities of learning the character of the administration of relief, both legal and voluntary.* (35.)

(7) *The Central Authority should assume a more direct position of guidance and initiative in regard to the Local Authorities.* (47.)

(8) *The Division of the Local Government Board which has hitherto dealt with "the Relief of the Poor" should in future be known as the Public Assistance Division.* (49.)

Chapter 2.

THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

50. We now briefly indicate the changes in the local Poor Law Authorities effected by the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, and by subsequent legislation.

51. Prior to 1834, there were three Local Authorities concerned in the administration of relief, namely, the Overseers, the Magistrates, and the Vestry.

(1) Overseers.

52. The law placed the entire legal responsibility for the assessment, collection, and distribution of the funds for poor relief upon the unpaid Overseers of the parish, or upon the paid Assistant Overseers appointed under 59 George III., cap. 12, sec. 7, to execute for a salary some or all of the duties of the Overseers.[1] The Overseers were appointed annually by the Magistrates and upon them devolved, except where local Acts were in force, the entire management of the relief of the poor.[2]

53. The Overseers were, however, subject to a dual control. On the one hand, the Magistrates could give orders determining to whom, to what extent, and in what way poor relief should be given, and these orders were binding on the Overseers upon pain of indictment. On the other hand, the Overseers were bound annually to submit their accounts to the Vestry, and, where a Select Vestry was appointed, they were also instructed to obey the directions of that Vestry.[3] But the Statutes provided no legal method of enforcing the administrative or financial control of the Vestry,[4] and in many cases the Overseers or Assistant Overseer administered the Poor Laws without any supervision whatever by the Vestry.[5]

54. The Vestries could, therefore, exercise no effective check on the Overseers, except with the acquiescence of those officers, but as a matter of practice it appears that, in most cases, the Overseers merged their responsibility in that of the Vestry, with whom they sat and whose practice and control they accepted. So that, over a great part of England, without any express legislative sanction, Vestries in fact performed the greater part of the work now done by Boards of Guardians.[6]

55. This practical supersession of the Overseers as a Poor Law authority was recognised and emphasised by the Act of 1834 and later Statutes, so that at the present time practically the only functions left to the Overseers in regard to the relief of the poor are these:—

(i) They make out and submit to the Assessment Committee valuation lists upon which the poor rate is based, and in some cases they can appeal or object in respect of the valuation list or the poor rate.[7]

(ii) They make the poor rate and sign and submit the rate books to the Magistrates for allowance, and afterwards collect the rate.[8]

(iii) They can give relief in kind in cases of sudden and urgent necessity.[9]

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 98. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 98. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 98–9. [4] 3 Will. & Mary, cap. 11, Sec. 11; 9 Geo. I., cap. 7, Sec. 1; 59 Geo. III., cap. 12, Sec. 1. [5] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905. Reports from Assistant Commissioners, pp. 62, 70, 143, 147, 164–5, 167, 199 365 and 367. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 107. [7] Adrian, 130, 673, 1192–3; [8] Adrian, 477-8. [9] Adrian, 15, 714; Lockwood, 13930.

56. The first and second of these functions are in practice almost everywhere actually performed by an Assistant Overseer,[1] or by some other authority, except as regards the signing of the rate and submitting it to the Justices,—duties which are purely ministerial; and the third, according to our evidence, is hardly ever exercised, and then badly.[2]

57. In these circumstances it is questionable whether, so far as the Poor Law is concerned, there is any necessity for continuing the office of Overseer as a separate office.[3] In London separate Overseers were abolished by the London Government Act, 1899, the Borough Councils being made the Overseers for each parish in the Borough.[4]

(2) Magistrates.

58. The abuses arising from the exercise by the Magistrates of their Poor Law authority have been fully dealt with in Part III.

59. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 swept away all their separate powers of ordering relief with a few trifling exceptions. Under Section 27 of the Act, they were empowered to order out-relief to aged and infirm persons,[5] and, under Section 54, they were empowered under certain circumstances to order relief upon sudden and urgent necessity in cases where the Overseer had neglected to give such relief.[6] Their power of visiting and reporting on the state of workhouses and, in exceptional cases, ordering relief therein was also retained:[7] but in all our evidence we have come upon no instance of the exercise of either of these powers. By way of compensation for this loss of authority, Section 38 of the Act definitely recognised the Magistrates as the local Poor Law Authority until the new Boards of Guardians should be elected, and provided also that they might, if they wished, act as *ex-officio* members of those Boards. It was, however, expressly enacted that no *ex-officio* member should have power to act in virtue of his office except as a member, and at a meeting of the Board of Guardians.[8]

60. From a superior position of practically unfettered control of the Poor Law Authorities, the Magistrates were therefore reduced to a status of equality, with a number of popularly elected Guardians. And though, had they all exercised their rights, they might still have largely or even predominantly influenced Poor Law administration, yet there is evidence that, at any rate in the years immediately preceding their abolition in 1894, the *ex-officio* Guardians, by the irregularity of their attendance,[9] were forfeiting what might have been, and in many cases was,[10] a salutary influence on Boards of Guardians.

61. The Magistrates do not now exercise any influence upon Poor Law administration, except indirectly in the exercise of their judicial functions, as when applications are made before them either for enforcing contribution orders against relatives, or for enforcing disciplinary measures against paupers. The powers mentioned in paragraph 59 may therefore be regarded as obsolete and should be abolished.

(3) The Vestry.

62. In 1834, as we have shown, the control of the Poor Law administration was in most parishes practically in the hands either of Open or of Select Vestries. Open Vestries, it is said, "formed the most irresponsible bodies that ever were entrusted with the performance of public duties, or the distribution of public money."[11] The Select Vestries were undoubtedly superior to open vestries, but "they were subject to the same corrupting influences and equally free from responsibility."[12]

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[1] Harris, Vol. V.; App. xxv. (41). [2] Bircham, 4964; Hall, 70652–7; Wethered, 5885–6; Fleming, 9423; Stephens, 34642–5. [3] Wilkes, 75346 (12), 75421–4; Harris, Vol. V., App. xxv.(41); Llewelyn, 49303 (28c). Bircham, 4963. [4] 62–63, Vict., cap. 14, Sec. 11 [5] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, Sec. 27. [6] Sec. 54. 7/30 Geo. III., cap. 49, Secs. 1–2. [8] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, Sec. 38. [9] Copeman, 74488; James, 48468. [10] Fleming, 9445; Kevill-Davies, 72726–9; Dorington, Vol. VII., App. ccv., Stat. 6. [11] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 108. [12] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

63. The Royal Commission of 1832 was strongly impressed by the difficulties attaching to the distribution of relief in a small district, where distributors and recipients were near neighbours, and pointed out :—

> "Where the administration of relief is brought nearer to the door of the pauper, little advantage arises from increased knowledge on the part of the distributors, and great evil from their increased liability to every sort of pernicious influence. It brings tradesmen within the influence of their customers, small farmers within that of their relations and connexions and not unfrequently of those who have been their fellow workmen, and exposes the wealthier classes to solicitations from their own dependents for extra allowances, which might be meritoriously and usefully given as private charity, but are abuses when forced from the public. Under such circumstances, to continue out-door relief is to continue a relief which will generally be given ignorantly or corruptly, frequently procured by fraud, and in a large andrapidly increasing proportion of cases extorted by intimidation."[1]

64. The remedy contemplated by the Royal Commission was the substitution of central for local control. "It has been strongly, and we think conclusively, urged, that all local discretionary power as to relief should be withdrawn;"[2] hence their recommendation of the appointment of a Central Board to control local administration,[3] and of the abolition of partial relief to the able-bodied.[4] The new bodies which were to administer relief locally under strong central control, and, within these definite limitations, were Boards of unpaid Guardians, possessing a property qualification prescribed by the Central Authority elected by and representing the various parishes which were formed into a Union. To these elected Guardians were added (until 1894) as *ex-officio* members the local Justices of the Peace,[5] and in London, in 1867, certain members nominated by the Central Authority.[6] The new authorities were formed, not at once but gradually all over the country, the chief resistance coming from a few of those places where Unions had already been formed under Gilbert's Act,[7] and where the consent of a majority of the Guardians had to be obtained to a dissolution. These Guardians were paid from £5 to £20 for their attendance at their monthly meetings,[8] and some of them succeeded in prolonging the existence of their Boards until 1868, when power was obtained by the Central Authority to dissolve them without their consent.[9]

65. The constitution of the new and unpaid Boards of Guardians remained unaltered until 1894, when the Local Government Act put an end to all property qualification for the office of Guardians, and abolished *ex-officio* and nominated Guardians.[10] At the same time every Board of Guardians was given the power of co-opting a limited number of members from outside their own body.[11] The Act did not deal in the same way with urban and rural areas as regards the election of persons as Guardians; inasmuch as in urban districts Guardians continue to be elected *ad hoc*, and practically for Poor Law purposes only; while in rural districts they are elected primarily as District Councillors, and Poor Law business constitutes only a part of their work.[12]

66. The Act of 1894 thus effected three most important changes in the principles upon which the Local Authority was constituted. First; it swept away the *ex officio* Guardians in almost all Unions, and deprived the Local Government Board of its powers of nomination. Second; whereas from 1872 to 1894 Boards of Guardians had been in rural Unions the Sanitary Authority, by the Act of 1894 the Rural District Council (to which the powers of the Sanitary Authority were transferred) became *ipso facto* the Board of Guardians. Third; the Act, by adopting the principle of co-option, recognised the possibility of improving local administration by selecting for that work persons other than those directly elected. Changes effected by Act of 1894.

67. Unfortunately, the Boards of Guardians do not appear as a rule to have been anxious to avail themselves of the privilege of strengthening their *personnel* by co-option. Failure of co-option.

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, pp. 276-7. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 279. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 297. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 262. [5] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, Sec. 38. [6] 30 & 31 Vict., cap. 6, Sec. 11. [7] 22 Geo. III., cap. 83. [8] *Vide* Memo by Professor Smart "The Poor Law Commissioners, 1834–1847," p. 19. [9] Twenty-First Annual Report of the Poor Law Board, 4197, 1869, p. 22. [10] 56 & 57 Vict., cap. 73, Sec. 20. [11] *Ibid.*, Sec. 20 (8). [12] *Ibid.*, Sec. 24.

option.[1] Even after fourteen years' existence of the right, it was in 1908 only exercised at all by 218 out of 643 Boards, and in none of these cases was the right used to the full extent. The general law permits each Board to choose its Chairman, its Vice-Chairman, and two members from outside its own body; but in 1908 apparently[2]—

	only	16 Boards	co opted	3	members	each
	only	120 ,,	,,	2	,,	each
and	only	82 ,,	,,	1	,,	each

68. Thus, in all England and Wales, there were only 370 instead of a possible 2,572 co-opted members, and on 425 Boards there were no co-opted members at all: moreover the number of Boards failing to exercise the right of co-option is apparently increasing rather than diminishing, and it is interesting to note that this increase is entirely accounted for by the rural and mainly rural Unions, where indirect election prevails.[3]

69. The principle of voluntary co-option seems therefore to have failed; and this failure is the more to be regretted in view of the evidence we have received as to the value of the co-opted Guardians.[4]

Effect of popular election on administration.

70. From the very first no doubt the newly-constituted Boards were a great improvement over the old Open Vestries. But it does not appear that the evils pointed out by the Royal Commission of 1832 in this regard have been adequately or permanently met by the remedies they proposed. The parish still preserves its peculiar relation to the Guardians whom it elects to represent it on the Union Board, with much the same consequences as before 1832. It is found that in many places Guardians are still interested chiefly in administering relief to their near neighbours,[5] while the publicity given to their work by means of newspaper reports makes them even more liable to undue pressure from their constituents.[6] Electioneering literature shows how easy it is to fall into the dangerous practice of courting popularity by promises of relief on easy terms. We may call attention in this connection to the handbill issued by certain candidates in Huddersfield in 1901, which was "followed by a distinct deterioration in administration"[7]; and to the collection of election addresses in Mr. Bagenal's last report to the Local Government Board.[8]

Divergencies in administration.

71. If the establishment of central control had resulted, as the Royal Commission of 1832 desired, in withdrawing "all local discretionary power as to relief,"[9] such electioneering promises would be futile; but a study of the relief given in different Unions shows how great a discretionary power is still exercised by local administrators,[10] and, undoubtedly, the wideness of that power does make it possible for an elected Guardian to fulfil to some extent his election pledges. The class of applicants who have no chance of receiving outdoor relief in one Union may get it easily and as a matter of course in another.[11] In one Union out-relief will not be granted unless the applicants have sufficient independent means to pay their rent;[12] while in another Union the very fact of earning or possessing any independent resources will be considered a bar to relief.[13] Some Guardians will not relieve the sick dependents of an able-bodied man at all unless the man himself comes into the workhouse,[14] while other Guardians make no effort whatever to exclude even the well-to-do classes from receiving gratuitously both indoor[15] and outdoor[16] medical relief. Innumerable instances

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1 Vulliamy, 73470–2; Kemp, 46816; Read, 76047–8; Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (A) (87).
2 Statistical Appendix, Part X. 3 Local Government Directories, 1906, 1907, 1908. 4 Preston-Thomas, 4348–9; Fawkes, 43973–4; Dodd, 47403; Fleming, 9019; Joseph, 69393–4; Grey, 15582.
5 Joseph, 69368–72; Jenner-Fust, 10957; Armstrong, Vol. V., App. lxvii. (9); Visits: Urban 39.
6 Fawkes, 43979. 7 Bagenal, 6885–6, 6889.
8 Thirty-Sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907 p. 339.
9 Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728] 1905, p. 279. 10 Davy, 2184; Preston-Thomas, 4575; Bagenal, 7324–6. 11 Wallace, 77095–103. 12 Grey, 15566. 13 Visits: Rural 89.
14 Dr. McVail's Report, p. 59. 15 Court, 6604; Dr. McVail's Report, pp. 43, 50, 147. 16 *Ibid.*, pp. 122–3.

of the existing lack of uniformity will be found throughout our evidence, and this diversity applies to every form of relief and to every class of applicant. In no case is the varying interpretation placed on the claim to relief better illustrated than in the case of the widow. In one part of the country a widow with one child would get no relief whatever unless she came into the workhouse;[1] in another part of the country she would, indeed, get out-relief, but nothing for herself, and only 6d. and two loaves per week for her child;[2] in a third district, she would get as much as 5s. for herself, and 4s. for her child,[3] and in a fourth district, she would get relief only if she consented to part with her child and send it into a Poor Law school.[4] Or again, in one Union outdoor medical relief may be freely given to all applicants without any inquiry as to means,[5] whilst in another Union it is refused to all persons unless they are in receipt of ordinary outdoor relief.[6]

72. While we fully appreciate the advisability of allowing a certain elasticity in the treatment even of the same class of cases, it cannot, in our opinion, be justifiable that the divergence should involve so great a curtailment or extension of the privileges of paupers, far less that it should amount to an actual denial of the right to relief. The same divergence of practice is shown throughout the statistics of pauperism. If, for example, we take the proportion of indoor paupers to outdoor paupers as affording some criterion of policy, we find it varying on 1st January 1908, between the ratios of 1,427 to 100 in the Whitechapel Union, and 4 to 100 in the Union of Newcastle-in-Emlyn (Cardigan),[7] Similarly in regard to expenditure, the cost of in-maintenance per indoor pauper varied in 1904–5 from £6 6s. 0d. in Longtown (Cumberland), to £26 9s. 0d. in West Hampnett (Sussex), and the cost of out-relief per outdoor pauper varied in the same year from £1 5s. 0d. in St. George-in-the East, to £12 18s. 0d. in the City of London.[8]

Lack of popular interest in Guardians' Elections.

73. In the absence of special electioneering appeals such as those above referred to, the interest shown in Guardians' elections is remarkably small.[9] Mr. Lockwood, in his evidence, gives a return showing the percentage of voters who took the trouble to record their votes in certain districts in London in 1904; in one ward it fell as low as 13·3 per cent.[10] The Chairman of the West Ham Board of Guardians thinks that about 10 or 12 per cent. vote at the elections.[11] Mr. Lewis, of Stepney, says: "Very little interest is taken in the proceedings of the existing Boards. The number of persons voting at Guardians' elections is small, and the Guardians are not subject to any effective public criticism."[12] The following figures compiled by the London County Council confirm statistically these witnesses' opinions as to the apathy of the electorate at the elections of Metropolitan Guardians.[13]

Proportion of electorate voting at—

	Year.	per cent.
Parliamentary Election - - - -	1906	78·3
County Council „ - - - -	1907	55·5
Borough „ „ - - - -	1906	48·2
Guardians' „ - - - -	1907	28·1

74. Similar conditions seem to prevail in other parts of the country. The Chairman of the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture thinks that about a quarter of the electors vote, and those vote who pay the least amount of rates.[14] This general indifference

[1] Heale, 69184; Visits: Urban 39, Rural, 56, 57, 81. [2] Brown, 75936. [3] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (O), (20). [4] Thorburn, 35692 (64). [5] Battersby, 28904; Paton, 50304; Downes, 23013; Dr. McVail's Report, p. 144. [6] Emberton, 71420–1. [7] Pauperism, England and Wales, Half-yearly Statement, 1st January, 1908, H.C. 130 of 1908. [8] Appendix, Vol. xii, Tables prepared by Mr. Booth. [9] Wethered, 5601; Bagenal, 7182; Davy, 2060–1. [10] Lockwood, 14043. [11] Paul, 21198. [12] Lewis, 21993, 2(c) 22014. [13] London County Council, "London Statistics," Vol. xviii, 1907–8, p. 27. [14] Kendrick, 22454.

to Poor Law elections may sometimes result in a good Board being elected and maintained in office, when both the few who do vote and the candidates are persons genuinely interested in Poor Law administration. But it has the marked disadvantage that the constituency is always open to capture by any party which is prepared to throw a little energy into the matter; and the whole policy of a Board may be reversed by a single election.[1] It often happens that candidates are "run" by the different political associations of the district,[2] sometimes with no other object than to try the relative strength of the political parties.[3] Moreover, occasionally, a whole Board of Guardians may be turned out on grounds wholly unconnected with Poor Law, *e.g.*, a question connected with the Vaccination Laws.[4] In Poor Law administration this liability to change is peculiarly disastrous. It is only by experience that Guardians learn wisdom in administration, and, to have a new set of Guardians every three years, means that both the poor and the ratepayers suffer from the constantly renewed mistakes of inexperienced administrators, and that the best class of officials are discouraged. It is unfortunate, we think, that advantage appears to have been so generally taken of the provision in Section 20 (6) of the Local Government Act, 1894, under which County Councils may direct that the whole of the Guardians of a Union shall retire together in every third year instead of one-third retiring annually.

One Guardian states :—

> "I have now been a Guardian for twelve years, and have been through four triennial elections. In my opinion, each of the four Boards elected has been less good than the last. The men on it are proposed and elected without, as it seems to me, the slightest regard to whether they are fitted for the position and work of a Guardian. They are chosen and elected (often avowedly so) in order to try the strength of the political party to which they belong, and to many of them one cannot help thinking that the chief idea in being a Guardian is that it brings some notoriety, and may be the first step towards a seat in the City Council—a sort of practising ground for it. Every three years our whole Board goes out, and only about one-third returns. The new two-thirds come totally ignorant of everything to do with Poor Law, not content to wait to learn, not even waiting to understand what is going on in their particular Union, much less what has been the history of the Poor Law, and of pauperism, for some years and centuries."[5]

Strikingly similar evidence comes from another town :—

> "Many men simply become Guardians as a stepping-stone to the Town Council; they wish to gain confidence in speaking, and use the Board room as a practising ground. . . . They are often ignorant and indifferent, and stand for other reasons than their knowledge of or interest in the poor."[6]

Defects in administration and some of their causes.

75. The lack of continuity caused by recurrent elections is a sufficiently grave evil, but there are defects in administration which call still more urgently for reform. We have been strongly impressed by the need for an improvement in the treatment of cases, from the points of view of discrimination, of adequacy and of impartiality. We attach great importance to our own visits to the recipients of out-relief in all parts of the kingdom, both urban and rural; and, while fully recognising the respectability and merits of many of the recipients, we cannot fail to call attention to the many cases in which the allowances made by the Guardians are helping to perpetuate social and moral conditions of the worst type. (*Vide* Chapter 6, Outdoor Relief.) Even when the relief is given to the right people, it is too often inadequate in amount and ill adapted to the particular needs of the case. We have also attended many Board meetings and Relief Committees, and have found in our experience quite enough to account for the bad work which is being done in some places. We have been present at meetings where the treatment of cases has obviously been affected by the presence of members who were house agents or owners of slum property;[7] on other Boards the publican interest is strong[8] (on one Board no less than seven out of thirty-five members are publicans[9]), and publicans have been heard to insist on out-relief being given to *habitués* of their houses.[10] More generally, the evil is attributed to ignorance and indifference, combined with the fallacious hope of keeping the rates down by a minimum dole of out-relief.

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[1] Morris, 16760. [2] Ford, 39775 (49), 39799; Grey, 15600; Baines, 39611–2; Dodd, 47229–30. [3] Lewis, 22014; Davy, 2061. [4] Davy, 2067. [5] Baines, 39541 (18-21). [6] Pease, Vol. V., Appendix ci. 13; *Vide* also Mee, Vol. IV., App. lxxxviii. (85). [7] Visits: Urban 18, 43. [8] Visits: Rural 65. [9] Chadwick 47014 (4). [10] Visits: Rural 65.

76. It frequently happens also that the conduct of business is such as to make the proper administration of relief impossible. Committees of our number report as follows :—

"We attended a meeting of the Board. . . . The relieving officers and the chairman stated the cases so confusedly and so incompletely that it was almost impossible to form any opinion as to the methods on which out-relief is distributed, but we gathered that each Guardian decided whether relief should be given to the applicants from the parish which he represented. The relieving officer was not consulted, nor was his statement of facts considered." [1]

"We attended a meeting of the Board. There was a large number of Guardians present, and the proceedings were not very orderly ; the relieving officer, a talkative, masterful man, practically decided most of the cases in conjunction with the Guardian of the parish in question. The clerk seemed to be a nonentity, and was seldom in evidence. Most of the Guardians took part in the proceedings, but as they all talked together it was difficult to judge what passed. There was practically no enquiry as to the resources of the applicant, and with the old people the amount of relief was determined solely by their age." [2]

"We found a very large meeting of the Guardians, ... the reason, as it appeared later, being that the election of a chaplain was on the agenda paper. It is difficult to say anything in praise of the method of conducting business, the chairman was totally ignorant of the procedure of a public meeting, the clerk self-assertive, ignorant and copious. . . . The election over, the Guardians streamed out of the Board room and the relief cases were taken. For this purpose, the remnant of the Board divided into two committees, one at either end of a small Board room, result, such a babel that it was difficult to hear, and impossible to estimate the merits of the applicants." [3]

"We visited and attended two Relief Committees. At the first there were five Guardians present, of whom one was a lady. Relief was distributed without principle or knowledge of the facts. The Guardians paid little or no attention to the officer's report, indeed sometimes they began to discuss the amount of relief before he had completed his statement of the facts. . . . The chairman seemed weak and incompetent, without backbone, afraid of the members of the Independent Labour Party, of whom two were present." [4]

"A large number of Guardians were present, and they seemed to us noisy in their proceedings and rough in their handling of the applicants." [5]

"We were present at the Relief Committees. These are four in number. . . . It is not easy to convey any idea of their inefficiency. Three of them were held in close proximity—the shouting of the relieving officers, the banging of doors, made the scene a pandemonium. The procedure was as follows :—The committee sat on one side of the counter, the relieving officer on the other with a pile of money beside him. He took names in order from the Application and Report book (which seemed to be very fairly kept), summoned the applicant, stated the facts of the case, allotted the relief, and handed it to the applicant, at the same time giving a card to the chairman of the committee for endorsement. By this method thirteen cases were decided in one committee in four minutes." [6]

"The relieving officer did not make or read out any general statement or explanation of the cases ; and amidst the babel of what largely resembled a *conversazione*, it was difficult for us (or indeed any of the Guardians save the chairman with the book in front of him) to obtain a clear idea of the cases." [7]

"We attended a meeting of the Board, at which eleven members were present, one being a lady. There had been another lady, but she was beaten at the last election by a publican, who was said to have brought twenty-five electors drunk to the poll. The out-relief was practically administered by the chairman and the relieving officer ; if the Guardian of the parish in which the applicant resided happened to be present he took some interest in the case, otherwise the Board were not concerned with the relief. . . . The publican interest, we were told, was largely represented on the board, the assistant clerk being in intimate and close alliance with them. . . . The Board, as a whole, seemed slack, uninterested and unintelligent. . . . In one case where the woman was reported dirty and the man given to drink, one of the Guardians mentioned having seen him at the public-house that morning. Relief was, however, granted at the instance of the Guardian of the parish, who was also the publican whose house the man frequented." [8]

77. Such instances as these, numerous though they were, are not given as typical of the general way in which the work is done. In many Unions the administration of relief is conducted in a very different way. Procedure is orderly, applicants are treated with courtesy and kindness, Guardians weigh carefully the needs of those who come before them, and adapt their treatment to those needs. For proof of

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[1] Visits : Rural 72. [2] Visits : Rural 82. [3] Visits : Rural 59. [4] Visits : Urban 24. [5] Visits : Urban 20. [6] Visits : Urban 5. [7] Visits : Urban 43. [8] Visits : Rural 65.

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this we may refer to our printed evidence, and to the reports of visits paid by ourselves. We welcome the opportunity of putting on record our high appreciation of the steadfastness and wisdom which have marked the work of such Boards. We earnestly hope that, if our recommendations take effect, every effort will be made to secure the continued services of such Guardians. But there is at present no adequate means of raising the standard of work to this high level, nor of ensuring that the condition of things to be found in many Unions shall be impossible for the future. It would seem to be imperative in the interests of good administration that the work of relief should be entrusted to persons secure both from external pressure and from the temptations of self-interest.

78. It is certain that one adverse influence to good administration lies in the great size of many Boards,[1] some of them having as many as ninety or a hundred members,[2] for although it is possible for a Board to obtain power to deal with relief cases by means of Committees, in many of the large Boards, especially in the country, the relief cases are taken by the Board sitting as a whole.[3]

79. Recent prosecutions of Guardians have brought to light the fact that systematic deception, dishonest contracting, and conspiracy to defraud the ratepayers are not inconsistent with popular election, notwithstanding the control exercised by the auditors of the Local Government Board. However, it seems only fair to point out that, while some of the worst cases of corruption and extravagance which have come to light have occurred in London, it is also in London and the immediate neighbourhood that some of the most enlightened and disinterested Poor Law work is being done. How far defects in the Local Authority are due to the more democratic element introduced by the Local Government Act of 1894, it is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to estimate. The immediate effect of the Act was that the membership of the Boards was very largely changed and that many new and inexperienced persons were elected. A considerable number of witnesses maintain that administration has deteriorated in consequence;[4] others however, that there has been little or no change.[5] The worst results have been apparent in the urban or mainly urban Unions,[6] where, following upon the change, there has been a large increase in the number of paupers. It is true the rate of pauperism in the Urban Unions taken as a whole has slightly diminished, but it has not diminished to the extent that would be expected when we consider the rapid increase in their population, and the considerable decrease in the rate of pauperism in rural or mainly rural Unions where the population is declining or is only slightly increasing.[7] It has been suggested by one witness that in rural districts the conditions of local self-government are more favourable than in towns; that there is definite financial responsibility; that there is an admixture of classes on the governing body; and that the best men are willing to serve.[8] In large urban Unions, on the other hand, there is apt to be very little common interest in the locality: few of the electors take the trouble to vote;[9] and the administration tends to fall into the hands of a class of men with little financial responsibility.[10]

80. One remedy which has been suggested for the apathy of the electors, and for increasing the sense of financial responsibility, is the abolition of compounding for rates, the argument being that this would force the ratepayer to realise his personal interest in economical administration.[11] Many of the electors pay their rates indirectly, and it is thought by some witnesses that this leads to lax administration and a high rate of pauperism. We revert to this matter in Part VIII.

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[1] Herbert, Vol I., App. xvii. (A), 99; Read, 75966; Copeman, 74463; Davy, 2058. [2] Statistical, Appendix, Part X. [3] Visits: Rural, 35, 67, &c. [4] Bonar, 29635–6, Bowen-Jones, Vol. VII., App. ci. (6); Stableforth, 51243–4, &c., &c. [5] Jones, 49764; Hervey, 11746–7, Davy, 3325, Cleaver, 36133–7, James, 48467–9. [6] Chance, 27061 (25–6), 27086, 27112. [7] Statistical Appendix, Part I, par. 85. [8] Davy 2044. [9] Davy, 2060. [10] Burke 74383; Clark, Vol. IV., App. cxviii. (6.) [11] Bury, 48131–4; Mee, Vol. IV., App. lxxxviii. (85.); Wilson, Vol. IV., App. cv. (27); Crowder, 17451.

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81. But the root of the evil in our judgment is to be found in the absence of any sufficient qualification in those who elect the Boards of Guardians, and in the Guardians themselves. Persons who are not qualified even to vote at a Parliamentary or County Council election may be elected as Guardians on a franchise wider than either the Parliamentary or County Council franchise.[1] Twelve months residence in a parish is a sufficient qualification for a person to be elected as a Guardian,[2] and, provided a man has this qualification, he may have been a pauper or a mendicant, and the law will still pronounce him qualified to be elected as a Guardian.[3] Moreover, it is technically possible for such a person, who pays no rates himself, to be elected to this position of high responsibility by voters, many of whom themselves pay no rates directly and have, therefore, no immediate interest in nor knowledge of the amount of expenditure which is placed upon the ratepayers. Or, even worse, the voters may themselves be prospective claimants for relief, and that from a Board which they know will be favourably prejudiced towards their claims: as instance the Board of Guardians who acquiesced in the following view:—

> "We are sent here to give outdoor relief to our relations, our fathers, and our mothers, and our sisters, and our brothers, and our cousins, and our uncles, and our aunts, and if we did not do it we should very soon be sent about our business."[4]

It seems clear to us that so long as such a state of affairs is even remotely possible, the law itself provides no guarantee whatever, that responsible and proper persons shall be elected as Guardians.

82. We have, therefore, scrutinised our evidence with a view to ascertaining what classes of persons as a matter of fact are elected to be Guardians under the existing system. In the rural districts there is an overwhelming mass of testimony to show that the tone and policy of the Boards of Guardians is largely determined by the tenant farmers, who are in a great majority.[5] Interspersed among the mass of farmers are a few clergymen, still fewer country gentlemen, and a sprinkling of land agents and small tradesmen.[6] On the one hand, as a rule, the country gentleman is unable to secure election,[7] or holds aloof because he is not willing to seek election, and on the other hand the country labourer is missing because he cannot afford the time.[8] There is also apparently in many parts of the country a very real difficulty in any woman securing election as a Guardian.[9] In the year 1907 there were 16,001 Rural District Councillors, all of whom were *ex-officio* Guardians. Amongst this number there were only 146 women; that is, the number of men and women respectively was in the proportion of 109 to 1.[10]

83. In the towns the evidence points to the bulk of the representation on Boards of Guardians being in the hands of present or past tradesmen,[11] and in some Unions, the tendency seems to be in the direction of electing a lower class of small shopkeepers.[12] In urban Unions, the preponderating influence of the shopkeepers is, however, modified on the one hand by representatives of the working men[13] and on the other by a sprinkling of clergymen and professional men.[14] There are also a fair number of

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[1] Adrian, 17–19. [2] 56 & 57 Vict., Cap. 73, Sec. 20 (2). [3] Visits: Urban 51. [4] Preston-Thomas, 4586; *Vide also* Brown 25257–8; Fothergill 43825 (14); Penman, Vol. VIII., App. lx. (2). Smith, Vol. IV., App. xcix. (20); Afford, Vol. IV., App. cx. (10). [5] Batchelor, 68879 (10); M'Gonigle, 52780; Calverley, Vol. IV., App. cxvii. (10); Burges, 72139 (6); Cook, 74128 (9); Kevill-Davies, 72681 (12); etc., etc. [6] Hervey, 11909; Bircham, 5063–5, 5069–70; Cook, 74128 (9–10); Cheeseman, 73806 (6); Macnaughton-Jones, 72977 (15). [7] Batchelor, 68879 (10) 68910. [8] Cowell, 74119; Macnaughton-Jones 73148. [9] Henniker, 67906 (18), 67997–8; Joseph, 69465–6; Copeman, 74565; Warnes, Vol. VII., App. ccii. (5); Visits: Urban 26. [10] Statistical Appendix, Part X. [11] Howitt, Vol. IV., App. cxxxvi. (11); Peters, Vol. V., App. cii. (7); Fallowfield, Vol. VII., App. clxxiii. (13); Lee, Vol. V., App. xxxiii. (3); Ford, 39776 (44), 39809; Stableforth, 51219 (7); Chadwick, 47092. [12] Howliston, Vol. V., App. lxxxiv. (10); Coulson, 52533 (28); Senior, Vol. IV., App. xcvi. (13); Lee, Vol. V., App. xxxiii. (3). [13] Howliston, Vol. V., App. lxxxiv. (10); Senior Vol. IV., App. xcvi. (3); Bastard, Vol. IV., App. cxii. (8); Beston, Vol. IV., App. cxiv. (9). [14] Fletcher, Vol. IV., App. cxxviii. (32); Stewart, Vol. V., App. cxi. (52).

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urban Unions in which women seek election and become Guardians;[1] of the 8,231 Guardians serving in 1907 who were elected for urban parishes 953 were women, the proportion here being nine men to one woman.[2]

84. Two shortcomings in administration are specially conspicuous.

85. On the one hand, and perhaps especially in the case of rural Guardians, it is alleged that excessive economy has tended to impair the administration in such matters as the supply of proper buildings,[3] the provision of sufficient relieving officers,[4] and the granting of adequate relief.

86. Thus, Mr. Preston-Thomas, the late Senior Inspector of the Local Government Board, says of the west country:

> "A difficulty is, that in London, for instance, and in some other districts, one important function of the Local Government Board may be to cut down proposals for spending, whereas in the west it is all the other way. We have to try exceedingly hard to get most of the Guardians to spend money for the most necessary purposes, so that we have to push them to spend, and not to curb their extravagance. I can give you numbers of instances as to the difficulties I have had in getting an infirmary built for the sick, or something of that sort. It is generally done in the end, but the reluctance of the farmers has to be combated. They always look at every penny they pay in rates very keenly, and they come in and oppose expenditure of all kinds."[5]

Mr. Willis Bund, Chairman of the Worcestershire County Council, says their one idea "is to keep down the rates."[6] Mr. Ross says: "Rural District Councils, with little debate, will add £100 or more to the expenditure on the roads but . . . haggle long about a shilling more or less to a widow's outdoor-relief."[7] Mr. Macnaughton-Jones stated that they "are desperately keen in cutting down relief to the last farthing to save the rates."[8]

87. When the rule of economy is broken it is often in favour of particular paupers in whom particular Guardians are interested. Thus, Mr. Preston-Thomas says:—

> "It is a little different *** when the question is whether they shall be generous, as they call it, to this or that individual applicant for relief, and what they call their generosity, which is often very bad for the community, in particular cases outweighs their desire to be economical."[9]

Thus, too, one relieving officer thinks that the system by which Guardians become associated with the interests of those they represent paralyses the efforts of a relieving officer to keep downrelief.[10] Or, again, the average Guardian's interest in his work is confined to interest in a particular case when out-relief is applied for,[11] and "a Guardian frequently acts as special pleader on behalf of a particular applicant, sits in judgment, and votes upon the case."[12] Applicants for relief will speak of "my friend on the Board."[13] The injustice of such procedure is emphasised by Mr. Mackay, who says: "It is cruel that poor people should go to the Board of Guardians and have it left a mere question of chance whether their particular friend is present or not, whether they get relief or not."[14]

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1 Coulson, 52533 (28); Rusbridge, 20948; Sankey, Vol. V. App. xliv. (9); Stewart, Vol. V. App. cxi. (52); Bastard, Vol. IV, App. cxii. (8); Fletcher, Vol. IV., App. cxxviii (30), etc. 2 Statistical Appendix, Part X. 3 Visits: Rural 35, 38, 70. 4 Bagenal, Vol. I, App. xv. (A), (58); Preston-Thomas, Vol. I. App., viii. (A), 22–4. 5 Preston-Thomas, 4285. 6 Willis-Bund, 76688. 7 Ross, Vol. VII., App. lxxvi. (7). 8 Macnaughton-Jones, 72977 (15); *also* Wheatley, 40310 (49); Newman, 68284–7. 9 Preston-Thomas, 12405. 10 Wright, 40012. 11 Phillips, 71011–12. 12 Joel, Vol. V., App. lxxxviii. (25). 13 Klassen, Vol. IX. App. lxviii. (10). 14 Mackay, 30026.

88. In fine, there is, as will be seen by a reference to the evidence, a body of testimony which we cannot overlook to the effect that the policy of many Boards of Guardians is one of parsimony tempered by patronage.[1]

89. On the other hand, in the towns there are not wanting, as has been above explained, indications that political motives govern the conduct of many of the Guardians,[2] who are often elected by the help of political organisations;[3] with the result that, in contrast with the rural districts, extravagance rather than parsimony dominates their policy.[4]

90. Moreover, the system does not always exclude the election of persons whose motives in administering the Poor Law are inextricably interwoven with their own interests.[5] Thus, Dr. Burnet says:—"It is impossible to get a complete Board of Guardians in any Union which is not liable to be associated with self-interest with respect to some of its members."[6] Cases have been brought to our knowledge in which Guardians have been administering relief to those on whom they rely for support in their business, as customers or tenants. Scarcely more creditable is the case of those who seek election as Guardians with a view to the patronage which the distribution of relief confers.[7] We do not intend to imply that the instances we have cited are necessarily typical of the characters and motives of Guardians as a whole. On the contrary, we are convinced that a very large number of Guardians are as a class not actuated by motives of self-interest in their administration. But all this points to the absence of safeguards against the election of undesirable Guardians under the existing system.

91. We are reluctantly forced to the conclusion that whatever may be the high qualities of individual Guardians or individual Boards of Guardians, the system of direct election has not succeeded on the whole in giving us Local Authorities who have an adequate or uniform appreciation of the difficulties and responsibilities which beset the administration of the Poor Laws.

92. Under the present method of direct election for small and self-contained areas there is no security that the Guardians elected will be those who are most suited to the position. The work is tending more and more to fall into the hands of persons who, caring more for their own interests than for those of the community, direct their administration more towards the attainment of popularity than towards the solution of the real problems of pauperism. It is not a class question in any sense; as one witness tells us, "it is not a question of the social *status* of the Guardians, still less of wealth or poverty. I have known some of the best Guardians the poorest and *vice versa*."[8] But it *is* a question of choosing, from whatever class in the community, experienced, thoughtful, and, above all, disinterested men and women to perform a most important public service. We believe that there are many such men and women quite prepared to give the service, who will not face a popular election carried on under the present conditions; and who, in particular, will not make the promises of liberal relief which are so potent in an election and so fatal to good administration. At present there is no doubt that the work of Boards of Guardians has fallen into disrepute, and nothing short of a determined effort will restore it to the esteem which it deserves. As a step towards this we shall recommend that, in future, the members of the Local Authority shall be largely nominated from amongst men and women of experience, wisdom and unselfish devotion to the public good It is hoped that many of the evils alluded to will then disappear, and the way be prepared for a disinterested and progressive administration.

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[1] Willis-Bund, 76546 (5); Joseph, 69293 (7). Wheatley, 40310 (49), 40367; Visits: Rural, 28; 87; 91. Sharp, 17138; Rusbridge, 20644; Brown, 25149–52; Fust, 10957; Kevill-Davies, 72681 (12–13).
[2] Hervey, Vol. I., App. xxiii. (A) 24; Afford, Vol. IV., App. cx. (13); Kerwin, 18147–8; Ford, 39776 (49).
[3] Kemp, 46820, 46882; Booker, 40854 (15) (b); Wilcockson, Vol. IV., App. l. (31); Cleaver, Vol. IV., App. cxx. (7); Grey, 15478–9; Hunt, Vol. VII., App. liii. (4).
[4] Lord, Vol. IV., App. lxxxiv. (6).
[5] Atkinson, Vol. IV., App. liv. (9); Ward, Vol. V., App. CXVII (9); Mee, Vol. IV., App. lxxxviii. (57); Fitton, Vol. IV., App. lxviii. (10);
[6] Burnet, 44421 (13).
[7] Phillips, 70962 (9), 70996; M'Gonigle, 52725–8; Burnet, 44512–4; Hunt, Vol. VII. App. liii. (4); Visits: Urban, 18; Waite, 43247 (17); Vulliamy, 73439–42.
[8] Baines, 39541 (22). *Vide also* Preston-Thomas, 4347.

Proposed change of title for the Local Authorities.

93. In accordance with the change of title recommended for the Division of the Local Government Board which at present deals with Poor Law matters, we also recommend that the new Local Authority shall be known as the Public Assistance Authority, and that the bodies which carry on its work in the smaller areas shall be known as the Public Assistance Committees. The name is not intended to disguise the fact that those who come within the scope of the operations of the new authority are receiving help at the public expense; but it is intended to emphasise the importance of making that help of real assistance. We hope also that the change may make it easier for those directly engaged in administering relief to build up new traditions, and to carry on their work with a higher aim before them.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 2.

(1) *The powers of Magistrates mentioned in Par.* 59, *may be regarded as obsolete and should be abolished.* (61.)

(2) *In future the members of the local authority should be largely nominated from amongst men and women of experience, wisdom, and unselfish devotion to the public good.* (92.)

(3) *The new local authority should be known as the Public Assistance Authority, and the bodies which carry on its work in the smaller areas should be known as the Public Assistance Committees.* (93.)

Chapter 3.

OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

94. For an efficient administration of relief the Local Authority must depend very largely upon the officers by whom it is served. Unless there are capable men and women, giving their best energies to carrying on work which is always arduous and sometimes very delicate, the people committed to their care will inevitably suffer and the whole administration of the Poor Law will deteriorate. So much was this felt by the Royal Commission of 1832, that the provision of properly paid and efficient officers was one of the express purposes for which they recommended the incorporation of parishes into Unions;[1] and the Poor Law Commissioners in their First Annual Report lay special emphasis on the advantages of a large over a small area in the matter of obtaining a competent staff of officers.[2]

95. But even with an enlarged area, the Royal Commission could not "conceal their fear"[3] that it would be difficult to secure the appointment of efficient officers. Accordingly, they advanced many arguments in favour of allowing the Central Authority to appoint the local officers, and only refrained from positively recommending this drastic course on account of the practical difficulty of making a Central Department responsible for so vast a number of local appointments. Their final recommendations, which are embodied in the Act of 1834, were that the officers should be appointed by the Local Authorities, but that the Central Authority should prescribe their qualifications and have power to dismiss them when unfit.[4] One recommendation not incorporated in the Act was that the Central Authority should have power to "recommend" to the Local Authorities proper persons to act as paid officers. On the other hand, the Act went further than the specific recommendations in that it enabled the Central Authority to fix the salaries, duties, and method of appointment of all Poor Law officers, and to direct what kind, and how many, of such officers each Local Authority should appoint.[5] By the first Regulations made under these powers, every appointment by the Local Authority was to be reported to the Central Authority "so that they might approve or disallow" of the same, and for some years the Poor Law Commissioners did not hesitate to withhold their sanction to unsuitable appointments.[6]

96. These Regulations in regard to the appointment of officers were practically repeated in the General Consolidated Order of 1847, which is still in the main the charter of the rights and duties of Poor Law officers, both in relation to the Central and to the Local Authorities. Under this Order, the appointment of paid officers is not subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, but their salaries are;[7] and this, combined with the power to dismiss, gives the Central Authority control (if they wish to exercise it) over the appointment of every important Poor Law officer in England and Wales. In addition, by subsequent legislation, the Local Government Board has statutory power to appoint necessary officers in case the Guardians refuse to do so.[8]

97. We have pointed out in a previous chapter the great control over local administration which the Central Authority possesses in virtue of its relations with the local officers. It must not, however, be supposed that the Guardians are without control and authority

Control and dismissal of officers.

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 326. [2] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, p. 11. [3] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 326. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 329. [5] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, Sec. 46. [6] Third Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 546-1, 1837, p. 49, par. 20. [7] General Consolidated Order, 1847, Art. 172. [8] 31 & 32 Vict., cap. 122, Sec. 7; 30 & 31 Vict., cap. 6, Sec. 80.

over their officers. On the contrary, it is the Guardians who select and appoint the officers,[1] and it is only in very extreme cases that the Local Government Board interferes with their selection. When the Board is only doubtful of the wisdom of an appointment, it is always willing, if the Guardians desire it, to allow the selected officer to be appointed temporarily on probation. After appointment the officers must obey all lawful orders of the Guardians,[2] and the officers know that it depends on the Guardians in the first instance whether any increase is made in their salaries and is sanctioned by the Board; while minor amenities such as hours, leave of absence, etc., are entirely within the discretion of the Guardians.

98. As regard the termination of officers' appointments, the Clerk, Treasurer, Chaplain and the Medical Officers can be dismissed only by the Local Government Board.[3] The master and matron, schoolmaster and schoolmistress and superintendent nurse of a workhouse, and the relieving officer, can be dismissed by the Guardians with the consent of the Local Government Board, and with the like consent these officers' appointments may be terminated by three months' notice at any time within twelve months of their appointment.[4] Moreover there are a number of subordinate officers whom the Guardians can appoint, pay and dismiss, at their discretion.[5] The Guardians have power of suspending from their duties, officers other than the Clerk, Treasurer, and Chaplain.[6] Such suspension, if confirmed by the Local Government Board and followed by dismissal, carries with it loss of salary during the period of suspension.[7]

99. To sum up, therefore, except as regards the salary and dismissal of superior officers, the Guardians can exercise effective supervision and control over their staff.

100. It is alleged to be a disadvantage of the existing arrangements as to tenure of office, that, after the expiry of the probationary period, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for the Guardians to get rid of an officer on the ground of unsuitability, apart from misconduct.[8] The Local Government Board can, under Section 46 of the Act of 1834, determine the continuance in office or dismissal of any Poor Law officer, but commonly it takes action only when the case comes under Section 48 and the officer in its opinion ought to be removed on the ground of unfitness, incompetency, or wilful disobedience to its orders;[9] but it is alleged that officers may occasionally become unsuitable for their posts to an extent which causes friction, or apathy in administration, and yet the unsuitability may not amount to positive unfitness or incompetency for office, such as would justify dismissal by the Local Government Board under the latter Section.[10]

101. In view of the importance which we attach to the maintenance of an efficient staff, we think that there should be greater facilities than at present exist to enable a Local Authority to get rid of an apathetic or unsuitable officer; we therefore think that, when a Local Authority and the Local Government Board concur in the opinion that the retention of any officer is on general grounds detrimental to the administration, the Local Authority should have power to terminate that officer's appointment after proper notice.

102. With this exception, however, we do not think it would be wise at the present juncture to recommend any alteration in the existing method of terminating the appointments of officers. The whole question was considered in 1860–4 by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, who unanimously recommended:—

> "That in order to secure the due discharge of their duties by the principal officers of Unions and parishes, it is essential that their tenure of office should not be terminable without the concurrence of the Central Authority."

The grounds for this recommendation were:—

> "If the tenure of officers was altogether uncontrolled by the Central Authority, they would not only perform their duties less independently, but would be subject to removal from personal bias, political causes, and various other motives which ought not to be allowed to operate in deciding upon their fitness or unfitness to retain office."[11]

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[1] Curtis and Battersby, 28,997. [2] General Consolidated Order, 1847; Art. 154. [3] *Ibid.*, Art. 187. [4] Order, February 12th, 1879, Art. 1. [5] General Orders, August 19th, 1867, and September 7th, 1899. [6] General Consolidated Order, 1847, Art. 192. *Ibid.*, Art. 175. [8] Davy, 1664. [9] 4 & 5 Will. IV., c. 76, Sec. 48. [10] Davy, 1664; Jenner-Fust, 11208; Fleming, 8944–6. [11] Report of Select Committee on Poor Relief (255), 1864, p. 13.

103. It is true that we propose to set up a new Authority which we trust will be free from any suspicion of acting on grounds of personal or political bias; but on the other hand the very fact that we are proposing to set up a new system under a new Authority renders it more desirable that the new authority should be assisted and advised by officers who are in a position to carry out their duties independently and in accordance with the spirit of the new Regulations. A new Local Authority may not always at the outset see the reason for Regulations with which they are not familiar; and if the Central Authority is to be ultimately responsible for laying down and enforcing the Regulations of the new system, it is essential that it should retain some control over the officers who carry out these Regulations under the supervision of the Local Authorities.

104. We think, however, that the Local Government Board should lay down more precisely the qualifications for the higher offices under the new system. If this were done the future Authority might be given full discretion in appointing to these offices, but we think that in all cases evidence should be furnished to the Local Government Board that the qualifications are fulfilled. Appointment of officers.

105. Down to the present time little has been prescribed by way of qualification.[1] For instance, the only disqualification prescribed for the important office of Clerk to the Guardians is that the person appointed shall not be a legal infant.[2] The only qualification for the master of a workhouse is that he must be able to keep accounts.[3] Until 1897 the only qualification for the office of nurse was that the person appointed should be able to read written directions upon medicines.[4] Even these modest safeguards may be dispensed with by the Guardians with the consent of the Local Government Board.

106. We do not propose to enter into any details as to what these qualifications should be, as this is a matter which the Central Department might be trusted to decide after consultation with experienced Local Authorities and officers. We think it is clear that no person should be appointed as Clerk who has not some knowledge and experience of the Poor Law, no person as superintendent of an institution who has not had some experience in dealing with the classes which the institution contains, and no person as a relieving officer who has not had some previous training as an assistant relieving officer or has not passed an examination and obtained a certificate of an examining authority recognised by the Local Government Board.

107. Already a system of examinations has been adopted with courses of instruction for relieving officers and others in connection with the London School of Sociology and Social Economics. Established first of all in London it has been extended to Liverpool in connection with the School of Social Science (Liverpool University) and is now being extended to other centres. It has been stated by the National Poor Law Officers Association that they contemplate "establishing a board of examiners empowered to issue certificates of proficiency and qualification to hold appointments in the Poor Law service to members and others," something like the Sanitary Examination Board in London.[5] We recommend that some system of certificates should be instituted with courses of instruction and examination prescribed by the Local Government Board, and, if possible, in connection with an institution or institutions recognised for the purpose by the Universities. But whatever the more precise qualifications ultimately decided on, we think that once these are laid down, the entire responsibility for the appointment of all officers might be left to the new Local Authorities. It would not then in fact be legal for the Local Authorities to appoint any person without the prescribed qualifications, and, on the other hand, it would be legal for them to appoint any person with the prescribed qualifications. In the same way we think the Local Government Board might sanction a scale of officers' salaries for each local authority, and so long as the salaries, or increases of salaries were in accordance with that scale, it should not be necessary for the Local Authority to require the sanction

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[1] General Consolidated Order, 1847, Arts. 162-6. [2] *Ibid.*, Art. 162. [3] *Ibid.*, Art. 163 [4] *Ibid.*, Art. 165. [5] Curtis and Battersby, 28796 (30), 28998. *Vide also* Williams, 45554; Craig, 19466 (29); Hill, Vol. IX., App. lxiv.

of the Local Government Board to individual salaries. In this manner, we think that the freedom of the Local Authorities might be increased and the Central Authority at the same time released from a mass of routine work in regard to individual appointments and salaries.

Salaries of Officers.

108. It will be seen that we still propose to retain a central control over the amount of the salaries of local officers. We think that the retention of such control is justified in view of the great rise especially in London during recent years in the amounts expended upon the salaries and other remuneration, rations, and superannuation allowances of Union officers and servants, notwithstanding the restraining influence of the Local Government Board. In the year 1852–3 this expenditure amounted to £596,000[1] whilst in 1905–6 it had grown to £2,491,000.[2] The number of the principal officers has no doubt increased, but in nothing like the same proportion. In the years 1872 and 1906 the principal offices held under the Poor Law Authorities numbered respectively[3]:—

	1872.	1906.
Clerk	661	670
Chaplain	544	599
Medical officers (institutional)	741	1,010
Medical officers (district)	3,458	3,718
Master, steward or superintendent	716	812
Matron	734	835
Schoolmaster or schoolmistress	924	448
Nurse	1,406	6,094
Relieving officer	1,606	1,892
	10,790	16,078

109. We do not intend to imply that the amount at present spent upon the salaries, etc., of officers is necessarily in excess of what is needed for a proper administration of Public Assistance. An adequately paid and efficient staff of officers should be in itself a safeguard against lax or corrupt administration, and their cost should be regarded as a form of insurance against the calamity of a growing pauperism. This point of view, and the danger of unduly restricting the salaries of Poor Law officers, was so ably put by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1840, that we feel justified in reproducing the gist of their argument:—

> "It is difficult to overrate the importance to a Union of possessing a body of efficient paid officers. Without efficient paid officers no Union, of whatever size, can conduct its Poor Law business in an economical and satisfactory manner. Although the vigilant superintendence of the Guardians is necessary to the well-working of the Union, it is not alone sufficient; and without able instruments for carrying the directions of the Guardians into effect, even a closer and more constant attention to details than can fairly be expected of a body of unpaid officers, would fail to accomplish the desired purpose. Many of the results produced by efficient Union officers are positive and apparent, such as the order, cleanliness, and salubrity of the workhouse; the good discipline of its inmates; the progress of the workhouse children in industrial, moral, and religious acquirements; the regular keeping and accuracy of the Union accounts; a frequent inspection of the outdoor paupers; a reduction of outdoor pauperism and of vagrancy. On the other hand, many of the results produced by efficient Union officers are merely negative, and, therefore, although they may be equally important with the others, they are likely to escape the attention of many persons, and their existence can always be disputed by uncandid reasoners. Thus the great diminution in the law expenses of parishes which had taken place since the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act is partly to be attributed to the changes in the law effected by that Act, and partly to the measures and the advice of the Poor Law Commission; but it is also to a large extent to be attributed to the management of parochial business by a class of officers superior to the parish overseers; officers, many of whom (particularly the clerks of unions) had had a professional education, and could, therefore, save parishes from the rashness, the ignorance, and the carelessness which, directly or indirectly, produced so much of the vexatious and expensive litigation which took place under the unreformed system. In like manner, when pauperism has been diminished or prevented from increasing, by the exertions of the Union officers, the small quantity of their apparent business (which is owing to their efficiency) is made an argument for reducing their salaries, or even for dismissing them altogether. A similar mode of reasoning has been sometimes employed respecting policemen who have been thought useless, in the exact proportion in which they were successful in preventing the commission of crimes."

[1] Sixth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1797–1854, p. 90. [2] Thirty-sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 403. [3] Second Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 748], 1873, pp. 330–1 and [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 438.

110. It is not, therefore, our intention to suggest that the salaries of Poor Law officers should be reduced; but it will be our endeavour to introduce a system which ensures that the country obtains the full benefit which ought to be derived from the services of an adequately supervised and adequately remunerated staff of efficient officers.

Effect of the Superannuation Act.

111. Our attention has been called to the restrictive effect which the Poor Law Officers Superannuation Act, 1896 may in some cases have upon the circulation or promotion of officers in the Poor Law service. Under the terms of that Act an officer is entitled, at a certain age or in certain events, to a superannuation allowance.[1] The allowance is payable in full by the particular Union by whom the officer is employed at the time when he becomes entitled to his allowance.[2] On the other hand, from the commencement of an officer's career each Union which employs him in turn deducts and retains a certain percentage of his salary by way of contribution towards the superannuation allowance. These contributions remain the property of the Union which has deducted them, and are not transferred to any other Union which may subsequently employ the officer.[3]

112. Under this arrangement it is clearly to the financial advantage of a Board of Guardians, in making an appointment, to select a young officer who presumably will make many contributions before he becomes entitled to superannuation, rather than an older officer, who will become entitled to superannuation at an earlier date and the bulk of whose contributions have already been paid to some other Union or Unions.

113. We have received evidence to the effect that these considerations do prejudicially affect the chances of elderly and experienced men being appointed to Poor Law posts.[4] We think it highly inexpedient that any inducement should be given to the appointment of inexperienced officers, or that middle-aged officers should be led to believe that, however efficiently they perform their duties, they have no chance of promotion to better positions in other Unions.

114. We strongly recommend that this restriction on the mobility of the Poor Law service be removed and that a central superannuation fund be established for the whole service,[5] and we think that, in the case of teachers transferring themselves from public elementary schools to the Poor Law service and, *vice versa*, arrangements should be made by which any sacrifice of pension is avoided.

115. We have now dealt with what appear to us to be the more important matters affecting the Poor Law service as a whole. We pass on to consider the duties and position of the higher officers in that service at the present time, and the changes which will be necessary under the system which we propose to introduce.

Clerk to the Guardians.

116. The Clerk to the Guardians is perhaps at present the most important officer of the Local Authority. He conducts all their general business, is the channel of communication between the Central Authority and the Guardians and other officers, and has multifarious duties which are prescribed in the General Orders and by Statute. In addition, if a Solicitor or Attorney, he conducts all ordinary legal business connected with the Union without extra remuneration; and he is the skilled adviser of the Guardians in all technical and administrative matters, such as the interpretation of the law, or of the Orders and Regulations of the Central Department.[6] In large urban Unions, his position is one of little less responsibility than that of Clerk to the Borough or County Council. On the other hand, in a large urban Union, although he is the expert adviser of the Guardians in all technical matters, it is held to be no part of his duty to supervise and guide the relieving officers in the discharge of their duties. Neither has he that power over subordinate officers nor that responsibility over the general administration of relief which devolves upon the Inspector of Poor in Scotland.[7] In rural Unions, the volume of his duties may be less, but his responsibility is equally great.

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[1] 59 & 60 Vict., cap. 50, Sec. 2. [2] Davy, 1930. [3] Curtis and Battersby, 28967. [4] Davy, 1930. Anderson, 39013 (18); Curtis and Battersby, 28966. [5] *Vide* Memoranda by Home Office and Board of Education relating to Superannuation of Police and Elementary School Teachers respectively. Statistical Appendix, Part XVIII. [6] General Consolidated Order, 1847, Art. 202; Amendments of Consolidated Orders, 1866, Art. 3, 4. [7] *Vide* Part IX., par. 19.

117. In many of the urban Unions the Clerk gives the whole of his time to his duties, but in the smaller urban and in the rural Unions only part of his time is usually given to them.[1] The advantages of a "whole-time" appointment are that the Clerk gives his undivided attention to his work and is more likely to have a complete grasp of those details the mastery or neglect of which in the aggregate makes good or bad Poor Law administration.[2] The advantages of a "part-time" appointment are that the Guardians are thereby enabled to obtain the services of a higher type of man than they could afford to pay as a whole-time officer, especially where the work is not sufficient to occupy the whole time of an able man.[3] These considerations are of special weight in the country, where the Guardians often find it to their financial interests to employ as Clerk a local Solicitor who is also Clerk to the Magistrates.[4] In certain of these cases, we found from actual experience that the Clerk knew little or nothing about the Poor Law or its administration,[5] but relied upon some subordinate in his office for guidance and for the necessary knowledge in such matters.[6] Such division between responsibility and knowledge is not, in our judgment, to be defended. We, therefore, recommend that the Clerk of the future or any officer performing analogous duties to any Local Authority, shall not, save under very exceptional circumstances, and subject to the consent of the Local Government Board, be a part-time officer.

Workhouse masters.

118. In regard to workhouse masters, the "general workhouse" system imposes upon the official head of the workhouse responsibility for the care of children, healthy adults, imbeciles, aged and sick persons. The workhouse master is expected to exercise supervision over the workshop, nursery, school, asylum, and hospital. The position in fact, is impossible, and is recognised to be so by the more thoughtful of the masters themselves;[7] moreover, they complain that their difficulties are enhanced by the amount of book-keeping imposed upon them, which distracts their attention from their more responsible duties of supervising the care of the inmates.[8] If, as we intend to recommend, the "general workhouse" is abolished, each of the specialised institutions which takes its place will require a superintendent, qualified by knowledge and experience for its management. The selection of men for such posts will be a matter requiring great care and discrimination, and the salary offered must be sufficient to attract men not merely of organising power, but having the moral qualities necessary to develop the capacities of those under their charge.

119. Similarly in our judgment highly trained officers will be required in what are now regarded as less important posts. Whilst visiting workhouses in different parts of the country we have noticed, especially in thickly populated urban Unions, that the number of labour masters is often insufficient, and that they lack the training needed for the difficult duties which they have to perform. The marked improvement in the treatment and condition of the sick in Poor Law infirmaries, which is seen everywhere, is due in great measure to the introduction of trained nurses. If the condition of the able-bodied is to be improved in like manner the qualifications of those entrusted with their care must be raised. For purposes of comparison we have visited some of His Majesty's prisons, and we have been impressed by the industry which we found there as contrasted with the listlessness and idleness of a workhouse. After making every allowance for the fact that detention is the rule in the one case and not in the other, we are of opinion that the difference is due to the thoroughness of the supervision exercised by warders and the curative treatment recently introduced by the Prison Commissioners.

120. In this connection we desire to call attention to the need which exists for an extension and improvement of the religious ministrations which are provided in Poor Law institutions. All denominations are in our judgment entitled to receive religious instruction from the clergy of their respective churches, and provision for this need ought to be made. To secure the moral welfare and progress of all the inmates of a workhouse is as much a duty as their physical maintenance, and without religious and moral influences improvement is impossible.*

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* *Vide* Appendix.

[1] Jenner-Fust, 11143. [2] Bagenal, 7475–7. [3] Jenner-Fust, 11146–9. [4] Davy, 1868. [5] Visits: Rural, 32, 82. [6] Visits: Rural, 65. [7] Elkerton and White, 26496–8. [8] Sharman, 74986 (12), 75179–80; Ifolkes, 75247 (10); Grounds, Vol. VII., App. clxxvii. (8); Davies, Vol. VII., App. cix. (8); Cross, Vol. VII., App. clxxi. (22); Ingledew, Vol. V., App. xxvii. (13).

121. Before we leave the subject of indoor officers we desire to express a strong opinion that the indoor staff should be allowed to live out, where circumstances permit, and so far as is consistent with discipline and the proper discharge of their duties. We cannot approve of a system by which persons with families are practically excluded from indoor appointments, or by which parents are separated from their children at a time when parental control is important. We believe that in most institutions arrangements could be made by which the number of resident officers would be greatly reduced.

122. In so far as the Local Authority is engaged in adjudicating upon individual cases, the most important of their officials is the relieving officer.[1] Unless he submits the cases to them with impartiality and a full knowledge they cannot be sure of coming to a wise decision. It is true that Guardians sometimes have local knowledge that is useful, but even the intimacy of a lifetime will often fail to reveal essential facts while it may still more often stand in the way of an impartial and independent judgment; and quite as essential is the constant supervision and attention which a good relieving officer gives to the cases under his care.[2] Relieving officers.

123. In the Orders and Regulations of the Poor Law Commissioners, provision is made for the appointment of relieving officers[3] and in subsequent sections their duties are defined. Those duties, as now prescribed in the General Consolidated Order, will be found set out in full in Mr. Adrian's evidence.[4] Briefly, they are: To receive all applications for relief, and forthwith to examine into the circumstances of every applicant by visiting the house and by making all necessary inquiries; to visit from time to time all paupers receiving relief; to report to the Guardians; to carry out the instructions of the Guardians with reference to relief; to supply immediate relief in cases of sudden and urgent necessity; and to procure medical attendance where necessary.

124. It is clear that the efficiency of the Guardians' administration must depend very largely upon the faithfulness and intelligence with which these duties are carried out by their officers. Unless full and accurate information is laid before them they will not be in a position to form a right judgment upon the needs of an applicant, and may be gravely misled as to the right course to pursue.[5] On the other hand, unless the Guardians give proper weight to the relieving officer's evidence, and are to some extent guided by his opinion, he is only too likely to become discouraged and indifferent.[6] We have been much impressed by what we have seen and heard as to the importance of preserving the right relation between the relieving officer and his Board, and by the great diversity of practice. It happens not infrequently that where the relieving officer is a masterful man, he completely dominates the situation making known as much or as little of the facts of the case as he chooses, and dictating to whom relief shall or shall not be given, and in what amount.[7] It is a practice which may work without any serious miscarriage of justice, but it is clearly open to grave abuse; and it is fatal to any genuine interest in the work by the Guardians themselves when they merely ratify the decisions of their officer.

125. But the results may be still more serious where the information and recommendation of the relieving officer are brushed aside, and the cases dealt with on other grounds.

> "The relieving officer is paid to know, and, if he has time and is not overworked, ought to know all the facts, but I have over and over again seen his judgment and recommendation overridden by Guardians whose feelings or want of knowledge or partiality overcame their reason. That is a great discouragement to the relieving officers, who have often complained to me of this weak point in administration."[8]

The President of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association says:—

> "Relieving officers generally feel that their advice and opinion should not be so readily set aside as it is at the present time;[9] I have heard relieving officers make this remark time after time:

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[1] Morris, 16675. [2] Rigby, 40718 (16); Cooper, Vol. IV., App. lxii. (17). [3] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, p. 159. [4] Adrian, 232. [5] Visits: Urban 2 D. [6] Thompson, 22801–2; Dodd, 47191 (34i); Chance, 27301; Visits: Urban, 22 C, 24 B; Jones, 49790. [7] Visits: Urban, 5 A, 25 A, 45 B; Rural, 75, 82. [8] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (A) (131). [9] Thompson, 22636.

> 'What is the good of our making inquiries and looking into cases when the Guardians will not take any notice of our recommendations when we bring the case up?' [1] We feel that experience is so often set aside for personal policy." [2]

In places where the poor are allowed to make statements for the purpose of obtaining relief without due verification being made of these statements, a whole class of the population is being tempted daily into habits of deceit. Of one London Union we are told:—

> "Inquiry into character of applicants for out-relief and into truth of their statements is discouraged. In no case are employers asked. The superintendent relieving officer has applied three times to the Guardians for permission to request the officers to ascertain the wages of persons applying for relief. They absolutely refused to grant such permission. The result is: 'We are "done" every day we rise.' On several occasions it has been found that recipients of out-relief under-stated their earnings, or that after relief had been granted they obtained remunerative employment. These facts, when brought to the knowledge of the Guardians, are ignored, and the relief is continued as before." [3]

126. Perhaps the most striking evidence in this connection is a list of cases from Leicester in which relief has been continued by the Guardians although the relieving officers have reported the cases as unsatisfactory.[4]

127. In one respect the position of the relieving officer in relation to the Guardians is a peculiarly difficult one for him. He is their paid servant, and is bound to carry out their instructions with regard to relief; and yet it is he who is responsible if, in consequence of those instructions, any misadventure should occur. If, for instance, the Guardians order that relief shall be given only in the workhouse, and the applicant refuses to enter, then the relieving officer is not free from responsibility but must "watch the case," giving sufficient food from time to time to prevent starvation [5]:—

> "It is a most onerous responsibility, and what is more, exposes the relieving officer to threats of being indicted for manslaughter and so on in case the man dies." [6]

The Metropolitan Association of Relieving Officers ask that their members may be relieved of this responsibility. They say:—

> "Where a case has been adjudicated by the Board of Guardians and they are of opinion that indoor relief is the proper relief to offer, then the relieving officer should not be left with the responsibility of dealing with the cases when the applicants object to go inside. [7] . . .
>
> "The Guardians will very often tell the officer that he must watch the case. But what is meant by watching the case?—simply that to protect himself he goes and gives them relief. . . . We feel that it should not rest with us. We feel that the applicant having had the opportunity of accepting or rejecting the relief offered, should abide by the consequence of his own choice." [8]

128. We think that this request is reasonable, and we would add that, in our opinion, this construction of the law imposes on relieving officers an excess of obligation which interferes with the just and proper administration of relief. If there is any dereliction of duty there is ample opportunity for the Local Authority or for any private person to report the matter to the Local Government Board, who can investigate the complaint, and if he is culpable, deprive the officer of his post. We think that administrative appeal and administrative action on these lines should be sufficient

129. It is clear that if the relieving officer is to perform his work satisfactorily he must not be burdened with too large a number of cases. This is important not only from the point of view of the original inquiries, but also from that of the subsequent supervision. His duty is not ended when he has carried out the first order of the Guardians. A large number of cases remain on his books for a considerable time, many are permanent, and these should be constantly visited. We have found a great diversity of opinion as to

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[1] Thompson, 22638. [2] *Ibid*, 2271.5. [3] Report as to Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment in London, by Miss Williams and Mr. Jones, p. 13. [4] Kemp, 46894–6, App. xxv. (a) [5] Adrian, 758–60, 955–60; *vide also* Young, 69537 (9), 69587, 69595–601; Burnell, 68171–5; Hurworth, 53035–43; Solomon, 50703. [6] Davy, 3020. [7] Thompson, 22572. [8] *Ibid.*, 22573–4.

the number of cases which a relieving officer can look after, and a still greater diversity of practice. Mr. Bagenal writes on this point :—

> "As to the number of cases which a relieving officer can deal with, both population and acreage must be taken into account. A very experienced superintendent of out-relief expressed quite recently to me the opinion that in a small densely populated district a good relieving officer can look after 300 cases, assuming he has no other duties and there is a superintendent and cross-visitor." [1]

Mr. Lockwood quotes an experienced officer as holding that the proportion should not exceed 150 to each officer.[2] Mr. Preston-Thomas says :—

> "In many of the Unions, the staff of relieving officers is so inadequate as to make it quite out of the question that cases should receive sufficient investigation; and some Boards of Guardians, even if they desired to reform their present laxity in the grant of relief, would probably find it impossible to do so without reorganising their official machinery in this respect. Cases are too often decided according to the sympathies of individual Guardians rather than on facts systematically ascertained by relieving officers. . . . The Local Government Board have indicated between 250 and 300 as the maximum number with which one relieving officer can efficiently deal." [3]

Mr. Preston-Thomas quotes, as an instance, the case of Barnstaple in 1902 :—

> "For 1,479 outdoor paupers it has only three relieving officers, much of whose time is taken up with other duties, two of them being also inspectors of nuisances, while the third is so much occupied with his functions as registrar that he has frankly stated his inability properly to investigate the circumstances of the paupers to whom he administers relief; and of whom he has over 700 on his books." [4]

In this case the Local Government Board intervened, and insisted on the appointment of another officer with the result that :—

> "they had saved the salary of the officer several times over, and they were now in a position to judge whether their people wanted relief or did not want relief, which was the great thing." [4]

130. The largest proportion of cases to relieving officers which has been reported is at Leicester, where in 1906 it stood over 1,000, and is still more than 800 to each officer.[5] It is obvious that where the number of families becomes too large they cannot be looked after in a satisfactory manner; and we have satisfied ourselves, both by looking over the officers' books and by attending at Relief Committees, that, in many Unions, the information obtained is quite inadequate to a proper understanding of the cases.[6]* Our view practically coincides with that of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor who report :—

> "In urban districts there is no doubt that these (relieving) officers. . . have often far more work than they can properly perform, and this is especially the case where outdoor relief is freely given." [7]

We recommend, therefore, that in any scheme or regulations for the administration of relief in local areas, the proportion of cases to officers be carefully and periodically revised.

131. The position is complicated by the difficult question of pay-stations. The best work is done when the relieving officer has time to take the money to the home each week, and so see for himself the position of the recipients; but owing to the large number of cases, and in country districts to their remoteness from the

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* Although the population and the extent of the district are not the only factors which should be considered in this connection, they form a fairly reliable test of the adequacy of the staff employed, and we find that there are unions in which the relieving officers' districts have populations of 80,000 and upwards, and others in which the acreage extends to upwards of 100,000. A district in one Union has a population of 74,000 and an acreage of 35,000, and another Union which has but one relieving officer has a population of 18,000 and an acreage of 111,000.

[1] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. XV. (A) (131). [2] Lockwood, 12669. [3] Preston-Thomas, Vol. I. App. viii. (A) (22–3). [4] Preston-Thomas, 4403. [5] Walsh, Vol. I., App. xviii. (A) (26); Hincks. Vol. IV., App. cxxxiv. (29); *Vide also* James, 48454; Coulson, 52543. [6] Visits : urban, 2D, 13, 25A, 43A; rural, 53, 65B, 72, 75, 78, 82, 88. [7] Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor [Cd. 7684], 1895, p. xxii., par. 58.

centre, the custom has become almost universal of instituting pay-stations, to which the recipients of relief come or send for their allowances. The pay-stations were originally started in obedience to a suggestion from the Local Government Board in 1871,[1] and they conduce, no doubt, to a considerable saving of time; but there is evidence to show that they are open to abuse and lead to careless work.[2] To abolish the pay-stations would mean additional officers in many cases,[3] but great stress is laid upon the need for their abolition by one witness of much experience :—

> "Various complaints have been made against the system, as, for instance, that children are sent to the relief stations to receive the parish pay from the relieving officer. Then it is notorious that occasionally one of the paupers will act as a sort of commission agent and collect the pay of other paupers for a small sum. A graver objection to relief stations is that if you have relief stations, you have no certainty that the relieving officer really visits the home of the pauper . . . the abolition of relief stations, or their restriction to the smallest possible limit, would be the best check that the relieving officer discharged what is one of his primary duties, namely that of visiting the pauper. . . I think the importance of ensuring that the relief shall be paid to the pauper in his own house is so great that I would not hesitate to recommend any increase of the relieving officer staff which was necessary to that end. I put the suggestion forward as one of the most important ones which I am able to make for improving what I have already termed the business side of the present relief administration.[4]

We recommend the abolition of the pay-station. We have ourselves noticed, in going round with relieving officers, sometimes that the people did not recognise the officers,[5] sometimes that the officers did not know the addresses of the people they were visiting.[6]

132. Even more important than to have a sufficient number of relieving officers is to have the right type of man appointed. Generally speaking, the only personal influence which is brought to bear upon the poor in connection with outdoor relief is that of the relieving officer, and owing to his position that influence may be very great. It is right to record that the majority of the officers we have seen have shown a high sense of their responsibility in this regard, and that in visiting the homes of paupers we have seen that the officer is welcome as a valued friend.

133. But it is inevitable under the present system of appointment that officers should differ widely in capacity and that some should be much less suited to the difficult work than others. Mr. Preston-Thomas thinks that :—

> "As a rule the relieving officers are a very good class, and that we get men who do their work surprisingly well."[7]

Another witness, however, says :—

> "As a matter of fact men are appointed relieving officers very often who know absolutely nothing about it. A relieving officer, as a rule, has to learn his work after he is appointed. It is very difficult to get at the motives which move individuals to appoint other individuals to certain Poor Law offices, but you will sometimes see a man appointed as a relieving officer simply because he has failed in everything else—I will not say very often—but not infrequently. He may have failed as a farmer; he may have failed as a contractor; he may have failed as a road surveyor; he may have failed in any sort of line of business to which he has devoted himself, but if he be well known and have a quantity of friends they will find something for him."[8]

134. Later in the Report we shall propose very considerable changes in the relations between public and voluntary assistance. These would lead to many alterations that would affect the work of a relieving officer incidentally. An altogether higher standard of investigation in the individual case will be required with a more careful consideration of the possibilities of preventing distress; for we shall propose that all cases in which prevention may be possible shall be referred to a co-operating Committee of Voluntary Assistance. It will follow that instead of relieving officers endeavouring to fulfil the impossible task of dealing with hundreds of cases, they will have to expend much more care in individual cases, and at the same time much of the supervision of cases will be shared with voluntary workers. This will lead to an increase and concentration of their duties in one direction and to the reduction of their work in another. All our references to the work of relieving officers, and indeed to the character of existing administration generally, must, in any inferences which may be drawn from them in regard to the future, be qualified by this consideration. As we state later on, we are of opinion that in some places an

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[1] Bagenal, 7808. [2] Davy, 2518, 2752; Dansey, 5945–6; Fleming, 8923. [3] Preston-Thomas, 12403.
[4] Davy, 2518. [5] Visits: Rural, 83. [6] Visits: Rural, 75. [7] Preston-Thomas, 12449. [8] Fleming, 8937.

officer might be appointed who, like the Inspector of Poor in Scotland,* might fill the position both of Clerk and relieving officer with such assistance as is necessary. With a simplified Poor Law it should not be necessary in all circumstances to have a Clerk who is a Solicitor in charge of the official work of each local Committee. Thus the changes which we propose will affect the work and the relations of officers to the Authorities in many different ways.

135. Instances have also been brought to our notice where ex-Guardians have been appointed as relieving officers, having resigned their office as Guardians for the purpose of taking up a position as paid officer.[1] It has been pointed out to us that in such cases the Guardians, in making the appointment, are more likely to be moved by considerations of sympathy with their colleague than by an impartial estimate of his fitness for the post. And even if he be duly qualified, it must be difficult to make properly amenable to discipline an officer who has lately been the colleague and equal of those whom it is now his duty to obey. We recognise that it may be considered unjust that the experience gained by membership of a Local Authority should be a bar to appointment as an officer of that Authority, but we feel strongly that it would be little less than a national disaster to encourage a practice of seeking membership of Local Authorities with the ultimate purpose of obtaining paid offices. To do so would be to debase the tradition of local government in England which is founded on the principle of voluntary, unpaid service; and there would be a great danger of attracting a worse instead of, as we wish, a better class of volunteers to the State's service of local government. We think that it should be recognised that membership of a Local Authority is a bar to candidature for paid posts under that Authority.

136. To this end we recommend that a Local Authority should not be allowed to appoint an ex-member as a paid officer unless he or she has ceased to be a member of the Local Authority for a period of, say, twelve months before appointment. A rule of this kind is, we understand, actually enforced by the Registrar-General in the case of local appointments in connection with the registration of births and deaths.

137. At present the appointment of a relieving officer must be sanctioned by the Local Government Board.[2] The only prescribed qualifications are that the officer must be able to keep accounts, must be resident in his district, and, unless with the consent of the Guardians and of the Local Government Board, must not engage in any other trade, profession, or service.[3] As in the case of other officers, it is obvious that these "qualifications" are by no means comprehensive of the qualities which are to be desired in a relieving officer. To a large extent those qualities are of a personal nature which it is difficult to test in any way but by actual experience. Mr. Baldwyn Fleming says:—

> "For a relieving officer you want not only a man of good personal character, but you want a man of great sympathy and at the same time great firmness, you want a man who can be very gentle and at the same time very strong, you want a man who has the fullest sympathy with distress and at the same time who is determined to protect the ratepayers from fraud—a man who will find out imposition on the one hand and be very stern with it, and, who, on the other hand, will be most sympathetic with real suffering."[4]

Mr. Lockwood states:—

> "A relieving officer is practically on duty the whole twenty-four hours through. He has frequently to act in difficult cases on his own responsibility; his duties take him into uncleanly houses and rough localities, he is on duty always and liable to be called up at any hour of the day or night."[5]

138. Under the present system a relieving officer generally approaches his work without any previous experience, and the Guardians, having once appointed him, cannot remove him except with the consent of the Local Government Board. It has been

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* For definition of duties of Inspector of Poor *vide* Part IX. par. 19.

[1] Carryer, 46537; Frater, 52150. Visits: Rural, 65, 75; and recent questions to Mr. Burns in Parliament. [2] Davy, 1874. [3] General Consolidated Order, 1847, Art. 164, 166; General Order, September 7th, 1899. [4] Fleming, 9021. [5] Lockwood, 12666.

suggested that relieving officers should always be appointed in the first instance as assistants, and only promoted to independent positions after having received training and shown definite capacity.[1] A further suggestion is that training should be combined with examination:—

> "The work of the relieving officer is of such importance that he should be trained for the work and expected to obtain a certificate from a competent authority as to his knowledge of the law and the orders of the Local Government Board governing his duties." The Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, after due consideration, passed the following resolution on September 30th, 1903: "That the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association agrees with the training and certification of relieving officers."[2]

Some advance has already been made in this direction in connection with the School of Sociology:—

> "Lectures and classes have been held, conducted by experts in Poor Law practice, and in March last an examination extending over nine hours was arranged. The examiners were well-known authorities upon the various subjects. Thirty-eight candidates entered, amongst them superintendent relieving officers, relieving officers and assistants, and others not in the service; twenty-eight candidates qualified for a certificate."[2]

139. As we have stated no person should be appointed as a relieving officer who has not had some previous training as an assistant relieving officer or has not passed an examination and obtained a certificate of an examining authority recognised by the Local Government Board.

140. We have already referred, generally, to the present system of superannuation of Poor Law officers: one of its effects on a relieving officer is that he has little chance of promotion.[3] The work is more difficult and the salary higher in some Unions than in others, but under the present arrangement there is little or no passing from the one to the other. And as, generally speaking, the officers are all of one grade, there is no promotion in the service of one Board. In large Unions, however, a change is taking place in this direction, and it is becoming more usual to appoint different grades of officers. In eleven of the London Unions and some provincial towns there are superintendent relieving officers who supervise the work of the staff,[4] and to some extent train the officers in their work. Mr. Court says:—

> "Some of their relieving officers who were appointed were not at all good men at the time of their appointment—they were people who had been attendants in lunatic asylums and so on; but I really think that all of them are turning out fairly well and that they are improving. That was one reason why we wanted a superintendent relieving officer, so as to educate these people first of all and then to supervise them."[5]

At Nottingham, Mr. Herbert states:—

> "Owing to the extra vigilance of the relieving officers, and the very careful inquiries that were made by the superintendent relieving officer, many cases of deception were shown up, as will be seen by the list of cases taken from the superintendent relieving officer's reports."[6]

141. In some Unions "cross-visitors" are appointed who perform somewhat the same functions as the superintendent[7]; while the "assistant" relieving officer is generally, as his name implies, of subordinate rank, and his appointment affords a good opportunity for training prior to promotion.[8]

142. There is one other point to which we desire to draw attention in this connection, and that is the excellence of the work which can be done by women as regards the outdoor poor. In some few Unions, women are already employed in visiting certain classes o cases. In Bradford, an experienced woman holding a certificate of the Sanitary Institute visits all out-relief cases, and makes an independent report as to circumstances and condition of the homes direct to the Committee.[9] In Camberwell and Southwark "their visiting is understood to relate chiefly to children and lying-in cases,"[10] while at King's Norton a woman is engaged chiefly in visiting widows and old people in receipt of out-

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[1] Fleming, 8998; Blossom, 42979; Craig 19550, 19611–2. [2] Craig, 19466 (29). [3] Davy, 1932–3. [4] Lockwood, 13575; Wallace, 77008 (1); Thompson, 22734–7; Wood, 16068; Dewsnup, Vol. IV., App. xxxvii. (1–3). [5] Court, 6659. [6] Herbert, Vol. I., App. xvii. (A) (62). [7] Davy, 2515. [8] Lockwood, 12666, 12945. [9] Women's Local Government Society, Vol. IX., App. lxxxiv. (14). [10] Lockwood, 13575.

relief.[1] It is obvious that there are many cases in which it is more suitable that a woman should visit the home, and in which her influence may be more effective. Amongst many of the poorest class the knowledge of housekeeping and child-management is very defective, and might be greatly improved by a sensible woman visiting regularly; while her care and supervision would bring comfort to many of the permanent aged cases.

Proposed Public Assistance Service.

143. For reasons suggested in previous pages and further developed in the Chapters on Indoor and Outdoor Relief we are of opinion that a Public Assistance Service should be set up which should include all officers concerned with the supervision, control, and disciplinary treatment of the poor—not only those who in the future will occupy positions analagous to that of the Inspector of Poor in Scotland, but also relieving officers both male and female, masters, matrons and superintendents of institutions of every grade, labour masters and mistresses. The service should be graded, and no person should be eligible for enrolment who had not received a certificate from a recognised Authority, showing that he possessed specific qualifications. Those qualifications should include some knowledge of the law and the principles on which it is based, and such intellectual acquirements as would enable him or her to discharge satisfactorily the duties to be performed. A system should be organised, whereby those who have been certified as eligible for service could give evidence of capacity, knowledge and interest in their work by obtaining higher certificates on lines similar to those which obtain in other services; in effect, every officer should realise in the earlier years of his career not only that he has to discharge certain formal duties, but that he is concerned with the moral training of those committed to his care. In our visits to the workhouses we have been impressed by the interest which the higher type of masters and matrons take in the moral recovery of inmates; with properly graded institutions, this type of officer would become far more common than at present. We think that there should be more opportunity of promotion from the lower to the higher ranks in the service, that opportunities of specialised training should be provided, and that no question of superannuation should hinder the transfer of efficient and promising officers from one Local Authority to another.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 3.

(1) *When a Local Authority and the Local Government Board concur in the opinion that the retention of any officer is on general grounds detrimental to the administration, the Local Authority should have power to terminate that officer's appointment after proper notice.* (101.)

(2) *No person should be appointed as Clerk who has not some knowledge and experience of the Poor Law, no person as superintendent of an institution who has not had some experience in dealing with the classes which the institution contains, and no person as a relieving officer who has not had some previous training as an assistant relieving officer or has not passed an examination and obtained a certificate of an examining Authority recognised by the Local Government Board.* (106.)

(3) *There should be qualifying examinations for the higher officers. Once qualifications for each office are laid down, and the Local Government Board satisfied that they are fulfilled, the entire responsibility for the appointment of all officers might be left to the new Local Authorities.* (104 and 107.)

(4) *The Local Government Board might sanction a scale of officers' salaries for each local Authority, and so long as the salaries, or increases of salaries were in accordance with that scale, it should not be necessary for the Local Authority to require the sanction of the Local Government Board to individual salaries.* (107.)

(5) *A Central Superannuation Fund should be established for the whole service, and in the case of teachers transferring themselves from public elementary schools to the Poor Law service and* vice versa, *arrangements should be made by which any sacrifice of pension is avoided.* (114.)

(6) *The Clerk of the future or any officer performing analogous duties to any Local Authority shall not, save under very exceptional circumstances, and subject to the consent of the Local Government Board, be a part-time officer.* (117.)

[1] Hayward, 45922 (1).

(7) *If the general workhouse is abolished, each of the specialised institutions which takes its place, will require a superintendent, qualified by knowledge and experience, for its management. The salary offered must be sufficient to attract men not merely of organising power, but having the moral qualities necessary to develop the capacities of those under their charge.* (118.)

(8) *Highly trained officers will be required in what are now regarded as less important posts, as* e.g., *that of labour master.* (119.)

(9) *Provision should be made for inmates of all denominations receiving religious administration and instruction from the clergy of their respective churches.* (120.)

(10) *The indoor staff should be allowed to live out, where circumstances permit, and so far as is consistent with discipline and the proper discharge of their duties.* (121.)

(11) *Where adequate relief is offered and refused, the responsibility for the consequences arising from such refusal should not rest with the relieving officer.* (127–128.)

(12) *The relieving officer must not be burdened with too large a number of cases.* (129.) *In any scheme or regulations for the administration of relief in local areas, the proportion of cases to officers should be carefully and periodically revised.* (130.)

(13) *Pay stations should be abolished.* (131.)

(14) *In some places an officer might be appointed who, like the Inspector of Poor in Scotland, might fill the position both of Clerk and relieving officer with such assistance as is necessary.*[1] (134.)

(15) *A Local Authority should not be allowed to appoint an ex-member as a paid officer, unless he or she has ceased to be a member of the Local Authority for a period of, say, twelve months before appointment.* (136.)

(16) *Women visitors might be employed for certain classes of out-relief cases* (142.)

(17) *A graded Public Assistance Service should be set up which should include all officers concerned with the supervision, control, and disciplinary treatment of the poor, including relieving officers, both male and female, masters, matrons and superintendents of institutions of every grade, labour masters and mistresses. In this service there should be more opportunity of promotion from the lower to the higher ranks, and no question of superannuation should hinder the transfer of efficient and promising officers from one Local Authority to another.* (143.)

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[1] The designation and duties of the chief officers of the new Public Assistance Authorities will be found in Part IX.

Chapter 4.

AREAS OF ADMINISTRATION.

Reasons for enlarging area of administration in 1834.

144. At the basis of the reforms introduced by the Act of 1834 lay the enlargement of the area of administration from the parish to the union of parishes. The intention of thus increasing the area of administration was partly, as we have seen, to avoid the difficulties arising out of the distribution of relief in small areas, where administrators and recipients were near neighbours. Partly also it was desired, by the creation of a common fund, to make it possible for officers of a higher standing to be employed.[1] But the primary object of the change was to facilitate the construction and "common use" of workhouses.[2] It was impossible that each parish should erect and maintain its own workhouse; but the abolition of parochial relief involved the alternative of maintenance in institutions, and it was for the purpose of facilitating institutional treatment that the 15,500 parishes were gradually grouped into the 643 Unions which form independent units of administration to-day. It is important to note, however, that the Royal Commission of 1832 did not contemplate the erection of large "general" workhouses, such as we know. Their suggestion was that the paupers of a district should be properly classified, that certain classes might be accommodated temporarily in ordinary dwelling-houses, and that the "poorhouse" should be reserved for the able-bodied. Ultimately, the different classes of paupers were to be distributed, one class to each house within an incorporated area. Stress is laid upon the economy to be effected by such an arrangement as compared with having all classes within one house, and their final recommendation is for classification *by* workhouses.[3] This recommendation has never been completely carried out, although it was in a sense recognised by the Legislature which, in Secton 26 of the Act of 1834, gave the Central Authority power to make Regulations for the "classification of the poor" in the "workhouse or workhouses" of parishes incorporated in a Union.[4]

Policy of First Central Authority in regard to classification of indoor poor.

145. In view of the fact that we shall repeat and emphasise the recommendation made by the Royal Commission of 1832 of classification by institutions, it is important that we should consider somewhat closely why the Central Authority omitted, after 1834 to carry that policy into effect.

146. We are not aware of any official document setting out at length the policy pursued by the Poor Law Commissioners in this matter, but a perusal of their Annual Reports from 1835 to 1839, when the workhouse system was being initiated, makes it tolerably clear that from the outset the Central Authority was never very enthusiastic for the principle of classification *by* institutions, and that in a short time it frankly abandoned the principle in favour of the system of classification *in* institutions which the Royal Commission of 1832 had expressly condemned as being ineffectual.[5] In the first year of their administration the Poor Law Commissioners evidently contemplated permitting the system of classification by institutions in some Unions. Thus, they say:—

> "It has also been proved that the expense and loss of time in building new workhouses may, in many cases, be saved by . . . assigning one or two classes of the paupers to one of the separate workhouses within the district."[6]

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 326. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 314. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 313, 314.
[4] 4 & 5 Will. IV., c. 76, Sec. 26. [5] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 306.
[6] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, p. 10.

And they instructed the Assistant Commissioners when making their inquiries as to the combination of parishes into Unions to ascertain, with regard to all workhouses :—

> "if they could not be considered useful for all classes of inmates, whether they might not be made useful for only one class of paupers, and to what extent."[1]

147. On the other hand, whenever a new workhouse was built, the policy seems to have been to induce the Guardians to provide a building which should include all the classes which the Royal Commission of 1832 held ought to be provided for in separate institutions.[2] Both the Regulations and the plans for workhouses issued by the Central Authority, and very extensively adopted by the Local Authorities, provided for the accommodation in one institution of men and boys, women and girls, the able-bodied, the sick, and the infirm.[3]

148. Apparently classification by institutions was only recommended in Unions in which there were *already existing* several *suitable* workhouses belonging to the Union.* Thus, in the Instructional Letter to Boards of Guardians on their first formation, the Guardians are expressly told :—

> "*If* there be several houses belonging to the Union, it will be found that much room may be gained by assigning one house to one or to two classes, instead of allowing paupers of all classes to remain together in each house,"

And, thereafter, it is explained how the expenses of management in such cases may be diminished.[4]

149. But, contrary to the expectation of the Royal Commission of 1832,[5] the Central Authority did not find many Unions in which the existing workhouse accommodation was sufficient, and within only five years after the passing of the Act of 1834, new workhouses had apparently been built, or ordered to be built, in some 350 Unions.[6] It, therefore, followed that a policy of allowing classification by institutions only in Unions where sufficient institutions were existing, would confine the realisation of the principle to fewer and fewer Unions, as the standard of "sufficiency" rose.

150. Moreover, the Commissioners seem soon to have arrived at the opinion that, in the existing state of workhouses and their administration, the expense of maintaining a number of workhouses in one Union was not justified by the results. Thus, in their Fifth Annual Report, they instance Halifax Union, where there were twelve separate workhouses :—

> "Some of these houses were in a state unfit for human beings to inhabit, and the aggregate expense of their expenditure and management was very great and wholly disproportioned to the number of inmates maintained (231)."[7]

They go on to state that the building of a central workhouse at Halifax would be desirable both on the ground of economy and of proper administration. They cite other cases of Unions having more than one workhouse and quote with approval the reduction in their numbers. Finally, they say :—

> "It is probable indeed that very few Unions will ultimately find it desirable to retain more than one establishment."[7]

151. The case of Bristol was also quoted by one of the Assistant Commissioners where the alteration of the four or five existing workhouses had produced inadequate results at a cost exceeding what would have been required to build a new workhouse capable of maintaining all classes of paupers. These considerations seem finally to have entirely

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* It is interesting, however, to note that the logic of events forced the Guardians to adopt the principle in some cases, *e.g.*, in Nottingham, where in order to find room for the able-bodied it became necessary to move the children, the old men, and the sick, into separate institutions.

[1] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, p. 17. [2] p. 60. [3] Second Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 595, 1, 1836, p. 23. [4] Third Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 546, 1, 1837, p. 7. [5] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 313. [6] Fifth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 78, 1839, p. 118. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

converted the Commissioners to the plan of classification in institutions instead of classification by institutions, and it is interesting to note that whereas in 1834, as we have seen, classification by institutions was distinctly recognised as an alternative to classification in institutions, when the Commissioners in 1839 were engaged in introducing the Poor Law into Ireland, classification by institutions was recognised only as a temporary expedient until one workhouse for all classes could be built.

152. Thus, in the Instructions issued to the Assistant Commissioners in Ireland, we find the following passage :—

> " Instances will probably occur, in which buildings suitable for one or more classes of the destitute will be obtainable on very easy terms, and it may become a question whether it may not be expedient to purchase or hire such buildings instead of incurring the charge of erecting one sufficient workhouse, or in the aid of a smaller workhouse. *As a general rule, the Board has no doubt that one central workhouse of a size sufficient for the whole of the Union is the best and will in the end be the cheapest mode of providing for the relief of the destitute.*" [1]

The Commissioners, we read further *in order to avoid large outlay at an early stage*, consider that it will be expedient for the Assistant Commissioners to avail themselves as far as they possibly can of existing buildings to be appropriated to different classes of inmates.[1]

153. Apparently, therefore, the Commissioners had, by 1839, rejected the principle of classification by institutions for two reasons :—

(1) The paucity and unsuitability of existing workhouses made the building of new institutions a necessity, and it was more economical to build one workhouse to accommodate all classes than to build a number of workhouses.

(2) It considered that under the new *regime* classification could properly be carried out within the workhouse.

Arguments against classification by workhouses now inapplicable.

154. In view of the multiplicity of institutions now existing, it cannot be said that the first reason continues to have much weight. With regard to the second, we shall proceed to show how, under the present *regime*, the principle of classification is in many workhouses insufficiently carried out, and, even when properly carried out, has failed to result in a proper and satisfactory treatment of the various classes.

155. It is true that, with regard to certain classes, especially the sick and the children, circumstances and public opinion have led to a very considerable reinstatement of the principle of classification by institution, and the latest figures show that 38 per cent. of the indoor poor (exclusive of casuals) are in special institutions in particular Unions.[2] But the disadvantages of attempting the classification and treatment of a heterogeneous population within one building still operates in the large majority of Unions.

156. As early as 1861 a Select Committee of the House of Commons found that the workhouses were in many cases insufficient for the proper classification of the inmates ; and they drew special attention to the evils arising from the lack of separation between respectable and dissolute females, and from the association of children with adults in the sick wards.[3] At that time the failure to provide proper classification was attributed to the limitation of the amount which, under the Act of 1834, the Poor Law Board could compel a Union to spend upon alterations or additions to a workhouse. But an alteration of the Statute in question has not apparently remedied the two specific evils of which the Committee complained. The number of single female inmates seems to have largely increased since 1861, but it is only in a small minority of workhouses that there is any attempt to keep the better young women from contamination by the depraved. Both in the dining-hall and in the sick-wards of many workhouses, there is opportunity for the children to come in contact with the adults.[4]

Impossibility of proper classification in existing workhouses.

157. Indeed, as a result of our evidence and our visits, we have been impressed, as the Royal Commission of 1832 was, with the great difficulty of proper classification and treatment by classes so long as the present general workhouse continues to exist.

[1] Fifth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 78, 1839, p. 28. [2] Half-yearly Pauperism Return, January 1st, 1908, H. C. 130, 1908. [3] Report of Select Committee, 1864, p. 37. [4] Penrose Williams, Vol. VII., App. xci. (9) ; Visits : Urban 26 ; Rural 57, 70A., 72, 74, 77, 81, 82., etc.

158. It is beyond doubt that children suffer from being in the same institution with adult paupers; that where the aged and the able-bodied are together, either the former are treated too severely or the latter with too great leniency; and that it is a great hardship as well as a great danger for the respectable pauper to be forced to live with the worthless and depraved. Yet this is the case in most of the workhouses in the country. The growing demand at the present day for specialised treatment for various classes of the dependent poor,[1] in institutions adapted to their various needs, has made it clear that the Union itself is too small an area for institutional purposes; and that the intention of the Royal Commission of 1832 can be carried out only by means of a further extension of area. The average population of each Poor Law Union is (1908), about 55,000, but the population (1901) of more than two-thirds of the Unions is less than 50,000 each, and of eighty, it is less than 10,000 each.[2]

Enlargement of area for certain Poor Law purposes.

159. For certain purposes and in certain places the necessity for an extension of the area has been recognised and acted upon.

160. Thus, as is well-known, provision for dangerous pauper lunatics is now made by the County and not by the Union. We find as early as 1838, the desire to keep children out of the workhouse making itself felt in the suggestion of district schools to which children might be sent from a number of Unions,[3] and in 1844, the establishment of such schools was authorised by law;[4] but the Guardians have never been very willing to combine for this or any other purpose,[5] and such was the opposition raised to the exercise of the powers of the Central Authority in the matter that the number of district schools has never been more than ten.[6]

161. Owing, no doubt, to the concentration of population and the greater facility of communication in London, the Legislature has found it easier to pass comparatively effective measures for the compulsory combination of Metropolitan Unions for purposes of classification. Thus, under the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867, a number of Metropolitan Boards were combined to form sick asylum districts for providing infirmaries for their sick poor.[7] Two only of these districts survive and with a single exception every Union has now a separate infirmary. A more successful instance of combination under the same Act is afforded by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, which provides special treatment for certain classes of sick imbeciles and children in London. These instances of successful enlargement of the area for the purposes of classification apply, however, as will be seen, for the most part to London.

162. An attempt was made to meet the general difficulty in 1879. In its third Report 1873–4, the Local Government Board had laid stress upon it:—

> "We attach the utmost importance to this improvement of the classification of indoor paupers, which we believe to be a necessary condition of the maintenance of that discipline which lies at the root of an effective administration of indoor relief."

And it added that classification:—

> "Cannot be effected, except at an enormous and almost prohibitory cost, otherwise than by the combination of several Boards of Guardians for this purpose. Their existing workhouses would, in that event, become available for the separate accommodation of various classes of indoor paupers chargeable to the several combined areas."[8]

163. Accordingly, facilities were offered in the Poor Law Act (1879) to Boards of Guardians to enter into combinations "for any purpose connected with the administration of the relief of the poor."[9] Under this Act, Orders have been issued "for the erection and maintenance of special institutions for the reception of particular classes of paupers."[10] We instance the Joint Committee of Manchester and Chorlton for providing accommodation for able-bodied paupers (in a test-house) and casual paupers, and for imbeciles and

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[1] Jenner-Fust, 10830–3; Hervey, 11940–4; Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi. (a), (24); Thurnall, 15872–3; Millward, 18953–8; Elkerton and White, 26409–13. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part X. [3] Fourth Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1838, p. 60. [4] 7 & 8 Vict., c. 101, Sec. 40. Davy, 2383. [6] Davy, 3435–6. [7] 30 & 31 Vict., c. 6, Sec. 5 *et seq.* [8] Third Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 1071], 1874, pp. xxv.–xxvi.; *Vide also* Jenner-Fust, Vol. I., App. xxii. (a), (29). [9] 42 & 43 Vict., c. 54, Sec. 8. [10] Adrian, 55.

epileptics;[1] the Joint Committee of the three Liverpool Unions for the treatment of tuberculosis;[2] and the Joint Committee of the three Birmingham Unions for providing accommodation for epileptics and feeble-minded not certified as insane.[3]

164. But the Act is permissive only, and has been used to a very small extent. Mr. Davy says:—

> "There is nothing on which the average Guardian is more sensitive than any change in his area. He looks upon it as his right, and he does not like to be mixed up with the neighbours at all. It is quite impossible, except by general legislation, to get over that prejudice.'[4]

Again:—

> "I think it is one of those things, which, if it were left to the Local Government Board would not be done; I mean to say, even if we had a recommendation in favour of it, I do not think we could do it."[5]

Disregard of existing facilities for combination.

165. The present situation then is this: that ever since 1834 the need for classification has been felt, and has become increasingly urgent as the possibilities of specialised treatment for various kinds of distress have been realised. Nevertheless, notwithstanding steady pressure on all sides, and notwithstanding the fact that for thirty years Boards of Guardians have had full facilities of combination, little advance has been made in this direction. We have seen for ourselves the evils which exist under the present system; in large workhouses the crowding together in one institution of old and young, infirm and able-bodied, imbeciles and epileptics; and in small workhouses the same evils on a smaller scale, complicated by the difficulty of affording proper attendance or nursing.

Advantages of classification by workhouses.

166. A description of some of these workhouses will be found in a later Chapter, but the following evidence may be quoted here:—

> "The practice of having a number of general workhouses, each receiving several classes of paupers, involves waste of accommodation, as a margin has to be left in each workhouse for every class, and difficulties of administration are increased. It is cheaper to assign a particular class to each workhouse and to keep it full. Administration is easier—experts can be placed in charge of each. Deserving inmates can be made more comfortable."[6]

167. Great weight must be attached on this point to the evidence of the Workhouse Masters and Matrons Association. They state that:—

> "With proper classification of, and in, workhouses, it would be possible to treat each class of inmates on its merits, in more detail, with the result that to the deserving an almshouse system would present itself, while the treatment of the undeserving would be deterrent.[7]

> "If you give us all classes to look after as we have at present, you want expert knowledge on every point and expert administration on every point, and it is impossible, in the one house, with the one staff of officials, to get it. That is one reason why we request so strongly classification by workhouses as well as in workhouses."[8]

Extension of area will facilitate classification.

To this we would add that classification affords opportunities for curative and preventive treatment. The case for an extension of the area of administration is therefore a very strong one.

168. Against it must be weighed the objection to removing individuals outside the purview of their friends. To this objection we shall refer later (*vide*, Part IX., Par. 7). There is also the argument that local responsibility tends to economy; the more directly and obviously the burden of the rates falls upon those who are administering the Poor Law, the more reluctant they will be to spend. But there is no security that this reluctance will not take the form of an unwise parsimony, rather than of a wise economy. It is the small farmer who, feeling the direct incidence of the rate, is most opposed to any improvement in institutional treatment, and most prone to inadequate doles of out-relief. Moreover, the principle of local financial responsibility has been to a large extent abandoned already; that is to say, by various means the area of financial responsibility

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[1] Jenner-Fust, Vol. I., App. xxii. (a), (30–2). [2] *Ibid.*, (34). [3] Astbury, 43421 (10); Waite, 43391. [4] Davy, 2383. [5] Davy, 2385. [6] Jenner-Fust, Vol. I., App. xxii. (a), (54). [7] Elkerton and White, 26408 (5). [8] Elkerton and White, 26496.

has been widened beyond the area of administration. This has been especially the case in the Metropolis, but, throughout the country as a whole, the need for equalising the burden between one district and another has been felt to be irresistible.

Financial aspects of enlargement and provisions of Act of 1834.

169. The Act of 1834, while grouping the parishes into Unions for purposes of administration, left their individual financial responsibility almost untouched. It is true that Section 34 of the Act gave Guardians optional powers of making the Union one area for rating purposes,[1] but the power was hardly ever exercised.[2] A common fund for certain items of indoor relief in each Union was indeed created[3] by the Act, but, as the parochial contributions to this fund were assessed according to the poor relief expenditure incurred by the parishes calculated upon a three years' average, considerable inequality in the burden of the rate still remained between parishes in the same Union.

Union Chargeability Act, 1865.

170. A Parliamentary Return of 1850 shows that the rates in the £ required for relief of the poor in 1846–7 varied from 13s. 10d. to ¼d. in different parts of the country, while even within the same Union there were parishes with rates for this purpose varying from 11s. or 12s. to less than 3d. or 4d.[4] In 1861 the basis of contribution to the common fund was altered so that the contributions became assessable according to the rateable value of the parishes.[5] In 1865 a still more important step was taken towards equalising the burden: under the Union Chargeability Act of that year the entire expenditure of the Guardians and their officers in the relief of the poor was cast upon the common fund of the Union, each parish in the Union bearing its share according to its rateable value.[6] Owing to certain technical details, however, minor parochial inequalities still exist.

Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

171. In London this plan of widening the area of charge was further extended by the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867.[7] This Act and certain extending Statutes provided that certain expenses, incurred by all the Unions within the area which now forms the administrative County of London, should be repaid to the Guardians from a fund called the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund to which the several Unions contribute according to their rateable value. The Guardians receive from this fund a contribution of 5d. per head per day for the maintenance of indoor adult paupers;[8] and there is repaid to them the expenditure they have incurred for the maintenance of insane poor in the recognised institutions other than the workhouse for the maintenance of patients in asylums, for cases of fever, smallpox, etc.,[9] for the maintenance of pauper children in certain classes of schools[10] or boarded out,[11] for the expenses of vagrants under the Houseless Poor Acts,[12] for medicines and medical and surgical appliances,[13] and for paid officers.[14]

Exchequer Contributions.

172. The principle of local financial responsibility has been still further abandoned in the system which has grown up of making annual grants from the Exchequer to Local Authorities for specific purposes. These grants were originally made with the object of encouraging improvements in particular branches of the local service, and they have no doubt been the occasion of increased expenditure in certain directions. The first was made in 1846–7, to aid Poor Law Authorities to meet the salaries of teachers and industrial trainers in Poor Law schools and institutions, and so "to contribute to an improvement in the character of" those schools and institutions.[15] A similar grant was made in the same year to provide:—

(*a*) One-half of the sum required to pay the salaries of Poor Law Medical Officers; and

(*b*) One-half of the cost of drugs and medical appliances, and so "to contribute to an improvement . . . in the supply of medical relief to the poor."[16]

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[1] 4 & 5 Will. IV., cap. 76, Sec. 34. [2] Pitts, Vol. I., App. iii. (18). Footnote †. [3] 4 & Will. IV., cap. 76. Sec. 29 *et seq.* [4] Pitts, Vol. I., App. iii. (18). [5] 24 & 25 Vict., cap. 55, Sec. 9. [6] 28 & 29 Vict., cap. 79, Sec. 1 *et seq.* [7] 30 & 31 Vict., cap. 6. [8] 33 & 34 Vict., cap. 18, Sec. 1 (3). [9] 30 & 31 Vict., cap. 6, Sec. 69 (1–2). [10] *Ibid.*, Sec. 69 (8). [11] 32 & 33 Vict., cap. 63, Sec. 21. [12] 27 & 28 Vict., cap. 116; 28 & 29 Vict., cap. 34. [13] 30 & 31 Vict., cap. 6, Sec. 69 (3). [14] *Ibid.*, Sec. 69 (4). [15] Thirteenth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 816, 1847, pp. 16, 17. [16] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

173. In 1874–5 a grant was made of 4s. per head per week towards the cost of maintenance of pauper lunatics in recognised institutions other than the workhouse.[1]

174. All these grants were made direct from the Exchequer to the Poor Law Authorities; but by the Local Government Act of 1888 and subsequent Finance Acts a new system has been introduced, whereby the grants have become payable from certain sums paid out of the Consolidated Fund into the Local Taxation Account, from which payment is made to the County and County Borough Councils by the Local Government Board. These payments are carried to the Exchequer contribution accounts of the Councils and the grants previously charged upon the Exchequer are paid from those accounts.[2] Under the Finance Act, 1908, certain local taxation licences will be collected by the Councils themselves and the sum paid out of the Consolidated Fund will be correspondingly reduced.

175. An extension of the Poor Law grants was also effected by the Act of 1888. The Councils were required to pay to the Guardians an additional grant for the school fees of pauper children sent from a workhouse to a public elementary school.[3] The grant for salaries of Medical Officers and cost of drugs and medical appliances was, outside the Metropolis, merged in a larger grant towards the salaries and expenses of all Poor Law officers (other than teachers in Poor Law schools), and the cost of drugs and medical appliances.[4] This grant was based on the amounts paid in the year 1887–8 and is not to vary until Parliament so directs.[5] Within the Metropolis, the salaries of Poor Law officials were already charged upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund,[6] and the new grant took the form of a payment by the County Council from its general revenues and not from its exchequer contribution account, of the cost of maintenance of indoor paupers to the extent of 4d. per head per day.[7] The grant is a fixed grant calculated upon the average number of indoor paupers maintained during the five years ended March 25th, 1888.[8] The grant of one-half of the salaries of Poor Law Medical Officers and of a moiety of the cost of drugs and medical appliances was continued in the Metropolis.[9] Finally, there is a grant made to meet the deficiencies in the poor rate, caused by the exemption from rates of agricultural land to the extent of one-half under the Agricultural Rates Act of 1896. This is also a fixed grant.[10]

Absence of central control over grants.

176. Boards of Guardians are now, therefore, receiving from the County and County Borough Councils an annual contribution to the cost of the Poor Law of a sum which in 1905–6 amounted in the aggregate to £2,211,000, apart from the grant of £466,000 under the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896.[11] Although a great part of the grants was originally intended by Parliament to "contribute to the improvement of particular services," and the grants are generally in fact still connected by name with particular Poor Law purposes, it is worthy of note, and we emphasise the fact, that these grants cannot be withheld by the Central Authority on account of any deficiency or default in the local administration. It follows therefore that this vast sum of money is practically an unconditional grant to the Local Authorities in aid of their Poor Law expenditure. We cannot think that large grants of money given thus unconditionally in aid of local expenditure can be conducive to maintaining good administration and a sense of responsibility on the part of the Local Authorities.

Inequalities of Poor Law burdens.

177. The net result of these grants, taking the country as a whole, has been that since 1846 the percentage of expenditure on poor relief which is not met from local sources has gradually risen to about 20 per cent.[11] * Nevertheless, as between different Unions, great inequalities remain in the proportion of expenditure which falls upon the rates. This is due partly to the character of the administration, partly to the varying degrees in which the Unions benefit by the grants, and partly to the varying extent to which they derive income from such sources as relatives' contributions, repayments of relief on loan, rents and sales of property, etc. Outside the Metropolis there were in 1903–4 some Unions in which the proportion of expenditure met out of the rates was as low as 38 per cent., and

* Exclusive of the sums charged on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

1 Local Taxation Return, 1893, App. 13, pp. 82, 83. 2 51 & 52 Vict., cap. 41, Sec. 20 and 33; *see also* Adrian, 305. 3 51 & 52 Vict., cap. 41, Sec. 24 (2) (*b*). 4 Sec. 26. 5 Davy, 2009–10; 2995. 6 Adrian, 1251. 7 51 & 52 Vict., cap. 41, Sec. 43, *see also* Adrian, 306, 1254–5. 8 Sec. 43 (*b*). Adrian, 306. 9 Sec. 43 (*a*). 10 59 & 60 Vict., cap. 16, Sec. 1, 2, *et seq.* 11 Pitts, Vol. I., App. iii., Table No. 1 and Thirty-Sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board, [Cd. 3665], 1907, pp. cxxxix. and cxl.

others in which it was as high as 83 per cent. In some Unions more than one-half (58.5 per cent.) of the total expenditure was defrayed out of grants; in others little more than one-eighth (12·8 per cent.). The receipts from "other sources" sufficed in some Unions to meet nearly 25 per cent. of the expenditure, whilst in others they covered not much more than 2 per cent. And the rates in the £ levied for Poor Law purposes varied from 2d. to 2s. 5d.[1]

Equalisation of burden of poor relief in London.

178. In London the equalisation of the burden is carried much further, partly by the working of the County Council grant in respect of indoor paupers, partly by the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and partly by the transference of some of the Guardians' duties to the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The proportion of the poor relief expenditure from the rates which was "equalised" (*i.e.*, for which the whole of London, and not the particular Union, is responsible) was in 1903–4 as much as 59·4 per cent. of the whole.[2] Taking into consideration other sources of income, including Exchequer grants, we find:—

> "That 70 per cent. of the total expenditure by Boards of Guardians (in London) is now borne by the grants made out of sums raised by Imperial Taxation or other receipts in aid, or by rates levied throughout London in the proportion of the rateable value of the Unions."[3]

Summary.

179. It will be seen from what has preceded that in recommending a wider area both for administration and for the incidence of expenditure, we are only systematising and completing a tendency which has long been making itself felt. An equalisation of the burden of pauperism might be obtained by enlarging the area of charge, but we do not think it wise to enlarge this area without also enlarging the area of control and administration. As we have shown, it has also been proved by the experience of three-quarters of a century that the Union is too small an area for the purposes of proper institutional treatment, and that no pressure from outside is sufficient to induce Guardians to combine. For this reason also an authority for a wider area seems clearly required which will co-ordinate the institutions in such a way that each class of inmate may be properly provided for, and the possibility opened up for a treatment really remedial in its nature. What these areas and institutions should be will be indicated in a future Chapter.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 4.

(1) *In view of the great difficulty of proper classification and treatment by classes so long as the present general workhouse continues to exist* (157), *the growing demand for specialised treatment for various classes of the dependent poor in institutions adapted to their various needs* (158), *and the advisability of equalising the burden of pauperism* (168), *the area of administration should be enlarged.*

(2) *The practice of making grants unconditionally from the Exchequer to Boards of Guardians is not conducive to maintaining good administration and a sense of responsibility on the part of the Local Authorities* (176). (Vide *also Part IV., Chapter I., Par.* 47.)

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[1] Pitts, Vol. I., App. iii., Tables No. 2 and 3. [2] Pitts, Vol. I., App. iii. (34). [3] Owen, 14825.

Chapter 5.

INDOOR RELIEF.

Control and supervision of indoor poor.

180. The generally accepted distinction between the methods of relief practised by Boards of Guardians is that between "indoor relief" and "outdoor relief," between maintenance supplied in an institution, and maintenance or part maintenance by means of an allowance. The significance of the distinction lies in the fact that, when the Guardians grant relief in an institution whether workhouse, infirmary, or school, they make themselves entirely responsible for the lives of the recipients. In so-called "out-relief cases," on the other hand, it is too often the case that the Guardians consider their responsibility fulfilled by the grant of a small allowance, and do not consider it incumbent upon them to ensure either that it is adequate, or that it is properly expended, or that the recipients are leading satisfactory lives. Before the reform of 1834 this distinction would not have held good, for the inmates of many workhouses were almost as free from supervision and control as many of the out-relief cases of to-day.[1] But since 1834, under steady pressure from the Central Authority, the Guardians have assumed responsibility for the inmates of their institution, down to the minutest details of dress, diet, and mode of life.

181. The advantages of this complete control and supervision are obvious. By means of it we can ensure that the children are properly fed, clothed, and educated; that the patients in the infirmaries are treated appropriately and made to carry out the doctors' instructions; and that the inmates of the workhouse lead a sober, clean, and orderly life. Some of its disadvantages are hardly less obvious. The loss of liberty may be keenly felt and greatly resented, more especially in the workhouse; the loss of family life is hardly less serious for the children, though they may not know what they miss; but most serious of all in its effects is the loss of the sense of responsibility when the inmates are still young and able-bodied.

Intention of 1832 Commission regarding workhouses.

182. In order to justify the policy of the Royal Commission of 1832 in connection with this last class, it is necessary to consider what they had in mind in substituting for partial outdoor relief the offer of total maintenance within a well-managed workhouse, where employment should be given under conditions less favourable than those of the independent labourers. They were certainly not influenced by any desire to "penalise poverty," or to prevent people from applying for necessary relief. On the contrary, they claimed that their policy was based upon that adopted by the working classes themselves as the only safe principle for the government of their Friendly Societies.[2]

> "On this point, as on many others, the independent labourers may be our best teachers. We have seen that, in the administration of the funds of their friendly societies, they have long acted on the principle, of rendering the condition of a person receiving their relief less eligible than that of an independent labourer. We have now to add, that they also adopt and enforce most unrelentingly the principle that under no circumstances, and with no exceptions, shall any member of their societies receive relief while earning anything for himself."[3]

183. But the Commissioners, as we have seen, never intended that the workhouse should be the miscellaneous institution which we know under that name to-day. What they had chiefly in view was that there should be a place where the able-bodied might be set to work under conditions which should be the least harmful both to themselves and to the independent labourer; but there were to be institutions for others besides the able-bodied. If their principle of classification by institutions had been carried out, we should have been spared many of our present problems, and above all the problem of finding that in the large towns the workhouse is no longer deterrent, but is actually attractive to many of the able-bodied.

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, pp. 51–4. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 232. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 272.

The workhouses of to-day.

184. But there is, perhaps, no point in Poor Law administration upon which it is more difficult and dangerous to generalise than the workhouse itself. We have visited many of these institutions, and find them differing from each other as light from darkness. So much depends upon the amount of interest taken by the Guardians, upon the temperament of the master and matron, upon the policy of the Board, and upon the nature of the district and of the building itself, that no one description will apply to all, although all alike may conform to the minutest details of the Local Government Board Regulations. A rough distinction may, however, be drawn between the workhouses in rural areas, in provincial towns, and in London.

Rural workhouses.

185. In country workhouses administration is much simplified by the fact that there are for the most part no able-bodied inmates. In some districts there are many tramps, but they do not, as a rule, pass beyond the casual ward, and the workhouse itself is more in the nature of an almshouse for the aged and infirm and the children. Many of them, notably in the home Counties, are picturesque old buildings, with pleasant gardens, and generally with 10 to 20 acres of ground attached on which the inmates are employed, according to their physical condition, in raising vegetables for the use of the institution.[1] The old people who retire there towards the end of their lives do so gradually, going in through the winter, and coming out again in the summer when they can work a little in hay-fields or make long visits to friends.[2] Where the master and matron are kindly and genial, the inmates are well cared for and experience many little kindnesses. As their seclusion becomes more permanent, its monotony is sometimes cheered by the visits of the ladies who are working under the Brabazon scheme; and in the older buildings "classification" is made more easy by the fact that the wards are generally small and numerous. It may be doubted, however, whether classification needs to be carried very far amongst the aged; no doubt it is most desirable to keep apart the few who may make themselves noisy and disagreeable; but variety of experience and even of character does much to make the life tolerable.[3] In one excellently managed workhouse the master's main scheme of classification was to put into one ward the deaf old men and those who snored.[4] In the best of these rural workhouses the children, if not provided for in "scattered homes" or separate schools, are carefully separated from the adult paupers, and sent out to the village school for their education.

186. It must not, however, be supposed that all rural workhouses are of this type. Some of them are quite unsuited to their present purpose from the fact that they were originally built to accommodate very large numbers of the able-bodied, and are more like factories than dwelling places.[5] Nothing can make such buildings other than forbidding in aspect, and a dreary refuge for the small numbers of aged and infirm who now occupy a corner of them. In others there is an obvious lack of interest on the part of the Guardians; no one visits the old people, and the children are not well cared for. Sometimes a mistaken economy prevents even necessary repairs from being carried out, or reduces the staff below what is essential for good management.

Urban workhouses.

187. In small country towns the workhouses are of much the same type as those in rural districts, though the administration is perhaps more progressive. But in the larger provincial towns the conditions are apt to be very different. The number of inmates is larger, and they reflect the more mixed character of the town population from which they are drawn. If the town is growing and the workhouse old, the wards are often overcrowded, and the absence of land makes it difficult to occupy the inmates. A thousand or more inmates of all types may be gathered together in one of these large town workhouses, and the problem of organisation and discipline becomes one calling for great skill and strength of character on the part of the master. In the absence of these qualities the institution presents many painful features. The able-bodied are not occupied and spend their days in sullen idleness, and the old people suffer from the general atmosphere of repression and gloom. Nor is classification, even within the one institution, properly carried out. On the other hand we have found here and there a large workhouse where the very best is made of a most difficult situation; and the ingenuity of the governing spirit contrives to keep everyone occupied and contented. In such cases the workhouse tends to become a refuge where the fairly respectable but inefficient workman, or the man who can only keep sober under close supervision, may be made to contribute something

[1] Visits: Miscell., 108. Rural, 63. [2] Visits: Miscell., 108 I., III., IV. [3] Davy, 2343.
[4] Visits: Miscell., 108. [5] Visits: Rural, 68, 69, 74.

towards his maintenance. It is largely of these that the so-called "able-bodied" in the workhouses consist; and the best that their life there can do for them is to prevent them from falling still lower. Too often under less strenuous management, their deterioration is ensured when once they have adapted themselves to the routine of workhouse life.

188. It is in London, however, that the workhouse system has been developed to its fullest extent, and that its dangers also have become most apparent. Since the institution of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, there has been more inducement to London Guardians than to others to offer indoor rather than outdoor relief; and this has probably been responsible to some extent for a higher standard of comfort with which has gone a greater amount of liberty. This tendency to relaxation has been specially marked since the Reports of the Royal Commission on Aged Poor and the Select Committee on the Aged Deserving Poor; and, owing to the mixed character of the workhouse, the indulgent administration, intended primarily for the respectable aged, has been shared in more or less by all classes. At the same time there has appeared, more especially in London, a class of demoralised people for whom the workhouse under its present conditions has lost its deterrent effect, and who— London workhouses.

> "regard it as a kind of clubhouse, in which they put up with a certain amount of inconvenience, but have very pleasant evenings."[1]

A Committee of our members visited one of the London workhouses and reported that they—

> "found about 100 men in two rooms; respectively described as the 'reading-room' and the 'smoke-room.' Some of these men were asleep, others were reading, others smoking, playing dominoes or bagatelle, and others were doing nothing. In another room there were twenty-eight aged men of a better class who have the room to themselves, but occupy the same dormitory as the others. In one dormitory (which had been cut off the chapel) there were no fewer than fifty beds. In one of the women's day-rooms about forty women were sitting listlessly, with nothing whatever to do but gossip and sleep. . . . But the most lamentable feature of the ——— Workhouse was the inadequacy of the work provided for the inmates. Three-fourths of the men found in the 'smoke-room' and 'reading-room' were equal to some work, and that they were occupied as they were at mid-afternoon was deplorable."[2]

189. The most recent of the workhouses in London has been built at a cost (inclusive of site) of £126,612, which represents a cost per bed of £286. A Committee of our members has recently visited it, and report in the following terms:—

> "Seeing that this vast edifice was erected regardless of expense either in planning or fitting, a building should have been provided which could not be criticised from the point of view of administrative efficiency. But this is not the case. The principle of less eligibility could never have entered the minds of the Guardians, and it may safely be said that few, if any, of the inmates had ever before been so lavishly provided for.
>
> "It seems improbable that the loss of freedom, which can be the only drawback to the acceptance of relief in this institution, will be sufficiently distasteful to the thriftless. There can be little doubt that the attractions of institutions of this kind are largely responsible for the considerable increase in indoor pauperism during the last few years, and that, in an increasing degree, they will continue to exercise a baneful influence on the improvident as their character becomes better known."[3]

190. The following instances, taken from descriptions of visits made by Committees of our number to workhouses in different parts of the country, are illustrative of the conditions arising out of the present system of general workhouses:— Disadvantages of present system.

> (1) "On the day of our visit there were eighty-seven inmates, fifty-one men, twenty-seven women, and nine children. There was no attempt at classification. Thus, young women, girls, infants, and old women were all using the same dormitory. The master and Guardians apparently considered that this was inevitable, but in one case in which a small sleeping-room had been allotted for six old women, the next dormitory thereto was occupied by old women, young women and girls, and as we pointed out, it would have been easy to have allotted the old women's room as a girls' dormitory. It seemed to us scandalous that local apathy should be allowed to condemn young girls to be put to sleep with women, admitted by the master to be frequently of bad character."[4]
>
> (2) "We visited the workhouse, but being short of time, we could only visit those sections of the building which the master was least unwilling to show us. We were accompanied by the acting chairman, who seemed quite unfamiliar with the house. . . . . In the infirmary there were ten beds for males, eight beds for females, and a lying-in ward which is but seldom used. The charge nurse was absent on holiday; there were no acute cases. The condition of the patients was unsatisfactory, and although (as we were informed) the doctor comes when sent for, the condition of the patients was such as to suggest reasonable ground for complaint. In the absence of the nurse, the patients were in charge of the assistant matron, who is quite ignorant of nursing. At night the patients, one of whom has fits of a somewhat serious kind, help one another. In the body of the house there were five imbeciles in charge of

[1] Morris, 16686. [2] Visits: Met. 118. [3] Visits: Met. 117. [4] Visits: Rural, 87.

inmates. . . . . The children, eleven in number, are in the house; they mix with the other inmates; they go out to school; the two or three whom we saw seemed untidy and neglected. The Board is opposed to boarding-out. Our visit to the * * Union has left an unpleasant, if not painful impression in our memories."[1]

(3) "The inmates were simply crowded together in ill-ventilated wards. With such overcrowding, classification is impossible. The beds in the infirm men's wards were so close together that it was scarcely possible to get between; clothing and utensils were lying about everywhere; nails were driven into the walls in many places, evidently by inmates, and garments of various kinds hung on them. Men were lying on the beds in their day clothes; others playing draughts around the fire in their shirt sleeves; whilst others were permanently bed-ridden in a state of senile decay. There was only one day attendant for a pavilion with 190 inmates. The overcrowding applies to all parts of the workhouse."[2]

(4) "Most of the people looked even more dejected than usual; hardly one seemed to have enough spirit to speak when spoken to."[3]

(5) "There is little or nothing to be said in praise of this house. Every place seemed dirty and the fullest use was not made of what resources there were. The sanitary arrangements were disgraceful, the laundry was in a state of chaos, and the accommodation in the tramp wards was primitive. . . . . The inmates were sitting round fires in small rooms with low ceilings, and seemed morose and indifferent to their surroundings. The children looked far from happy. They were huddled together in a small room with no attempt at brightness."[4]

(6) "The whole condition of the workhouse reflects great discredit on the Board of Guardians, it is over-crowded and ill-managed, and the staff is inadequate. Indeed, the detailed administration seemed so incompetent as to be almost cruel."[5]

Effect upon inmates of life workhouses.

191. One witness, for twelve years Chaplain at Holborn Workhouse, has given evidence as to the effect upon the inmates of life in a large general workhouse, which is a serious indictment of the system.

"After an experience of some twelve years there is," he says, "no doubt in my mind that life in the workhouse deteriorates mentally, morally, and physically the habitual inmates. Indeed, the life of these people is better described as more or less a miserable existence than a life. It must be admitted that the mental capacity of the average person who drifts into the workhouse, is of a low order, but nevertheless, I have seen in countless instances a gradual deterioration of intellect owing to the lack of almost all incentive to use the brain. The inmate finds at very least the necessities of life, and in many places far more than the necessities of life, provided for him with scarcely any thought or effort on his part, and in the majority of cases the sole ideas that fill the mind are to get as much to eat and as much sleep, and as large an amount of immunity from even the lightest task as possible. . . . . A large number of cases has come under my notice of young persons of both sexes who on their first admission to the workhouse have felt their position and surroundings most keenly, and yet in a very short space of time have found the life so congenial and free from responsibility and need of exertion that they made no effort to leave it, and after their discharge return to it as soon as possible. I have also seen many young people admitted who were at first bright and willing to perform their light duties, but who, under the influence of their associates, soon grew lazy and unwilling to do anything, though physically well able to work. Then follow short sentences for refusing to perform their tasks, and soon they become incorrigible rogues and vagabonds, and the result is—the habitual criminal. Again, the ill-effect of the increasing tendency to make the life easier and to increase the dietary and general comfort of the inmate is shown in the increasing number of admissions of those who, earning wages for a portion of the year outside, place their money in safe keeping and enter the workhouse regularly for periods of rest at the ratepayers' expense. I have come across many such cases; such people easily learn to complain of mysterious weaknesses, aches and pains which are hard to disprove, the supposed possession of which entitles them to the best of fare and medical comforts which the institution has to offer. In conclusion, the rapidly growing opinion amongst the poorer classes seems to be expressed by the remark of a man to me last week. 'So long as I can get sixteen ounces of pie for my dinner and my two children kept for life, and they don't ask me to do any more than polish the stair bannisters, I'm not going to work.'"[6]

192. The effect of the life upon the able-bodied women is not less deplorable. The matron of the Lambeth Workhouse says:—

"Physically they improve, mentally they degenerate, varied employment helps to keep them interested in life, but is not an absolute success. Married mothers will sometimes remain in the house for the good of their children, and after some years lose all desire to leave the workhouse, or they become mentally unfit to take up the duties of life again. . . . I consider that the older women have a bad influence upon the girls."[7]

193. A lady member of the Liverpool Select Vestry writes at length to the same effect:—

"The commonest faults of able-bodied workhouse women, as a body, are laziness and dishonesty I have never yet seen a workhouse woman hurry. Every movement is taken in a leisurely way. Our best workers do not do in a day more than half of what a good charwoman outside would do. This is one of the difficulties in getting young women taken out of the workhouse, to stop in the situations found for them. They cannot understand why the mistress objects to their dawdling through their work, as they have always been used to do inside. I fear that nearly all our able-bodied women steal when they get the chance. . . . The views which workhouse habitués express from time to time

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[1] Visits: Rural, 72. [2] Visits: Urban, 40c. [3] Visits: Urban, 36. [4] Visits: Rural, 32. [5] Visits: Urban, 27. [6] James, 23566 (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10). *Vide also* Summary of Reports of Workhouse Chaplains. [7] Edwards, 23785 (12, 14).

are interesting as showing their point of view. One woman said to the portress in my hearing: 'I lives here; you are only a paid person.' Another said to a policeman: 'You're a beggar come over from Ireland to live out of the rates, that's what you are.' Another said to a gentleman holding an important post: 'You're only a servant; I want to see your masters.' A man told a group of our nurses: 'If it wasn't for the likes of us, the likes of you wouldn't be here.' . . . It is difficult to believe, but it is an actual fact that respectable young married women, who enter our 'class' and maternity wards, not infrequently declare themselves unmarried, so that their husbands shall not run any risk of being asked to pay on their account."[1]

The general workhouse in relation to the able-bodied.

194. Further evidence as to the effect of workhouse life on the able-bodied will be given in the Chapter dealing with that class; but from what is here cited, it is obvious that a very serious problem has arisen which must be faced and dealt with. It is that, under the present conditions in London and other large towns, the workhouse has ceased to be a true test of destitution, and has become positively attractive to a certain class of able-bodied and even young people. What is still more serious is, that while the Guardians undertake the responsibility of maintaining these people, they have found themselves unable to exercise any regenerative influence over them. It is, of course, quite otherwise with the children, who can be subjected to systematic education under conditions which are physically and morally healthy. But the evidence cannot be resisted that, for those past childhood, workhouse life is liable to have an actually deteriorating effect. This is especially true of those who are still quite young when brought into association with degraded characters. It is partly the great size to which some of these institutions have grown which makes it impossible to deal with all classes of inmates in a suitable way. But the difficulty mainly arises out of the attempt to deal in one institution, under one master, with people requiring such very different treatment as the infirm and the able-bodied, the old and the young, the feeble-minded, epileptic, insane, and those of bad character. The difficulty can only be met by setting apart special institutions for special classes, as was intended by the Royal Commission of 1832; so that it may be possible to deal humanely with the aged, without thereby attracting the young; and so that the able-bodied loafer may be kept under strict discipline and not allowed to lose the power of work. It is mainly with a view to facilitating this specialisation of treatment that we have recommended the enlargement of areas.

Increasing cost of indoor relief.

195. The workhouse is not the only form of indoor relief. Specialised treatment has already been introduced in so far as the sick, the children and, to some extent, the aged are concerned. But the infirmaries and schools and homes for the aged will be dealt with in subsequent Chapters. There is, however, one characteristic in which all the institutions share, and which must be noted here. It is their constantly increasing, and, in many cases, excessive costliness. This increasing costliness, which is to some extent inevitable, and to some extent also no more than a wise expenditure, bringing its return in a reduction of pauperism, shows itself in many ways. As early as 1870 Mr. Goschen, in the Annual Report of the Poor Law Board, called attention to the fact that expenditure had been increasing in a much larger ratio than the number of paupers—that the same number of paupers was costing very much more than twenty years previously:—

"Several causes have contributed to this result. If may be generally said that in all establishments, both public and private, the scale of salaries has continuously increased for a long period and that more people are required to do the same work. But, apart from this general cause, it cannot be denied that the more humane views which have prevailed during the last few years as to the treatment of the sick poor have added most materially to Poor Law expenditure. . . . Generally it must be remembered that, apart from any increase in the number of paupers to be relieved, the expenditure may be enhanced:—

(1) By a more liberal scale of relief in money or food.
(2) By improved accommodation in workhouses, schools, infirmaries, and asylums.
(3) By a rise in the prices paid for provisions, clothing, etc., and buildings.
(4) By increased salaries to workhouse officials, medical officers, and the general staff employed in the administration of the law."[2]

196. This increased expenditure per pauper has progressed at an accelerating rate down to the present day; and we think that a consideration of the following facts will show that to some extent it cannot be justified.

197. The increase shows itself in the first place in the cost of maintenance, *i.e.*, the food and clothing of the inmates and the warming, cleaning, and lighting of the institutions. Taking first London alone, we find that in 1858–9 the cost per indoor pauper was about £10; in 1868–9, the cost had risen to £11 17s.; in 1898–9, it was £13; and in the next five years it rose to £15 11s.[3] Taking the country as a whole, we find that in 1848–9, it was £7 17s. per head; it rose slowly till 1898–9, when it was £11 10s. per head, and in

[1] Thorburn, 35693 (46, 47, 48, 50). [2] Twenty-second Annual Report, Poor Law Board [Cd. 123], 1870, p. x. [3] Pitts, Vol. I., App. C (8)

1903–4, it amounted to £13 10s. per head, the last five years showing a very marked increase.[1] This increase would indeed be still greater if it were possible to omit from the amounts for the year 1898–9, as has been done for the year 1903–4, the cost of the patients in the Infectious Diseases Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. By the year 1906–7 there had, however, been a slight decrease in the expenditure on maintenance, the amounts per head for that year being £13 12s. in London, and £12 3s. in England and Wales.[2] The total cost per head, including debt charges, salaries, maintenance, etc., has increased in a much larger proportion, especially in London, where it has risen from an estimated cost of £27 0s. 11½d. in 1873–4, to £39 12s. 4½d. in 1903–4. The corresponding figure for the rest of the country outside London is £25 14s. 10½d.[2]

198. A considerable portion of this increase is due to salaries, and this increase means a better paid and probably more efficient staff of officials; and a considerable part is due to the higher standard of maintenance, especially in the infirmaries. But a great part also consists of loan charges, and represents a very large investment in building. The expenditure on Poor Law buildings sanctioned by the Local Government Board for this purpose amounted in 1885–6 to £440,000; in 1897–8, it rose to £1,142,304; in 1900–1, it reached a maximum of £1,776,548 *; and in 1904–5, it fell again to £941,258.[3] In all, since 1835 to the end of the year 1906, expenditure upon Poor Law institutions had been authorised to the amount of £40,000,000, and, at the end of the financial year 1905–6, loans to the amount of £13,360,000 were still outstanding.[4]

199. But the gravity of the position lies not so much in the amount of accommodation supplied as in its expensive nature. This is well brought out by a comparison made by Mr. Davy between the cost per bed in different institutions. He points out that whereas some of the infirmaries in or near London have cost as much as £325 to £377 per bed (exclusive of the site), in other places the cost has been much lower, ranging to £45 per bed; though all alike have to satisfy the requirements of the Local Government Board. In the same way, the cost of cottage homes for children has varied from £42 12s. per bed up to £289 per bed.

> "This curious generalisation emerges from all these figures, that the larger the infirmary, the greater cost per bed. I think that is almost uniform, the reason being, I suppose, that in a large Union the Guardians are very anxious to have the best of everything; they feel that they can afford it, and indulge in, I might say, ornaments that the poor country Unions do not wish to indulge in."[5]

Mr. Davy points out that the tendency, though not quite new, has been greatly strengthened in late years.[5]

200. In 1870, Mr. Goschen, as President of the Poor Law Board, wrote in the Annual Report of the Board that the extreme parsimony developed by some Boards of Guardians had given way to a desire to conduct all the duties which devolved upon Guardians on somewhat more than a liberal scale. The Board were compelled to check expenditure in the more ornamental parts of workhouses, as, for instance, granite columns, terra-cotta mouldings, encaustic tile pavements, Portland stone decorations, and so on.[6]

Mr. Davy says:—

> "That difficulty has been felt ever since, sometimes in a very acute form; and some years ago when Mr. Chaplin was President of the Board there was a Memorandum as to the cost of Poor Law buildings, in which he says he has observed 'with much concern the large and continuing increase in the cost of buildings erected in connection with Poor Law administration'; and exhorts the officers of the Board to check that excessive expenditure as far as they can. My experience in my present post has not been very long, but I can honestly say that we do make every effort to check the expenditure, though the results are, I think, a little startling."[7]

Unnecessary expenditure.

201. If it could be maintained that the higher rate of expenditure were essential to efficiency it would be difficult to urge that it should be checked. But we consider that in many instances expenditure has gone very far beyond what is necessary for efficiency, and is due to quite other causes. An urban workhouse of which the cost was £162 per bed was visited by a Committee of our members, and they report:—

> "Little fault could be found with the workhouse and the infirmary except on the ground of expense. More modest buildings would have answered the purpose quite as efficiently. The two or three furlongs of corridors were sheer waste, and made effective supervision from headquarters unnecessarily difficult. Whether deterrence be right or wrong, it could not be held that these buildings would exercise any deterrent influence whatever. Discipline might be distasteful to some, but the staff was altogether inadequate for the purpose; it may safely be said that nine-tenths of the inmates had never before been so comfortably housed. The grounds are laid out with ornamental flower beds, and some of the London parks are not nearly so pleasant."[8]

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* In 1900–1, a large amount of increased accommodation for children was needed in consequence of the breaking-up of district schools.

[1] Davy, 3410. [2] Davy, 3387, Vol. I., App. v. (18). [3] Davy, Vol. I. App. v. (1). [4] Thirty-sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, pp. cxlviii. and 419–20. [5] Davy, 1633–4, Vol. I., App. v. (2 *et seq.*). [6] Twenty-second Annual Report, Poor Law Board [Cd. 123] 1870, p, xv. [7] Davy, 1633. [8] Visits: Metropolitan, 116.

202. The small sense of financial responsibility in urban Unions, and the ease with which expenditure can be met by loans, make the Guardians very willing to spend.[1] The method by which architects are paid, being a percentage on expenditure, makes for extravagance. (It is significant that in the year 1900–1 the architects' fees amounted to £88,000.[2]) There is further the pressure from the expert, the medical man who wants his infirmary to have everything of the best and newest.[3] And finally, the requirements of the general workhouse, as we have described it, do not tend to economy. If our recommendations as to classification are carried out it will be easier to deal with some of the inmates in very much cheaper institutions than at present. It has been found, for instance, by the Poplar Guardians that the able-bodied pauper can be housed at a cost of £14 per bed in their country workhouse at Laindon, as against £140 per bed, which is the lowest sum at which a workhouse for the able-bodied can be provided in London.[4]

> "I think," says Mr. Davy, "that what we have to do is to revise the requirements of the medical and architectural professions with regard to the housing of persons in workhouses, and I think we have to fight against the tendency which I have seen for so many years of requiring for the class that we will say is able-bodied exactly the same provisions as the requirements for the sick, that is to say, I think we want a better classification of demands."[5]

203. Even as regards the sick we think that economy can be effected by a better classification, and that, for the cases of chronic infirmity which form so large a proportion of the inmates of Poor Law infirmaries, it is unnecessary to provide the same elaborate hospital accommodation as is required for the treatment of acute cases.

Control of expenditure by the Local Government Board.

204. But we also think that the Local Government Board should exercise its authority more strictly in checking excessive expenditure. It has the machinery for doing this; all plans are submitted to its Architect, who can recommend that sanction be given or withheld, and without the sanction of the Local Government Board no loan can be raised.[6] We agree with the Architect of the Local Government Board that a good deal more might be done in the way of advice and consultation between him and the Local Authorities[7] prior to the preparation of the plans, and that after their adoption more care should be taken to secure that the erection is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, estimates, and quantities.

205. We think also that, on any proposal being made for building new institutions it should be considered

(1) Whether some part of the demand for institutional treatment could not be met by a greater and more systematic use of voluntary homes and hospitals;

(2) Whether the institution is necessary in view of the desirability of breaking up the existing workhouses into institutions specialised for different classes, and, if so, what the policy of the Local Authority should be in utilising the workhouse for a particular class or classes and not for applicants of all or many kinds;

(3) Whether the proposals for building do, or do not, exceed a recognised standard of cost per bed, which buildings for the particular class of applicant should in no circumstances be allowed to exceed; and

(4) Whether the land on which it is proposed to build is not, in view of modern facilities for movement, unduly near the large towns and unduly expensive considering the particular class of inmates for which the accommodation is desired.

"Ins-and-outs."

206. Another characteristic common to all Poor Law institutions is the facility for entering and leaving which is afforded. Reasonable notice of a pauper's intention to leave an institution must be given, and certain powers of detention are conferred on the Guardians by law. Thus, he may be detained for 24 hours if he has not previously discharged himself within a month, for 48 hours if he has discharged himself once or oftener within the month, for 72 hours if he has discharged himself more than twice within two months, and for 168 hours if he has in the opinion of the Guardians discharged himself frequently without sufficient reason.[8] With these exceptions, destitute persons can both enter and leave the workhouse when they like, and as often as they like. Even where the destitution is the result of a pauper's wilful and persistent negligence or laziness the Guardians have no power to prevent him from either entering or leaving their institution. Thus, figuratively speaking, the door of the workhouse is always ajar, and the responsible authority have but little power to prevent it swinging outwards or inwards at the push of the pauper. In the West Derby Union out of 13,573 persons receiving indoor relief

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[1] Davy, 1642. [2] Davy, 1640. [3] Davy, 1642. [4] Lockwood, 4120. [5] Davy, 1644. [6] Davy, 1629–30. [7] Kitchin, 3660–8. [8] 34 & 35 Vict., Cap. 108., Sec. 4; 62 & 63 Vict., Cap. 37., Sec. 4.

in the year ended 30th September, 1907, no less than 2,401 were relieved on more than one occasion during the year, and 99 of these claimed admission more than four times during the year. And in this Union and eighteen others from which returns have been received, we find that, out of 68,318 persons receiving indoor relief in the same year, 11,105 were relieved twice or oftener, and, of these, 1,933 were admitted on five occasions or oftener.[1]

207. Under such circumstances the curative treatment of pauperism becomes, in many cases, impossible. The worst characters may flock into the workhouse to recuperate from the effects of their evil lives, and as soon as they have, at the ratepayers' cost, partially recovered their physical condition, they can leave the workhouse and resume their degenerate careers. Their period of stay is not long enough to cure them of their evil courses, but it is long enough to give them fresh strength to pursue them. In this way has sprung up that crowd of prostitutes, drunkards, mendicants, loafers, and the like who are now known as the "ins-and-outs." These men and women form a hopeless problem under the existing Poor Law, and the case for sterner measures against them is aggravated by the penalties which their present mode of life imposes on their children. As Dr. McVail has forcibly pointed out, the children of the ins-and-outs are subjected to alternative régimes of vermin and soap, and the benefits of the "children's homes" are periodically obliterated in the beer-house and the slums, making any curative treatment of them impossible.[2]

208. But the evils of the almost unrestricted right to leave the workhouse do not end with the failure to cure individual paupers. The ratepayers' money spent on their maintenance contributes to producing future paupers which subsequent ratepayers will be called upon to maintain. Unmarried mothers, often mere feeble-minded girls, are tended at the public expense, and then allowed to go out and breed a future race of paupers, and probably feeble-minded children. Persons suffering from contagious diseases are allowed to depart uncured, and to infect another circle of cases, some or all of whom may ultimately come to the ratepayers for maintenance at the public cost. We feel very strongly that, both in the interest of the cure and of the prevention of certain forms of pauperism, some further powers are necessary. And in dealing subsequently with various classes of paupers, we shall make more definite suggestions for the giving of such powers of detention under proper safeguards.[3]

Periodical revision of indoor cases.

209. But detention is useless, nay, cruel, if the result is not improvement but actual deterioration, and it is impossible to make treatment ameliorative unless the attention of the responsible authorities is from time to time directed to individual cases with a view to seeing what form of curative treatment is best for them and how that treatment is progressing.

210. Such a periodical revision of institutional cases is, however, in the large majority of Unions non-existent. It is true that in the case of indoor medical relief, the Guardians' responsibility for curative treatment is, to some extent, transferred to the Medical Officer, whose duty it is to reconsider from time to time the patient's condition, with reference to cure. But the supreme responsibility for the proper care of the sick remains with the Guardians, and, as will be seen from Dr. McVail's report, there is not always a satisfactory and periodical revision of cases with a view to seeing whether the best possible treatment is being applied.[4] Even with regard to children there is nothing in the existing regulations to prevent an orphan being sent away to some certified institution in a distant town, and growing there from a child into an adult, without the Guardians who sent it having any report from the institution, or taking any further interest in the child's existence unless, or until, it dies, goes out to service, or is guilty of some gross misbehaviour.

211. But with regard to ordinary workhouses cases, the absence of revision is still more striking. An order for out-relief is invariably given for a particular period, at the end of which the case must, automatically, come up before the Guardians for revision if the relief is to be continued. But the necessity for assigning a period to an order for indoor relief is not generally recognised, except in rare instances, and, consequently, an order for the workhouse may, at the pauper's will, be an order for maintenance for life at the public cost. Wherever the expedient of a workhouse "call-over" has been undertaken by a Revision Committee, numbers of such cases have been discovered,[5] and instances have been known where the call-over has resulted in the discovery that certain indoor paupers only existed as such in the workhouse books, having, in the body, long since departed from the institution.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., Section 2. [2] Dr. McVail's Report, pp. 59–60. [3] *Vide* Part IX. [4] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 62. [5] North, Vol. IV., App. cxlv. (3); Williams, 45464 (8); Davies, Vol. V., App. lxxi (8); Dearden, 41202–6.

212. We feel very strongly that, in future it should be part of the regulations of every institution that each case in that institution is periodically reconsidered by a responsible Committee, with a view to seeing whether the existing treatment is producing the desired results or whether it is desirable that the treatment should be altered. It is only by treating paupers as individuals that there is any chance of restoring to them their sense of individual responsibility for self-maintenance.

Course of indoor pauperism since 1871–2.

213. We may turn now to consider the extent to which advantage is taken of institutional treatment.

It is shown in the Statistical Appendix to our Report that, arranging the figures in the cycles into which they naturally fall, the number of indoor paupers has shown a progressive increase since the year 1871–2, while the number of outdoor paupers shows a parallel decrease. But whereas, until 1895–6, the decrease in outdoor pauperism more than compensated for the increase in indoor pauperism, since that date the increase in the number of indoor paupers has been enormously in excess of the reduction in outdoor pauperism. Had this increase been due to a change in the economic position of the population, we should have expected to find it reflected in outdoor pauperism as well as in indoor pauperism. But, instead of an increase in outdoor pauperism, the decrease has continued though at a diminishing rate. Moreover, it is since 1895 that the expenditure has increased most rapidly, and we thus arrive at the conclusion that the increase in indoor pauperism is due to a change in policy of the Local Authorities rather than to any slackening in the moral and material progress of the people.[1]

214. When attention is turned to London the position is still more serious. The increase in indoor pauperism is far greater proportionately than in the rest of the country, and more than counterbalances the reduction in outdoor pauperism at an earlier date. Indeed, since the cycle of 1880–1 to 1887–8 the number of indoor paupers in London has increased by no less than 29 per cent., whilst outdoor pauperism has remained almost stationary.[2]

215. The expenditure in London has also increased more rapidly than in the provinces. Between 1871–2 and 1891–2 there was little change in the amount of the extra-Metropolitan expenditure, but during the same period the London expenditure rose 40 per cent.[3]

216. It is true that the influence of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund favours the indoor policy, but there is no reason why this influence should operate in a greater degree now than formerly, and the large increase in indoor pauperism in London must still, we think, be chiefly attributed to an alteration in the policy of the administrators of the Poor Laws. At any rate, it is clear that the people of London are using Poor Law institutions very much more freely, and in this connection it is important to consider whether they are being driven into them by a repressive policy or attracted to them by the advantages they offer.

Attractiveness and deterrence of workhouse to certain classes.

217. In the first place, we may note that less than one half of the whole number of London indoor paupers* (39,802 out of 80,509) were in the workhouse on January 1st, 1908. The other half were in infirmaries, homes, schools, imbecile asylums, etc. Of those who are in the workhouse there is, as we have seen, a certain class—not as yet very large—to whom it has most unfortunately become attractive, the class of able-bodied loafers. Of the remainder, the great majority are there, not through any repressive policy of the Guardians in regard to out-relief, but owing to their own loneliness and helplessness, *i.e.*, it has been shown, on inquiry, that only a small percentage of the aged now in the workhouse could live outside on a pension or on out-relief.[4] To these the workhouse is an asylum, and one which is certainly in London tending to become more attractive.[5]

218. The next largest class to those in the workhouse are the inmates of the infirmaries, 14,202, and of those it has never, so far as we know, been suggested that they could be better dealt with by out-relief, or that they are "driven" there by any other cause than their own illness. It is mainly in connection with this class that the recent increase in expenditure on buildings has taken place; and in a subsequent Chapter it will be shown that in London the Poor Law infirmaries are proving increasingly attractive, both to the poorest, and to persons who might be considered above the destitute class.

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1 *Vide* Part II., pars. 648; Statistical Appendix, Part I., pars. 26–7. 2 Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 68. 3 Davy, Vol. I., App. v. (17). 4 Wethered, 5532–7: Vol. I. App. xi. (A), (87–8); Lockwood, 14022; Cheeseman, 73880–4. 5 Lockwood, 13439–40; Visits: Met. 112, 116, 117. * Excluding Casuals.

219. If we take the rest of the country we find that a much larger proportion of the inmates of institutions were in the workhouse, *i.e.*, 127,232 out of a total of 190,577 ; but this again can hardly be said to be due to a repressive policy, inasmuch as the proportion of the population who receive out-relief is much greater in the country at large than it is in London.

220. We do not think, therefore, that there is evidence to show that the existing system, even under strict administration, has forced into Poor Law institutions any considerable proportion of persons who could more properly have been dealt with by outdoor relief.

221. The question must here be raised as to how far relief afforded in an institution should be deterrent ; that is to say, how far it should be given under such conditions that the applicant would prefer, if it were in his power, to maintain himself outside without assistance from the Poor Law. This form of deterrence must be considered from two separate standpoints, viz., the material discomfort and disability which institutional relief imposes, and the moral or social discredit which it inflicts upon its recipients.

222. The first is capable of more or less accurate measurement. The loafer, the in-and-out, and the work-shy are influenced as to whether or not they accept the offer of the workhouse by the amount of physical comfort, restraint, or inconvenience associated with the particular institution offered them. The more comfortable the house, the less is it a deterrent to this class. To the respectable poor the moral consideration is paramount ; many of them will for long periods subject themselves to material conditions far less eligible than those of a workhouse rather than accept comfort if it involves association with a number of persons of a degraded *status*. Thus, the modern mixed workhouse with its higher level of comfort works most unevenly as a deterrent. It attracts the very class it ought to repel, and it may act as a deterrent in the case of the aged and infirm to whom it might legitimately be a refuge. So long as an institution remains the receptacle for all classes needing relief, and good, bad, and indifferent characters are herded together, so long will the bad be indulged and the respectable suffer. At the same time we think it will be a great misfortune if the aged should be brought to prefer life in the workhouse (under whatever name it may in future be known) to an independent life amongst their own friends and relations, and we should deprecate any policy which aimed at or tended to this result.

223. On the other hand, we think that when once they have become inmates of such an institution their life should be made comfortable, and as far as possible cheerful.

Conditions essential to effective indoor relief.

224. There are, therefore, five preliminary essentials to making indoor relief in future rightly effective, both as a curative and a deterrent agency, viz. :—

(1) The reorganisation and entire revision of the system of general workhouses

(2) Classification by institutions.

(3) Periodic revision of all indoor cases.

(4) Properly safeguarded powers to remove to and detain in institutions certain classes of cases.

(5) The provision of regenerative influences both personal and industrial.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 5.

(1) *For the treatment of cases of chronic infirmity, the same elaborate hospital accommodation should not be required as for the treatment of acute cases.* (203.)

(2) *The Local Government Board should exercise its authority more strictly in checking excessive expenditure :—*

(a) *Through the Architects' Department.*

(b) *By closer consideration of proposals made for building new institutions.* (204–5.)

(3) *Further powers of detention are necessary as regards certain cases, especially "ins-and-outs."* (207–8.)

(4) *In every institution, each case should be periodically reconsidered by a responsible Committee, with a view to seeing whether the existing treatment is producing the desired results, or whether it is desirable that the treatment should be altered.* (212.)

(5) *The life of aged inmates should be made comfortable, and as far as possible, cheerful.* (222–3.)

Chapter 6.

OUTDOOR RELIEF.

225. It had been the original intention of those who framed the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 that all out-relief to the able-bodied should cease on July 1st, 1835, but it was ultimately left to the discretion of the Commissioners to introduce the prohibition gradually. In their Second Annual Report they write :— Orders regulating outdoor relief to the able-bodied.

> "No doubt can be entertained that it was the deliberate intention of Parliament . . that all outdoor relief to the able-bodied should cease at the earliest period that it could safely, and with propriety, be put an end to; and the question which we have successively to decide as to each Union is, 'Whether this time may be fairly deemed to have arrived?'" [1]

226. Until parishes had been formed into Unions, and adequate workhouse accommodation provided as an alternative, it was felt to be impossible to prohibit the outdoor relief upon which so many had come to rely. For this reason the introduction of the new policy was not sudden, but gradual, and proceeded first by means of preparatory Rules,[2] and subsequently by Orders issued to particular Unions, which were afterwards generalised into the two Orders under one or the other of which outdoor relief is now administered. As has been said, the pauperism which presented itself to the Royal Commission of 1832 as most immediately pressing was that of the agricultural labourer, and the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order which was issued in 1844 was the culmination of the new policy as applied to the rural or less populous Unions. The main provision of this Order (of which the full text will be found in the Appendix to the First Volume of Minutes of Evidence), is that which prohibits relief to the able-bodied, male or female, and their families, except in the workhouse. There are important exceptions made in the case of

> "sudden and urgent necessity; sickness, accident, or infirmity; burials; widows in the first six months of widowhood; widows with legitimate children as dependents, and with no illegitimate children since widowhood; imprisonment; family of soldiers, sailors or marines; and resident family of non-resident head." [3]

The Order also prohibits non-resident relief with somewhat similar exceptions, and the payment of the paupers' rent by the Guardians or their officers or by the Overseers. The Order allows the Guardians to depart from its provisions in particular cases if the Central Authority approve.[4]

227. For the more populous Unions a different form of Order was issued.

> "In their Second Report the Poor Law Commissioners gave a form of Order specially intended for the requirements of a town Union. The chief point in this form of Order was the simplification of the requirements in the case of the able-bodied as compared with the preparatory rules applicable to rural Unions. The rule with regard to the able-bodied in a town Union provided that 'the Guardians may, until accommodation can be obtained for the reception of such persons in the workhouse, give outdoor relief, one-half of which at least shall be in kind: but such relief shall only be given in return for labour at task-work.'" [5]

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[1] Second Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 595, I., 1836, pp. 6–7. [2] Adrian, 194. [3] Adrian, Vol. I., App. i. (c). [4] Adrian, 196. [5] Adrian, 194.

228. It was not until 1852, under the Poor Law Board, that the rules for town Unions were codified into the general Outdoor Relief Regulation Order,[1] which is, as its name suggests, less stringent than the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order.[2] The main difference is that, under the Regulation Order, outdoor relief is not prohibited to able-bodied females, and is allowed to able-bodied males if set to work and kept employed by the Guardians while in receipt of it, provided that one-half at least of the relief is given in articles of food or fuel or in other articles of absolute necessity. It is noteworthy that, although relief is expressly prohibited to able-bodied males who are working for remuneration from any other source, no such restriction is applied to females; and this distinction has led to a great difference in practice. The prohibition aimed, of course, at putting an end to the system of paying a considerable portion of the labourer's maintenance from the rates, thus enabling the employer to pay wages below subsistence level. Another provision which has had serious practical results is contained in Article 10 of the Regulation Order, which permits the Guardians to depart from the Regulations, by making exceptions in special cases, provided they report to the Central Authority within twenty-one days the grounds of their action. Relief thus given before the Central Authority returns an answer to the report is legal, and its continuance is also legal if the Central Authority gives its approval, but not otherwise.[3]

229. These two Orders still in the main apply to rural and urban districts respectively, the Prohibitory Order being applicable to the larger part of England and Wales, and the Regulation Order to London and other populous centres,[4] mostly in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire; though the distinction between urban and rural is less clear than formerly, owing to the increase and shifting of population. But a method of modifying the Prohibitory Order has been introduced by means of Outdoor Labour Test Orders, under which the Local Government Board approves of departure from that Order on conditions similar to those of the Regulation Order, *i.e.*, permitting out-relief to the able-bodied, provided they are kept at work.[5] Thus a Union which is nominally under the Prohibitory Order may yet, under an Outdoor Labour Test Order, administer its relief quite as freely as if it were under the Regulation Order; indeed, one witness states that:—

> "So far as statistics show, the actual administration is rather stricter under the Regulation Order than it is under the Prohibitory Order; that is to say, a greater proportion of the relief is institutional in London (for which there are special reasons, owing to the operation of the Metropolitan Poor Fund), and in Lancashire (where there is no Metropolitan Poor Fund) than is the case in the bulk of the Unions which are under the Prohibitory Order."[6]

230. Having regard to the fact that the distribution of the population has so much altered during the last seventy years, and more especially to the fact that able-bodied pauperism is now almost entirely confined to the large towns, we think that there should be only one Order applicable throughout the whole country.

Policy as to outdoor relief to able-bodied.

231. The history of able-bodied pauperism under the new policy instituted by the Poor Law Commissioners will be told in detail in the chapter relating to that class, but we must emphasise here the point that the whole campaign of the reform was fought and won upon two main issues—that of making dependence less desirable than independence, and that of abolishing subsidised employment. One of the first acts of the Central Authority was to issue a Circular in which it was stated that the Poor Law Amendment Act had been passed, not for the purpose of abolishing necessary relief to the indigent, but for preventing certain illegal and injurious practices which had by degrees grown up in the administration of such relief.[7] And the subsequent action of the Central Authority shows that, even in connection with the able-bodied, it is only as entailing specific evils that outdoor relief is condemned. When it could be used to restore the recipient to independence every facility was given for raising the necessary money. One of the original recommendations was to authorise the payment out of the rates of the expenses of migration of any person willing to migrate; and in the first year of their work the Commissioners were actively engaged in promoting the migration of agricultural labourers from the south to the manufacturing districts of the north, the expenses of this migration being defrayed out of the rates and considered as relief.[8]

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[1] Adrian, 195. [2] Adrian, 201. [3] Adrian, Vol. I., App. i. (D) (10). [4] Adrian, 202. [5] Adrian, 204. [6] Davy, 2392. [7] Memo. by Prof. Smart, "The Poor Law Board, 1847-71," p. 4. [8] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, pp. 21–3.

232. Outdoor relief to other classes than the able-bodied the Royal Commission of 1832 considered as a less pressing danger. Thus, they say :— Outdoor relief of non-able-bodied.

> "The outdoor relief to the impotent (using that word as comprehending all except the able-bodied and their families) is subject to less abuse . . . no use can be made of the labour of the aged and sick, and there is little room for jobbing if their pensions are paid in money. Accordingly we find, that even in places distinguished in general by the most wanton parochial profusion, the allowances to the aged and infirm are moderate." [1]

233. Nevertheless they indicate one danger, of a moral rather than an economic nature, which attends even the relief to the impotent. Though not fully convinced of the wisdom of legally enforcing the maintenance of the impotent by parents and children, they add :—

> "But if the deficiencies of parental and filial affection are to be supplied by the parish, and the natural motives to the exercise of those virtues are thus to be withdrawn, it may be proper to endeavour to replace them, however imperfectly, by artificial stimulants, and to make fines, distress warrants, or imprisonment act as substitutes for gratitude and love." [2]

234. It was probably because they considered the question of voluntary charity to be outside their sphere,[3] that the Royal Commission of 1832 do not mention in their Report an interesting scheme submitted by two of the Assistant Commissioners.[4] Their suggestion, supported by much evidence, was that the able-bodied should continue to be relieved by the Poor Law, but from a national fund, and under the strictest conditions. The impotent poor, on the other hand, were to continue to be relieved locally, and from funds obtained in the first instance by organising all the charitable resources of the district. A twofold object was to be attained, the more kindly and thorough treatment of those in need, and the prevention of the mischief done by miscellaneous almsgiving :—

> "The experience we have had as Commissioners for inquiring into charities," they say . . . "had convinced us, before we undertook to collect evidence for your Commission, that some constant superintendence is necessary to regulate and harmonise the proceedings of the trustees to whom the various benevolent founders have committed the management of charitable funds. But since our attention has been turned, in consequence of our connection with your Board, to the concerns of the poor in general, we have satisfied ourselves that all charities for the relief of the poor, as such, ought to be placed under the same superintendence as the general fund raised for that purpose." [5] . . . "It seems, then, clearly expedient that there should be in every district a public body, whose business it is to ascertain the real wants of the deserving poor, to receive and distribute the funds destined by the benevolent for their relief, and to give notice when those funds are insufficient for the purpose." [6]

These local boards were to be elected by the ratepayers, and were to be in connection with a central board in London, which would authorise them to assess their constituents after due notice, when voluntary funds fall short.[7]

235. As early as 1840 it began to be felt that out-relief gave rise to serious difficulties even beyond the circle of the able-bodied. In the Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for that year it is stated that investigations into the number of aged and infirm outdoor paupers relieved in the quarter ending Lady Day 1839 showed that, out of 236,000, no less than 87,000, or more than one-third, were partially able to work[8] :— Difficulties arising from outdoor relief.

> "This large number of paupers," said the Commissioners, "may be considered as receiving relief in aid of wages, and as injuring the independent labourers, by depressing the rate of wages."

And they added :—

> "We entertain no doubt that, if Boards of Guardians would resolutely require, as the condition of giving relief to these persons, that they should either come into the workhouse, or should be employed on account of the parish or Union, or should even, as in the case of persons receiving sick allowances from friendly societies, abstain from all employment, a large proportion of this

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, pp. 42–3. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 43. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 361.
[4] Report of Poor Law Commission 1832, App. A; Part I., H. C. 44, 1834, pp. 151 *et seq.* [5] *Ibid.*, p. 161.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 162. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 163. [8] Sixth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 245, 1840, pp. 16–7.

> 87,000 would be found capable of supporting themselves, and would, by refusing relief on these conditions, relieve the country from a large expense with which it is now fraudulently burdened; and that (which is of far more importance) the independent poor, especially the able-bodied and their children, would be protected from the unfair competition to which they are now exposed from those who, deriving part of their support from the poor-rates, can afford to sell their labour for an inadequate remuneration."[1]

236. Another class which gave rise to difficulties was one which has always been regarded as privileged with respect to out-relief—viz.: widows. The Report of the Royal Commission of 1832 devotes a very brief section to this subject:—

> "In all the cases which have been mentioned, relief is professed to be afforded on the ground of want of employment, or of insufficient wages; but a class of persons have, in many places, established a right to public support, independently of either of these claims. These are widows, who, in many places receive what are called pensions, of from 1s. to 3s. a week on their own account, without any reference to their age or strength, or powers of obtaining an independent subsistence, but simply as widows. In such places, they receive an additional allowance if they have children. The allowance for each child is generally about 1s. 6d. a week in rural districts, unless the child be illegitimate, in which case it is more frequently 2s. or more."[2]

237. By 1840, matters had so far improved that the relief to widows was granted ostensibly at least on the ground of insufficient wages. During the quarter ended Lady Day, 1839, 28,880 widows were receiving out-relief for this reason, and in their Report the Commissioners remark that much of this relief is probably unnecessary.[3] In Westhampnett Union (Sussex), the Guardians had taken the view that relief to the able-bodied of either sex should be given in the workhouse, with the result that in their thirty-seven parishes, only three widows and twelve children were obliged to accept this form of relief. They state in strong terms their belief that relief to able-bodied women does tend to reduce wages.[4] Nevertheless in the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order which was issued in 1844, widows with one or more children are expressly exempted from the prohibition, while, as we have seen, the Regulation Order of 1852 confines its prohibition of relief in aid of wages to men.

Recurrent interest in Poor Law administration.

238. The next period in which we find the question of the policy of out-relief being seriously raised is nearly a generation later. It is noteworthy that public interest in Poor Law administration tends to move in cycles, determined in part by varying prosperity, and in part by the coming in of a new generation, which lacks the experience of its predecessors, and has ideas of its own. Difficulties recur, old abuses and old evils which were thought to have been buried reassert themselves, the scale of needs and of resources is greater, but the problems are fundamentally the same. It was in the late sixties that it became apparent that a careless administration of out-relief was once more threatening to become a social danger. For some years there had been a great and continuous increase in expenditure, which could not be entirely attributed to the rising standard of medical relief. In their Report for 1868–9, the Poor Law Board point out that the increase has taken place in every County in England and Wales; the relaxation of administration enforced by the disaster of the cotton famine had left a permanent increase in Lancashire of over £260,000, and the significant comment is made that: "Relief in aid of wages is given to a greater extent in Lancashire than in any other County."[5] The only attempt made by the Board to arrest the evil was by means of a Circular Letter on outdoor relief advocating the greater use of pay stations, in which they incidentally hope that this will not make the relieving officer neglectful of his duty of visiting the house of applicants for relief,[6] and they conclude by desiring:—

Mr. Goschen's Minute of 1869.

> "to impress upon Guardians generally, the importance of a strict compliance with the provisions of the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order, in all unions and parishes to which it has been issued."[7]

239. In 1869, Mr. Goschen, then President of the Poor Law Board, issued an important Minute on "Relief to the Poor in the Metropolis," which begins by pointing out that:—

> "The published statements of Metropolitan pauperism have for some weeks past shown a considerable increase in the number of the outdoor poor, not only as compared with previous weeks, but as compared with the high totals of 1867 and 1868."[8]

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1 Sixth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners [C. 245] 1840, p. 17. 2 Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 42. 3 Sixth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners [Cd. 245], 1840, pp. 17–8; *Vide also* Mackay, pp. 301-2. 4 *Ibid.*, p. 18. 5 Twenty-first Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 4197, 1869, p. 14. 6 *Ibid.*, p. 77. 7 *Ibid.*, p. 78. 8 Twenty-second Annual Report, Poor Law Board, [C. 123], 1870, App., p. 9.

He urges once more the lesson learned at such a cost at the beginning of the century :—

> "One of the most recognised principles in our Poor Law is, that relief should be given only to the actually destitute, and not in aid of wages. In the case of widows with families, where it is often manifestly impossible that the earnings of the woman can support the family, the rule is frequently departed from, but, as a general principle, it lies at the root, of the present system of relief. In innumerable cases its application appears to be harsh for the moment, and it might also be held to be an aggravation of an existing difficulty to insist that, so long as a person is in employment, and wages are earned, though such wages may be insufficient, the Poor Law authorities ought to hold aloof and refuse to supplement the receipts of the family, actually offering in preference to take upon themselves the entire cost of their maintenance. Still it is certain that no system could be more dangerous, both to the working classes and to the ratepayers, than to supplement insufficiency of wages by the expenditure of public money."[1]

240. But perhaps the main interest of the Minute lies in the fact that it is an urgent plea for co-operation between charity and the Poor Law, pointing out in great detail the necessary limitations imposed upon the Poor Law by a wise administration and the great good to be effected in preventive and curative work by properly regulated charity.[2]

241. The answers made to the Minute by some Boards of Guardians illustrate both the nature of the evils at which it was aimed, and the obstacles which the Local Authorities have so often opposed to reform, and especially to co-operation with other agencies.

242. The Holborn Board, for instance, argue the question at length, and state that :—

> "According to the Return last week, ... 6,374 persons were relieved, out of the workhouses at a cost of £384 15s. 10½d., or nearly 1s. 2½d. per head,—a sum obviously insufficient of itself to maintain "destitute" persons in a state of health, the more so as many of them are unfit to work, and others labouring under acute diseases. . . . The Guardians are therefore of opinion that it would be impossible in most cases to provide "adequate relief" to the extent and with the object proposed in the minute of the Poor Law Board."[3] . . . "The Guardians, however, do not wish to disguise the truth. They are convinced that it is by means of the relief afforded to the outdoor infirm and more or less disabled poor, that the competition in the lower forms of labour is increased to such an extent as to reduce the wages paid for it. The price of various forms of needlework could not be maintained at the present starvation standard, but that so much is done by persons in receipt of parochial relief."[4]

They then point out that persons working in seasonal trades are relieved in slack times in aid of the wages earned in the busier periods of the year.[4]

243. Some few Boards, notably the "strictly administered" Unions in London, responded cordially, and an effort was made to organise local charities for the purpose, which developed into the Charity Organisation Society. But the City of London Board was probably more representative of the general attitude of the Guardians, in its reply that :—

> "The Guardians have no need to refer applicants to charity for assistance, for they have not felt themselves bound by the restrictions laid down by the law."[5]

244. Nor were the charities more eager to be drawn into co-operation, and the scheme contemplated by Mr. Goschen has never been to any great extent carried out. Except in so far as the Charity Organisation Society has attempted to mediate, the work of the Guardians and that of the voluntary charities has always been conducted on separate lines, and often without due regard to the needs of the poor. Among the members of most Boards there is an ignorance of voluntary charity which leads to an almost universal assumption of "unknown resources," and is thus responsible for a great deal of very inadequate relief.

The crusade against outdoor relief in the 'seventies.

245. The general attitude of the administrators of relief finds its reflection in the statistics of pauperism. The number of outdoor paupers per thousand of population which stood at 35·3 in 1859–60, rose to 42·8 in 1862–3, fell again to 35·3 in 1865–7, and rose to 37·7 in 1869–70. Since that date there has been an almost continuous fall till the year 1900–1, when the lowest point of 15·3 was touched and the rate remained at that figure during the three succeeding years.[6] This diminution must

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[1] Twenty-second Annual Report, Poor Law Board, [C. 123] 1870, App., pp. 9–10. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 10 *et seq.* [3] *Ibid.*, p. 18. [4] *Ibid.* p. 21. [5] *Ibid.* pp. 25–26. [6] Thirtieth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 746], 1901, App. No. 75.

be attributed largely to the fact that, from 1869 onwards, a persistent effort was made, first by the Poor Law Board, and subsequently by the Local Government Board, and their Inspectors, to expose the evils consequent on a careless administration of out-relief, and to induce the Guardians to adopt a stricter policy.

246. With the Annual Report of the Poor Law Board for 1870–1 were published a series of Reports by the General Inspectors on the administration of out-relief in their districts. These are of great interest as indicating some of the ways in which carelessness had crept into local administration—carelessness which as we shall show is exactly repeated in the administration of to-day. For instance, Mr. Wodehouse, in writing of London, says :—

> "I do not recollect that I met with a single case in the course of the inquiry in which total destitution was relieved out of the workhouse, and if such cases occur at all it is certain that they are extremely rare. In every case, therefore, the Guardians must be considered as supplementing an income derived by the applicant from sources other than the rates, and what struck me as most unsatisfactory was that in the large majority of cases they have no sufficient data for forming an opinion as to the amount of such income, or the sources from which it is derived. The headings of the various columns in the Relief Application and Report Book have indeed been so framed that if they could be accurately filled up the book would show at a glance the total means of subsistence of every applicant for parish relief. So difficult, however, is it to obtain information on this point that I believe the clerk to one of the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians was within the mark when he told me that that which the applicants represented as their entire income did not on the average amount to more than 50 per cent. of their actual means of subsistence. The Guardians in granting relief practically act upon the assumption that this is so. . . . This system is, I fear, attended with many evil consequences. . . . On the poor it cannot fail to have a very demoralising effect. They are constantly endeavouring to steer a middle course, fearing that if on the one hand they name too low a sum as their weekly income they will be told that the Guardians could not give them in the shape of out-relief an amount sufficient to maintain them, and that they must come into the workhouse, and that on the other, if they rate their means of subsistence too high, they will either be refused relief altogether, or that the relief given them will be below the usual scale."[1]

247. The results of these inquiries are summed up in a Circular Letter issued by the Local Government Board to the Inspectors in 1871,[2] in which stress is laid upon the great diversity of administration in different Unions, with the consequent diversity in the number of paupers and their cost to the ratepayers :—

> "Variations in adjoining Unions, where the surrounding circumstances are similar and where the variations can be attributable, in the main, to no other cause than the different system of administration adopted by the Guardians."[3]

It is pointed out that :—

> "A certainty of obtaining outdoor relief in his own home, whenever he may ask for it, extinguishes in the mind of the labourer all motive for husbanding his resources, and induces him to rely exclusively upon the rates instead of upon his own savings for such relief as he may require. It removes every incentive to self reliance and prudent forethought on his part, and induces him, moreover, to apply for relief on occasions when the circumstances are not such as to render him absolutely in need of it."[4]

248. The considerations which the Board thought most important to be borne in mind by the Guardians in the administration of outdoor relief are :—

> "The application of an efficient workhouse test to all able-bodied applicants for relief, whether male or female, and the most strict and careful enquiries into the destitution and circumstances of all paupers to whom outdoor relief is granted at their own homes."[5]

Great stress is laid upon the proper enforcement of the duties of the relieving officers, and it is suggested that inspectors of out-relief might be appointed, and that great care should be taken to ensure that the relief districts are not too large.[6]

249. This determined attitude of the Central Authority was accompanied by a very remarkable decrease in outdoor pauperism throughout the country. Between January 1st, 1871, and January 1st, 1877, the number of outdoor paupers fell from 881,000 to 531,000, without any corresponding increase in the number of indoor paupers.[7]

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1 Twenty-third Annual Report, Poor Law Board [C. 396] 1871, App., pp. 37–8. 2 First Annual Report, Local Government Board [C. 516], 1872, pp. 63, *et seq.* 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 65–6. 4 *Ibid.*, p. 66. 5 *Ibid.*, p. 67. 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 67–8. 7 Thirtieth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 746], 1901, p. 357; Davy, 3297.

It is true that the greater part of this period was a time of great economic prosperity, which no doubt facilitated reform; but economic prosperity by itself has little or no tendency to reduce pauperism where administration remains careless. It will save those who are honest from the necessity of applying for relief, but it will not affect the cases in which the Guardians are being misled, and it is in these cases that the reduction mainly occurs under careful administration.

250. The statement is, of course, often made that, to reduce pauperism by careful administration, merely means to withhold the necessary means of subsistence from the poor, and to save the rates at the expense of their suffering. The fact that the number of indoor paupers did not increase during this period is strong presumptive evidence against this view; but a complete answer can only be given by a careful study of the facts in particular Unions. We have included amongst our evidence the particulars of two historical Unions which reformed their administration at this time, and we feel sure that a careful study of these will carry conviction that no one benefited more by the change than the working classes themselves.[1]

251. These reforms were initiated gradually, so that those affected had time to adapt themselves to the change and make their own provision. That they did so, is proved by the increase of Friendly Societies and medical clubs. Further, by watching over the applicants to whom relief had been refused, and where necessary assisting them from private charity, care was taken to ensure that the system did not merely result in thrusting poverty underground. It is remarkable, however, how seldom the intervention of charity was necessary after the change had been established.

252. It was thus, then, that the generation of 1870 attacked its problem, as did that of 1834, by a determined effort to introduce wisdom and self-restraint in the administration of outdoor relief, and by a strenuous if not very successful attempt to bring about co-operation between the Poor Law and the charities. To this was added, as we shall see later on, work in dealing with the sick and with the children, which struck at the very roots of pauperism.

Extent of present day outdoor pauperism.

253. The present period of revived interest in the Poor Law reproduces many of the characteristics of its predecessors. Relief to the able-bodied and subsidised employment have re-appeared, and flourish as vigorously as ever, though for the most part they are carried on by agencies outside the Poor Law. By far the greater number of paupers receive out-relief, and notwithstanding the considerable reduction in the number of outdoor paupers since 1871 we still have approximately half-a-million on any given day, or two outdoor paupers to one indoor. In rural or mainly rural Unions, for every one indoor pauper there were on March 31st, 1906, 4·46 outdoor, while in urban or mainly urban Unions, excluding London, for every one indoor there were 2·45 outdoor. In London however, the number of indoor paupers exceeded the number of outdoor paupers by nearly 60 per cent., and the proportion of outdoor paupers was only ·63 to one indoor pauper. But the out-relief problem of to-day is for the most part a problem of the aged, and of women and children. Is this out-relief, the non-institutional work of the Poor Law, on a satisfactory basis?

Insufficient inquiry into circumstances of applicants: inadequate outdoor relief.

254. In forming our judgment upon this important question we rely partly upon the evidence laid before us by witnesses, partly upon Reports made to us by our Investigators, but largely also upon our own experience, gathered by attending a large number of Board meetings and Relief Committees, and by visiting the recipients of the relief in their own homes. In the course of our inquiries we have found that in many places the same defects have crept into the administration as were reported in 1870, and we have again and again noticed upon what diverse and often conflicting principles out-relief is administered by different Boards of Guardians. In some Unions out-relief is not given unless there is a sufficient income to pay rent, under the mistaken idea that it is illegal to give relief sufficiently adequate to pay for shelter, thus encouraging applicants to overstate their incomes in order to qualify for relief. In other Unions a like amount would debar an applicant from getting outdoor relief, thus encouraging applicants to understate their income. In some Unions, in the case of a widow with children, no relief is given for the widow and one child, even though it may be impossible

[1] Willink, Vol. VII., App. ccxi.; Bury, 48031 (1–20).

for her to earn anything, owing either to her own condition, or to the number of children of tender years who need her constant attention. Whilst some Unions take into account the whole income of the household in computing the amount of relief, other Unions ignore entirely the income of those who are not legally liable to repay; and even, although there may be a sufficient income for all the members of the household, brought in by those who are legally liable, relief is not refused in case of aged people. Again, relief is given in some places on the same low and rigid scale both in case of assumed resources and in cases where there is no possible reason to believe there can be any other income. Some Boards endeavour to act upon the principle of sufficient inquiry and adequate relief; but the large majority still give wholly inadequate allowances, and rely upon the insufficiency of their inquiries for "unrevealed resources." If these resources happen to exist, all is well; if they do not, then the recipients inevitably suffer. Committees of our number have been present at many Relief Committees where hardly any inquiry had been made as to the means of the applicants, and where the Guardians habitually relied upon "unrevealed resources" in fixing the amount of relief.

255. The following extracts may be quoted from the reports of these visits :—

(1) "The practice of the Boards (six Unions) with respect to out-relief varies considerably. Most of them seem to work from a fixed standard, which varies from 2s. to 2s. 6d. per head for adults, and about 1s. 6d. for children. Cases are seldom discussed with reference to their needs: 'She will be content with that,' or 'That is what the other old women are getting,' or 'She is over eighty, give her another sixpence,' were the sort of considerations brought forward. Here and there the relieving officer had ascertained the income, but that was exceptional. Generally speaking, the relief given seemed on the face of it quite inadequate; but the assumption that there were undisclosed resources was probably justified in many cases."[1]

(2) "Relief was apparently granted on the assumption that it was supplemented from other unascertained sources. Unless this assumption was correct, the scale of relief seemed inadequate."[2]

(3) "In cases of out-relief, undisclosed resources were nearly always assumed. The relieving officer would not even inquire to what extent applicants were being helped by charity, but he would content himself with the knowledge that Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so was looking after the case."[3]

(4) "I visited out-relief cases with the relieving officer. The relief given is on a fixed scale, without regard to circumstances, *i.e.*, 2s. 6d. for old people, 1s. 6d. for children. Resources are not known, but it is surmised that private charity and relations do what is necessary. . . . . I afterwards examined some of the old people closely as to their resources, and am confident that some, at least, were much pinched."[4]

(5) "A widow, living alone, received 3s. 6d. a week, out of which 1s. was given to a girl for attending to her room, as she was helpless. She said that coals and rent cost her 1s. 4d., leaving her 1s. 2d. a week on which to live. She was trying to eat a dinner which she said was not cooked, and she could not finish it."[5]

(6) "Looking through the books, under the heading 'Other resources,' I found the entry to be invariably 'unknown!'"[6]

(7) "Enquiries as to resources are, I should say, practically not made at all. The first two cases I saw were an old groom and an old gardener, who had worked for good families, and were very comfortably housed. I asked whether their employers allowed them anything, and the relieving officer replied that he had never asked, as he made a point of not asking about private charity. Sons he may happen to see, but trusts to his general knowledge to judge whether they do or should contribute. I do not think there was a single case amongst those I visited, or amongst those we heard called over at the board meeting, in which he really knew what the children were doing for their parents; with one exception, the relief given was on the face of it glaringly inadequate, but the homes were comfortable, and there were no signs of extreme poverty."[7]

256. We have also received much evidence to the same effect, of which the following extracts may serve as examples :—

The West Derby Union is, next to West Ham, the most populous Union in England, having within its limits a population in 1901 of 529,000. We were struck by the inadequacy of the out-relief given in this vast district, and our opinion was endorsed by the following evidence of Mr. Cleaver, Clerk to the Union and an officer of great experience and ability.

"You would say, I suppose, speaking generally, that the scale of relief in West Derby is somewhat low?—Yes. I cannot speak too strongly on that matter. I think if out-relief is to be given it should be adequate. If out-relief is not to be given, then let them be dealt with by being

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[1] Visits: Miscell., 108. [2] Visits: Urban 1. [3] Visits: Rural 57. [4] Visits: Rural 69.
[5] Visits: Rural 53. [6] Visits. [7] Visits: Rural 75.

sent into the house. I find that the average outdoor relief given in the West Derby Union—I am ashamed to own it—is 3s. per week. That, the guardians are of opinion, is granting adequate relief; but really it is only making up the deficiency that has been created by charitable people and others, and it is not dealing with a case as it should be dealt with.

"What do you put the rent of these cases at?—As a rule I should say that the relief of 2s. 6d. practically covers the rent, and I do not know what they are to live on after that.

"When this small sum is given rather as a sort of conscience salve, is not the result, from the judicial point of view, unsatisfactory, because the cases are not thoroughly gone into? —The difficulty is that the class of men granting relief do not see through the same spectacles as myself in this matter. They consider that as long as they can salve their consciences by giving out-relief of some sort they have dealt with the case; but whether that is satisfactory or not I think it is for others to decide. I consider there are numberless cases in the West Derby Union who ought to be receiving considerably more than they are receiving; but it is very difficult to get guardians to understand that it is better to have 500 on outdoor relief at 7s. 6d. than 1,500 at 2s. 6d.

"Do the relieving officers hold your view?—I think they hold my opinion. If I may allude to it, I find there is one case in the West Derby Union receiving 15s. a week and one receiving 10s. a week, but the average is 3s. per case."[1]

257. Mr. Baldwyn Fleming, one of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, states:—

"I constantly ask the question of the relieving officers: 'What income has this man got?' When he has had the 2s. 6d., the answer frequently is: 'Nothing, that I know of,' and yet 'they give the 2s. 6d. . . . the whole of the facts in the case ought to be thoroughly ascertained. Then, if relief be given, it should be adequate; if it is not needed it should be refused. As a matter of fact, these half-crowns, eighteen-pences and shillings are given because the facts are not ascertained.'"[2]

258. Mr. Preston-Thomas is of opinion that:—

"One of the results of the extraordinarily large number of individual cases of outdoor paupers is that few of them are relieved adequately. Indeed, in some Unions, so little pains are taken to keep down numbers that it would be an intolerable burden on the rates to give each individual enough to keep him. It is thus left to chance to provide the difference between perhaps 2s. a week and the sum necessary for a bare subsistence."[3]

259. The existence of this deplorable, though happily not universal practice of giving inadequate out-relief, is referred to again and again in the Reports of the Diocesan Inquiries as to poverty. A considerable number of incumbents report that outdoor relief in their parishes is so meagre as to cause positive suffering;[4] and cases are cited where the Guardians' allowance is alleged to leave only 6d. a week for the recipient to live on after the rent is paid.[5] A still larger number of clergy say that it is necessary to supplement the Guardians' allowances by charity, and it is pointed out that in this way much charity is expended in supplementing relief which otherwise might be more usefully employed to help the "second poor." The inquiry also indicates how inadequate relief in some cases becomes a motive and excuse for begging, and thus tends to deteriorate morally the very cases it is supposed to help.[6]

260. We shall speak more fully in dealing with particular classes of the results of this widespread system of trying to compensate for inadequacy of knowledge by inadequacy of relief. Two points, however, seem quite obvious; first, that when the applicants are honest in their statements they must often suffer great privation; and, second, that when they are dishonest relief must often be given quite unnecessarily. The cases which touch the happy mean, where the resources which the Guardians assume are just those which the applicants conceal, must be comparatively very few.

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1 Cleaver, 35908–11. 2 Fleming, 8869–70. 3 Preston-Thomas, Vol. I, App. viii. (a) (31): *see* also Lockwood, 12729-34. 4 Summary of Diocesan Reports as to the Methods of Administering Charitable Assistance and the Extent and Intensity of Poverty in various parts of the Country, pp. 27-31. 5 *Ibid.*, Lichfield, p. 28. 6 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Indiscriminate and unconditional outdoor relief.

261. The next point to which we desire to call attention is that in some districts this lack of proper discrimination and supervision occurs under conditions which call for the gravest consideration. Opinions may differ as to the degree of strictness desirable in Poor Law administration; but no possible justification can be advanced for the granting of out-relief in such a way as to perpetuate pauperism and the evil conditions which give rise to pauperism.

262. The following are some of the instances in which we have found that out-relief is being applied to subsidise dirt, disease, and immorality, and where the strictest enforcement of an indoor policy would have been not only far more humane but wiser.

(1) "An old Irishwoman, moving feebly about a room crowded with dirty lumber and herself in the last stages of dirt and decrepitude. She gets 3s. relief, pays 2s. 3d. rent, and has no other income except when she can get lodgers; she had two mill girls with her, one with a child, but the child was taken away with typhoid last week, and now she has no one. The place is hopelessly dirty and insanitary, and ought to be closed."[1]

(2) "We visited several more cases in which the man was sick; always the same struggle, the wife trying to earn, the man refusing to stay in the hospital, the children more or less neglected. The last was the worst. A man more ill from starvation than from anything else, a great talker, could not say why he would not stay in the hospital, thought it was 'just his peculiarity.' He and a child about four were eating jam tart and brawn off a broken chair. He was thrown out of work two years ago . . . and cannot get anything to do. . . . He lost his home, and is now in a furnished room at 4s. 6d. a week. The room is unpapered; the ceiling not plastered; the furniture consists of a rickety bedstead, one chair, and an old wooden box for a table. A most squalid place."[2]

(3) "The worst case on the list was that of an old man, aged 65, living with prostitutes, who boarded and lodged him at 2s. 6d. a week. The Committee granted this man (although he did not appear) 2s. 6d. a week, but he was warned he must move into a more respectable neighbourhood."[3]

(4) "Widow with seven children, none working. Received 10s. per week relief. Rent, £5 10s. Said to be paid by friends. The relieving officer says the family can live on 10s. per week with care. I visited the home, and found it in a very dirty, I might say, filthy condition. The woman is a sloven. She went about the house in a dazed manner. I tried to get particulars of the way she spent her money, but found it impossible. Her memory could not serve her even for one week; one of the children was at home from school ill, but had not been seen by a doctor; although the relieving officer had called in she had not mentioned it to him. Some outside assistance is evidently given in this case. It is obvious, even with a few vegetables from the garden, that a family of eight persons could not live on 10s. per week, and pay £5 10s. per annum rent."[4]

(5) "Mrs. W., a widow with five children, receives 10s. per week. She is a notorious drunkard, and has lately been turned out of a house in a street where drunkards abound, because her drunken habits disturbed the whole street. When we called she refused to open the door; the relieving officer concluded she was drunk."[5]

(6) "T., married, with three children, is partly paralysed, and seems mentally deficient. His wife is crippled by rheumatism. The guardians allow 6s. per week for man and wife, and 6s. for the children. The tenement consists of two rooms . . . and there are living in the house in addition to the foregoing, Mrs. T.'s mother, one male lodger, about 40, and Mrs. T.'s sister with an illegitimate child. In these two rooms it will be observed there are five adults, three children and one baby. I was told by the relieving officer that the guardians do not attach importance either to cleanliness, sanitation, decency, or the ordinary standards of morality. As a result of my own observation, I am prepared to endorse the statement."[6]

(7) "Case of phthisis. Man been ill three years (56 years of age), been getting out-relief for three years. Has five children, youngest, 8 months, another expected. Wife, aged 41, getting 12s. 6d. from parish. The children are made up as follows:—A girl, 20, out of work, living at home; a son, 17, working as miner, earning 16s. a week; and three young children. The whole seven sleep in one filthy dirty room with a gable roof at the sides, about 3 feet high, running up to 8 feet in the middle. The room was about 14 feet by 8 feet."[7]

(8) "Case of phthisis. Man about 40, and wife same age; two children dependent; 5s. out-relief. Son, aged 19, earns 18s. a week. Man, wife, son and two children all in one room; filthy is a mild word to use to describe the condition of things here. . . . The boy is delicate already, and will, without doubt, follow his father. Never works a full week."[8]

(9) "A single woman lives with her sister and her husband in one room. She gets 4s. 6d. a week out-relief. It is a mystery where the single woman sleeps, as there is only one room and one bed. She makes up her living by making scones, which she retails; these are made under filthy conditions."[9]

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[1] Visits: Urban, 17 G. [2] Visits: Urban, 17 G. [3] Visits: Urban, 22. [4] Visits: Rural, 61. [5] Visits: Urban, 44 B. [6] Visits: Urban, 44 B. [7] Visits: Urban, 44 C. [8] Visits: Urban, 44. C [9] Visits: Urban, 43 C.

263. We have been assisted in our investigations on this point by certain of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, and the following are extracts from their Reports :—

Mr. Baldwyn Fleming :—

"There were many cases receiving relief, where the circumstances from one cause or another were very undesirable. The relieving officers were well acquainted with the cases, and with these undesirable conditions, but the presence of those conditions affords further proof of the extreme difficulty of granting out-relief in ordinary cases with any degree of satisfaction. The amount given is insufficient to afford adequate relief, the accommodation is very poor, the bedding miserable, the food insufficient, the dirt too apparent. But in the lowest parts of the town all this is the normal state of the population." [1]

Mr. Wethered :—

"Some were clean and tidy, but in very many instances the rooms were dirty, ill-kept, and sometimes verminous." [2]

Mr. Bagenal :—

"This class (Class C.) contains those concerning whom the present inquiry is made. Too frequently they represent the most demoralised and diseased of the population. They include some epileptics, imbeciles and cripples of the lowest class. Their homes are nearly always to be found in the poorest quarters where population is densest. Cleanliness and ventilation are not considered of any account. The furniture is always of the most dilapidated kind. The beds generally consist of dirty palliasses or mattresses with very scanty covering. The atmosphere is offensive, even fetid, and the clothing of the individuals, old and young, is ragged and filthy. Bankrupt in pocket and character, this class look to the rates to support them, and are never backward in making application. The children are neglected, furnish the complaints of the National Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children inspectors, and fill the homes of the guardians. The men are drunkards, gamblers, workshy corner boys, and often criminals. The women are too often immoral, as well as unclean and neglectful. *Souteneurs* may be included in this class. . . . It is impossible with the present powers to deal satisfactorily with the various subsections of it which come before the guardians and the sanitary authorities. The guardians feel forced to give relief to bad cases because of the children, or for fear of some allegation of want of consideration to destitute ruffians or drunkards." [3] "It will be seen from the notes on each case that the conditions are very often bad indeed, and are quite incompatible with decent living for the adults, or with a respectable and healthful upbringing of the children where they exist." [4]

Mr. Walsh :—

"Many of the homes which I visited, both in . . . and . . . of those in receipt of relief and of the neighbouring poor, were dirty, ill-kept and evil smelling." [5]

Mr. A. B. Lowry :—

"In too many cases, however, where the house was structurally sanitary, I found the bedding and the house generally in a state of unnecessary and disgusting dirt." [6]

Mr. Williams :—

"There is no doubt whatever that a large number of the outdoor paupers are living in an environment of filth and immorality, and in many cases I fear they are participants in, and abettors of these foul, insanitary and degrading conditions. . . . I found far too much intemperance and sometimes even drunkenness in cases to which relief was being granted. . . . Closely allied to it, and as a rule the fruits of it, were filth, both of person and surroundings, and sadder even was the neglect and resultant cruelty to children, who were ill-fed and ill-clad. . . . During the periodical visits of the relieving officer I consider that each room in a dwelling should be thoroughly inspected, for frequently I found that though the living-room might be fairly clean, the rest of the house was a mass of filth, the bedding dirty, a heap of ill-smelling rags for bed clothes and the atmosphere vile and vicious. In some instances even the living-room was a disgrace to humanity." (*See* particular cases.) [7]

264. Stress is laid by the General Inspectors upon the point that these unhappy conditions are exceptional, and we are prepared from our own experience to corroborate this view. But the fact remains that they occur with sufficient frequency to be a very potent influence in perpetuating pauperism and propagating disease. From the point of view of phthisis alone there is harm being done which

[1] Reports from General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, Fleming, p. 2. [2] *Ibid.*, Wethered, p. 4. [3] *Ibid.*, Bagenal, p. 2. [4] *Ibid.*, Bagenal, p. 12. [5] *Ibid.*, Walsh, p. 1. [6] *Ibid*, Lowry, p. 3. [7] *Ibid.*, Williams, pp. 1–3.

far outweighs any benefit to be derived from the dole of out-relief. And children who are brought up in the very midst of such conditions as we have seen, surrounded by disease and immorality and drunkenness, are almost doomed to pauperism. We are not urging here that the remedy is to give more relief: money alone cannot touch the evil. But we do urge that, if relief be given, it should be used to raise the recipients out of their deplorable condition, and to check the creation of another generation of paupers.

265. In this connection we may refer to the Report furnished to us from a Metropolitan Union showing the localities from which the cases of relief (both indoor and outdoor) came, and to the observations of the Medical Officer of Health for the Borough on that Report. It appears that the cases of relief in the Union chiefly come from four groups of streets, and that the domiciliary conditions prevailing in some of those streets leave much to be desired. In regard to some of the streets in which out-relief is given, the Medical Officer reports that:—

> "The basement tenements which are in front 4 feet 2 inches below the level of the road, and at the back abut on a yard having a superficial area of only 180 feet, hemmed in by the houses in the other roads, are, owing to their want of proper light and ventilation, in my opinion, unfit to be occupied, and some years ago I endeavoured to get them closed, but was unsuccessful. . . . The arrangements, too, of the non-basement rooms are objectionable, as in many cases the water closet opens directly into the kitchen which is used as a living room. . . . On a very careful inspection of these basement houses made some two years ago, seventy-one of the rooms were found to be over-crowded. Subsequent to this the houses were put in good repair in compliance with the Council's notices, so far as their structural conditions would permit, but being, as I have said, occupied by a very rough class of people, very frequent inspections and overhauling are necessary if they are to be kept in decent condition. The death rate at all ages for these houses, and the infantile death rate are considerably above the average of the borough, the high mortality from phthisis and diarrhœa being especially marked." [1]

266. It is only fair to the Guardians of this Union, however, to say that they are apparently alive to the importance of refusing out-relief when the house is not clean and respectable, and we read with satisfaction that the granting of out-relief in certain streets:—

> "is restricted as far as possible, and every effort is made by the Guardians to throw these people upon their own resources. No permanent out-relief is given in —— Place, and in these cases where the Guardians deem it expedient to grant temporary out-relief in this (which is without question the most demoralised portion of the whole group), it is given, as far as possible, having regard to the needs of the case, in kind, and for short periods only." [1]

267. We consider that Mr. Court reaches the heart of the matter when he says:—

> "Potent factors towards producing such a state of things as that suggested by the Commissioners are the views taken by a not inconsiderable proportion of guardians: First, that the disposal of the relief granted by them is a matter for which not they but the recipients are responsible; and, secondly, that however small the relief given to a person with little or no other apparent means of subsistence, it is no one's business to inquire further if the applicant is satisfied." The first of these views . . . is almost an incitement to a careless parent to waste on drink money which should be devoted to the nourishment and clothing of the children, while the second may mean a bargain between a parsimonious Board of Guardians and liberty or licence-loving paupers for the lowest terms on which they will keep out of the workhouse." [2]

Proposed conditions of outdoor relief.

268. We cannot admit that administrators are justified in this attitude of irresponsibility for the effect of the relief given; and we recommend that in future it should be a condition of out-relief that the recipients are leading respectable lives in decent houses. As a step towards this, and having regard to the fact that instances such as those described are generally to be found in certain quite limited and well-defined areas—often indeed single streets—we recommend that the relief Authority should proscribe such areas for the purpose of outdoor relief. That is to say, it should be understood that outdoor relief would not be given to anyone while inhabiting such a district, save in circumstances of sudden and urgent necessity. There would be no hardship in this, as rents tend to be higher in such streets than in more respectable areas; where it is not so, relief could, naturally, be given on a higher scale; and it would have the great advantage of removing the respectable poor from surroundings of degradation and misery. It is of special importance in the case of families of children and young persons. It would have the incidental advantage of discouraging the owner of slum property, and of calling public attention to insanitary areas, and—in certain places—to the insufficiency of working class housing accommodation. In

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part XVII. [2] Reports from General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, Court, pp. 2–3.

London it is the duty of the Relieving Officer in accordance with regulations which it is the duty of the Guardians to make, to give the Sanitary Authority information of nuisances liable to be dealt with summarily under the Act. Premises which are overcrowded or are in such a state as to be injurious or dangerous to health are nuisances within the meaning of the Act. It is desirable that this provision should be extended to the rest of the country and enforced, and that the Public Assistance Authority be required, if the Sanitary Authority refuses to take action, to report the fact to the Local Government Board.

269. We may add that in some places this policy of proscribing particular areas is already practised by Boards of Guardians. Mr. A. B. Lowry reports :—

> "I gathered from nearly all the relieving officers that there were certain streets in their district of such a reputation that an application for outdoor relief from a resident therein could not meet with success."[1]

Mr. Court says :—

> "In . . . there are a number of courts and yards of the slum type, but no persons on out-relief to be found in them, owing to the practice of the Guardians to refuse applications for out-relief from persons living in unsatisfactory surroundings. . . ."
>
> "In . . . again, very few paupers live in the courts."[2]

Proposed compulsory removal of certain cases to an institution.

270. A policy such as this, gradually but steadily pursued until it was generally recognised, would, we are convinced, do much to diminish the evils of dirt, overcrowding and immorality, not only amongst the actual recipients of relief, but also amongst their neighbours. At present such evils are condoned by the action of the Guardians, and the mere insistence on a higher standard would be an influence for good both upon the people themselves, upon the owners of slum property, and upon the Sanitary Authorities. But we are aware that there are a certain small number of cases where something more is needed. Wherever we have gone we have heard of the one or two cases, generally of old people, who are living in a terrible state of neglect, and to whom the Guardians are forced to give out-relief, because they are powerless to remove them to an institution against their will.[3] Very often they are senile, and incapable of taking a resolution on their own behalf. Their homes and persons become indescribably loathsome, so much so that there are cases in which even district nurses and undertakers have refused their services ;[4] and they are a source of constant danger to themselves and to their neighbours. We recommend that powers should be given to the relief Authority, under due precautions, to remove such cases to an institution. There are, no doubt, objections to such a course ; but they are no greater than those which can be brought against the compulsory removal of infectious cases. And, as with infectious cases, so it would be here when once the removal has been effected, it would almost invariably cease to be felt as a hardship. We have had strong evidence from many witnesses as to the pressing need for this addition to the powers of the Guardians ;[5] and we think that those who oppose it can hardly have realised the evils which it is designed to meet.

Outdoor relief to widows.

271. We have seen that the question of out-relief to widows has always been one of difficulty in Poor Law administration ; and it is certainly not less so at the present day. It is a question which has to be considered very largely, if not mainly, from the point of view of the children ; but there are other issues involved which must be raised here.

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[1] Reports from General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, A. B. Lowry, p. 2. [2] *Ibid.*, Court, pp. 1–2. [3] Visits : Urban 17, 43, 44, 45, etc. [4] Court, 6636. [5] Thompson, 34102-5 ; Price, 67743 (18) (*e*) ; Brown, 75895 (11) 75947 ; Fawkes, 43889 (44) (*g*), 43977-8 ; Young, 69537 (9) (*a*) ; King, 25264 (8) ; Solomon, 50435 (15*a*), 50482-4 ; Bygott, 43998 (25) (*a*) ; Wright, 39980 (6) ; Niven, 38612-3 ; Copeman, 74415 (13) ; Cook, 74128 (23) ; Dyson, 20116 (15) ; Craig, 19463 (30) 19555, 19664 ; Fuller, 10412 ; Wood, 15883 (13) ; 15911-2 ; Burnet, 44421 (3) ; Griffiths, 71172 15) (*a*) ; Verlander, Vol. VII., App. cci. (12-3) ; Hayes, Vol. VII., App. clxxxi. (8) ; Macdonald, Vol. IV., App. xlv. (8) (*b*) ; Hill, Vol. IV., App. lxxviii. (19) (*a*) ; Bale, Vol. IV., App. xxviii. (10) ; Stanford, Vol. V., App. cix. (10) (4) ; Smith, Vol. IV., App. xcix. (27) (*e*) ; Young, Vol. IV., App. cviii. (15) ; Fitton, Vol. IV., App. lxviii. (18) ; Curtis & Battersby, 28796 (10), 28943 ; Woolf, Vol. VII., App. xciii. (18) (*b*) ; Broadmead, Vol. VII., App. xxv. (8), etc., etc.

272. In the reaction of the seventies against out-relief the Local Government Board took a stricter line than that of the Orders, and, in the Circular which it addressed to the Inspectors on 2nd December, 1871, it recommended that out-relief should not be granted to any able-bodied widow with one child only, and stated that, in the case of an able-bodied widow with more than one child, it may be desirable to take one or more children into the workhouse in preference to giving outdoor relief.[1] It is probable that the first recommendation is very generally observed; in many Unions the rule is that a widow is expected to maintain herself and one child, in some few it is held that she can maintain two children. In respect to the second recommendation there is much greater divergency, both in opinion and in practice. The general feeling is strongly in favour of leaving the children of widows with their mothers, on the twofold ground that the mother is the proper person to have charge of them, and that it is cheaper than either placing them in an institution or boarding them out. On the other hand it is maintained that, when deprived of her husband's help, it is by no means certain that a woman is capable of bringing up her children well, especially when she has to go out to work, or when there are boys in the family who need a strong control over them. With respect to the greater cheapness of out-relief, again, it is too often only another name for very inadequate relief, which does not permit of the children being properly clothed and nourished.

273. The extent to which the former view preponderates is shown by the fact that on January 1st, 1907, there were 34,749 widows, with 96,342 children, receiving out-relief, as against 1,240 widows with 2,998 children being relieved in the workhouse. The number of widows' children in schools and institutions would, however, be larger than this, though what proportion they form of the 60,421 indoor children is not known.

274. In some few places the evils of the mother going out to work have been felt so strongly that the experiment has been tried of making a sufficient allowance to enable her to stay at home altogether, and give her whole time to looking after the home and children.

275. At Glasgow the experiment has been working for some years on a considerable scale, and a detailed account will be found in Mr. Jones' Report on Wages and Out-Relief in Scotland.[2] The scheme was started in 1902, when, in accordance with a Circular from the Local Government Board for Scotland, a special roll was made for respectable widows with young children, the mothers being constituted guardians of their children, and paid as if the children were boarded-out with them. Up to May 15th, 1906, 461 widows had been placed on this roll, and 252 had been removed for various reasons. Of these, 148 were removed from the special roll because of improved circumstances; 48 married, were sent to hospital, or died; 8 were removed to the country; while the remaining 48 were removed on account of drink or immorality. As regards those who turned out badly, Mr. Motion, the Inspector of Poor, states:—

> "The circular was well intended in every respect, if it had been carried out with sufficient discretion by our members; but some of them insisted upon giving the full aliment in every case, so that women who had no calling at their finger ends, who could neither knit, sew, nor do anything else, resorted to 'close-mouth' gossiping, tippling, and drinking, with the inevitable result that a considerable number of these widows fell into bad habits, becoming drunken, and otherwise unsatisfactory, and had to be struck off the roll. If a little more common-sense had been exercised, and the recommendations of the Lady Inspector and the ordinary Inspectors taken into account, these people would not have been ruined as they have been."[3]

> "The duty of supervising the widows in Glasgow on the Special Roll," Mr. Jones reports, "has been assigned to a lady assistant inspector. . . . They are paid weekly. Those who receive from 15s. to 18s. a week are often better off financially than in the lifetime of their husbands. They are free of taxes, get free medical relief, medicine and clothes for their children. . . Where the inspector is convinced that no harm will come to the children when the mother works at some gainful occupation, nothing is said. So many of the women are devoid of domestic and other interests that work for wages is a positive safeguard. How they are to be taught to care wisely for their homes and children and to spend their relief to the best advantage is a problem which this scheme has not solved, and which no single inspector, however efficient and helpful, can possibly solve without the co-operation of other social workers. Two hundred homes are far too many

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[1] First Annual Report, Local Government Board, 516; 1872, p. 67. [2] Interim Report of Inquiries into the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment in Scotland, Mr. Jones, p. 29. [3] Motion, 58087 (61).

thoroughly to be supervised and assisted in practical ways by one person. The other main drawback to the success of the scheme is the vacillating action of the councillors, and the effect this has in weakening the influence of the lady inspector. . . . Further insight into the types included on the 'special roll' can best be obtained from the following notes of visits made by us, usually in the forenoon, to the homes of a number of the widows. Five are reported as very clean or in good order, two as clean, four as fairly clean, one as dirty, three as very or indescribably dirty. Each group represents a number of others of like character to be found on the Roll. Two were out-workers, one ran a small shop, and a fourth had charge of a maternity case occasionally." [1]

As regards the eight widows who were removed to the country, Mr. Jones reports:—

"An experiment in planting out widows in the country was begun in 1903. Eight widows with children were selected and distributed between two villages lying within twenty miles of Glasgow. The results have been considered so unsatisfactory that the scheme is at present in abeyance. Three of the cases are reported as satisfactory. A fourth was sent to a hospital and her children boarded-out. In the remaining four cases immorality wrecked the case. On the surface, one serious defect in the scheme would seem to be the choosing of villages so conveniently near Glasgow." [2]

Effects of outdoor relief on women's wages and conditions of employment.

276. The plan of granting complete maintenance, instead of subsidising the woman's earnings, has it is true the advantage of removing from the labour market some of the workers who are least able to stand against the conditions prevailing in the lower branches of women's industries. This question of the relation between out-relief and wages and the conditions of employment, especially in women's industries, has so much impressed us with its difficulty and importance, that it has been made the subject of a special investigation by Mr. Jones. From this investigation it does not appear that, to any considerable extent, employers deliberately pay lower wages because the workers are in receipt of out-relief, though such cases do occur. On the other hand, women are enabled by out-relief to continue doing work which otherwise they must abandon, either for the workhouse or for some better paid work. Again, if the question is raised whether certain industries are subsidised by out-relief to their workers, and whether they would not without this subsidy be forced under or obliged to reorganise on a better basis, we are met by the fact that those in receipt of out-relief form an exceedingly small proportion of the workers in any trade, while there is always a surplus of women waiting to be taken on. This is not, of course, quite conclusive; the removal of even a few competitors from a labour market may have a surprisingly large effect upon the standing of those who are left. But in London and many of the larger towns the supply of *unskilled* women's labour is still far beyond the demand for it. Unconsciously, no doubt, the employer relies upon the Poor Law, amongst other agencies, to keep his "hands" together for him in slack seasons, and so the irregularity of work is intensified.

"As a rule, the large employer has not the 'least idea' what becomes of his discharged workers. All he knows is that when he wants to take them on again, they will be on the steps in larger numbers than are required." [3]

277. It still remains true, however, that out-relief, by diminishing the mobility of the lowest and most unskilled labour, so far increases the competition of it in congested districts, and so far tends to force the rate lower for all concerned. It enables, and even induces, the recipients to continue working at wages far below subsistence level. In the section of Mr. Jones' Report on out-work and out-relief in a Metropolitan Union, will be found a table showing that the average earnings of forty-three out-workers in receipt of relief averaged 4s. 10d. a week, while the average earnings of 131 workers in the same trades *not* in receipt of relief were 7s. 3½d.[4] Neither sum, of course, is a subsistence wage in London, even for a single person. But the paupers are not paid lower rates than the independent workers; they are merely enabled by the receipt of the relief to work less hard, while in many cases they are probably disabled from working so hard by old age, young children, etc. The Investigator concludes:—

". . . since it is clear that the whole situation arises out of the exhaustion and stagnation of labour in . . . . and clear also that the Poor Law administration in its attempt to relieve that condition has been unable to do anything but render it still more acute, a part of the responsibility for the labour being in that condition, or being there at all, must lie at the doors of the . . . Union. It seems, therefore, fair to say that out-relief is one element in a complicated

[1] Interim Report of Inquiries into the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment in Scotland, Mr. Jones, pp. 30–31. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 30. [3] Report on Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and Conditions of Employment in London, Miss Williams and Mr. Jones, p. 58. [4] Mr. Jones' Report on Poplar, p. 6.

system, and to that extent has affected outwork and the earnings of outworkers; to what extent it is impossible to state, owing to the comparatively small number, and those naturally the older or less efficient workers, directly affected. But to affirm that out-relief created the situation, or is, indeed, primarily responsible for it, is quite unwarranted by the evidence. The question is far larger than the relation of outwork to out-relief."[1]

278. Glasgow is a city where there is much "sweated" women's work and much out-relief; and the investigation leads to much the same results. Out-relief is a contributory cause to an evil arising out of conditions which prevail far more widely than the area directly affected by Poor Law administration. Whatever effect it has in lowering wages is produced indirectly, by increasing the congestion of labour in the industries employed by the lowest class of workers.

Effects of outdoor relief on character.

279. Its effects upon the recipients themselves are more direct and often more detrimental. From the section of Mr. Jones' Report on London we may take the following conclusions:—

"(1) It damages character by inadequate inquiry and haphazard relief. It mixes the dissolute and the decent to the detriment of the latter. If guardians think a woman is paying too much rent she is told to move to cheaper rooms. Sometimes this hastens deterioration by withdrawing the support of a respectable street and placing the women and children in an unfavourable environment.

"(2) The help it affords is frequently insufficient for proper maintenance when all other resources are included.

"(3) It deters women from entering 'the world of self-support.'"[2]

280. Sometimes this effect is produced by the fear of the women that, if they earn too much, their relief will be reduced or stopped.

"We are convinced," Mr. Jones says, "however, that some paupers conserve their energies so as to ensure the continuance of relief. This was brought home to us by the statement of a partner in Firm No. 15. His forewoman on offering an outworker more work, met with a refusal as the worker feared she might lose her out-relief if she earned more. Such cases are significant, and there are probably more than we have found."[3]

281. Sometimes the same fear makes them refuse opportunities of independence when offered. The following instances are quoted from Leicester:—

(1) "A.B. Deserted by husband. A strong able-bodied woman in receipt of out-relief. Work was found for her by the Charity Organisation Society. She demurred: 'What's the use? I shall be no better off; my relief will be stopped.' She has not been on relief long. Previously, for five years, she supported herself bravely, but grew tired."

(2) "C.D., widow. Her father's family are well-to-do. She has an awkward disposition and quarrelled with her people three years ago, and is still estranged from them. She declines to write to her father for help. 'Not I; if he helps, I shall only have my out-relief stopped.'"

(3) "E.F., widow. Strong, rough woman. She is a good floor-scrubber and might have had a regular berth. She is very cantankerous and resents supervision. She gave up her work because 'she can get a little from the parish.'"

(4) "G.H., widow. Ill. Has a daughter, nineteen. Relief was given because of the woman's illness, and because the daughter was out of work. She hung on to the relief, and never would have got well had it not been stopped. Then she resumed work at once and has gone on well since."[4]

282. London experience is similar. A trained social worker in Dulwich wrote to Mr. Jones and Miss Williams as follows:—

"There is no doubt that in this district many widows are deterred from trying to earn an independent living by the knowledge that they can obtain out-relief very readily for their children. The certainty of this is so strong among a certain class of the population that they look upon the help as a right, and a woman will be urged by her neighbours to apply for relief as a thing to which she is legally entitled, with no doubt whatever of the relief being granted. The relieving officers do their best to induce widows to become self-supporting, but their efforts appear to be rendered useless by the action of the guardians, who consider out-relief the most economical way of dealing with that class of the community."[5]

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[1] Mr. Jones' Report on Poplar, p. 9.
[2] Report on London by Miss Williams and Mr. Jones, p. 63.
[3] Mr. Jones' Report on Scotland, p. 19. Report on London, p. 13, also p. 18.
[4] Miss Williams and Mr. Jones' Report on Leicester, p. 118.

283. The question has been asked in some places what would happen if the out-relief were stopped. Mr. Jones and Miss Williams report :— Effect of abolishing outdoor relief.

> "Many officers agree that out-relief could be greatly reduced in their unions without causing hardship. In Leeds the clerk thought that given a sufficiency of relieving officers and a certain amount of expert knowledge on the part of the Guardians, 20 per cent. of the cases could safely be struck off. In Leicester the figure was put at 90 per cent. These are lax unions and many names have found their way to the roll through other avenues than destitution, and could be removed without destitution resulting. In the stricter Union matters are different. In Ipswich the superintendent relieving officer believed that some of the paupers would have been supported by friends and relations. He did not think their own earnings would have risen had relief ceased, nor could he point to current cases whose out-relief ought to be reduced because of high earnings. A more extreme view was put forward by a Taunton officer. He thought if no out-relief were given nobody would be any the worse."[1]

284. It has sometimes been suggested that, to stop out-relief to women who are engaged in the worst paid industries, is likely to drive them into an immoral life as a last resource. It is only fair to the working women of this class to say that there is no evidence whatever to show that they resort to such a life as an alternative to the hardest work and the poorest pay.

> "Prostitution is sometimes suggested as the resource, but we could discover no *proof* of this and, in any case, prostitution is not to be explained on economic grounds alone. Cases where relief has been stopped because of immorality, or for keeping an immoral house, occur."[2]

Again :—

> "It is alleged that low wages of women are a direct cause of immorality. We do not find that this is sustained."[3]

285. Admitting that little good and much harm are done by the present administration of out-relief to widows, the question still remains how far, with better discrimination and wiser supervision, it might be possible to utilise it in the better interests of mothers and children alike. To part the mother entirely from her children is an impossible policy, and, except in cases of grave misconduct, undesirable for both; to ask that some of the children should be sent to school, where there are good Poor Law schools, is to ask little more than a reasonable mother in every rank of life is prepared to yield for the sake of her children. To give the mother a sufficient maintenance without work in return is wise only in very carefully selected cases, and, as shown by the Glasgow experience, may in some cases easily lead to demoralisation. To give a partial maintenance only may lead to the neglect of the children and the home. Sometimes it may be possible to arrange for friends and relations to look after the children or contribute to their support. Every case seems to call for special and individual attention; and it is well worth considering whether, in towns of any size, the necessary help might not sometimes be best given by means of day boarding-schools, on the lines of the day industrial schools. Outdoor relief, administered on a fixed scale, regardless of other resources or of home conditions, stands condemned by its results. Question of future administration of outdoor relief to widows.

286. Analogous to the question of out-relief to widows, but in some ways even more difficult, is that of out-relief to deserted wives. One of the recommendations in the Circular issued by the Local Government Board is :— Outdoor relief to deserted wives.

> "That outdoor relief should not, except in special cases, be granted to any woman deserted by her husband during the first twelve months after desertion."[4]

The object is, of course, to diminish the motives to desertion, and especially to guard against collusion between husband and wife; but the present practice of Guardians varies very much. At St. Pancras, we are told :—

> "Of course, there is always a danger of collusion, and I have found that it has been advisable for the wife to be taken into the workhouse. . . . It prevents collusion, and, I think, it tests the case, and shows whether it is a *bona fide* desertion case."[5]

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[1] Miss Williams and Mr. Jones' Report on certain Unions in England, pp. 10-11. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 10. [3] Final Report on Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions of Pauperism, Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 122. [4] First Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 516], 1872, p. 67, par. 2. [5] Craig, 19511.

On the other hand :—

> "In the Bermondsey Parish, outdoor relief is granted to these cases. . . . I am of opinion that, so long as outdoor relief is continued to these women, there will always be a large number of desertion cases to deal with. It has been proved in several instances that the desertion has not only been brought about by these women themselves, but the latter have been known to be in collusion with their husbands, thus enabling the men to avoid arrest."[1]

In Camberwell :—

> "There are a large number of desertions due, it is suggested, to the generosity of the guardians. The wives always receive out-relief. Hence in many cases collusion with husbands. The superintendent relieving officer has urged in vain that women should go to the workhouse for the first three months."[2]

We therefore endorse the recommendation of the Local Government Board.

Effect of inadequate outdoor relief to aged women.

287. One of the most painful features of the present system of inadequate relief is the vast army of aged women, whom it keeps clinging to the skirts of industry at an age when they are quite unfit for work of any kind. Mr. Jones and Miss Williams report :—

> "At Leicester in March, 1906, there were 2,008 women recipients in receipt of out-relief, the total being composed of 823* under sixty and 1,185* over sixty. . . . Special notice should be taken of the cases of the old women in receipt of out-relief who work at glove stitching. Their earnings are exceedingly low, working out at 1s. 4d. a week on the average; but it has to be pointed out that the average age of the women is 67·7 years." [3]

288. The amount of relief given is 3s. 6d., except in the case of one veteran aged 88, who earns 1s. 6d. and receives 4s. 6d. relief. We are not told how long they work for their pittance; and if the hours were very few it might be argued that the stitching was merely a pleasant occupation. But this is not likely to be the case. Where infirmity is great long hours must be worked to earn even a few pence. Amongst the illustrative cases from London is that of a widow aged 79, who works from 5 a.m. till 10 p.m. to earn 2s. 11d. a week at steel-covering; she has 4s. from the parish and a loaf from the clergyman, and pays 2s. rent.[4] From Glasgow we hear of women over sixty working ten hours a day at shirt-finishing, and earning 1s. 10d. a week; younger women can earn more at the same work, but the infirmity of the aged turns their work into slavery. Some women over sixty may be quite capable of earning a full living; others are incapacitated even earlier. Here again, what is needed is to replace a mechanical system of out-relief, which is superfluous for some and cruelly inadequate for others, by a discriminating treatment of each case.

Rural labourers' wages indirectly subsidised by outdoor relief.

289. We reserve to Chapter 9 the question of out-relief given directly to the able-bodied. The practice is happily confined to a few Unions. Perhaps more serious, as being both more general and less obvious, is the indirect subsidy to labourers' wages which prevails in most rural districts. There is no doubt that out-relief is freely given to old people living with single sons who are well able to maintain them; and we cannot disregard the fact that generally speaking, the Guardians who give this relief are the farmers who employ the labourers. They may have no definite policy in the matter, but :—

> "Guardians, especially the older ones, hold the view that if pressure is put on the sons to keep their parents entirely they will leave the country in still greater numbers, and they can point to examples where this has taken place."[5]

290. One of the instances quoted by Mr. Jones is that of a widower receiving 2s. 6d. out-relief, who has two single sons at home earning full wages as farm labourers. In South Wales, again, the relief is given with still less reason, owing to the higher wages earned by the sons:—

> "It is practically certain that in the majority of these cases relief could be discontinued without hardship ensuing. This is especially true where the sons are colliers, and where the family income ranges from £2 to £4 per week. Lax administration is the reason why these cases are on the books." [6]

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* As regards these, it should be observed that a large proportion were engaged in "casual domestic service."

[1] Dyson, 20117 (12). [2] Miss Williams and Mr. Jones' Report on London, p. 13. [3] Miss Williams and Mr. Jones' Report on certain Unions in England, p. 115. [4] Miss Williams and Mr. Jones' Report on London, p. 48. [5] Mr. Jones' Report on Suffolk and Cambridge, p. 24. [6] Mr. Jones' Final Report, p. 19.

291. The Report by one of our number on Unions in North Wales shows that the practice is common there also.[1]

Future policy as to outdoor relief.

292. We have dwelt at length upon the question of out-relief, believing it to be of the utmost importance that the evils connected with the system as now conducted should be fully exposed. If these evils were inherent in any system of outdoor relief, and could not be got rid of unless the system itself were abolished, we should feel ourselves bound to recommend the cessation of all outdoor relief after a certain date. But we think that this course, though it might be preferable to continuing the present system, would be attended with considerable hardship, that it would give rise to a feeling of harshness and injustice on the part of those who could not be expected to understand the reasons for the change, and moreover that it would deprive the administrators of the Poor Law of a method of assistance which may be turned to good account in skilful hands. At present, we believe that out-relief is largely instrumental in perpetuating pauperism; but we believe that this is due to bad administration, and, while we do not disguise the fact that we desire by the reforms we suggest to reduce the present number of cases by a wiser discrimination, we hope also to check the supply of future pauperism by a more constructive policy.

293. In the first place, we think that in every case there should be a complete knowledge of the facts, and the assistance given should be adequate and carefully adapted to its needs.

We mean that every family applying should be looked upon as unique, and a serious effort made to remedy the distress from which it is suffering. We recognise that in order to do this adequately it will be necessary to call in the assistance of other agencies, spiritual, moral, and charitable, but we regard as one of the worst features of the present administration its almost complete lack of co-operation with other agencies, and hope that our Report may lead to a great change in this respect. We think that, when application is made for relief, the question must be asked *in limine*: Is this a case which can be best treated by public assistance or in some other way, and by some other agency? Assuming it to be a case for public assistance treatment, we must ask what is the best method of treatment? And if outdoor relief is thought to be the best, "it is the plain duty of the Guardians to take precautions to ensure that the relief is adequate, and that the pauper is sufficiently fed, clothed and lodged."[2] If this principle be accepted and acted on, it will involve much closer supervision of cases than is now common, for it will mean frequent visits and a thorough knowledge of all the circumstances and their variations. This we think most desirable, and here again, we hope that the help of voluntary agencies will be enlisted.

294. It is generally assumed that cases which have once applied to the Poor Law for relief are "hopeless," and that the only use to which the relief can be put is to enable the recipients to drag on a miserable existence at the lowest level. That there are many such cases at present we are painfully aware, but we consider them a legacy from a mistaken policy in the past. It is probable that many of them, if they had been wisely dealt with in the earlier days of their distress, might have been raised into a position of independence. Miss Harlock, one of our Special Investigators, says:—

> "I was much struck with the hopeless condition of some of the cases at the stage at which I visited them. With these an earlier common sense treatment would have prevented the development of destitution (and in some cases of degradation also) to its present acute form."[3]

295. The following case, described by Miss Harlock, will illustrate what we mean by the need for more constructive work:—

> "A further reference to this case-paper will show that even in this Union where the administration is unquestionably able, leakages occur. There were possibilities of development in connection with this family which were not taken. James, a lad of 14, was, when his parents first applied to the board, allowed to remain untrained, and now at the age of 24, is selling flowers in the streets instead of being employed at a good trade. The relieving officer (November 3rd, 1903) calls the attention of the Guardians to the daughter, Margaret, a girl of 19 (a cripple), and suggests that she be taught some occupation by which she can earn

[1] Visits: Urban, 96; Rural 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105. [2] Davy, 2433. [3] Report of an Inquiry in Six Unions into cases of Refusal of Outdoor Relief, Miss Harlock, p. 37.

her living, but nothing is done, and we now find her sometimes in the workhouse and sometimes living with her mother entirely untrained and incapable of supporting herself. In all probability she will be a source of expense to the State as long as she lives, and her happiness in life will be curtailed by her limitations. Yet when she first became chargeable, she was only a child of 11."[1]

296. Here, as also in the two following cases from our own experience, the relief given by the Guardians, in the absence of any constructive policy, is only helping to perpetuate pauperism.

(1) "A baker's assistant out of work three years; about 50; does odd jobs. He and the woman who is now his wife, and three or four illegitimate children, were many years in the workhouse. They came out and married; there is another child, and they have intermittent relief in kind only. A miserable home."

(2) "A bricklayer's labourer, out of work constantly owing to quarrelsome temper. Wife was born and bred in the workhouse, and would be quite content to return there. Four little children, and a very bare home. Relief in kind only, no food unless they had it. Wife says she would gladly emigrate. Her sister and family are doing very well in Canada, but 'they did not emigrate, they just went.' Relieving officer thinks the man's character too unsatisfactory. This family seems condemned to hopeless pauperism, unless the guardians adopt some different policy, and the relieving officer says he has several others like it."[2]

297. We fully endorse the following paragraph in which Miss Harlock summarises the impression made upon her by her inquiry into cases which had been refused outdoor relief:—

"The method of dealing with cases should be much more elastic. The workhouse test is not enough (*See* Case No. 11.) There are many cases which cannot suitably be met either by the grant of a workhouse order or by out-relief. Some require curative treatment, some merely sound advice. No case which has ever touched the Poor Law should be left to drift unaided. There is evidently an urgent need for some organisation which would deal with cases where the offices of a friend are required. It should work in conjunction with the Poor Law officials, who would hand over suitable cases to its care. I have come across cases, *e.g.*, Nos. 46, 48, where it is likely that if a strong and wise friend could be found they might be placed upon an independent economic footing. It is so often not only financial aid that is needed but friendship and advice. It is sometimes thought that the religious and charitable agencies provide this, but in only one case have I discovered any attempt on the part of such agencies to build up the economic independence of the family. The need for effective encouragement of thrift in the case of those who are engaged in seasonal trades was very evident. Cases 35 and 36 illustrate this. The men earned good money in the summer, but instead of saving a proportion of it spent it all, and in winter they had nothing to fall back upon. The mere providing of facilities for saving is not enough. There should be persons visiting the families who will encourage them week by week during the summer to make provision for the period of seasonal unemployment."[3]

298. That there is a large scope for work of this kind is suggested by the facts brought out by the year's record of pauperism which has been taken by the Local Government Board at our suggestion. It shows, amongst other things, what proportion of cases are permanent, and how many are recurrent with intervals of independence:—

"It shows that 274,607 persons, or 16·1 per cent. of the total number, were relieved on more than one occasion during the year. Clearly then, the previous period of relief obtained by these people had failed to exercise any curative influence, and they returned to independent life, not more, but in all probability, much less, fitted for maintaining their independence. The figures show that there is much room for improvement and that capable administrators can find ample scope for their talent."[4]

299. We have already indicated some of the changes which we consider as requisite to this improved administration, in addition to the fundamental change in the constitution of the Local Authority. Smaller relieving officers' districts, more highly trained officials, greater powers of dealing with extreme cases, are some of them. To these we must now add another method which has frequently been suggested to us of improving the work of relief, and more especially of out-relief, *i.e.*, the adoption of what is known as the case-paper system.[5] Under the ordinary system, no continuous record is kept of an applicant and his family; at every application he is entered afresh in the application and report book of the

Proposed adoption of "case-paper" system.

[1] Report of an Inquiry in Six Unions into Cases of Refusal of Outdoor Relief, Miss Harlock, p. 6. [2] Visits: Urban, 84. [3] Report of an Inquiry in Six Unions into Cases of Refusal of Outdoor Relief, Miss Harlock, p. 37. [4] Statistical Appendix, Part IV., section 2, par. 48. [5] Fleming, 9507; Lockwood, 13588–90; Briant, 14881, 14891; Thurnall, 15698–702; Morris, 16682–3; Peters, 20087–8; Dyson, 20254; British Medical Association, 39477–82; Dodd, 47190 (41*b*); Elms, 49887 (14); Heathcote, 70320 (21), etc.

relieving officer, and, where this book is not indexed, it depends entirely upon the memory of the relieving officer how much of the applicant's past history is brought before the Guardians. When a new relieving officer succeeds to the work, the cases to him are all new, and unless he goes through the application and report books of his predecessor he has no means of tracing their previous history. Under the case-paper system every application is recorded on the same set of papers, which thus constitute a running history of the case; every set of case-papers is indexed, and can be turned up by anyone who is dealing with the case; into whatever institution the applicant may be sent his history goes with him. The system takes some trouble to start, but once initiated it is generally acknowledged to be much more effective and more simple than the old.

300. For an account of how the case-paper system was introduced into a Union, and of the saving effected by it, *see* Appendix XV. (R) of the Appendix to the First Volume of Minutes of Evidence. A specimen case-paper is printed in the Statistical Appendix (Part XIX.), and further remarks on the subject will be found in Part VIII., Chapter 10.

Proposed co-operation between Poor Law and charity.

301. It will be seen that what we are aiming at is, instead of a system of allowances, granted capriciously and irresponsibly to meet a constantly increasing demand, to substitute a system of careful and varied assistance, in which the "allowance" will be only one of many forms of help, and which will be directly designed to raise the recipients, or where that is impossible the children of the recipients, to a position of independence. And, as was urged in 1834, and again in 1870, so we once more urge the need of co-operation in this work between the help which is paid for out of the rates, and that which is rendered by voluntary charitable agencies. On these lines the Charity Organisation movement has worked consistently and the present moment seems to afford a peculiarly favourable opportunity for securing that co-operation on a wider and more permanent basis than has hitherto been found possible. One of the most striking features of the time is the creation in many of the larger towns of "Guilds of Help," or "Civic Societies," which have their origin in a very general conviction that, in its non-institutional work, the Poor Law is not effective, and needs to be supplemented by some other agency. The feeling seems to be justified; and it is a matter for earnest consideration how far the forces it has set in motion can be brought into line with Poor Law work, and made permanently available as a regenerative agency. Experience would seem to show that, unless such agencies are in some way officially recognised, and given a *status* at least as important and responsible as that of the Poor LawAuthority, it is useless to hope for a real co-operation and co-ordination of work. In Germany the voluntary workers form an integral part of the official system of relief; and, though it may not be possible or desirable to introduce the German system in its entirety, it should be possible to bring into some one scheme of service the official system and the large resources of voluntary effort. We shall make recommendations elsewhere for the systematic co-operation of the Local Authorities with recognised Voluntary Aid Committees in the care and treatment of cases of distress, whether these are being supported by public relief or public assistance. We shall also recommend the adoption of the registration of cases, whether dealt with by the poor Law or by voluntary agencies, as a necessary part of the new organisation which we propose.

302. Some such co-operation becomes the more necessary in view of the limitations at present imposed by law upon those who can claim relief from a public authority administering the poor rate. They must be destitute in the sense defined by Mr. Adrian:—

> "Destitution when used to describe the condition of a person as a subject for relief implies that he is for the time being without material resources: (i.) directly available; and (ii.) appropriate for satisfying his physical needs; (*a*) whether actually existing; or (*b*) likely to arise immediately. By physical needs in this definition are meant such needs as must be satisfied: (i.) in order to maintain life; or (ii.) in order to obviate, mitigate, or remove causes endangering life or likely to endanger life or impair health or bodily fitness for self-support."[1]

303. Until this condition is reached no person can be legally helped out of the poor rate. Thus, much of the preventive work of arresting the decline of persons into the ranks of pauperism is outside the functions of the Poor Law Authority. The applicant must lack some essential of life before he can be assisted out of public funds. We do not recommend any change in the law in this respect; we are reluctant to enlarge the scope of public assistance for the needy in such a way as to lead to a sapping of the spirit of self-maintenance. But the fact that the public authorities are precluded from

[1] Adrian, 973.

helping other than destitute cases renders it the more imperative that the large charitable endowments and resources in the country should be organised and form, with the social workers and organisations now in existence, a first line of defence against impending pauperism or incipient indigence. Such an organisation should work in co-operation with but independently of, those entrusted with public funds for assistance The two should be one service to combat a common social evil, but each branch should work in a separate and a distinct sphere of action. We shall expand this idea in a subsequent Chapter.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 6.

(1) *There should be one uniform Order governing outdoor relief.* (230.)

(2) *It should be a condition of out-relief that the recipients are living respectable lives in decent houses, and as a step towards this the Public Assistance Authority* should proscribe certain areas where the conditions of living are bad.* (268.)

(3) *The provision which obtains in London that it is the duty of the relieving officer to inform the Sanitary Authority of overcrowded and insanitary premises, should be extended to the rest of the country and enforced, and the Public Assistance Authority* should be required, if the Sanitary Authority refuses to take action, to report the fact to the Local Government Board.* (268.)

(4) *Power should be given to the Public Assistance Authority,* under due precautions, to remove persons living in a state of neglect to an institution.* (270.)

(5) *Every case of out-relief to widows should have special and individual attention.* (285.)

(6) *Outdoor relief should not, except in special cases, be granted to any woman deserted by her husband during the first twelve months after desertion.* (286.)

(7) *In every case of outdoor relief there should be a complete knowledge of the facts, and the assistance given should be adequate and carefully adapted to its needs.* (293.)

(8) *The case-paper system should be universally adopted.* (299.)

(9) *There should be systematic co-operation between the Public Assistance Authorities* and recognised Voluntary Aid Committees in the care and treatment of cases of distress.* (301.)

* *i.e.* the Relief Authority of the future.

Chapter 7.

THE AGED.

304. The practice of considering the aged as a class by themselves for purposes of relief is one of modern growth. Throughout the history of the Poor Law we find old age regarded as one form of impotency; the distinction lay between the poor and impotent, on the one hand, and the able-bodied on the other. Sometimes the impotent and aged are mentioned together, but always as forming one class, to be dealt with in one and the same way.

Modern growth of the practice of regarding the aged as a separate class.

305. The Royal Commission of 1832 accept the same classification, and out-relief to the sick, the aged, and the infirm is dealt with in one short section entitled "Outdoor Relief of the Impotent." Their view was that relief to this class was subject to comparatively little abuse:—

> " . . . No use can be made of the labour of the aged and sick, and there is little room for jobbing if their pensions are paid in money. Accordingly, we find that even in places distinguished in general by the most wanton parochial profusion, the allowances to the aged and infirm are moderate."[1]

306. With the development of medical relief, a distinct class has gradually been formed of those amenable to medical treatment, excluding those whose "impotency," whether due to age or to other causes, is irremediable. For these, the aged and "impotent in very deed," differential treatment has long been an implicit principle in Poor Law administration. The Royal Commission of 1832 considered that for them the workhouse should be a place where "the old might enjoy their indulgences without torment from the boisterous;"[2] and in the Continuance Report of 1840 the aged are expressly exempted from the restrictions therein placed upon outdoor relief. It is there stated:—

> "We do not require aged and infirm paupers to be relieved only in the workhouse";

and this exemption by the Central Authority has been maintained down to the present day.

307. Except when the question is raised of subsidiary earnings we find singularly few references to the aged on the part of the Central Authority until we reach the last twenty years. Practically, it was left entirely to the discretion of the Local Authority to determine the form and amount of relief to be granted; and the Local Authority has nearly always accorded a different treatment to the impotent from that given to the able-bodied. Even those Boards which have aimed at the abolition of out-relief have done so with no idea that the aged should be forced into the workhouse, but rather as holding that their differential treatment would be best achieved outside the Poor Law altogether, and by more appropriate agencies.

Favourable discrimination as regards the aged.

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, pp. 42–3. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 307.

308. Within the workhouse, again, there has always been the possibility of granting at least a more generous diet to the aged. In 1836, the Commissioners published a set of dietaries, which, according to Mr. Davy :—

> "Are very important from this point of view, that they are the first indication of the workhouse classification. In the dietaries for able-bodied men and women there is this footnote, which has had a very wide-reaching effect on the whole indoor administration of our Poor Law : 'Old people of sixty years and upwards may be allowed something extra.'" [1]

But a difference of diet has been the least of the "indulgences" allowed to the aged, and the attempt has generally been made, though not always very successfully, to render their life in the workhouse preferable to that of the able-bodied. Latterly, there has been a continual and increasing pressure from the Local Government Board on Local Authorities to carry out this policy.

> "For instance, in 1885 there was," says Mr. Davy," a Circular as to married couples in workhouses, pointing out to the Guardians what the law was. I need not remind the Commission that the law is that if both husband and wife are above sixty years of age they have a right to live with one another, and that if one is above sixty they may live together with the permission of the Guardians. In 1891, there was a Circular addressed to the General Inspectors as to the supply of books in workhouses, and of toys for the children. In 1892 there was an Order permitting the Guardians to give the inmates of workhouses tobacco and snuff. In 1893, there was a very important Order which authorised the appointment of Ladies' Visiting Committees, and which gave the right of visiting the workhouses to every individual Guardian. In 1894 there was an Order which allowed the Guardians to give dry tea, sugar and milk to the women, so that they might make their own tea. In 1896 there was a further Circular as to the classification of inmates. In 1897 came perhaps the most important Order of all, the Nursing Order. In 1900 there was a new dietary Order; I do not know whether I should class that with the other Orders as making a change for the better in the conditions of workhouse life. I rather prefer to look upon that Order as one of decentralisation and simplification, but I may as well include it in my list. Then, lastly, came the Circular of August, 1900, as to the treatment of the aged deserving poor, as they called them. You will notice how very rapidly all these Orders have come one after the other since the year 1890; that year forms a sort of epoch in Poor Law administration. The effect will have to be tested by statistics." [2]

Effect of old-age pension question on the treatment of the aged.

309. Since 1890, the treatment of the aged has undoubtedly been greatly affected by the movement in favour of old-age pensions. Although that movement has been entirely for differential treatment *outside* the Poor Law, its most marked effect has been to increase and emphasise their differential treatment *within* the Poor Law. In 1893, a Royal Commission was appointed of which Lord Aberdare was Chairman :—

> "To consider whether any alterations in the system of Poor Law relief are desirable, in the case of persons whose destitution is occasioned by incapacity for work, resulting from old age, or whether assistance could otherwise be afforded in those cases." [3]

It is noteworthy that in this reference the inquiry is limited to the destitute, and the question of "desert" is not raised. Desert was, however, made the main feature of the recommendations of the Commission. The summary of their Majority Report states that no fundamental alterations are needed in the existing system of Poor Law relief, as affecting the aged, but that :—

> ". . . . we are convinced that there is a strong feeling that in the administration of relief there should be greater discrimination between the respectable aged who become destitute and those whose destitution is distinctly the consequence of their own misconduct ; and we recommend that boards of guardians, in dealing with applications for relief, should inquire with special care into the antecedents of destitute persons whose physical faculties have failed by reason of age and infirmity ; and that outdoor relief should in such cases be given to those who are shown to have been of good character, thrifty according to their opportunities, and generally independent in early life, and who are not living under conditions of health or surrounding circumstances which make it evident that the relief given should be indoor relief." [4]

310. The great difficulty attaching to such an inquiry into character "which . . . . could never be conclusively conducted, except on oath and by judicial procedure," was pointed out in a separate memorandum by one of the signatories ;[5] nevertheless, it was this recommendation which has had most effect upon subsequent administration. With regard to classification within the workhouse, the Commission did not recommend any fresh Regulations, being aware of the difficulties pertaining to the question of classification by past character, and the greater importance for practical

[1] Davy, 2571. [2] Davy, 2310. [3] Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor [C. 7684], 1895, p. iv.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. lxxxiii–iv. [5] *Ibid.*, p. xc.

purposes of present behaviour.[1] Another recommendation which had some, but neither great nor lasting effect upon administration was :—

> "That where out-door relief is given the amount should be adequate to meet fully the extent of the destitution, and that proper investigation and supervision should be ensured in all cases in which application is made for relief." [2]

311. Finally, the majority report that they have carefully examined the various schemes for State assistance to the aged which have been submitted, but are unable to recommend the adoption of any of them.[3]

> "Having regard, however," they continue, "to the widespread expectation, in and out of Parliament, that some provision other than that made by the Poor Law should be devised for the assistance in old age of those among the poor who have led respectable and industrious lives, we do not desire that our inquiry should preclude the future consideration of any plan which may hereafter be proposed and be free from the objections which have prevented the adoption of the schemes submitted to us." [4]

A minority disagree on the ground that the recommendations of the majority are inadequate, and recommend that a further inquiry by a better-constituted Commission should be undertaken at once.[5]

312. The immediate effect of this Report was that in 1896, the year after its publication, the Local Government Board issued two Circulars, in one of which attention was called to the views of the Commission with regard to outdoor relief, and the Guardians were pressed to appoint an adequate number of relieving officers; whilst the other urged better classification in the workhouse. Three points upon which this Report laid stress may be repeated here :—

> (i.) "The view often held that the aged labourer has in general only the workhouse before him in which to end his days has been shown to be erroneous." [6]
>
> (ii.) "We have seen that the complaint often made of the compulsory separation of old couples is without foundation, and that aged married couples have a right to live together if they wish." [7]
>
> (iii.) "That the number of aged poor who seek public relief, while still very large, has much lessened in proportion in the last thirty years, although the rate of decrease has greatly diminished in the last decade." [8]

313. In 1896, the suggestion of the minority of the Royal Commission was carried out by the appointment by the Lords of the Treasury of the Committee known as Lord Rothschild's Committee on Old-Age Pensions. The reference is interesting as showing what importance was still attached to preserving the independence of the working class. The Committee was instructed :—

> "To consider any schemes that may be submitted to them for encouraging the industrial population, by State aid or otherwise, to make provision for old age; and to report whether they can recommend the adoption of any proposals of the kind, either based upon, or independent of, such schemes; with special regard, in the case of any proposals of which they may approve, to their cost and probable financial results to the Exchequer, and to local rates; their effect in promoting habits of thrift and self-reliance; their influence on the prosperity of the Friendly Societies; and the possibility of securing the co-operation of these institutions in their practical working." [9]

314. The Committee considered that by the terms of this reference they were precluded from considering either compulsory or non-contributory schemes, and devoted themselves, therefore, to schemes providing special facilities and encouragement to voluntary insurance against old age, with material assistance from the State.[10] Considerable stress has been laid upon the financial nature of this inquiry; but although the Committee were largely concerned with the question of finance, they did not regard that as the sole or most important aspect :—

> "Of the questions raised by the proposal to establish a State-aided pension system, that of its cost and administration is not the most serious. We do not question that the State could bear the necessary additional burthen if the welfare of the community really demanded it. But would such a pension system encourage thrift in the working-classes? Would it not affect the question of wages, and hand over to the employer rather than to the employed the benefit of the State contribution? Would the receipt of State aid be free from that taint of pauperism which makes Poor Law relief bitter to the self-respect and independence of the best of the working-classes?" [11]

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[1] Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor [Cd. 7684], 1895; Report pp. lxxxiv–v. [2] *Ibid.*, p. xxxiv. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. lxxxvi–vii. [4] *Ibid.*, p. lxxxvii. [5] *Ibid.*, p. lxxxiv. [6] *Ibid.*, p. lxxxiii. [7] *Ibid.*, p. lxxxv. [8] *Ibid.*, p. lxxxvii. [9] Report of Committee on Old-Age Pensions [Cd. 8911], 1898, p. iii. [10] *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3. [11] *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.

Their answer to the last question is one which must always hold true, and needs to be constantly emphasised :

> "Any discredit must depend, not on the form in which the relief is received, but on the causes which have led to it." [1]

315. The conclusion come to by the Committee was a negative one :—

> "It is only very slowly, and with very great reluctance, that we have been forced to the conclusion that none of the schemes submitted to us would attain the objects which the Government had in view, and that we ourselves are unable, after repeated attempts, to devise any proposal free from grave inherent disadvantages." [2]

They add :—

> "One consideration which the course of our inquiry has strongly impressed upon us. It is that a large and constantly increasing number of the industrial population of this country do, already, by prudence, self-reliance, and self-denial make their old age independent and respected." [3]

316. This Report was issued in 1898, and in 1899 a Committee was appointed by the House of Commons to report on a Bill for the introduction of cottage homes for the aged. This Committee reported in the same sense as the Royal Commission, though pressing leniency of administration still further, but rejected the actual proposals of the Bill.[4] This was followed in the same year by the Select Committee on the "Aged Deserving Poor," appointed :—

> "To consider and report upon the best means of improving the condition of the aged deserving poor, and for providing for those of them who are helpless and infirm; and to inquire whether any of the Bills dealing with old-age pensions, and submitted to Parliament during the present session, can with advantage be adopted, either with or without amendment." [5]

317. Seven Bills were submitted to the Committee, which decided, instead of adopting any of them, to formulate "the general principles upon which any measure dealing with the question might be framed." [6] These principles included non-receipt of poor relief (other than medical) during twenty years, and the endeavour on the part of the applicant to make provision for himself and those immediately dependent on him.[7] The Committee also considered that there should be improved poor relief, as well as old-age pensions, and endorsed the recommendations of the Cottage Homes Committee.[8]

318. This Select Committee was appointed in April, 1899 ; it reported in July of the same year ; and in August, a Departmental Committee was appointed to report on the financial aspects of their proposals. This Committee work out, with great elaboration, estimates of the cost of the scheme at different ages. They make no recommendation, but end by pointing out—

> "Some of the incalculable, but, in our opinion, certain, results of the establishment of a pension scheme, which would all tend either to bring down to the pensionable level those who are now above it, or to raise up to it those who are now below it, and would thus swell the pensionable list from above, as well as from below." [9]

319. In 1900, the Local Government Board issued a Circular explaining that : "This moment is not propitious for legislation," but urging that Poor Law administration should be modified in the direction suggested by the various Reports alluded to :—

> "With regard to the treatment of the aged deserving poor, it has been felt that persons who have habitually led decent and deserving lives should, if they require relief in their old age, receive different treatment from those whose previous habits and character have been unsatisfactory, and who have failed to exercise thrift in the bringing up of their families or otherwise. The Board consider that aged deserving persons should not be urged to enter the workhouse at all unless there is some cause which renders such a course necessary, such as infirmity of mind or body, the absence of house accommodation or of a suitable person to care for them, or some similar cause, but that they should be relieved by having adequate outdoor relief granted to them. The Board are happy to think that it is commonly the practice of boards of guardians to grant outdoor relief in such cases, but they are afraid that too frequently such relief is not adequate in amount. They are desirous of pressing upon the guardians that such relief should, when granted, be always adequate." [10]

320. The Circular concludes by recommending that the Guardians should form a special class of inmates of the workhouse of sixty-five years of age and upwards with regard to whom the Guardians, after due inquiries, have satisfied themselves that by reason

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[1] Report of Committee on Old-Age Pensions [Cd. 8911], 1898, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 16 (69). [3] *Ibid.*, p. 16 (70). [4] Davy, 3331–2. [5] Report of Select Committee on Aged and Deserving Poor, H.C. 296, 1899, p. ii. [6] *Ibid.*, p., v., par. 18. [7] *Ibid.*, p. ix., par. 56. [8] *Ibid.*, p. viii., pars. 44–5 and p. x., par. 63. [9] Report of Departmental Committee on Financial Aspects of Proposals of House of Commons Committee of 1899 as regards the Aged Deserving Poor [Cd. 67], 1900, p. xlix., par. 163. [10] Thirtieth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 746], 1901, App. A, pp. 18–19.

of their moral character, or behaviour, or previous habits, they are sufficiently deserving to be members of the class. As regards the members of this class one of the recommendations was :—

> "That considerably increased liberty should be granted to them, and greater facilities for being visited by their friends."[1]

Of this Circular Mr. Davy says :—

> "That is a Circular which, I submit to the Commission, is a necessary corollary to the reports which have been made to the House of Commons and to the Government by the Commission of 1895 and by the Committee of 1899."[2]

321. In the movement so far, there are two points to be specially noted. The one is the introduction of a character test as determining the kind of relief to be given; the other, that the question of impotency and destitution has dropped out, and attention is concentrated on length of years in combination with desert.

322. In 1903 a Bill was introduced into Parliament :—

> "To provide pensions for the aged deserving poor, through the existing machinery of the Poor Law administration, by empowering the pensions committee of the guardians, with the help of Parliament, to grant pensions which shall not involve any electoral disability, nor convey the reproach of pauperism."

323. A Committee was appointed to report upon this Bill; they approved of it as a basis for legislation, but made several suggestions. One of these is that it would not seem

> "fair or reasonable to leave to an elected body the duty of deciding upon the merits of large numbers of its constituents."

Another interesting feature of the Report is the attention given to inquiry into the number of inmates of workhouses likely to benefit. It expresses the opinion :—

> "That the reduction on Poor Law expenditure will be considerably less than has often been represented, inasmuch as the proportion of the aged poor who are now, or may in future be, in the workhouses, who could with advantage to themselves live outside with the help of a pension, will probably be found to be very small."

324. The final step in the movement consists of the Act passed in 1908, and entitled simply : "An Act to provide for Old-Age Pensions."[3] In this Act, age, residence for twenty years in the United Kingdom, and limitation of yearly means are practically the sole qualifications prescribed, and the difficult question of desert is met by specifying definite disqualifications. Destitution is not to be a condition of the pension, and its amount is regulated by the amount of income. Persons whilst in receipt of relief (except in certain forms), and, until the end of 1910, persons who have received any such relief since January 1st, 1908, or who hereafter receive it, are disqualified. The question of impotency is not raised, though it may fairly be said that the advanced age—seventy—at which the pension is to be due, implies impotency on the part of the recipient. The case of those, however, who may be incapacitated long before reaching that age, is not met.

325. The movement for old-age pensions has had, directly and indirectly, so much influence upon Poor Law administration that it has been necessary to refer to it in some detail. We may summarise that influence by saying that the general tendency has been to concentrate attention upon the question of age, to throw into the background the questions of destitution and impotence (or disability), and to urge upon administrators the attempt to classify upon a basis of merit. In the description of the present condition of the aged under the Poor Law to which we shall now proceed, it will be seen that these considerations have led to very different results in different places according to the weight attached to them, or the interpretation put upon them, by different Boards of Guardians.

Improved treatment of the aged in workhouses.

326. Taking first the condition of the aged in the workhouses we find that Boards of Guardians have shown considerable activity in carrying out the suggestions made to them, and in making experiments in classification. We ourselves, have seen a great variety of these experiments; the separation of the aged from the able-bodied and imbeciles in different wards of the same workhouse, or in separate workhouses, their classification into

[1] Thirtieth Annual Report for Local Government Board [Cd. 746], 1901, App. A, p. 19 (5). [2] Davy 3344. [3] 8 Edw. VII., Cap. 40.

two, three, or four grades of more or less deserving, and the provision of cottage homes within the workhouse grounds or as separate institutions. On the whole, we have found that the comfort of the old people depends largely upon the system adopted, but quite as much on the kindliness and consideration of the officers in charge. The following instances from among our visits may illustrate this point:—

(1) "In addition to the general air of cleanliness that pervades the workhouse the outstanding feature is the classification of the aged inmates according to character, each class having separate accommodation and being entirely separated from the others. The accommodation for the first and highest class provides for twenty-eight men and twenty-four women. Both the men and women have two dormitories and two sitting-rooms, the latter having linoleum or a canvas covering on the floor, and being furnished with arm-chairs, rocking chairs, tables and couches. Meals are served in the sitting-room that appears to be in daily use (the other being reserved for Sundays and for receiving friends). As regards food, the inmates get a loaf and a pot of jam for the cupboard (whenever they require them). They are also allowed a cheap and wholesome currant cake to their tea, The inmates may, with consent of the master, go out any day after 'the performance of their small duties.' Friends, likewise, are admitted on any evening. The qualifications necessary to obtain these privileges are good character, twenty years' residence within the union area, freedom from connection with any crime and not having previously received relief within the period named. The accommodation for the second or middle class providing for thirty-six males and thirty-six females is not quite so luxurious as that provided for the first-class inmates; nor have they the same privileges. They have their meals in their sitting-rooms, but no jam. Their leave of absence is only one half-day a week. The qualifications for admission to the second class are ten years' residence and a slightly less unblemished character than that necessary for the first class. The rooms of the first and second classes are pleasantly situated, fronting the north and south quadrangles, which are laid out with ornamental flower beds, etc. Here the inmates can take exercise or sit when the weather is fine. Misbehaviour on the part of an inmate in the first or second class is punished by reduction of class, and this is found to be a very effective method of enforcing discipline. Third Class.—No special accommodation is granted for this third class, which is provided for in the general day rooms of the workhouse. Meals are partaken of in the general dining hall, and leave is allowed one half-day per fortnight."[1]

(2) "I think most of the people looked even more dejected than usual: hardly one seemed to have enough spirit to speak when spoken to. There are some married couples' quarters which are never fully occupied; I am not surprised, as they are the very worst I have ever seen, and are really only an apology for supplying a need. There is also a scheme for classifying women. The basis for classification is previous character. Out of forty women, only two can be found who come up to the required standard, and so two old women each occupy a big room with five beds, and a plentiful supply of texts, etc. There is also a similar scheme for men, but I must confess I did not realise much difference in the rooms occupied. There is no privacy anywhere, however good a person may have been, and here again it seems to me it is only the letter and not the spirit of classification which has been followed."[2]

(3) "I saw the women's day wards in the workhouse. They are old, but bright and fairly comfortable. I was struck by the pleasant relations between the inmates and the matron, an exceptionally pleasant woman. I also saw four cottages built for married couples. There is no demand for these, one is occupied, one is empty, and the others converted into the female tramp wards."[3]

(4) "The Homes for the Aged and Deserving poor were erected to comply with the urgent recommendations of Mr. Chaplin's Circular. They may be described as adequately supported almshouses, under disciplinary conditions, such as obtain and are enforced among the passengers of a mail steamer. The swing gate of the institution is always open. The inmates go out when they please, but we understood that they seldom go beyond the garden: they prefer that their friends should come and see them and, we were told, not a few look in for a 'cup of tea.'"[4]

(5) "The building includes a number of cottage homes for aged couples. They were quite simple in character, but bright, and the inmates seemed very happy. The meals are served to them in their own rooms, and they make their own tea."[5]

(6) "A street of four cottages with gardens has been bought for £1,200, and converted by inmates' labour into cottage homes for four married couples, and thirty-two old men of good character; the cost thus being £30 a head. The inmates of these homes seemed very happy, and we understood were free from all the more irksome regulations of workhouse life."[6]

Character classification of workhouse inmates at Sheffield.

327. At Sheffield there is an elaborate classification into four classes; and it is noticeable that here, as in some other cases, in constituting the highest class, recourse is had to length of residence without relief. It is clear that there must always be great difficulty in a classification based upon such an indeterminate factor as general merit, and the introduction of a measurable quantity, such as age or length of residence without relief, greatly simplifies the problem of the administrators. Mr. J. Wycliffe Wilson, Chairman of the Sheffield Board of Guardians states that:—

"By careful investigation of the antecedents of applicants for relief, through the relieving officers, such applicants are divided into four classes, *A*, *B*, *C*, and *D*—

[1] Visits: Urban, 20. [2] Visits: Urban, 36. [3] Visits: Urban, 7. [4] Visits: Urban, 21. [5] Visits: Urban, 2 E. [6] Visits: Urban, 19.

"*A.*—Comprises those of unblemished character who have long been resident in the union without receiving relief.

"*B.*—All other persons of distinctly good character, but who are not equal to *A.*

"*C.*—Comprises those who are neither distinctly good nor distinctly bad, and also persons of whose character little or nothing is known.

"This may be called the normal class, or the residuum after sorting out those who are entitled to rank higher or lower respectively.

"*D.*, which is unfortunately far the largest class, comprises all whose character is distinctly bad.

"The classification is reviewed by the Classification Committee from time to time, and individuals are put higher or lower as may appear desirable."[1]

328. We are not prepared to recommend so detailed a scheme for general adoption. Whilst we are convinced that a system of classification mitigates the distress which the respectable poor feel when living in association, the effect upon those who are, so to say, condemned to the lowest class must not be overlooked. Again, neither Relief Committees nor even the best officials are infallible judges of desert, and any system of classification on that ground admits of favouritism. The inmates of an institution may be arranged in classes on the record of their lives previous to admission or on their behaviour after admission. We think that both considerations should be allowed weight.

Dreariness of life in certain Poor Law Institutions for the aged.

329. What results however may follow from the absence of any system of classification may be seen from the following Reports of visits by our members :—

(1) "The inmates, over 900 in number, were congregated in large rooms, without any attempt to employ their time or cheer their lives. There was a marked absence of any human interest, and though the superintendent and matron impressed us favourably it was impossible to avoid feeling that the lives of the inmates were not merely wanting in colour, but were aimless and listless. On more than one occasion there have been offers from outside to brighten the Sunday service, but they have been refused by the guardians owing to religious difficulties. It could not be better described than as a "human warehouse." The dormitories, which in some cases accommodated as many as sixty inmates, were so full of beds as to make it impossible to provide chairs, or to walk, except sideways, between them."[2]

(2) "The . . . "Home" which we visited in the afternoon seemed to us defective in every particular. It is rented by the . . . Union and used as an overflow house for the aged inmates from . . . The rooms were low, ill-lighted, and hopelessly overcrowded. The men were, in many cases, lounging, in the bedrooms, there being no chairs except in the dining hall, and there was a total absence of books or newspapers—as far as we saw—and it is impossible to conceive a more dismal and hopeless asylum for age. The administration consists of but two officers for 268 inmates. The officer in charge, however, stated that they had no difficulty in enforcing such discipline as was necessary. The only outdoor space available for the inmates was an asphalted roof-yard, some 35 feet by 25 feet, up so many flights of stairs that a large proportion of the inmates were unable to mount to it."[3]

The Brabazon Scheme.

330. One of the effective agencies in brightening the lives of the old people has been the Brabazon Scheme for the Employment of Workhouse Inmates. Under this scheme interesting handiwork is organised by ladies for the infirm and aged, with wonderful results on the happiness of the people engaged in it; those workhouses in which it is in force have an atmosphere of brightness and interest which is often quite lacking elsewhere.

Variety of practice as to outdoor relief to aged.

331. If we turn now to the administration of out-relief to the aged we find even greater divergencies than in indoor relief. There is no doubt that in some places the practice of the Guardians was considerably influenced by the Circular of 1900, though not always in the way contemplated by the Local Government Board. As one witness expresses it, there was a general impression that Guardians were desired "to be more easy with the people."

"You said, I think, that since 1900 the out-relief has increased in amount?—It was about then.

"That was the time Mr. Chaplin's circular was issued?—I would not be sure of the date; you no doubt know what I am referring to.

"The result was an increased number of applications?—Yes, after it got known about that they got more relief.

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[1] Wilson, 40085 (3). [2] Visits : Urban, 1 E. [3] Visits : Urban, 1 E.

"Was it supposed that the guardians would give relief more freely, not only in amount, but to persons to whom they previously would not give outdoor relief?—It was practically understood so by the board, that they were to be more easy with the people.

"Therefore, they were not merely confining themselves to giving more adequate out-relief, but extending the class to those to whom they would not give outdoor relief before?—I take it so, both.

"Has that been continued?—It is not done so much now as it was, not to a great extent." [1]

The late Inspector for London says:—

"The effect of the Circular in London has been to occasion the belief in certain quarters that it was intended to encourage the giving of outdoor relief." [2]

Mr. Wethered quotes the case of Bath to the same effect:—

"There is a very good instance in the case of Bath, which shows the effect of that circular. The guardians decided after that circular was issued that more outdoor relief should be afforded to people over sixty-five years of age; and the clerk to the guardians prepared a special report, in which he said that the effect has been that this out-relief has not only been given to the aged and deserving but to others as well. They have lost sight of the word 'deserving,' and he says, 'The danger appears to be lest the term "deserving" should be overlooked and this "more adequate" relief be given to other cases.'" [3]

Mr. Baldwin Fleming thinks that the effect in raising the amount of relief was only temporary.

"I think now that that circular as regards the outdoor poor has ceased to produce any effect. I do not think to-day that the aged and deserving poor in the immense majority of cases receive 5d. more than they did before the circular was issued. For a time it did have a certain amount of effect; in the case of guardians who wished to give outdoor relief it has enabled them to turn to that circular as a recommendation in favour of outdoor relief; it has had some effect in that direction, an effect which I consider mischievous. With regard to the indoor relief, it has given a certain fillip to the improved classification of the aged indoor poor, and to that extent I am grateful for it." [4]

Inadequate out-relief to aged.

332. Our own experience is that the Unions in which the relief given to the aged is adequate, in the sense of being adapted to the needs of the case, are comparatively very few. In some London Unions, where there is an attempt to ascertain the whole resources of the applicant, relief is given to bring up the income to a sufficient amount:—

"The income aimed at for old people is 4s. 6d. above rent for a single person, 7s. for two." [5]

Out-relief to aged regarded practically as old-age pensions.

But throughout the country as a whole the practice is to ignore the resources of the applicant and to give according to a fixed scale. In the Chapter on Outdoor Relief, we have already pointed out the results of this, but we must note some of its more special effects in application to the aged. One is that in rural districts, in all parts of the country outdoor relief is practically regarded as an old-age pension. There is no reluctance in applying for relief, and it is not confined to destitute cases, but given to all comers of a certain age. Mr. Bagenal gives the following description of the out-relief in a Union in his district:—

"With two exceptions the general impression left on my mind was very favourable indeed. There was a general air and appearance of comfort and satisfaction. There was in thirteen cases no appearance of any destitution. In nearly all the cottages there was plenty of furniture, food and fire, and adequate accommodation. In a few cases there was more accommodation than was absolutely necessary. The cottages consisted chiefly of four rooms, two below and two above, and all were, I should say, old buildings. I give the rents below. The relieving officer said that the cases were the ordinary typical cases, of the aged poor relieved in the union. I do not think anyone could wish for better treatment."

"The recipients received us with great kindliness and seemed on the best terms with the relieving officer, whose manner and treatment was all that could be desired. A few of the cases had a bit of garden attached to the cottage. It seemed to me that here you had practically a system of old-age pensions carried out at the expense of the ratepayers, on a scale and standard suited to the requirements of the population. But of course the remark must be made that this treatment puts the pauper in a better position than the independent labourer who has to work in order to attain the same scale and standard of comfort which his pauper neighbour enjoys. The relief given in some of the cases I describe may perhaps be said to be in aid of poverty rather than to prevent mere destitution." [6]

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[1] Ball, 35679–84. [2] Lockwood, 12676. [3] Wethered, 5405. [4] Fleming 9138. Visits: Metropolitan, 113. [6] Bagenal, Vol. I., Appendix lv. (a) (118–9).

333. We have received a considerable amount of evidence to the same effect :—

"There are a large number of people in receipt of relief outside the workhouses who would be fit subjects for an old-age pension ?—They are practically getting it now." [1]

"In this Union no old people are offered the workhouse so long as they can take care of themselves or other people take care of them. When they do go into the house they are almost always infirmary cases—our out-relief too is practically a pension list. It seems all nonsense to me about the difficulty of old-age pensions—our people have had it for years and it is just wonderful what a little people can live upon and reach a fine old age. There is no fear of any of the poor wanting the necessaries of life in the country places." [2]

"You will find in the agricultural districts that every old servant of everybody in the neighbourhood is practically on outdoor relief at anything from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. Of course, they ought to be pensioned as old servants, not as paupers: You cannot get at the motive; you never know why the outdoor relief is given. You see a most improper case come up, and you suggest that there is something wrong in the family, either there is drink or immorality, or something or another, and it is very undesirable that outdoor relief should be given; nevertheless it is given." [3]

"In the case of old people, this payment is given, and, I suppose, almost admitted to be given, as a sort of old-age pension ?—Yes, outdoor relief has become a habit of the country in the rural districts, and if you could only get the administrators and the recipients out of that habit, you would do a very great deal to restore proper administration. I have heard cases where the Chairman will say: 'Oh, what have you come for ?" and the man will say: 'I have come for my allowance.' It is a matter of course." [4]

"Under this system in the rural districts, has the tendency been for the amount of outdoor relief to rise of recent years ?—I do not think so. I think it stands at very much the same level as it did when I first had to do with attending boards of guardians. I do not think any of them have increased their scale, except perhaps in the large towns." [5]

Age and character classification of outdoor poor.

334. In some places, *e.g.*, Bristol, an attempt has been made to classify the outdoor poor by character, and to give a higher scale of relief to the more deserving. More generally recourse is had to age or length of residence as a basis of classification. In Camberwell, *e.g.*, there is a classification into three classes, on a combined basis of age and residence. The following scale of relief from Shifnal is typical of general practice.[6]

"There is a practice of old standing here of allowing, as a general rule, relief according to the following scale :—

	Per week. s.	d.
Males, under 60 years of age	2	0
Males, over 60 years of age	2	6
Males, over 70 years of age	3	0
Females, under 60 years of age	1	6
Females, over 60 years of age	2	0
Females over 70 years of age	2	6
Widows	1	6
Widows with children—for each child	1	6

335. We think that this method of determining the amount of relief given to the old people by any consideration other than that of their needs is much to be deprecated. An inadequate income is not made less inadequate by a man's character, nor by the fact that he has not lived for a prescribed period in a particular parish. Greater length of years *may* mean greater needs, and when it does it should be taken into account, but it does not necessarily. And where a case is made unsuitable for outdoor relief for any reason, the difficulty is not met by diminishing the amount. The following cases illustrate what we consider to be a quite unjustifiable practice :—

"A man and wife, aged 78 and 61 respectively, in receipt of relief, 5s. a week. Both drink, and the woman had recently been found dead drunk. It was suggested that the best method of dealing with this case was that they should come into the house; but this was considered too costly, and ultimately the merits of the case were held to be met by reducing the relief to 2s. 6d. No other sources of income were known." [7]

"Man, 79, lives with married daughter, who gives some food. The room is dirty and there is a suspicion of drink. The relief has been previously reduced from 4s. to 2s. on account of this. Question now is whether he has any income beside the parish relief. He says son John gives 2s. a week, but John says he only gives 6d. now and then." [8]

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[1] Wethered, 5743. [2] Sharman, 74986 (2) (*g*). [3] Fleming, 8874. [4] Fleming, 8875. [5] Fleming, 8876. [6] Phillips, 70962 (10). [7] Visits: Rural, 28. [8] Visits: Metropolitan, 113.

"An old man of 73, who had a son at home neither working nor seeking for work, had his relief reduced from 3s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. to try to make son bestir himself." [1]

Variety of practice as to out-door relief to aged.

336. As illustrating the great difference of practice on different Boards we may quote the following instances :—

(1) "It is a rule to give 2s. 6d. to an aged person, sometimes 6d. less, but rarely ever more than 2s. 6d. One case was that of a widow, 67 years of age, living alone; the rent was 2s. 6d.; they granted only 2s.; there was no other known income." [2]

(2) "Old couples would be given 7s. 6d., 8s. or 10s., and single old people 4s. to 5s. where little or no rent was being paid, and other help was available." [3]

(3) "Aged couple, three sons at home, earning 25s. 8d., 27s., 22s. 11d. respectively; total £3 13s. 7d. for five persons. Relief was continued."

(4) "Couple, aged respectively 66 and 38, with two young children, 12 and 8. Son Edmund, not at home, earning 24s.

	s.	d.
Son Llewellyn, 19, at home, earning	34	9
Son B., 16, at home, earning	8	6
Daughter, M. G., at home, earning	7	0
Total	50	3

Relief, 7s. 6d.; rent, 12s. 6d. per month." [4]

337. In the last two of these cases, which are typical of many others, there is not only no destitution, there is not even poverty; and we consider it quite wrong that the ratepayers, many of whom must be less well off, should be taxed to supplement the income in such cases. In one provincial town we came across an incident which reminded us of the days before 1834—

"We were told that, before May, 1904, the increase of outdoor relief, due to several committees working independently, induced the board to take some measures to stop it. A central committee was then appointed, which reported that the 'chief fact impressed upon the members by their investigation had been the inequalities of the orders made—inequalities not only between the orders of Committee and Committee, but between the orders of the same Committee.' Rules were then adopted against the giving of outdoor relief in certain cases, and scales laid down for the others. The result was that the expenses fell so greatly that the board 'actually became frightened.' At the same time pressure was brought to bear from the aggrieved parties; *e.g.*, it had been the custom that, when an aged mother was living with a married daughter, relief had been given even if the son-in-law was making as much as 40s. or 50s. The sons-in-law threatened to turn the old ladies on to the streets, if the relief were withdrawn, and—as we understood the clerk to say—the outdoor expenses had gone up to something like the old figure." [5]

Question of compulsorily removing certain aged persons to institutions.

338. It is chiefly with reference to the aged that the powers of removal which we have recommended in a previous Chapter are asked for. The evidence in favour of such powers is very strong, and comes from all quarters. It is only in a small number of cases that the need arises; for the most part the old people who are too infirm to look after themselves, and have no friends to look after them, are glad to find a refuge in the infirmary or workhouse before their state becomes such as to call for active interference. But the difficulty is so great as to lead to very weighty evidence in favour of granting no outdoor relief at all to the aged. The representatives of the Association of Poor Law Medical Officers say :—

"The opinion of Poor Law medical officers is overwhelmingly in favour of provision in institutions. The replies are all to the same effect, that the aged are kept cleaner and in better health in institutions than if you give them outdoor relief, and that they really suffer in health and in every other way if they are left to provide for themselves outdoors."

"And that opinion is given in face of the fact that it would tend to deprive the present district medical officers of their employment?—I take it so. There is no doubt as to the general tendency of the replies. These replies come from both workhouse officers and from district officers. Medical opinion seems quite clear in favour of institutional provision." [6]

339. The British Medical Association give evidence to the same effect,[7] and there is little doubt that from a medical point of view it is much more easy to deal with the aged in an institution than in their own homes. We think, however, that to a large

[1] Visits: Rural, 86. [2] Visits: Urban, 33 B. [3] Visits: Urban, 45 B. [4] Visits: Rural, 47. [5] Visits: Urban, 7 B. [6] Poor Law Medical Officers' Association, 39411-2. [7] British Medical Association, 39013 (38).

extent, this difficulty might be met by a better supervision of the people on out-relief, and that the number of cases becoming so neglected as to require compulsory removal might be diminished if they were properly looked after from the first. Under the present arrangement it often, one might almost say, generally happens that many months elapse between one visit of the relieving officer to the home and another, and when the pauper is unable to come for the relief, he may not even be seen by any one in authority. We have come across cases where the relief is systematically conveyed by the paupers to each other, and believe that it is frequently done, though not always recognised :—

"The relief of the permanent out-relief cases was paid to such cases by other paupers in receipt of out-relief. No out-pauper being allowed to pay out-relief to more than six permanent cases." [1]

"An aged recipient of 3s. weekly, owing to illness paid 3d. each time the relief was brought for her. I have reason to believe there are other similar cases. These aged recipients cannot afford to pay in this manner, and I submit the relief should be delivered to them." [2]

340. We consider that all old persons in receipt of out-relief should be periodically visited to ensure that they are not being neglected. In some places, the experiment has been tried of appointing a woman visitor,[3] and we recommend the general adoption of this plan. (*Vide* Chapter on Outdoor Relief.)

Need for more frequent visitation of the aged.

341. We have received considerable evidence to the effect that the number of aged people who apply both for indoor and outdoor relief has, in certain districts, been increasing in recent years :—

Increase of the aged receiving relief.

"Another phase of the Poor Law is the increased number of aged people who apply for out-relief. Doubtless the increase of these applications is to some extent due to bad trade, when friends are less able to assist them, but another cause is the tendency of sons, daughters, and relatives to shirk their responsibilities and fasten the old people upon the Poor Law." [4]

"Turning to London, have you considered the age of paupers in receipt of relief in London; whether the proportion of old people is exceptional?—I have here a statement of the number of paupers of sixty-five years and upwards, in which it shows that on the winter count in 1892 the percentage of the total indoors above sixty-five was 31·9; in 1900 on the same count, that number had grown in the eight years, to 36 per cent. Rather remarkably in the summer count the numbers for the corresponding years only go from 31·7 to 32·4, showing that the workhouse is largely used by old persons in the winter. There is a somewhat similar growth in the outdoor paupers, though not to the same extent, showing that pauperism is getting older and consequently more expensive." [5]

342. We think that this increase may be definitely connected on the one hand with the improvement of institutions, on the other hand with the tendency we have noted to treat outdoor relief as pensions :—

"The proportion of old people in the workhouses has increased, I think, of recent years?—Yes, but it is principally amongst the aged sick and the sick that require skilled nursing, the bedridden, that the numbers coming into the workhouse are increasing.

"The inducement of better treatment and better accommodation has increased the number of occupants?—That is so." [6]

343. One witness of great experience regards the increase as only temporary; and points out how small were the opportunities of our present generation of old people compared with those of our present generation of young :—

"Therefore the proportion of old paupers in the rural unions must be steadily increasing?—It is; but then there are very special reasons for that, and I doubt whether they are really appreciated as they should be. From my point of view old-age pauperism ought not to continue. We are living through a stratum of pauperism now which was a necessity of former years, but which ought not to continue in the future for this reason, that the people who are now the old paupers never had the opportunity of providing for themselves. Those who survived their wage-earning period, and the relations and others who were able to help them, had no alternative but to come upon the rates, because in the days when they were younger friendly societies were not sound, they had not the opportunities of thrift which the present generation have; and, from my point of view, I believe that old-age pauperism, unless it is perpetuated by unwise legislation, should become a thing of the past. I do not think that the present generation will have any excuse for being paupers in their old age, unless they have special inducements to rely on public support instead of their own independent exertions.

[1] Visits: Urban, 1 A. [2] Skivington, 36262 (8). [3] Hayward, 45948–50. [4] Wethered, Vol. I., App. xi. (a) (116). [5] Davy, 3926. [6] Herbert, 8071–2.

"Do you apply that general observation to the urban districts as well as to the rural districts?—Yes."[1]

344. Although this tendency to an increase in aged pauperism is, to some extent, reflected in the statistics for recent years, such figures as are available for the years between 1870 and 1890 seem to indicate that, during that period, there was actually a decrease in the rate of aged pauperism to population. There were no comprehensive age statistics of pauperism until the year 1890, but from the Census of Paupers we obtained on 31st March, 1906, we find that four-fifths of the adult paupers returned as not able-bodied were over 60 years of age.[2] Assuming that this proportion was applicable in each of the previous 35 years it would appear that, though the number of the aged in receipt of poor relief tends to increase, the ratio to the total population has diminished. The rate of diminution is, however, decreasing :—[3]

Cycles of Pauperism	Mean number of paupers classed as "not able-bodied."	Mean of the annual rates per 1,000, calculated on the official estimates of the total population in the middle of each year.
1871–2 to 1879–80	369,143	15·4
1880–1 to 1887–8	351,358	13·1
1888–9 to 1895–6	360,156	12·3
1896–7 to 1905–6	397,194	12·2

345. An examination of the various returns as to ages which have been obtained since the year 1890 shows that the proportion of paupers over sixty-five years of age to the population of the same age was much the same in 1900 as it was in 1892, in both of which years pauperism was at a low level. In each of those years the proportion was 19·5 per cent. but in 1906, when pauperism was at a high level, the proportion had increased slightly, and stood at 19·9 per cent.[4]

In indoor pauperism at the higher ages there has, however, been a considerable increase in the ratio, as the following Table shows :—[5]

RATE PER 1,000 OF POPULATION AT SAME AGE.

Age.	1891.	1901.	1906.
Males :			
65–75	49·4	58·5	70·3
75–85	76·8	90·7	97·3
85–	91·4	113·0	139·9
Females :			
65–75	26·3	28·6	30·2
75–85	45·2	53·8	54·8
85–	68·4	79·5	103·5

346. It will be seen that an increasing proportion of the aged have been entering the Poor Law institutions since 1891, and this table shows further what has constantly been brought before us in the course of our inquiry, that the old men have recourse to these institutions far more freely than the old women. This does not mean that the men are more infirm or more liable to illness than the women ; for we find from the Census of Pauperism that the surplus of old men is almost entirely in the wards of the workhouse not appropriated to the sick or infirm. Thus, on March 31st, 1906, there were in such wards 47,274 old men over sixty, as against 19,410 women over sixty, whereas the number of men over sixty in the infirm wards was only slightly in excess of the number of women over sixty in infirm wards, that is, 19,049 men as against 18,194 women.[6] And the return of persons under medical treatment on April 13th, 1907, shows similar results.[7] There are several causes which may conduce to this result. A woman is more adaptable, more ready to turn her hand to any

[1] Fleming, 8851–2. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 108. [3] *Ibid.*, Part I., Table II. [4] *Ibid.*, Part II., par. 64. [5] *Ibid.*, Part II., Table B. [6] *Ibid.*, Part II., Table 2. [7] *Ibid.*, Part III., par. 7.

way of earning which presents itself; she is more useful also in the home of her married children; and—perhaps most potent factor of all—the old woman without a husband can keep her little home together and do for herself on a small income, while the old man without a wife requires someone to look after him.

347. But the old people over sixty who are relieved in institutions form less than one-third of the whole number of persons over 60 in receipt of relief, 69·7 per cent. being relieved as outdoor paupers on March 31st, 1906, and on the outdoor lists the balance as between men and women is reversed, there being 188,656 old women as against 76,282 old men.[1]

348. The distribution of old people in different Unions has a good deal to do with determining the rate of pauperism. In the rural parts of the country, as we have seen, out-relief has come to be regarded as a pension, and it is in the rural areas also that the greatest proportion of old age is found. The proportion of old-age pauperism is also higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas outside London. In London itself the rate appears to be higher than in rural areas, but it is probable that the rates for London and the urban areas would be considerably lower if the number of the aged population in 1906 were available for the calculation. The following table taken from the census of paupers in 1906 shows how much larger the proportion of old people is in the rural areas than in the towns.[2]

Ratio of aged paupers to total aged population in urban and rural districts.

Groups.	Population (1901).			Paupers, 60 years of age and upwards (1906).	
	Total.	60 years of age and upwards.			
		Number.	Per 1,000 of total Population.	Number.	Per 1,000 of Population of same ages.
London - - - - - -	4,536,541	303,539	66·9	56,805	187·1
Unions wholly or mainly Urban	21,591,910	1,452,100	67·3	214,393	147·6
Unions wholly or mainly Rural	6,399,392	652,787	102·0	108,704	166·5
England and Wales - - -	32,527,843	2,408,426	74·0	379,902	157·7

349. One reason for the prevalence of outdoor relief in the country is, no doubt, the greater scope which agriculture affords for the work of men who are no longer young. As regards the high average age of persons applying for relief in rural districts a member of the Bridgwater Board of Guardians states :—

> "The average age of those who apply for relief is noteworthy; in my parish of Catcott the average is just over sixty-eight years."
>
> "In your reference to the advanced age at which men are still able to do a good day's work, are you speaking of men of seventy?—Men about seventy. I know men now of seventy or seventy-two who can work much harder than their sons." [3]

And a Clerk to a rural Union in another part of the country states :—

> "Many people do not apply for relief at all in this Union until they are quite past work, numbers earn their own living and support a wife until they are between seventy and eighty years old." [4]

350. But more often it happens that the old people can find a light job or work only through the summer, and that the out-relief is given to supplement their earnings. In the town, on the other hand, where the worker who cannot earn full wages is apt to find no work at all, there are other resources which may be wanting in the country. In one London Union :—

> "We sat with one of the committees, consisting of four gentlemen and a lady in the chair; the cases were reported on very fully by the relieving officer, and carefully considered. They were between thirty and forty in number, and all, without exception, old people having their incomes

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Tables C. and D. [2] *Ibid.*, Part II., Table 13. [3] Henniker, 67906 (16), 68078. [4] Sharman, 75236.

supplemented with sums varying from 1s. to 7s. 6d. We were struck by the extent to which these old people were attached to ladies in the neighbourhood who gave them allowances in money or food, or both. A letter was read from one of these threatening to discontinue her 5s. unless the Guardians would help more liberally. Also a minister looked in to press the case of a member of his congregation. A considerable amount is given by sons and daughters, including married daughters, and details were given as to the means of each member of a family."[1]

351. The evidence just quoted as to the great age up to which countrymen are still able to earn their living illustrates our view that it is invalidity rather than old-age as such which should form the basis of any scheme of assistance. The man or woman who is permanently invalided or incapacitated for work (as distinct from the man or woman who is only temporarily sick), is practically on the same footing as the person who is incapacitated from work by age.

Effect of old-age pensions on indoor pauperism.

352. An important question, which has been constantly raised in connection with old-age pension schemes, is whether many of the old people at present in the workhouse would be enabled by an allowance to live outside. It is important both as affecting the question how far a pension system would diminish Poor Law expenditure, and as affecting the allegation that our present Poor Law system tends to break up homes and drive respectable old people into the house. A large amount of evidence has been accumulated by the various Commissions and Committees, and we cannot do better than quote the following summary, taken from the Memorandum prepared by the Local Government Board last year:—

"There appears to be a general agreement in the Reports of the various Committees, who have considered the question of old-age pensions, that the cost of indoor relief would be practically unaffected by the operation of a pension scheme. The Royal Commission on the Aged Poor observed that 'except in crowded urban areas the great majority of aged poor in receipt of relief are given outdoor relief, while those receiving indoor relief are usually persons for whom it is necessary for substantial reasons.' Mr Chaplin's Committee reported that: 'The evidence is clear that the majority of the inmates of the house are in that position because of sickness or infirmity which obliges them to accept the shelter of such an institution.' From a Return obtained as to aged paupers in England and Wales on September 1st, 1903, it appeared that out of nearly 96,000 inmates of workhouse institutions over sixty years of age, about 61 per cent. were, in the opinion of the medical officers, unable, owing to physical or mental infirmity, to satisfactorily take care of themselves. Finally, inquiries instituted for the Committee on the Aged Pensioners Bill, 1903, in twenty-one Poor Law unions in England and Wales showed that (apart from those who, in the opinion of the workhouse medical officers, could not satisfactorily take care of themselves), only 14 per cent. of the total number of inmates over sixty-five years of age could live on a pension outside the workhouse with relatives having suitable accommodation for them, and only 10 per cent. were willing to do so. This Committee reported that 'the reduction on Poor Law expenditure will be considerably less than has often been represented, inasmuch as the proportion of the aged poor who are now, or may in future be, in the workhouses, who could, with advantage to themselves, live outside with the aid of a pension will probably be found to be very small."

"If, of the present number of inmates aged sixty-five years and upwards of workhouse institutions in England and Wales (about 76,000) 10 per cent., or about 7,600, were assumed to leave the workhouse on satisfactory terms, the result would be that the workhouse population per union would be reduced on an average by only twelve persons, or thereabouts, the total average number per union of indoor paupers (all ages) in workhouses and workhouse infirmaries at the present time being about 359. The withdrawal of this small number of persons would leave the expenditure on indoor relief, except in respect of actual food and clothing, practically unaffected."

Aged poor in workhouses.

353. If the question of desert is taken into account, the number of inmates who would be affected by a pension would be still further reduced:—

"As regards the aged inmates of workhouses, I have, in various instances, gone through the list, name by name, with the master, and have found that they resolve themselves practically into two categories: (1) those who require medical attendance and nursing which could not be given to them at home, and (2) those who have been of drunken habits or of notoriously bad character. Perhaps a third, but much smaller, class might be added, viz., those who, owing to infirmity of temper or general disagreeableness, have wearied out all their relations and friends, whom no one will receive as boarders, and to whom the guardians do not like to give out-relief for fear that harm should happen to them when living by themselves.

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[1] Visits: Metropolitan 113.

"Very few of them would be able to maintain themselves decently outside the workhouse on an allowance of 5s. a week. Nearly all are handicapped by some marked infirmity or defect of body or mind; some while perfectly well-conducted in the workhouse, cannot resist the temptation to drink. Indeed one of the most pitiable things about them is that when they obtain a day's leave of absence, they so often return in the evening the worse for liquor. Many would not discharge themselves if 5s. a week were offered them. Some, no doubt, would accept it, and try to shift for themselves, but there is good reason to believe that if it were paid on Saturday, most of them would be destitute by Tuesday and would have to be maintained at the public expense for the rest of the week."[1]

"Should you say, as a general rule, that they are what are called deserving cases?—No, I should say there are very few deserving cases. There are two or three old women I can think of, who have practically come to an end of all their belongings and have no people to support them, and whom it is hard to make come in; but they are quite exceptional."[2]

Proposal to accommodate aged indoor poor in simple, inexpensive institutions.

354. We do not consider it at all desirable that old people who are given to drink, or are of dirty habits, should be enabled to remove themselves from control either by a pension, or by the granting of outdoor relief. But we think that if our recommendation of separating the aged and infirm from the able-bodied is carried out, it will be possible to make their life in an institution much more satisfactory. We do not think that this will be best achieved by the erection of large and expensive buildings, and when fresh accommodation is needed we think that something much simpler is desirable. At Kingston-upon-Hull, cottage homes were provided at a cost of £30 a head.[3] At Woolwich a home for forty-two aged women has been provided at a cost of £51 10s. 11d. per bed, and the cost of salaries works out at £1 9s. 6d. per inmate per annum, as compared with £2 14s. 8d. at the workhouse. In both these instances, as in others which have been brought before us, the Guardians have bought existing property instead of building, and the Clerk to the Woolwich Board tells us:—

"The experiment has proved a great success because, although the old people receive the workhouse diet and remain on the workhouse books, they have the advantage of being removed from many of its restrictions, and the surroundings are certainly pleasanter than they would be in a ward of the workhouse. It is also a very economical way of dealing with any class of person who can be separated and treated apart from the remainder of the inmates, and might easily be made to apply to old men and to any other class where the number would be sufficient to justify the purchase or hiring of a suitable home."[4]

355. We would call attention to the contrast between the cost of provision such as this, and that of some recently built Metropolitan workhouses. At Hammersmith, for instance, the new workhouse has cost £286 per bed.[5] We do not consider that the expensiveness of these large institutions adds at all to the happiness and comfort of the old people, whose life in them is apt to be much more monotonous and mechanical than in some of the smaller homes we have seen. On the other hand, we think that the conspicuousness and expensiveness of the Poor Law provision encourages the growing tendency to consider that the responsibility for maintaining the infirm may be safely neglected by their relations.

Conclusions.

356. We have attempted to convey to our readers a picture of the condition of the aged under the Poor Law, as it has been presented to us by witnesses, and as we have ourselves seen it. It is impossible to generalise about it, owing to the great want of uniformity in administration. In some places it is thoroughly satisfactory, and the administration both wise and kindly; in others it is unsatisfactory, and the administration either careless or stupid. Even in the same Union, owing to the application of a fixed scale, one pauper may be in a condition of want approaching to destitution, while another would be in comfortable circumstances without any relief at all.

357. We have noted also the increase in old-age pauperism which has shown itself since 1900, and have indicated the causes which we think have conduced to that increase. The chief of these we consider to be the growing attractiveness of Poor Law institutions, and the tendency, consequent upon the old-age pensions movement, to regard outdoor relief as a pension.

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[1] Preston-Thomas, Vol. I., App. viii. (a), (45–6). [2] Joseph, 69455. [3] Visits: Urban, 19. [4] Cutter 18993. [5] Visits: Metropolitan, 117.

358. It has been suggested that a cause may be found in the weakness of a sense of filial responsibility in the present generation—but in our opinion, the increase of aged pauperism, and the decrease in filial duty, are both alike, effects of a common cause, viz., the general feeling that the State is able and willing to make provision, and even lavish provision for parents whose sons fail to support them. We believe that if the position is clearly defined and a consistent policy laid down both as to pensions and Poor Law relief, the natural feeling between parents and children will again assert itself.

359. Meanwhile, we consider it important to remember that the proportion of those who actually receive Poor Law relief, even under its present conditions, is but small. According to our census for 1906, the paupers over sixty years of age (excluding casuals) were only 14·8 per cent. of the total population of that age, leaving 85·2 per cent. otherwise maintained.[1] We consider it of paramount importance that any steps which are taken with a view to assisting the 14·8 per cent. shall not be such as will diminish the resources by which the 85·2 per cent. are now maintained.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 7.

As regards institutional relief :—

(1) *The aged should have accommodation and treatment apart from the able-bodied, and be housed on a separate site, and be further sub-divided into classes as far as practicable with reference to their physical condition and their moral character.* (354.)

(2) *The system of small homes such as has been instituted at Kingston-on-Hull and Woolwich should be promoted and extended, both on the ground of economy to the ratepayer and increased happiness to the recipients.* (328, 354.)

As regards outdoor relief :—

(1) *Greater care should be taken to ensure adequacy of relief.*

(2) *The aged recipients of out-relief should be periodically visited both by officers of the Local Authority (who might be women), and by voluntary visitors, as may be arranged with a local committee for voluntary aid.* (339–40.)

As regards old persons given to drink, or of dirty habits, they should not be enabled to remove themselves from control either by a pension or by the granting of outdoor relief. (354.)

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[1] Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 47.

Chapter 8.

THE CHILDREN.

360. With regard to the children under the care of the Poor Law the policy since 1834 has always been one of education to independence, although in the earlier days success was made difficult by defective machinery. But progress in the education of these childre has gone step by step with the general educational progress of the country, and it is probable that the children in some at least of the present Poor Law schools are being better fitted for earning their living than those outside. Early policy.

361. Prior to 1834 the children were, perhaps, the most neglected class under the Poor Law. In by far the greater number of workhouses outside London the young were merely trained in ignorance, idleness and vice, and according to Mr. Chadwick, not one-third of the children found any respectable employment. In their Fourth Annual Report the Commissioners describe the state of things existing previously to the formation of Unions as follows:—

> "The children, who were for the most part orphans, bastards and deserted children, continued to remain inmates of the workhouse long after the period at which they might have earned their subsistence by their own exertions; and those who obtained situations, or were apprenticed by means of the parish funds, turned out as might be expected of children whose education was utterly neglected or at best confided to the superintendence of a pauper. They rarely remained long with their employer, but returned to the workhouse—which so far from being to them an object of dislike, they regarded as their home, and which they looked forward to as the ultimate asylum of their old age. In this manner the workhouse, instead of diminishing, increased pauperism by keeping up a constant supply of that class of persons who most frequently, and for the longest period became its inmates. Pauperism, however, was only one of the evils which resulted from the neglect to provide proper means of instruction for the children. Those who have ascertained the early history of persons who in a greater or less degree have offended against the laws, have found that a large proportion of these have passed their infancy and youth in the workhouse, and can trace the formation of the habits which have led them to the commission of crime to the entire want of moral training in these institutions." [1]

362. The Commissioners began their work of reform on the lines of a classification which should separate the children from the adult inmates of the workhouse, and an improvement of workhouse schools. In the first Orders and Regulations, issued in 1835,[2] for the management of a workhouse, provision was made for the appointment of a schoolmaster and a schoolmistress. In addition to this they impressed upon Guardians and officers the necessity of obtaining for the children independent employment outside the workhouse as soon as they were old enough; a matter of great importance while the means of separating them from adult inmates were still inadequate. But so long as the children were untaught and untrained the difficulty of finding situations for them was great; the "pauper taint" was in those days a reality. Apprenticeship had been a recognised method of dealing with pauper children since the introduction of the Elizabethan Poor Law; but a step fatal to the interests of the children had been taken when it was made obligatory upon masters to take the apprentices put upon them by the Overseers.[3] The Guardians, having no other way of providing for children who were uneducated and undisciplined, made use of their powers to force apprentices upon masters Classification, education, and employment of children.

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[1] Fourth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 147, 1838, p. 60. [2] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, pp. 62, xxix. [3] 8 & 9 Will. III. c. 30, Sec. 5.

who were reluctant to receive them and glad of any pretext to get the indentures cancelled. The Assistant Commissioners had reported very strongly against the system; but it was not abolished until 1844.[1] Meanwhile, it became the object of the administrators to make the compulsory powers unnecessary, by giving the children an industrial training which should enable them to take their place in the world on equal terms with others.

Workhouse schools.

363. The workhouse school was commonly the place where this training was given; and some of these schools were raised to a high level of efficiency, as at Atcham and Ludlow, where land was set apart for the training of boys, and girls were prepared for service. In one district nineteen Unions had provided land in the cultivation of which boys were employed, to the great benefit of their health, while their studies, so far from being retarded, were promoted. In the Report of 1850[2] it is remarked that there were workhouses in which the children received an education beyond all comparison better than was within the reach of the children of labourers in any part of the country.

364. But these cases were exceptional; the supply of qualified teachers was limited, and the best of them did not take up Poor Law work; and progress, especially in the smaller workhouses, was slow. The earliest grant made by Parliament towards Poor Law purposes was one of £15,000 in 1846[3] towards teachers' salaries, its distribution being made to depend on the number of children under instruction and on the efficiency of the instruction. A suggestion had been already made in 1838 to meet the difficulties of the smaller workhouses by the establishment of district schools, in which the children from a number of Unions might be collected and brought up entirely away from the workhouse; and in 1844 the establishment of these schools was authorised by Act of Parliament.[4] In 1849 six of these districts were formed, three in the Metropolis (their schools partly replacing private schools in which the children had been boarded-out), and three in the country.

District schools.

365. The history of the district schools movement is remarkable as showing the way in which public criticism of Poor Law administration has wavered and contradicted itself. In 1861 the Report of the Royal Commission on Education appeared, containing a sweeping denunciation of workhouse schools, and recommending the compulsory establishment all over the country of large district schools to hold about one thousand children each.[5] In 1864 a Select Committee on poor relief reported that on the whole the education in the workhouse schools was satisfactory, but that, while the separate schools should be encouraged, they should not be enforced.[6] Meanwhile, the attitude of the Guardians was one of passive resistance, the number of district schools never increased beyond ten, and six of these were formed before 1849.

366. Within the next ten years public opinion had veered round, and was strongly antagonistic to district, or as they were disparagingly called "barrack schools." There had been great difficulties with ophthalmia, and doubts were raised as to the effect of the education received in them. Mrs. Nassau Senior was asked in 1873 by the Local Government Board to report more especially with regard to the education and training of the girls. Her conclusions were: That the massing of girls together in large numbers was bad and must issue in failure; that their physical condition when in the schools and their moral condition on leaving them was disappointing and unsatisfactory; and that, while the scholastic training of both boys and girls in the Metropolitan pauper schools was first-rate, on all other points the system of education did not answer in the case of girls, even at the very best separate and district schools, and that many of them were, in general intelligence, below children of the same class educated at home. The alternative which she recommended was boarding out for orphans, and cottage homes for others. This was in 1874. Her criticisms were much disputed, great doubt was thrown upon the evidence on which they were based, and no steps were taken towards breaking up the district schools until twenty years later.

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[1] Eleventh Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 624, 1845, pp. 10–11. Also 7 & 8 Vict., Cap 101, Sec. 13. [2] Third Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1340, 1851, p. 7. [3] "Local Taxation" Report by the Right Hon. H. H. Fowler (now Viscount Wolverhampton), 1893, H.C. 168 of 1893, p. 79. Local Taxation Commission Proceedings, Sir Edward Hamilton's Memorandum on Imperial Relief of Local Burdens, etc. [Cd. 9528], p. 12. [4] 7 & 8 Vict., Cap. 101, Sec. 40. [5] Report of Royal Commission on Education, 1861, pp. 352 *et seq.* [6] Report of Select Committee on Poor Law Relief, 255, 1864, p. 36.

Departmental Committee of 1894 on the Care of Poor Law Children.

367. In 1894 a Departmental Committee was appointed to inquire into existing systems for the education and maintenance of Poor Law children from the Metropolis, and this Committee reported in 1896, strongly condemning the district schools. Their Report was the occasion of a heated controversy,*[1] but was strongly backed by public opinion, and led to the larger schools being broken up.[2] The Committee also recommended that the Poor Law children in the Metropolis should be removed from the care of the Guardians. This Report has had a certain amount of influence on the subsequent history of this department of Poor Law work. The number of children educated in district schools has fallen from 7,358, in 1895, to 3,591 in 1907.[3] A strong public opinion has been formed in favour of boarding-out, and a great impetus given to the cottage and scattered homes systems. Moreover, although no new Central Authority, such as was suggested for supervising London Poor Law children, was ever formed, the Local Government Board in 1897 adopted the idea to some extent by an Order which laid upon the Metropolitan Asylums Board the duty of providing for certain classes of children requiring special treatment.

Merits of different types of Poor Law Schools

District or "Associated" Schools.

368. Without desiring to reopen the controversy as to whether the Committee of 1896 was justified in its Report, we have felt the importance of forming our own judgment as to the merits of the different types of school. Some of the evidence we have received is strongly in favour of the district or "associated" schools as compared with smaller schools and homes. Miss Stansfeld, who inspects for the Local Government Board, writes:—

> "The children who come under the care of the Poor Law have, as a rule, been neglected and subjected to bad example in such moral faults as dishonesty, intemperance, idleness, lying and the like, and the re-shaping of their characters needs expert handling. This, as it seems to me, can best be secured from experienced teachers and attendants in the Associated Schools.
>
> "The bedrooms of Cottage Homes are liable to be sources of moral contamination. Too much importance cannot be attached to the grave danger incurred by placing a few children alone in a bedroom. There cannot be proper supervision, and it is not within the power of the most watchful "Mother" so to classify her children as to guard against mischief. Many of the children in the Poor Law schools come from the lowest surroundings, where they have passed through experiences and witnessed scenes the description of which must be demoralising to the children who have been more carefully guarded. In the large dormitories of the Associated Schools such undesirable conversation is less likely. There are attendants about, and there is the feeling that out of so many one might tell."[4]

369. In Mr. Lockwood's evidence[5] also there is high commendation of these associated schools and it is fully supported by the extracts which he gives from the Reports of the Inspectors of the Board of Education. So far, again, as any Returns can be got, the children from the large schools do as well as those from the small:—

> "It depends entirely upon the way each system is administered. Of course in the very large schools, the very large numbers would tend to make them in some way mechanical, but at the same time they give them advantages which smaller numbers cannot have. In a very large school you can have a better staff and more selection. . . . There is one school which did very excellent work

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* The Committee had assumed that ophthalmia prevailed practically to the same extent as in 1874, and they had largely based their conclusions on this. But a careful examination of the children in the Metropolitan schools made by expert ophthalmic surgeons in 1874 and 1896 made clear the true facts shown in the following table:—

—	1874.	1896.
Total seen	8,798	13,047
Discharging eyes	11·90 per cent.	4·06 per cent.
Trachoma or "bad granular lids"	42·00 " "	4·91 " "
Ophthalmic corneal damages	9·10 " "	1·28 " "

"These figures," said Dr. Stevenson, who reported in 1897, "tell their own tale so plainly that they need scarcely a word of comment. They show that during the last twenty-two years a great improvement has taken place in the ophthalmic state of the Poor Law children. As to the main causes of the change, these may be looked for generally in: (*a*) The increased attention paid to ophthalmia, both inside and outside the schools; and (*b*) the bettering of school environment." (Report by Sydney Stevenson, M.B., on . . . the Ophthalmic State of Poor Law Children in the Metropolis, c. 8597, p. 34.)

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[1] Davy, 3453. [2] Davy, 3458. [3] Davy, Vol. I., App. No. v. (12); Thirty-sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 388. [4] Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi. (a) 66 (2) (3). [5] Lockwood, 13518.

which is now shut. . . . I have taken the case of ninety-nine girls, who came out ten years ago at the age of about fifteen as a rule, who are now therefore about twenty-five years of age. I made a special Report and it is wonderful how well some of those girls are doing, and how they have risen in the world.' [1]

A similar view is expressed by Mr. Davy :—

"There must be, I think, to anyone who looks at the evidence as to the dispauperisation of the children educated in the old schools, some little misgiving as to whether the children educated in the new schools are going to do quite as well as the old ones. There is just a doubt whether there may not be in small cottage homes where the children are mixed and not classified according to age, certain moral mischiefs which might well be guarded against in the larger schools; and there may be a doubt, and a strong doubt too, whether the industrial training, which is to my mind the main consideration, will be as good in these small homes as it was in the large ones." [2]

370. We are of opinion that the truth lies with those who hold that more depends upon the administration than upon the system :—

"There is no doubt that there are advantages peculiar to every way in which the Poor Law children can be maintained—boarding-out, 'barrack' schools, cottage homes, scattered homes—all have their various merits. The success or failure of any system must depend entirely on the people by whom it is administered." [3]

The Association of Superintendents of Poor Law Schools agree :—

"With reference to the question of the different systems of arranging for the care of the Poor Law child, it is not a question of system, but of administration. The infallible test of assessing the value of any arrangement is the examination of those living under the arrangement. It is impossible for a badly ordered barrack, block or cottage to produce alert, cheerful, upstanding and responsive boys and girls." [4]

371. The opinion of the Investigator whom we asked to report to us on the condition of children under the Poor Law is to the effect that the large school is more suitable for boys than for girls :—

"In a great school like Norwood the children are clean and well clothed; they are doubtless well trained and educated, their physical condition is looked after and defects treated carefully. There can be a good deal of corporate life about such an institution; there are bands, and clubs for games, and swimming, etc. Group photographs of school mates and class mates are taken, and all help to develop a feeling amongst the children of a common bond and a common interest. But for girls, at any rate, such a training is, I feel sure, not an effective one." [5]

372. Finally, we may quote the opinion expressed in the Report on the educational work in Poor Law schools issued in July, 1908, by the Board of Education :—

"Whatever opinions we may have been disposed to form on the vexed question of cottage homes *v.* barracks schools as rival methods of boarding children, we are not able to detect in the schools of either class any general characteristic which can be held to be distinctive of the particular system adopted. Our principal conclusion on this point is that the success of the school depends almost entirely on the character of the supervision and the *personnel* of the staff." [6]

Scattered Homes.

373. That the criticism of district schools has led to variations in the methods adopted for bringing up the children is, no doubt, a great gain. Schools of various types but all separate from the workhouse have steadily increased in number.[7] About 1867, the plan of building small groups of cottages was introduced.[8] In 1871 the Managers of the Asylum Districts in the Metropolis were empowered with the approval of the Local Government Board to establish training ships for boys; and, although only one has been instituted under the Poor Law, Guardians make frequent use of ships provided by other agencies. The "scattered homes" system was started in Sheffield,[9] nine such homes had been established in 1896, and the system is being increasingly adopted by other Unions. We have visited homes and schools of every type, and have found excellent work being done in all. Each type, however, has its own drawbacks and difficulties. Mr. Bagenal points out that the scattered homes system has the merit of involving very little, if any, capital expenditure, and thinks also that the home life is on the whole better than in the grouped cottage system, though the children may not get as good an industrial training.[10] Miss Stansfield, on the other hand, thinks that the strain of managing thirteen children in a scattered

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[1] Poole, 33911. [2] Davy, 3458. [3] Poole, 33856 (30). [4] Dean, 28302 (8). [5] Report on the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, p. 103. [6] Board of Education, Report on Poor Law Schools, 1908, p. 12. [7] Davy, 3459 [8] Davy, 3439. [9] Wilson, 40081 (10). [10] Bagenal, 6937

home is often too great for the "foster-mother,"[1] while the children lack the special advantages which they can have in "grouped cottage homes."[2] Our Investigator reports:—

> "Grouped cottage homes, such as those at Ponteland, and scattered homes both have special advantages and both can be very good. Scattered homes, if not too large (not more than eight or ten children) and especially if the sexes are mixed and the group made as permanent as possible, do give a certain sort of home life which for girls especially is worth while, but the value of the system depends entirely on the personality of the foster-mother."[3]

Cottage homes.

374. In connection with the subject of cottage homes we feel bound to call attention to their increasing elaborateness, and the growing cost of maintenance in them. "The original idea of a cottage home was a real cottage, but the cottage has now become a villa."[4] In the Appendix to Vol. I., App. V. (4) will be found a Return showing the cost per bed (exclusive of site) in the cottage homes which have been built in the last twenty years. It is not easy to make comparisons of any value between Unions which are situate in different parts of the country and in which the conditions vary not a little, but the general impression conveyed by the Return is that the system is becoming more and more costly. Our own visits have confirmed this impression, and whilst we recognise and warmly appreciate all that is being done by Guardians and officers in these institutions for the children under their care, the question suggests itself—How far are similar advantages within the reach of the independent labourer and the small ratepayer? It is true that these considerations should not be paramount in deciding on the scale and equipment of cottage homes, but they should not be overlooked.

375. The same consideration from another point of view is suggested by the following:—

> "It must be rather difficult for a girl who has spent her leisure time at school in playing hockey, croquet and organised games, who has been taught swimming and given a regular course of gymnastics, who has been taken on half-holidays to places of interest and has had free access to a library and recreation rooms, to settle down to an ordinary servant's work. A child in its own home has between school hours to help in various ways and learns early the necessity of real work, and has experience of the cost of clothing and food. The clothing, food and recreation of a Poor Law child should not be better or more expensive than those which could be provided for it by good parents in its own rank of life."[5]

376. We have ourselves seen homes which were of a much less costly type and quite as efficient:—

> "We were much pleased with all we saw, and we think it may be affirmed that the homes are a great success and very well adapted for the purpose they serve. . . . . We need scarcely add that they cannot, of course, compare with the modern homes that are thought necessary for city unions; they are on a wholly different scale and of a different type, less pretentious and much less costly, but we cannot say less efficient or useful as regards the future of the children whose wants they meet."[6]

377. Mr. Bagenal further argues:—

> "If we are going to have any progressive and continuous decrease of childhood pauperism, and if all the philanthropic and educational agencies of this country are going to work any good at all, it will be in the direction of improving the conditions of child-life and lessening the chance of their becoming paupers. If that is so, in process of time, this vast capital expenditure on children's homes and grouped cottage homes will be, to a certain extent, thrown away."[7]

Boarding out.

378. Many difficulties in dealing with children are avoided where Guardians are able and willing to adopt the system of "boarding-out." In this case the expense is comparatively small and involves no capital outlay; when the system is well-managed a real home life is secured for the children, and they enter into industrial life upon the same terms as the children of the independent working class. On the other hand, it is more difficult to be certain that they meet with kindly treatment; and they share in none of the special advantages enjoyed in Poor Law schools. Moreover, under the present Regulations of the Local Government Board, the class which can be dealt with in this way includes only children between the ages of two and ten, and upon whom there will be no rival claims to those of the foster-parent, *i.e.*, the orphans and deserted.[8]

379. In England a sharp distinction is made between "boarding-out within the Union," and "boarding-out without the Union." The first system has been of long standing under

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[1] Stansfield, 14288. [2] Stansfield, 14396. [3] Report on the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, p. 103. [4] Davy, 1865. [5] Poole, 33856 (28). [6] Visits: Urban 52. [7] Bagenal, 6937. [8] Mason, 9587.

the form of out-relief. The first Order regulating it was that of the Local Government Board, September 10th, 1877, entitled "Out-relief within Unions to orphans and deserted children."[1] Under this Order the children were under the supervision of the relieving officer who had to visit and report upon each every six weeks, and of the Medical Officer, who had to visit and report once a quarter at the remuneration of 2s. 6d. per head per quarter.[2] In 1889, an Order was issued which authorised Committees of ladies and gentlemen to undertake the supervision of the children within the Union and enabled the Guardians to dispense with the visits of the relieving officers.[3] Boarding-out without the Union was first sanctioned by the Poor Law Board in 1870,[4] by an Order under which: —

> "Committees of ladies and gentlemen, of no less than three in number, all voluntary and unpaid, were authorised to receive and place out in their 'neighbourhood' children chargeable to Unions other than those in which the places where the children were boarded-out were situated. A large number of children chargeable to London Unions, and others, were accordingly boarded-out in Westmorland, Devonshire, Buckinghamshire, and other distant counties. The order contained rules as to the visitation of the children by the committees, as to the character of the homes in which they were to be placed, and the number of children allowed in each home, etc." [5]

380. In 1885, an Inspector was appointed to visit and report upon the Committees, the children and their homes. Two more Inspectors have been appointed since, and a very complete system of inspection has been elaborated by them.[6] It is this inspection, with the greater security which it affords to the children, which constitutes the main difference between the boarding-out within and without the Union. Within the Union Committees are optional, and there is no inspection from the Local Government Board; without the Union both Committees and inspections are compulsory.

381. Our Investigators have examined carefully into the working of both systems; and are of opinion that boarding-out within the Union is liable to be very unsatisfactory owing to lack of proper supervision. Full details of the children seen and the conditions under which they were living will be found in the Report of these Investigators; we quote their summary here:—

> "It is clear from the accounts of these six unions that effective supervision of boarded-out children and their homes is not obtained under the ordinary Poor Law administration. This fact becomes still clearer on contrasting the conditions found in these unions with those prevailing amongst the groups of children boarded out under boarding-out committees without their unions. Supervision of homes and children by guardians and relieving officers was never found to be satisfactory."[7]

382. Exceptions are made in favour of one Union where supervision was exercised by a superintendent relieving officer of an unusually high standard,[8] and of another where the work was done by a Committee of ladies.[9]

383. We think that the defects in this branch of boarding-out may be met to a large extent if our recommendations as to the better supervision of out-relief in general are carried into effect. More especially do we recommend that this work should be placed in the hands of competent women officers, and should be brought under Local Government Board inspection. We think also that special care should be taken when the boarding-out is with relatives. Too often in these cases the Guardians merely give out-relief on behalf of the child without sufficient consideration of the conditions under which it is to live. We think that all such cases should be specially notified to the Local Government Board.

384. Our Investigator reports much more favourably upon boarding-out without the Union, as carried on under Committees and Inspectors:—

> "Taken as a whole the supervision of the boarding-out Committees visited in the course of this inquiry was wonderfully good and contrasted very favourably with supervision by guardians and relieving officers."[10]

Again:—

> "Boarding-out, especially in country districts, is certainly the best method of dealing with the small minority of pauper children eligible and suitable for boarding-out, and especially for girls. I have never myself seen children from any sort of Poor Law home or institution making friends

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[1] Seventh Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 2130], 1878, pp. 193-200. [2] *Ibid.*, Art. 12-13. [3] Nineteenth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 6141], 1890, pp. 57-72. [4] Twenty-Third Annual Report, Poor Law Board [Cd. 396], 1871, pp. 18-22. [5] Mason, Vol. I., App. xx. (A) (2). [6] *Ibid.*, App. xx. (A) (5, 9, 10.) [7] Report on the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, pp. 91–2. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 92. [9] *Ibid.*, App. xix. [10] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

with or playing with their schoolmates on terms of equality, though I was told they did so at Ponteland. Boarded-out children on the other hand can be just the ordinary children of the place sharing in all its life."[1]

"Boarding-out, when properly supervised and with an active and wise boarding-out committee is, I believe, the ideal system both for boys and girls, but especially for girls. Suitable homes, however, are not easy to find."[2]

385. Our Medical Investigator, Dr. McVail, reports to the same effect:

"I am strongly of opinion that, as far as possible, the rearing of pauper children should be done in the country, not in the town; and the holding of that opinion is partly why I prefer boarding-out to scattered homes."[3]

We gather from the recommendations which we have received, that a large number of Boards of Guardians are in favour of extending the boarding-out system; while many consider that the payments to the foster parents should be increased.

386. Notwithstanding the advantages of boarding-out, it is but little adopted in England. The number of children boarded-out without the Union has diminished during the last ten years, touching the lowest point three or four years ago, and on 1st January, 1908, stood at 1,876. The number of those within the Union, on the other hand, was slowly rising until the year 1907, when there was a slight decline, and on 1st January, 1908, the number stood at 6,689.[4] As compared with the 46,251 orphans and children "relieved without parents"[5] these numbers are very small, and contrast sharply with those in Scotland, where 92 per cent. of the orphan, deserted and "separated" children were boarded-out on 15th May, 1907.[6] The reason for the difference is not very clear. The Chief Inspector, Miss Mason, says:—

"The supply of committees and homes is still quite unequal to the demand, and there is still need for fresh ones in places where none exist at present."[7]

In Scotland there seems to be little difficulty in finding suitable homes. The difference is sometimes attributed to the different characteristics of the two nations. Sometimes again, it is said that there is too much inspection in England, and that it is resented by the foster parents. Having this in mind Committees of our number have gone round with one of the Inspectors and watched her at work; they failed to see, on the part of either foster parents or children any signs of resentment or dislike to a very minute inspection—a result attributable, no doubt, to the great tact with which it was carried out. We can appreciate the force of the criticism that such inspection must not be of an inquisitorial nature. Some confidence must be placed in the foster parents and in their good faith, and any ill-founded suggestion or suspicion that they have abused the trust reposed in them, presumably after full inquiry, may defeat its object and prevent suitable persons from undertaking such a charge.

387. Another possible reason for the scarcity of good homes, is the difficulty in many places of forming Committees of ladies; in Scotland there are no such Committees and the Commissioners have seen children boarded-out in places where it would have been impossible to form one.

388. Since the Report of the Departmental Committee in 1894 there has been strong public opinion in favour of extending boarding-out; and it is not sufficiently realised, firstly, that it is difficult to find suitable homes, and, secondly, that practically only orphan, deserted, and adopted children can be dealt with in this way. Miss Mason points out in her evidence:—

"Foster-parents constantly ask me if I know whether the child has parents, because they say 'I will not have her if she has because I will not be interfered with.'"[8]

389. We cannot say that it is proved that the existing system of supervision adds appreciably to the difficulty of finding suitable homes in England, and whilst strongly advocating the extension of boarding-out as far as possible we do not recommend any relaxation in the care exercised. The present supervision within the Union we consider to be as a rule quite inadequate.

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[1] Report on the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, p. 95. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 103. [3] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 88. [4] Thirty-Sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. cxxiv. Pauperism, England and Wales, half-yearly statement for 1st January, 1908., H.C. 130 of 1908, p. xiv. [5] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table xvii. [6] Thirteenth Annual Report, Local Government Board for Scotland, 1907, p. viii. [7] Mason, Vol. I., App. (xx.) (a) (17). [8] Mason, 9701.

390. In our opinion it would be right that in all cases the fullest inquiry should be made into the character of the foster parents and the suitability of the home before, rather than after, the children are handed over. If this were systematically done it would greatly lighten the subsequent task of supervision, and not improbably tend to produce a better class of foster parents than can be found at present. We are of opinion that the principle followed in the Orders which regulate boarding-out, whereby it is laid down that no person is eligible as a foster parent who does not profess the same religious belief as is indicated on the creed register of the child, should be made applicable in cases in which persons receive Poor Law children for adoption.

Number and condition of children in workhouses.

391. Notwithstanding all the efforts which have been made for the last seventy years, a very large number of children are still maintained in the workhouses. In the half-year ended at Lady Day, 1859, of an average number of 33,576* children under instruction in separate, district and workhouse schools in England and Wales, 26,513 were being educated in workhouse schools, 4,381 in nineteen separate schools, 2,682 in six district schools.[1] On January 1st, 1908, out of 62,426 indoor pauper children, 16,221 were maintained in workhouses, a considerable number of whom were under medical treatment.[2]

392. It will be noted that the proportion is much diminished, but the actual number is still large, and we have ourselves seen that the condition of such children is sometimes far from satisfactory. Where most of the children have been removed to schools, it would seem that the Guardians are apt to take less interest in the few that remain. In many Unions indeed, the children are treated with the utmost kindness and care, and in all Unions the majority now go out to the public elementary schools, only 565 being still taught in workhouse schools at the commencement of the year 1907.[3] Elsewhere we have ourselves found children in surroundings so dreary that it seems strange that Guardians who have families of their own could acquiesce in them. The following are instances of some of the places visited by us :—

"(1) The nursery was bad, very messy, and the children looked miserable; some of the infants were being nursed by old women, some lay in cradles with wet bedding, and were provided with 'comforters.' . . . The infirm and children over three are in the same building, apart from the main body of the house. The children are under the care of a woman who has been there twenty-seven years and has two helpers. She is a fairly capable, roughish sort of woman, hardly fit for such a responsible position. She was reluctant to show anything, and I had to push my way in everywhere. The three-year-old children were in a bare and desolate room, sitting about on the floor and on wooden benches, and in dismal workhouse dress. The older ones had all gone out to school . . . . except a cripple, and a dreary little girl who sat in a cold room with bare legs and her feet in a pail of water as a 'cure' for broken chilblains. The washing arrangements are unsatisfactory; the children have no tooth-brushes, and very few hairbrushes. They do not wear workhouse dress to go to school, but I saw some coming in from school in the rain who were not properly dressed for a wet day. Altogether there is great need for reform in the treatment of the children."[4]

"(2) The children (thirty-nine girls and twenty-three boys) are housed in the workhouse under the care of a male and a female industrial trainer, but they are not kept separate from the adult inmates. Indeed the children's wards left on our minds a marked impression of confusion and defective administration. . . . . In appearance the children were dirty, untidy, ill-kept, and almost neglected. Their clothes might be described with very little exaggeration as ragged, and when the inspector told a group of children to take off their right boots large holes were displayed in six stockings out of thirteen. The eyes of some of the children seemed suspiciously 'weak,' and in two or three cases to be suffering from some serious inflammation."[5]

"(3.) In the nursery we found the babies of one to two years of age preparing for their afternoon sleep. They were seated in rows on wooden benches in front of a wooden table. On the table was a long narrow cushion, and when the babies were sufficiently exhausted they fell forward upon this to sleep. The position seemed most uncomfortable and likely to be injurious. We were told that the system was an invention of the matron's and had been in use for a long time."[6]

"(4) There are twenty children in the house: the girls and younger boys have a day room together, and sleep together in a room three stories up. This is the only room in which there is no second exit in case of fire. There are two older boys who go in with the old men. The babies are under the charge of the laundress, who also looks after the female tramps, and is responsible for the young women. This seemed to me a most unsatisfactory arrangement; the laundress was a much harassed young woman, and the babies inevitably neglected. One was in the steam and heat of the laundry, two tumbling in the yard, two in a small room next door to the laundry in charge

* This is not the total number of indoor pauper children. On 1st January, 1859, there were in the unions from which returns were received 46,518 pauper children, some of whom were attending the national or village schools; others do not appear to have been under instruction, whilst others were not of school age.

[1] Twelfth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 2675, 1860, pp. 18, 290 *et seq.* [2] Statistical Appendix Part I., Table xvii. [3] Thirty-Sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 388. [4] Visits: Urban 39. [5] Visits: Urban 27A. [6] Visits: Urban 24D.

of a disagreeable looking pauper; and two could not be found until we hunted them down in the young women's dormitory. This was very untidy, with the beds not made and in an unsatisfactory condition. Here, as elsewhere, the provision for children is quite bad."[1]

"(5) The chief defect here, as in so many workhouses, is in the accommodation for the children. The boys' day-room is absolutely dreary and bare; and they share a yard and lavatories with the young men. There are two sleeping rooms, one over the day-room, the other over a carpenter's shop containing a large heap of shavings and other inflammable material. The windows of the sleeping rooms are barred, and escape in case of fire might be impossible. An old man sleeps with the boys. The girls use the sewing-room as a day-room. The older children go to school 1½ miles distant, taking bread and butter or jam with them, and dining on their return when the other inmates have their tea. The dining-hall is used by all inmates at the same time. It may be noted that here, in contrast to most country workhouses, the girls have separate towels and brushes. No tooth brushes, however, and the matron says their teeth are bad."[2]

393. These are some of the most unsatisfactory cases seen by us, and as a rule the children in the workhouse are better cared for. But even then the conditions leave much to be desired. Our Investigator reports:—

"The retention of children in workhouses is always unsatisfactory. Even where they have special attendants they are never completely separated from the ordinary inmates. . . . . The arrangements for their tendance and training are never as good as in an establishment wholly given up to them; the separation from the ordinary inmates of the workhouse was very incomplete in each case I saw. When sent out to school (as they were in both the unions under discussion) they did not enter into the play or out-of-school life of the other children. I have often felt as I have watched the little groups of workhouse children drawing off from the others that, to certain natures at any rate, this must painfully emphasise their position."[3]

394. We are strongly of opinion that effective steps should be taken to secure that the maintenance of children in the workhouse be no longer recognised as a legitimate way of dealing with them. We are aware that many of the children in question are the children of "ins-and-outs" (*vide* Chapter 9), and that under the law as it now stands there would be great difficulties in carrying out this recommendation. We think that this only strengthens the argument in favour of our recommendation that the Public Assistance Authority should have power to keep these children in institutions, while their parents are detained in a detention colony. Similar considerations apply to the present necessity of discharging (when the parents go out) a child while under treatment for ophthalmia or some chronic contagious ailment. In addition to the evidence already quoted on this subject we may add that of Major Skinner, Chairman of the Special Schools Sub-Committee of the Education Committee of the London County Council, with reference to children of this class who have ultimately been sent to industrial schools. He tells us that the parents of many of the children in their schools are

"thriftless, vagrant or dissolute persons who frequent workhouses and casual wards, and who are unfit to have the custody of children. Some of the parents are from time to time committed to prison for varying terms. While the parents are in prison or are the inmates of workhouses the children are placed under the care of the Poor Law guardians, and are usually sent to the parish schools; but when the parents are discharged from prison or when they choose to leave the workhouse, they have the power to claim their children, who are thereupon removed from the care of the guardians and are again subjected to evil influences and degrading surroundings. . . . When the children are removed by their parents from the care of the guardians it frequently happens that the parents have no homes, or are habitual beggars. In such cases the children often fall into the hands of the police.[4] . . .

"In addition, moreover, to the children who fall into the hands of the police or the council's officers, it is evident that there are many others who escape the vigilance of both, chiefly because their parents are constantly moving from one common lodging-house or free shelter to another, or, without committing any offence which causes them to be taken into custody, are in and out of the workhouse. For such children there is no hope of any other career than that of vagrancy or criminality. It is therefore desirable that all children who are without proper guardianship should, immediately they fall for the first time into the hands of the guardians, be rescued from their evil surroundings and be dealt with in such a way as will ensure their being educated and trained to become self-supporting and respectable citizens."[5]

Adoption of children by Guardians.

395. So far as the children are concerned it is probable that no further power would be needed, since the Guardians already have power, under the Poor Law Act, 1899, to adopt children until the age of eighteen where they are of opinion that, by reason of mental deficiency, or of vicious habits or mode of life, a parent of the child is unfit to have control of it. A Return made in 1902 showed that 352 out of 646 Unions had taken action under this law on 1st June, 1902, and that the number of children over whom the Guardians were then exercising the rights of parents was 7,724.[6] On 1st January, 1908, the number of Boards exercising the rights of parents was 474 out of 640 making returns, and the number of children had risen to 12,417.[7]

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[1] Visits: Rural 81; see also Dr. McVail's Report, p. 65. [2] Visits: Rural 82; see also Dr. McVail's Report, p. 66. [3] Report as to the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, p. 103. [4] Skinner, Vol. IX., App. lxxiv. (3)–(5). [5] *Ibid.*, pars. (7–8). [6] Thirty-second Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 1700], 1903, p. lxii. [7] Statistical Appendix, Part V.

396. We think that these powers should be more widely used, and that the Authority should retain supervision of adopted children up to the age of twenty-one. But we also think that, in view of the possible temptation thus offered to unworthy parents to relieve themselves of the care of their children, parental responsibility should be more strictly enforced in some cases by detention in an institution, and wherever practicable, by charging to the parents the whole or a part of the cost of maintenance of the children.

In all such cases we are of opinion that the children should become the wards of the Local Authority up to the age of twenty-one; that the children whether removed from their parents or left with them should be kept under supervision; and that one of the parents, if found worthy, or some other responsible person should, if willing to act in that capacity, be associated with the Local Authority as the official guardian. Every case in which a conviction is obtained should be reported to the Authority by the police.

397. In connection with the protection of children neglected by their parents, we may note that, under the Children Act, 1908, it is provided that a parent or guardian who neglects a child in a manner likely to cause injury to health is liable to a maximum penalty of £100 or two years' imprisonment with hard labour. Neglect under this Section includes failure to provide "adequate food, clothing, medical aid or lodging," or, in the event of the parent or guardian being unable to provide such food, etc., failure "to take steps to procure the same to be provided under the Acts relating to the relief of the poor."[1]

Lack of systematic records as to after careers of Poor Law children.

398. One grave defect which we have noticed is the absence of systematic record as to what becomes of the children after passing from the care of the Guardians, generally at the early age of fourteen. In the few cases where such records are kept, it is shown that all but a very small minority do well, and become respectable independent men and women.[2] Corroborative evidence of this is found in returns showing that in selected Unions very few of the present inmates of workhouses and infirmaries have been brought up under the Poor Law. Again, the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants, which takes charge of the girls who leave the institutions of the London Unions, keeps careful records, and these also show good results; the visitors of this excellent society keep in touch with the girls until they are twenty, or in special cases twenty-five.[3] Not less important than the after-care of the girl is that of the boy. The former almost invariably lives under continual supervision, the boy is usually left to shift for himself without guidance after work hours. Some admirable work for the care of this class has been commenced by the Association for Befriending Boys, chiefly in London but to some extent in the country also. There is also an association which does similar work for Southwark boys. But in the great majority of Unions the Guardians keep no record of their children, and it is a matter of chance whether some individual Guardian or official keeps in touch with a child sufficiently to know what becomes of it after the lapse of a year or two. In many of the schools we are glad to know that the superintendents have made themselves so trusted that the children will turn to them in times of difficulty; but we think that something more than this is needed. It is not sufficient to send a child of fourteen to a situation which may prove unsuitable, and leave it there to look after itself. Children of this age are greatly handicapped by having lost their natural guardians, and many suffer from the loss even more severely at this critical age than earlier in life. Dr. Williams in her Report, writes:—

After care of Poor Law children.

> "When a pauper child goes out to work is the time when the need of this relation is most keenly felt, and I have had it very strongly borne in on me during the last few months that many of the children who fall under the influence of unsatisfactory relations when they go out from the Poor Law institution to a situation, do so because they want this very thing" (*i.e.*, a home tie).[4]

399. The evidence which we have heard convinces us that voluntary agencies may be relied on to co-operate in this work. We think that such agencies should be recognised by the Public Assistance Authority and should report to it, and such reports should be entered on a record. We have been struck by the comparatively small attention given to the after-care of boys, and we should welcome development on the lines of those societies which deal with girls.

400. It is not possible to compensate wholly for the loss of family life, and of parental care; but we think that much more might be done in the way of after-care. We have inquired what steps are taken in this direction for the children leaving the London County Council industrial schools and reformatories,[5] and are informed: (i.) that for a period

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[1] 8 Ed. VII. Cap. 67, Sec. 12. [2] Davy, 3501. [3] Poole, 33855 (4). [4] Report as to the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, p. 85. [5] L. C. C. Memo, Vol. IX., App. lxxiii.; Home Office Memo., Vol. IX., App. lxvi.

of three or four years after leaving school supervision is compulsory, and it is continued voluntarily for an indefinite time afterwards; and (ii.) that information as to each case must be furnished to the Council from the time a child is eligible for disposal until it attains the age of eighteen years. We think that a system of supervision and record should be applied to the children leaving the care of the Poor Law Authorities. The experience which would be gained in this way would be invaluable in testing the value of the education received by the children, and in enabling less successful Unions to adopt the methods of the more successful.

401. Some witnesses of great experience have urged upon us the necessity of providing homes for the boys when they first leave the schools, and until they become self-supporting. In view of the great difficulty of finding masters who are willing to board apprentices, it has been suggested that the Local Authority should provide homes in which boys who leave their schools to take up work should be boarded and lodged. In such homes after-care is made easier and more thorough, some discipline can been forced and a general supervision exercised, habits of cleanliness and order can be strengthened, and the demoralising effect of bad associates counteracted. But, whilst we recognise these advantages, we are of opinion that such provision falls within the sphere of private benevolence and should be left to it.

Children of parents in receipt of out-door relief.

402. By far the greater number of children under the Poor Law are those of parents receiving out-relief, and it is only recently that the question has been explicitly raised whether the Guardians or the parents are primarily responsible for these. Sometimes the responsibility seems to be thrown upon the Guardians; *e.g.*, under what is known as Denison's Act:—

> "Boards of Guardians might at their option pay out of the poor-rates for the education of the children of outdoor paupers."[1]

403. It appears, however, from the Report of the Select Committee on Poor Relief of 1864, that, at any rate up to that date, this power was only rarely used. Indeed the Committee reported against a proposal to make the Act compulsory, and also against a recommendation of the Royal Commission on Education that:—

> "Guardians should insist on the education of the child as a condition of outdoor relief to the parents."[2]

Their reasons were

> "inconsistent with the principles upon which the relief of the poor is established."[3]

404. But this view was not followed in the Education Acts. By Section 3 of the Elementary Education Act, 1873,[4] it was made a condition for the continuance of outdoor relief by way of weekly or other continuing allowance to the parent of any child above the age of five, or to such child, that, unless the case came within certain exceptions, education in reading, writing and arithmetic should be provided for the child, and the Guardians were required to give such further relief, if any, as might be required for the purpose.

405. The Section was repealed by the Elementary Education Act, 1876,[5] but it was re-enacted with some modifications by Section 40 of that Act. The effect of later legislation has been somewhat to modify the latter Section, but at the present time outdoor relief on the order of the Guardians by way of weekly or other continuing allowance is conditional, in the case of any child to whom the bye-laws of the Local Education Authority apply, on the attendance of the child at school to the extent required by the bye-laws. The Guardians must still give any further relief which may be necessary for the purpose, but since the introduction of free education this duty is limited to the case of children who can only attend a particular school on payment of a fee.

406. The immediate responsibility of providing education for the children of a parent in receipt of outdoor relief rests with the parent, the function of the Guardians being limited to seeing that, as a condition of the continuance of the relief, such education is provided, and to paying the school fees in the rare cases where the child attends a school at which a fee is charged.

407. But the question has now been definitely raised as to how far this divided responsibility has worked for the benefit of the children, and we have devoted special attention to the condition of those children who are being wholly or partially maintained by means of out-relief.

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[1] 22 Geo. III. Cap 83. [2] Select Committee on Poor Relief, 255, 1864, p. 35. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[4] 36 & 37 Vict., Cap 86. [5] 39 & 40 Vict.

408. We have already drawn attention to the want of uniformity and to the frequent inadequacy of the allowances made by way of out-relief; and nowhere do we find these characteristics more marked than in the out-relief granted for the maintenance of children. The following instances were noted by us while attending Relief Committees in different parts of the country:—

"Altogether seventeen cases were heard and the applicants seen. The majority of these cases were widows with children, the relief being on an unusually adequate scale. Thus a widow with three children dependent and earning 14s. a week and some food, was given 7s. a week relief, bringing her total weekly income up to 21s. and food. In another case a widow with four dependent children and one boy earning 15s. a week, with a total income to the family of 25s., received 7s. a week, bringing their total income up to 32s. a week for six persons. The rents mentioned were high, varying from 4s. to 6s. There was no fixed scale of relief, but it seemed to average out very uniformly at 5s. 6d. a head, including the mother and children."[1]

"The following cases illustrate the methods of the guardians, *e.g.*, a man and his wife, aged twenty-four and twenty-two with two small children; man broke his collar bone, had been under treatment as out-patient in the general infirmary. Amount of relief which had been given during the previous month, 3s. and one loaf. The woman was looking after her husband and was earning nothing, and the rent was 2s. 6d. Thus leaving a family of four persons 6d. a week and a loaf to live upon."[2]

"Woman aged 33, with three children, aged respectively 7, 5, 2. Husband sent to Canada by public subscription six months ago. Earning 3s. Relief 2s. 6d. per week."[3]

"Woman with five children, aged respectively, 11, 9, 5, 2, ½. Husband in prison (twenty-one days) for non-payment of rates. He had only been out of prison five weeks, having served twelve months for felony. Family relieved during that time with 4s. per week."[4]

"We were told that there was no scale of relief, but we found that in practice a widow was supposed to keep herself and one child, and would receive 1s. 6d. a week relief for every child in addition to one."[5]

"The scale as regards widows is 4s. for the mother, 2s. each for two children, and 1s. for the rest."[6]

409. This attitude of the Guardians towards out-relief children we found painfully emphasised in one Union where the relief given in the case of a widow with a family was 1s. 6d. and a loaf per child, but nothing for the mother nor for her first child. This same Board is maintaining children in cottage homes at a cost of 17s. 6d. a week per child, exclusive of education for which a special grant is made to the public elementary school.[7] Making every allowance for the fact that some of the mothers might be able to earn, or might be assisted by relations, we think that the discrepancy should have suggested to the Guardians that the amount per child was too low in the one case and too high in the other.

410. It is clear that, where the income of the family falls as low as in some of the cases we have cited, it is impossible that the children should be properly fed and clothed. The following, which may be considered as a fairly average country case, shows a very inadequate dietary:—

"A widow with four young children, aged respectively, 13, 9, 6, 4. Also two elder girls in service, receiving £9 and £5 respectively. The relief given is 7s. 6d. per week. She earns some weeks as high as 4s. 6d. by charing, but does not average this amount. The rent is 2s. per week. There is a small kitchen garden, in a rather neglected condition; as she cannot do this work herself, it has to be paid for. With her slender means, a few shillings paid for gardening is a great sacrifice, although it would be well-spent money, and would give a very good return. Under present conditions the garden is a very great help. We asked her to give us some idea of the way in which she laid out her weekly income. This she readily gave, which is as follows:—

	s.	d.
Bread	3	2
Groceries	2	6
Butter	1	6
Clothing Club		6
Milk		3
Bacon	occasionally.	
Coal	1	4
Sticks	occasionally.	
Rent	2	0
Total	11	3"[8]

411. It is unlikely that children who are brought up with so little milk or meat in their diet can be properly nourished; nevertheless, they have a far better chance of doing well than the children who are left with bad parents, as in the following cases:—

[1] Visits: Urban 22 A. [2] Visits: Rural 28. [3] Visits: Rural 61. [4] Visits: Rural 61. [5] Visits: Rural 57. [6] Visits: Urban 7. [7] Visits: Urban 15. [8] Visits: Rural 53; *Vide also* Dr McVail's Report, pp. 79–80.

"A widow with three children, a well-known drinking character, was relieved with 3s., one of her children earning 7s., making a total of 10s. It was urged by the relieving officer that it was no case for out-relief as it was encouraging drunkenness and immorality. On one occasion she struck the relieving officer when in the street drunk. It was held that the relief having been suspended for a month she had suffered sufficient punishment. The officer said: 'She still drinks,' and that 4s. relief was given on December 13th, 'to tide her over the holidays.' She had been before the police for drunkenness. It was considered to meet the disqualification of the case by reducing the relief to 3s. instead of 4s." [1]

Widow with seven children, none working. Received 10s. per week relief. Rent, £5 10s. Said to be paid by friends. The relieving officer says the family can live on 10s. per week with care. I visited the home, and found it in a very dirty, I might say, filthy condition. The woman is a sloven. She went about the house in a dazed manner. I tried to get particulars of the way she spent her money, but found it impossible. Her memory could not serve her even for one week; one of the children was at home from school ill, but had not been seen by a doctor; although the relieving officer had called in, she had not mentioned it to him. Some outside assistance is evidently given in this case. It is obvious, even with a few vegetables from the garden, that a family of eight persons could not live on 10s. per week, and pay £5 10s. per annum rent." [2]

412. On this whole question of the condition of the children in receipt of out-relief, we call attention to the Reports of our Investigators. Dr. McVail writes in reference to such children:—

"Taking the facts as a whole, four conclusions were forced on me:—

(*a*) In many cases the amount allowed by the guardians for the maintenance of outdoor pauper children cannot possibly suffice to keep them even moderately well.

(*b*) Many mothers having to earn a livelihood as charwomen or washerwomen or otherwise cannot attend to their children at home, so that there is no proper cooking, the house is untidy and uncomfortable, and the living rooms and bedrooms unventilated and dirty. But there were exceptions to this rule—mothers who, though forced to go out to work, were yet able to keep their houses very clean and to give a surprising amount of attention to the feeding of their family.

(*c*) The mothers, even those who were not out working, were often too ignorant, and occasionally too indifferent, to make the best use of the money allowed them by the guardians.

(*d*) Throughout England and Wales there must be a very large sum of public money given for the maintenance of pauper children in their own homes without any control whatever being exercised over its expenditure. The money is handed to the widow, and, unless no doubt in cases of immorality or intemperance, she is practically allowed to do with it as she pleases. The amount given for the support of the children is often too little to begin with, and, such as it is, it is often wasted in bad or ignorant feeding." [3]

413. We think that the closer supervision which is required in the case of the aged is even more imperatively needed in the case of the children, and we quote from Dr. Williams's Report in support of our suggestions for improvement:—

"Where little supervision is exercised to see that out-relief is wisely used, large numbers of the children are brought up in homes fronting on to filthy streets or courts, and spend most of their time out of school playing amongst garbage. In Liverpool 45 per cent. of the families were living on roads which were in a bad and dirty condition, while in the same proportion of cases the sanitary condition of the house itself was bad. In Bradford, where an effort is made to see that out-relief is expended wisely, 19 per cent. of the cases only are living on dirty streets or courts, while in only 14 per cent. the sanitary condition of the house is bad." [4]

414. We think that where out-relief is given care should be taken to ensure that the total income from whatever source is sufficient to afford proper food, clothing, and housing conditions for the whole family:—

"The lowest income possessed by any family investigated is 2s., and belonged to a family of three persons in Liverpool, but incomes of 3s. for four persons, 4s. for three persons, 5s. for five persons are found in the tables. It does not need much consideration to see that not only are these incomes insufficient, they are impossible. The families possessing them do not live on them; they beg or borrow; they pawn their furniture and clothes; they do not pay rent, but move from place to place as landlords push them out. Such a life can be continued for a long time, and it is not necessary to emphasise the fact of how hopelessly demoralising it must be for children, and how small must be the chance children brought up in this fashion have of becoming decent and self-respecting citizens. Their schooling is often irregular owing to the frequent moves, and no regularity or order enters into their lives. . . . In the large urban unions we have particulars of many families whose income may be considered an impossible one. In Liverpool I saw a house into which out-relief was going, the whole household plenishing of which was a broken kettle, and another in which a heap of rags and an orange box represented the whole." [5]

415. We think also that it should be the duty of the Public Assistance Authority to ascertain that the children are being properly nourished.

[1] Visits: Urban 12. [2] Visits: Rural 61. [3] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 79. [4] Report as to the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief: Miss Williams, p. 33. [5] *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

"A large number of the children are fed almost entirely on bread and tea. Very few, if any, children of families in receipt of out-relief get sufficient fresh milk, most get none at all. How many go absolutely short of food it is difficult to say, but the evidence given by the condition of nutrition and intelligence of the children examined leads one to the conclusion that large numbers are underfed as regards the essential food elements, though they may possibly have sufficient bulk."[1]

416. We think that, unless satisfactory conditions in the home can be assured, the children should be maintained in a Poor Law institution or an industrial school; more especially we think that no children should be maintained by out-relief in immoral surroundings:—

"I saw in one instance out-relief children habitually sent out to pilfer in a small way, others to beg, some whose mothers were drunkards or living immoral lives. . . . These definitely bad mothers were but a small minority of the mothers whom we visited, but there were many of a negatively bad type, people without a standard, whining, colourless people, often with poor health. If out-relief is to be given at all, especially where children are concerned, those who give it must take the responsibility for its right use, and to do this there must be close supervision of the homes. The negatively bad mothers spoken of above might in a very large proportion of cases be guided and stimulated by kindly and wise supervision."[2]

417. Great stress has been laid by our Medical Investigator on the need for more medical supervision of all children under the Poor Law, both indoor and outdoor, and this opinion we endorse.[3]

Children of mothers in receipt of outdoor relief

418. We think that in the case of children of widows care should be taken that they get a fair start on leaving school:—

"No board of guardians, so far as my investigations go, takes any interest whatever about the placing and starting in life of boys who have had out-relief, nor does it try to help them to any technical training. In some unions the women guardians help to place the girls in domestic service, and the board generally tries to persuade mothers to send their girls to service For a boy, out-relief stops at fourteen, and he turns to the first job at which he can earn. Most likely this job will be one that leads to nothing. It may be street selling of some kind, it may be an errand or van boy's job. When it is over he finds, or tries to find, another, probably also leading to nothing, and so he drifts on."[4]

419. With regard to the difficult question of the employment of mothers in receipt of out-relief, we do not recommend that in all cases this should be prohibited (*vide* the Glasgow experiment, Chapter VII). But we think that the circumstances in each case should be carefully considered and watched, and that the mothers should not be expected to earn unless satisfactory arrangements can be made for the children:—

"The proportion of mothers employed varies from 92 per cent. in Lambeth to 59 per cent. in Paddington. . . . The children as a rule do not get suitably fed unless special arrangements can be made for them. In 60 per cent. of the cases investigated in which women were employed four days or more away from home, some arrangement was made more or less suitable for the care of them. . . . The children in many cases, even when some provision is made, suffer from lack of care and control, become wild and undisciplined, or worried and anxious, according to their circumstances and temperaments."[5]

420. For many of these children we think that provision might be most satisfactorily made by means of day boarding schools on the model of the day industrial schools. The children at these schools are day boarders, and receive more care and personal supervision than is possible or perhaps desirable in the ordinary elementary school. We understand that in Liverpool and Glasgow such an arrangement is already in force with the day industrial schools[6]; a Committee of our members visited the school at Glasgow, where the children are given three meals a day and ample instruction, for a payment from the parents of 1s. a week. Any objection which might be felt on the ground that the name of the industrial school carries undesirable associations might be met by calling such a school a day boarding school. We think that where necessary schools should be provided at which these children could be taken as day boarders. The relief given to the children in these schools would take the place partly or wholly of the allowance made to the mother, who, if there were no children below school age, would be set free to earn without risk of the children being neglected. When the children are too young to go to school, we think that the mother should not go out to work,

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[1] Report as to the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief: Miss Williams, p. 52. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 86. [3] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 152. [4] Report as to the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief: Miss Williams, p. 87. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 64. [6] L. C. C. Memo: Vol. IX., App. lxxiii.

where it is impossible to provide a sufficient substitute. In this connexion we would say a word on behalf of a class which has been hitherto neglected, the children of widowers. The circumstances make it almost impossible for a widower to engage the services of a housekeeper; he may be averse to re-marriage; and the problem of providing proper care and attention for his children is well-nigh insoluble. Among the many attempts to deal with social difficulties which we found in Glasgow we noticed a "family home" in which widowers could take rooms, and in which common meals and careful attention were provided for the children, whilst the parent was out at work: in the evening he returned and rejoined his family.

421. It will be seen that in this department we are advocating a system of complete supervision and adequate relief which will necessarily involve an increased staff. To some extent we think that the supervision may be carried out by enlisting the services of volunteer agencies; the guilds of help district visiting societies, and health societies might furnish many visitors who would undertake the detailed supervision of out-relief families and report to the official Inspector. When these are not available, no doubt additional officials will have to be appointed, and these in many cases should be women capable of instructing and advising mothers. But we think that to a large extent the increased expenditure in this department should be met by a reduction of the extravagant expenditure at present incurred in many Poor Law schools and homes. A Report from Dr. Macnamara, Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, issued in 1908 includes a table showing the cost per child per week, including establishment and loan charges, in various Poor Law schools and cottage homes in the London District. It varies from 10s. 3d. in the Islington schools and the North Surrey district schools, to 20s. 1d. in the Bermondsey cottage homes. In some places the high cost is partly due to loan charges; but we think that even when these are deducted such figures as 14s. 2d. at the Bermondsey cottage homes and 14s. at the Central London schools are unnecessarily high for maintenance and may be reduced.* Every effort should be made to return to a simpler though not less effective way of dealing with the children for whom an institution life is necessary. It will be long before the burden of debt already incurred in buildings disappears and the very extravagance of the buildings seems to bring with it a heavy maintenance cost; but we do not doubt that, if it is understood the Central Authority is steadily opposed to unnecessary expenditure, the reform may be carried out. Probable increase of expenditure.

422. Meanwhile, we cannot expect to carry out reforms of this character without some increased expenditure. Much might be said for a policy of complete non-intervention in such cases; and we think that, but for the existence of the Poor Law, much of the responsibility might have been assumed by the charity of friends and relations. But there is nothing to be said in favour of a policy which accepts these cases as suitable for Poor Law relief and then neglects to see that any real help is afforded. To a very large extent the money now spent in small doles of out-relief is wasted by reason of its inadequacy; and it will be good economy to spend more in doing effective work.

* The items included in these sums were—(*See* Report on Children under the Poor Law by T. J. Macnamara, Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, 1907, Cd. 3899, pp. 24-5).

Year ended Lady-Day, 1907.	Central London District School.	North Surrey District School.	Bermondsey Cottage Homes.
	Cost per child per week.		
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Provisions	2 2·46	1 10·27	2 11·60
Necessaries	10·77	1 4·67	1 7·47
Clothing	1 3·27	11·34	9·55
Total cost of maintenance	4 4·50	4 2·28	5 4·62
Officers' salaries and wages :—			
(*a*) Administrative staff	3 2·86	2 2·23	3 0·40
(*b*) Teaching staff	8·40	8·58	1 1·17
Officers' rations	2 1·06	11·90	1 5·91
„ uniforms	·93	·17	1·84
Rates and taxes	8·61	4·32	1 0·47
Building (new work)	—	3·61	9·16
Repairs and renewals	1 6·05	3·69	7·45
Drugs and medical appliances	·80	·33	·58
Other expenses	1 3·35	11·41	6·20
Total cost (exclusive of loans repaid and interest on loans)	14 0·56	10 0·52	14 1·80
Loans repaid and interest on loans	1 5·17	2·56	5 11·23
Total cost	15 5·73	10 3·08	20 1·03

Emigration of orphan and deserted children.

423. Our attention has been directed to emigration as a method of dealing with certain classes of children chargeable to the Guardians. It may be well to state briefly the legal basis on which this method of treatment rests, the procedure adopted, the dangers and difficulties of the system, and the results in so far as they can be ascertained.

424. Under the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1850, Boards of Guardians are empowered to procure or assist in procuring the emigration of orphan or deserted children under the age of sixteen years, with the order and subject to the Regulations of the Local Government Board; but no emigration can take place until the child has consented before the Justices and the Justices have submitted to the Board a certificate showing that they as well as the child have consented to the proposal.[1] When these consents have been obtained, the Guardians make application to the Local Government Board stating that they propose to emigrate a certain child through the Roman Catholic Emigration Agency, the Waifs and Strays Society, Dr. Barnardo's Homes, Miss Macpherson's Home, or one of the various well-known emigration agencies. The Local Government Board cause careful inquiries to be made as to the child's physical and mental condition, and, if the case is found to be suitable, the Guardians are required to pay a fee of £10 to defray the cost of regular and systematic inspection by the immigration officers specially appointed for the purpose by the Dominion Government. The home in which the child is placed is chosen by the agency through which the child is emigrated. No payment other than the cost of travelling, etc., is made by the Guardians, and the child is practically adopted under a contract; at thirteen years, wages are paid varying in amount according to the child's usefulness and the generosity and prosperity of the foster-parent.[2]

425. The advantages of this method of treatment are as obvious as are its dangers. If the emigration agency succeeds in finding suitable foster-parents, the child grows up familiar with Colonial life, in healthy surroundings, and is absorbed in the ordinary population; on the other hand, if an unwise selection is made the child has no protection but that of the Inspector, and perhaps the interference of a neighbour, a school teacher, or some other official. Miss Mason, the chief lady Inspector for boarded-out children under the Local Government Board, has impressed on us the dangers involved in this system. In her opinion the Inspectors cannot visit as often as is necessary children scattered over so wide an area as the Dominion. The officers, moreover, are exclusively of the male sex, and are not, therefore, qualified to report as to the condition and treatment of the girls.[3] As the result of her experience in England she urges strongly the need of Boarding-out Committees in Canada to safeguard the children's interests; but it is practically impossible to establish such an organisation.

426. A further objection has been raised by witnesses whose opinions are entitled to careful consideration. It is urged that only the most promising children are selected; that these children can easily find suitable employment at home; and that it is unfair to the least promising children, to the institutions, and to the home country, if only the least promising children remain.[4] In answer to these criticisms, we are of opinion that inasmuch as the Guardians stand *in loco parentis*, they are bound to secure for the children such a start in life as will afford a reasonable prospect of prosperity. As we have already pointed out, Boards of Guardians are adopting in increasing numbers the children of neglectful and unworthy parents. If this well-intentioned effort is to be fruitful in result, the children should, if possible, be withdrawn beyond the reach of the degrading influence of relatives who, as is well-known, become actively concerned in the children's welfare on their attainment of a wage-earning age.[5] In the case of such children, therefore, as well as that of orphan and deserted children, we are of opinion that Boards of Guardians are well advised in taking advantage of this method of treatment. At the same time it is essential that no pains should be spared to secure adequate inspection of the children. The Reports submitted by the immigration officers to the Local Government Board in 1908 shows that the system works fairly well, and whenever an unfavourable Report is received the Local Government Board requires the Board of Guardians which originally was responsible for the emigration of the child, to call upon the agency to provide a new home.

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1 Adrian, 281. 2 Davy, 3479–80. 3 Mason, Vol. I., App. xx. (a) 114. 4 Langley, 28470, (92–101); White, 26408 (46). 5 Williams, 45768; Wayne, 45998, xiii. (e); Zanetti, Vol. IV., App. li. (6); Hertz, Vol. IV., App. xlii. (5).

427. In this connection, our attention has been called to the Children's Farm Home Association farm, established by Mrs. Ellinor Close, situated 15 miles from St. John, New Brunswick. The holding consists of 185 acres, of which 90 acres are highly cultivated, with a good house, outbuildings, etc. Since April, 1903 thirteen boys and girls from six to thirteen years of age have been maintained under the care of two English ladies (one of whom is a trained nurse), and of a farmer and his wife who work the farm and instruct the children; the children attend a local elementary school, taking their place in the ordinary child-life of the district. Both children and farm are under the supervision of a local Committee. The Agent-General for New Brunswick, speaking on behalf of his Government, heartily approves of this institution, and if the supervision be adequate it is, undoubtedly, to the children's advantage to be brought up amid the healthy surroundings of Canadian life.[1]

Relief (School Children) Order 1905.

428. There is one Order in connection with the children to which we must call attention viz., the Relief (School Children) Order issued by the Local Government Board in 1905. The Order is intended to meet the case of underfed children attending public elementary schools. In such cases application may be made on behalf of the child to the Guardians, who, if they consider the case to be one of habitual neglect, are to feed the child and recover the cost from the parent.[2]

429. It would seem that this Order has been put in force in but few places. Where it has, the results have sometimes been striking:—

> "At Birmingham they had 6,000 children who were fed daily during the winter months, but since the Feeding of School Children Order the number has dropped to about 2,000.
>
> To what is that due?—The Birmingham Free Dinner Society, which had been feeding children daily for the past thirty years, ceased to exist after the Order came into force. The other voluntary source for feeding children (which was instituted by Mr. Hookham) is now confined by him to orphan and deserted children. Mr. Hookham is still feeding 1,600 daily, and the Birmingham Guardians 400, so that the number is reduced to about 2,000.
>
> Then the process was this, that the charitable agencies were relieving, and when the order came in they referred their cases to the Poor Law, and when the Poor Law came in they made investigation, and the result was an enormous reduction in the number of children?—Yes. One of the parents of those children was getting nearly £4 a week, and many of them were receiving between £2 and 30s. a week."[3]

Mr. Wethered, Inspector for the District including Gloucestershire, reports:—

> "Up to the end of the year only fourteen cases of necessitous children were treated under the Order throughout the whole of my district, and, of the fourteen, twelve were at Bristol. I do not mean to say that at Bristol there was not a number of applications made. There was a considerable number of applications. I think there were seventy-four cases in the first instance and fifty-five cases came afterwards; up to the week before last no case has been received since January; but of the whole of the cases investigated in Bristol, referred to the Guardians from the education authority, after investigation only twelve were found to be necessitous."[4]

430. It seems clear, from the small extent to which the Order has been put in force, that there is little desire amongst Local Authorities to make the feeding of school children a charge upon the rates.

Poor Law children in charitable or certified institutions.

431. When we turn to the other agencies for dealing with children which have come into operation since 1834 we find, in the first place, a large number of specialised charitable institutions which are intended to meet the needs of special classes of children; such are the training homes for boys and girls, homes for cripples, homes for the feeble-minded and epileptic, convalescent homes, etc. The question arises to what extent these should be utilised for Poor Law children, or how far they should be duplicated by Boards of Guardians amongst their own institutions. In 1862–3 the system was begun of sending children to such of these homes as were inspected and certified by the Local Government Board, and on 1st January, 1908, 7,967 pauper children were in institutions so certified. Another 1,402 were in uncertified institutions, sent by consent of the Board or by direction of the medical officer. Of the boys included in these totals many were on training ships, the total number on such ships, including those on the training ship provided by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, being 903 on 1st January, 1908.[5]

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[1] Close, Vol. IX., App. lxi. [2] Adrian, 246. [3] Herbert, 8524–6. [4] Wethered, 5795.
[5] Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, 1st January, 1908 (H.C. 130), p. xiv.

> "There are also nine training ships, and the Local Government Board encourage the sending of the boys to the training ships very much." [1]

We have here a beginning of co-operation between Poor Law and voluntary charities which might form the basis of a much wider scheme.

432. But in addition to these specialised institutions there have also grown up very large charitable agencies for dealing with poor children generally. These institutions deal to a large extent with the same class of children as the Poor Law; but their work is not always safeguarded in the same way, and there is no attempt at co-operation or at dividing the field of work. The children in these institutions are practically without outside control, and the question arises whether all institutions dealing with children should not be subject to the same supervision, registered as we have proposed in Part VII., and required to co-operate with the public Authority.

Education of Poor Law children.

433. The most important agency which has developed since 1834 is the system of national education, which frees the Guardians in many instances from the necessity of providing special educational facilities for the children under their care. Altogether some 17,785 of a total of 51,102 children in Poor Law institutions were attending the public elementary schools on 1st January, 1907,[2] and have the great advantage of mingling there on equal terms with the children of independent parents. On the other hand, they may miss the more specialised instruction given in some Poor Law institutions, and this objection is strengthened by the fact that children with whom the Guardians have to deal are often greatly handicapped by their antecedents, as well as by the fact that they may be without a parent's care at the critical period of beginning work.

434. The relation of the education of Poor Law children to the general elementary education of the country is a question which has often been discussed, and calls for some attention here. We are decidedly of opinion—and we believe that the same view has always been held by the Central Poor Law Authority—that the education of Poor Law children should be at least as good as that given in the elementary schools, and we believe that in the great majority of cases it is so. We are glad to be able to quote in corroboration of this view from the Board of Education's Report issued in 1908:—

> "The general estimate of their efficiency by the Board of Education's Inspectors amounts to this, that in rare instances Poor Law schools are as efficient as the best public elementary schools and that the average Poor Law schools on the whole compare fairly well with the average public elementary schools."[3]

435. The relation of these schools to the educational authority has varied from time to time. In 1846, Inspectors were appointed by the Committee of Council on Education, who continued to inspect until 1863; after that date the schools were inspected by the educational Inspectors of the Local Government Board. In 1904, it was arranged that the duties of inspecting the educational work in the schools should be transferred to the Board of Education, while the Inspectors of the Local Government Board continue to be responsible for the inspection of the premises and of the general arrangements of the schools.[4] The present position is therefore one of divided control, and no doubt may give rise to some difficulties. It is suggested in the Report quoted above:—

> "That the educational part of the work, which is now done by guardians, would, in the majority of cases, be much more efficiently performed by the local bodies, whose primary function is to deal with schools, and which are, or might be, composed of persons who are interested in and conversant with educational matters." [5]

This suggestion coincides to some extent with the scheme which has been brought before us for transferring the children entirely from the care of the Poor Law to the care of the Educational Authorities. We do not agree with the proposal in either form. We have received evidence from all parts of the country, and especially from the rural districts, as to the incompleteness and unsuitability of the education in public elementary schools in preparing children for their after life. The children under the care

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[1] Davy, 3461. [2] Thirty-sixth Annual Report: Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 388; Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table xvii. [3] Annual Report of Board of Education, 1908, p. 14. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 5. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

of the Poor Law need, and generally receive, much more care and training than is given in the elementary school; and even with it they are handicapped by their poor physique :—

> "With both out-relief and institution children, we are dealing with children of very poor physique; they are under-grown, and a large proportion of them suffer from some pathological condition." [1]

But in spite of this we note that :—

> "Teachers of public elementary schools which are attended by Poor Law children testify to their superior habits of cleanliness and obedience." [2]

436. We recommend that there should be close co-operation between the Education and the Public Assistance Authorities, both central and local entrusted with supervision over Poor Law children. As regards the teachers in Poor Law schools we consider that they should have the same *status* as teachers in the public elementary schools, and that every facility, including pension, should be given them for passing from one class of schools to the other. Proposed co-operation between Public Assistance and Education Authorities.

437. The transference of the children to the Education Authority is sometimes supported by the plea that it is desirable to remove from the children the "stigma of pauperism." We wish to protest against the way in which this term is loosely applied by critics of the Poor Law, without consideration of its justice. It can only mean one of three things: (1) That the person to whom it is applied is disfranchised; (2) that some blame attaches to the person in the mind of the speaker; (3) that the person labours under some disadvantage as compared with others of his class outside the Poor Law. In the first two senses it should be obvious that the term has no possible application to children, and in the last sense it has ceased, as we have seen, in the great majority of cases to be true. The "Stigma of Pauperism" as applied to Poor Law children.

438. Before we leave this branch of the subject we wish to put on record the impression which we have formed of the *esprit de corps*, which membership of these schools calls out. We have seen for instance photographs of groups of non-commissioned officers taken in India, all of whom were members of the same Poor Law school. We have seen and heard of annual gatherings of old pupils, which have been largely attended and greatly enjoyed. In short, abundant evidence is to hand that those educated in these schools carry away with them a memory of happy days spent there, and a real sense of gratitude to the officers, and that they find the membership of the school a bond of union of no mean strength. Results like these are the pride and glory of our great public schools, and it goes far to justify the Poor Law school system that it produces, in a smaller measure no doubt and in humbler form, results of the same kind. *Esprit de Corps* in Poor Law schools.

439. We desire to call attention to the step taken towards placing the business of relief in the hands of the Education Authority by the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906.[3] By this Act the local education authority is empowered, not only to furnish the whole machinery of school feeding at the expense of the rates, but also, if voluntary funds are not forthcoming to provide the food, to obtain authority from the Board of Education to raise a rate not exceeding ½d. in the £ to pay for such food. We think it most undesirable that there should be more than one authority empowered to grant relief out of the rates; and we fear that the Act will have the effect of checking the voluntary work which was being done in this direction. We may quote from a Report, which the London County Council have issued on Underfed Children, the following passage with which we thoroughly agree :— Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906.

> "We have felt grave anxiety lest the provisions of this Act should be so worked as to encourage the demand for meals by the too lavish supply, and lest the sense of duty of parents towards their children should be weakened by this relief from a responsibility which belongs to them, and lest the voluntary contributions of a liberal and sympathetic public should be dried up by the prospect of the application of the ratepayers' funds to meet the expenditure. We have repeated in this Report what we have always maintained, and assert to have been proved by our experience, that all the relief required by necessitous children can be met from voluntary contributions, provided that the organisation for enquiry into want, for collecting subscriptions, and for distributing food, is rendered effective." [4]

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[1] Report as to the Condition of Children in Receipt of Relief, Miss Williams, p. 122. [2] Board of Education Report, p. 18. [3] 6 Edw. VII. Cap 57. [4] London County Council Report of Joint Committee on Underfed Children for the Season, 1906–7, p. 3.

440. We think that, if the failure of the parents to maintain their families calls for further intervention than can be afforded by voluntary charity, they should receive the necessary assistance through the same channel and under the same conditions as other necessitous persons. We have already pointed out how essential a factor in the relief of children is the supervision of the home; and the Education Authority has absolutely no machinery for effecting this. The fact that a child comes to school under-nourished, is a call for a careful and sympathetic inquiry at its home as to the causes of the difficulty. Careful diagnosis will indicate the nature of the treatment required for the removal of the causes of distress. To attempt to alleviate the symptoms without attempting to remove the real cause would be, as has been said, to play with misery and to neglect the child's best interests. We would recommend that the policy and terms of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, be reconsidered in its relation to the relief of distress generally, and that, if relief for necessitous children is required and is not, and cannot be, met from voluntary sources it should become part of the duty of the Public Assistance Committees, which we propose to create, to provide such assistance as may be necessary by way of meals or otherwise. To establish separate relief centres in connection with education, health and sanitation and poor relief seems to us likely to lead to great confusion and much overlapping. It will duplicate and triplicate inquiry; it will prevent the immediate use of the information contained in case papers and available for reference in all matters of relief. It will hinder the introduction of any single and well directed system of friendly visiting and by an unnecessary interference with the work of caring for the poor in connection with one or another form of assistance or friendly visiting, it will frustrate even the best and most considerate attempts to aid those in distress and to prevent distress. The need of voluntary and skilful personal help in relief of all kinds and in many departments of work we fully recognise, and have advocated in a later Chapter of our Report. But to obtain and to utilise this help successfully it is necessary to concentrate and not to dissipate the force at the disposal of the community for such purposes.

Conclusions.

441. Our conclusions on this part of our inquiry may be thus summarised. We condemn the maintenance of children in workhouses, that is, in institutions where there are adult paupers. We believe that the other systems of training, namely, district schools, scattered homes, grouped cottages, boarding-out have given, and will continue to give, under proper supervision, good results. So far as we have been able to discover the children trained and educated under each of these systems do not relapse into pauperism in any appreciable number. Though the results of the grouped cottage system are satisfactory, the cost per unit educated is in many cases far too high and more than should be spent. Boarding-out, we believe, can be developed, and we strongly recommend it should be, but extreme care must be taken to associate adequate supervision with its extension and to ensure the sufficiency of the amount paid. We are of opinion that the children whose parents are in receipt of out-relief require much more careful watching than has hitherto been given to them, both as to the adequacy of their maintenance and the character of their surroundings. We recommend that steps be taken to secure that the children be medically inspected from time to time. We suggest that a system of day-boarding schools for some of these children might, in populous towns, be established much on the same plan as the existing day industrial schools, and that under proper safeguards emigration might be utilised by the Guardians as a method of treatment, in suitable cases, not only for orphan and deserted children, but also for children who have been adopted by the Guardians. We recommend that the power of Local Authorities to adopt and retain children of parents of proved vicious and vagrant habits be more commonly exercised than has been the practice in the past, and that systematic records of the subsequent occupations, calling and condition of all children trained in any of the above institutions be kept by the authority responsible for their training and education.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 8.

(1) *The supervision of children boarded-out within the Union should be placed in the hands of competent women officers, and should be brought under Local Government Board inspection. Special care should be taken when the boarding-out is with relatives, and all such cases should be specially notified to the Local Government Board.* (383.)

(2) *Whilst strongly advocating the extension of boarding-out as far as possible, we do not recommend any relaxation in the care exercised.* (389.)

(3) *In all cases the fullest inquiry should be made into the character of the foster-parents and the suitability of the home before, rather than after, the children are handed over.* (390.)

(4) *In all cases of adoption, no person should be eligible as a foster-parent who does not profess the same religious belief as is indicated on the creed register of the child.* (390.)

(5) *Effective steps should be taken to secure that the maintenance of children in the workhouse be no longer recognised as a legitimate way of dealing with them.* (394.)

(6) *The Public Assistance Authority should have power to keep the children of "ins-and-outs" in institutions, while their parents are detained in a Detention Colony.* (394.)

(7) *Children under treatment for ophthalmia, or some chronic contagious ailment, should not be discharged along with their parents.* (394.)

(8) *Guardians should have power to retain supervision of adopted children up to the age of twenty-one, and in such cases parental responsibility should be more strictly enforced, in some cases by detention in an institution, and, wherever practicable, by charging to the parents the whole or a part of the cost of maintenance of the children; such children, should become the Wards of the Local Authority up to the age of twenty-one; the children whether removed from their parents or left with them, should be kept under supervision; and one of the parents, if found worthy, or some other responsible person should, if willing to act in that capacity, be associated with the Local Authority as the official guardian. Every case in which a conviction is obtained should be reported to the authority by the police.* (396).

(9) *Voluntary agencies should be recognised by the Public Assistance Authority as regards the after-care of Poor Law children, and should report to it; such reports to be entered on a record.* (399.)

(10) *A system of supervision and record such as prevails in the case of children leaving industrial schools and reformatories, should be applied to the children leaving the care of the Poor Law Authorities.* (400.)

(11) *The provision of Homes for boys who leave Poor Law schools to take up work should be undertaken by voluntary agencies.* (401.)

(12) *There should be closer supervision of the condition of children in receipt of out-relief.* (413.) *Care should be taken to ensure that the total income from whatever source is sufficient to afford proper food, clothing, and housing conditions for the whole family* (414), *and the Public Assistance Authority should ascertain that the children are being properly nourished.* (415.)

(13) *Unless satisfactory conditions in the home can be assured, the children should be maintained in a Poor Law institution or an industrial school, and no children should be maintained by out-relief in immoral surroundings.* (416.)

(14) *There should be more medical supervision of all children under the Poor Law, both indoor and outdoor* (417).

Care should be taken that the children of widows get a fair start on leaving school. (418.)

(15) *The employment of mothers in receipt of out-relief should not in all cases be prohibited. But the circumstances in each case should be carefully considered, and watched, and the mothers should not be expected to earn unless satisfactory arrangements can be made for the children* (419); *for many such children provision might be most satisfactorily made by means of day boarding schools. When the children are too young to go to school, the mother should not go out to work where it is impossible to provide a sufficient substitute. Special provision should, where necessary, be made for the children of widowers.* (420.)

(16) *Voluntary agencies should be enlisted for the supervision of out-relief children; when such are not available, additional officials—in many cases women—should be appointed.* (421.)

(17) *The increased expenditure in this Department should be accompanied by a strenuous effort to return to a simpler, though not less effective, way of dealing with the children for whom an institution life is necessary.* (421.)

(18) *In the case of children of neglectful and unworthy parents (adopted under the Poor Law Act,* 1899) *as well as in the case of orphan and deserted children, Boards of Guardians might take advantage of emigration, so long as adequate inspection is ensured.* (426.)

(19) *Consideration should be given to the question whether all voluntary charitable institutions dealing with children should not be registered and subject to the same supervision and be required to co-operate with the public authority.* (432.)

(20) *Children now under the Poor Law should not be transferred entirely to the care of the Local Educational Authorities.* (435.)

(21) *Teachers in Poor Law schools should have the same status as teachers in the public elementary schools, and every facility, including pension, should be given them for passing from one class of schools to the other.* (436.)

(22) *The policy and terms of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act,* 1906, *should be reconsidered in its relation to the relief of distress generally: if relief for necessitous children is required, and is not, and cannot be, met from voluntary sources, it should become part of the duty of the Public Assistance Committees to provide such assistance as may be necessary by way of meals or otherwise.* (440.)

Chapter 9.

THE ABLE-BODIED UNDER THE POOR LAW.

442. We have seen that the Royal Commission of 1832 considered the great problem before them to be the reduction of able-bodied pauperism. In this most difficult part of their task they were constantly confronted by a cry with which we have recently become very familiar—the cry of "surplus labour." The argument is very plausible; there is only a certain amount of work to be done, and the fact that men are out of work shows that there are enough workers without them. There is a surplus of labour, and, since the surplus labourers cannot keep themselves, the community must keep them out of the rates. The line taken by the Commissioners was, that it depended very largely upon a man himself whether there is work for him to do or not; that if the services he offered were worthless to everyone, then he would be "surplus," but that ability and industry were pretty certain to find a market, if not in one place, then in another.

The problem of able-bodied pauperism in 1834: the "surplus labour" theory.

443. The workhouse test was based upon the assumption that the first essential towards being useful is the desire to be useful, and that this desire was being extinguished, by a policy of relief which made life easier for the man whom it was unprofitable to employ than for the man whose services had a real market value. When placed between the alternative of steady work for an employer and a light job for the parish (or even relief without any work), the labourer had chosen the easier course. When placed between the alternative of steady work for an employer and maintenance in a workhouse under strict discipline, he again chose the easier course, and sought for the work he had before avoided. The Commissioners had no wish to drive the poor into the workhouse; had they done so their policy would have been an utter failure. The object was to prove to the country, and above all, to the labourer himself, that his labour still had a real value, and that it rested primarily with him to make that value appreciated.

444. No better confutation of the "surplus labour" theory as advanced in 1834 could be asked for than the plain statement of what happened in some of the parishes where out-relief to the able-bodied was stopped. The Union of Faringdon may be quoted as an instance; it was formed in 1835, the second under the new Act. 'Eighty-seven labourers with families, who for years had been constantly dependent on the Poor Law, were refused outdoor relief in February and March. Not one-half availed themselves of the offer of the house, but immediately found means of providing for themselves. Those who accepted the offer stayed one, two or three days. Only two stayed more than four days.[1]

[1] First Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, App. (B) No. 3, p. 117.

The Assistant Commissioner, reporting five months later, said :—

> "Being anxious to ascertain whether the application of this principle had inflicted hardship upon these men and their families, and whether the denial of outdoor relief had driven them from their own villages to seek an uncertain subsistence elsewhere, I devoted several days, in the parishes to which they belonged, to the purpose of ascertaining their real situations by visiting them at their own homes. I found that of the eighty-five men, seventy-eight were at work in their respective parishes, and two others in the immediate vicinity, and not one of them had his dwelling broken up." [1]

Most significant is the reason given for this apparently impossible absorption of "surplus labour." On inquiry of some of the farmers who had previously represented to him that they had then no means of employing any additional labourers, he received for answer, that the additional employment was now given in consequence of the improved character of the labourers.[2]

445. The labourer, that is, was eager to give value in return for his wages when he could not otherwise obtain an easy maintenance without. Nor must it be thought that he was driven to sell his labour at a lower price; the better services at once commanded a better wage. In all the later reports from the dispauperised parishes, it was stated that wages had risen, and that the amount paid was greater than in the adjacent pauperised parishes.

Effect of the workhouse test on pauperism.

446. There seem to be no statistics available to show the immediate effect of the new policy upon able-bodied pauperism over the country as a whole, although the reports of the Assistant Commissioners afford many descriptions of the way in which pauper labour was absorbed in particular districts. In the Fifth Report there is a table for the Counties of Berks, Bucks, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Lincoln, Norfolk, Somerset, and Suffolk, whereby it appears that, in the year ended March, 1834, the number of able-bodied paupers amounted to 99,896. In the year ended March 25th, 1839, the number had fallen to 35,323. Other classes of pauperism amounted in 1834 to 231,761, as against 134,495 in 1839. The total decrease in the pauper population of these counties amounted to 161,839. The percentage of decrease was 65 per cent. in able-bodied pauperism, and 49 per cent. in pauperism of all kinds.[3]

447. Perhaps the strongest evidence that the reform did not consist in "thrusting poverty underground" and that the labouring classes were themselves the greatest is gainers, found in the impulse which was given to saving among those classes. Already in their First Annual Report the Commissioners say that the number of Friendly Societies since the passing of the Bill had increased by double the number certified in any previous year, while the deposits in savings banks had increased very considerably. In their Fifth Report, they are informed by Mr. Tidd Pratt, that from November, 1837, to November, 1838, there had been an increase of more than 50,000 depositors, and of more than £1,800,000 in the deposits as compared with the year preceding. The proportion of this increase was greatest in the rural districts. The number also of Friendly Societies and loan societies had greatly increased, as had the purchase of Government annuities devised for the benefit of the labouring classes.[4]

448. More difficult of proof, but constantly alluded to, is the improvement in the labourer himself. The knowledge that he must rely upon himself, and his new desire for work, so far from producing subservience, resulted in real independence of spirit :—

> "I have," says Mr. Woolley, an assistant tithe-commissioner, "seen the effect on the poor rates, the character of the population, the improvement of the land—such a change! I have talked with all sorts of persons, of all sorts of opinion on other subjects, and have heard but one opinion on this—that the measure has saved the country."
>
> "I am sick of the pitiful cry attempted to be raised against the measure, and especially at the supposed inhumanity of it. Let any man see the straightforward walk, the upright look of the labourer, as contrasted with what was before seen at every step in those counties. The sturdy and idle nuisance has already become the useful and industrious member of society. No man who has not looked well into human nature, and the practical working of the wretched system of pauperism, can form an idea how different is 6d. earned by honest industry, and 6d. wrung from the pay-table of a parish officer." [5]

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[1] First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 500, 1835, App. (B) No. 3, pp. 117–8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 118. [3] Fifth Annual Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 78, 1839, p. 8. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[5] Third Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, H.C. 546 I., 1837, p. 45.

Able-bodied pauperism in towns.

449. We have described in a preceding Chapter how the Order prohibiting out-relief to the able-bodied was gradually applied to the rural Unions; while a less stringent policy was adopted in the towns. Though the great mass of pauperism was then in the country districts, the problem of town pauperism, as we know it now, was already making itself felt. Even the problem of casual labour at the docks was familiar, and it was subsidised by Poor Law relief then as it is now by charitable funds and Distress Committees.

450. There was a very general feeling that, even if the new policy could be successfully applied in rural districts, it must break down in manufacturing towns where great numbers were liable to be thrown out of employment. It had been the custom in bad times to subsidise the earnings of the workers; this enabled the employer to lower wages, or to set men to work and sell their products at a loss, and this intensified the trade depression. The Commissioners maintained that, though pressure upon workhouse accommodation might occasionally necessitate a different form of treatment, nevertheless the essential principles of administration remained the same both in town and country. Mr. Chadwick gave interesting evidence on this point before a Select Committee appointed in 1838 to inquire into the working of the new law:—

> "In a manufacturing district emergencies may arise in which the workhouse test cannot be applied, and then you will apply, carrying out the principle of the Poor Law Amendment Act, the next best test that can be applied, that being labour by task-work."[1]

451. Such a crisis had occurred early in the history of the new Poor Law at Nottingham. A Poor Law Union had been formed there in July, 1836, during a time of very good trade; the population being entirely manufacturing, and engaged chiefly in the manufacture of cotton, hosiery, and lace.[2] In December of the same year, commercial difficulty began, and gradually the pressure upon the workhouse accommodation became very great. After utilising outside buildings and reopening a workhouse which had been closed:—

> "still the pressure went on increasing; our means were not equal to it, and we found that a great number of people towards October last were applying for relief that were not at all known as paupers; they were not of pauper habits; they were people who had effected some savings, but those savings having become exhausted, they were sunk down to the common level of pauperism. . . . The Commissioners, at once, on my suggestion, relaxed the rule, enabling the board of guardians of the Nottingham Union to give outdoor relief to able-bodied men in return for task-work; that task-work was digging. We obtained permission of the corporation to make a road through a property that had been very much hitherto inaccessible, and we set the men to digging under a surveyor."[3]

Care was taken that the money earned should be less than that earned by the independent labourer:—

> "Or we should have been swamped at once, and have had all the independent labourers upon us."[4]

The distress subsided at the beginning of 1838, without leaving any permanent burden of able-bodied men on the rates.[5]

Relief of able-bodied in times of "special distress."

452. This expedient of meeting times of special distress by a relaxation of the administration has been continued to the present day, with results to which we shall allude subsequently.

> "The modern form of Outdoor Labour Test Order is" says Mr. Adrian, "designed to operate in Poor Law unions to which the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order applies, and in effect authorises a relaxation of that Order on the lines of the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order."[6]

But in towns in which the Regulation Order is in force, it is always open to the Guardians, without any special relaxation, to grant out-relief to the able-bodied, provided that, in the case of males, half of it is given in kind and that the recipients are kept at work.

453. The history of the relief of the able-bodied outside the workhouse under these two Orders is full of interest, and for our present purpose very instructive. What we find (1) Labour yards.

[1] Select Committee, 1838, Chadwick, 67. [2] *Ibid.*, 18. [3] *Ibid.*, 41. [4] *Ibid.*, 56. [5] *Ibid.*, 73. [6] Adrian, 203-4.

is that, where this form of relief with employment is given to meet a genuine and temporary crisis, and where the men are expected and made to give real work, it has answered its purpose well, and has enabled the recipients to tide over the difficult time until they could resume work under normal conditions.

454. But, unfortunately, after the first period of careful administration the tendency has always been for Guardians to allow this form of relief to become permanent, and even to keep a stoneyard always open as a rough-and-ready way of disposing of any able-bodied applicant. When this is the case there grows up a nucleus of loafers, who have found the stoneyard under lax supervision an easy way of earning a scanty living, and who act as a centre of corruption when the crisis does come and the respectable workers are forced to have recourse to the Poor Law.

455. We find this difficulty strongly emphasised in 1870–1, when Mr. Wodehouse reported that in the Metropolis the Guardians were giving orders for the labour-yard for indefinite periods, and that young able-bodied men were becoming permanent habitués of them.

> "In the City of London Union a relieving officer informed me that two young men, perfectly able-bodied, had been working in the labour-yard for more than two years. In Mile End Old Town I was informed that a man, aged sixty-two, had not been absent from the labour yard for seven days in eighteen months. The class of men who are to be found in the labour-yards during the summer months are probably the least deserving class of paupers that could be named, and it is certain that in the case of many of them the labour yard does not act as a sufficient test. In the Parish of ..... Westminster, a week's notice was given a few months ago that after the expiration of that time no further relief in the labour-yard could be given to able-bodied men or women without families. Of the seventy paupers who were discharged under this order, only eight were found to have sought admission into the workhouse."[1]

456. Upon extending his investigations into the country, Mr. Wodehouse found that the labour-yard was being converted into a means of maintaining the farmer's labourers for him, much as in the days preceding 1834 :—

> "In unions in which relief is habitually given during the winter under the Supplemental Outdoor Labour Test Order, the same individuals are, in many instances, found to apply for it winter after winter. In the Gravesend and Milton Union I asked an applicant for relief how he got his living during the summer, to which he replied that he worked for Mr. ——, naming a farmer in the neighbourhood. I then enquired how he lived during the winter, to which he answered: 'I work for the guardians here in Gravesend.'"

457. The difficulty has made itself felt even more strongly in our own time. According to Mr. Davy :—

> "Under the Regulation Order, or under the Prohibitory Order where the guardians have an Outdoor Labour Test Order attached, the guardians may give outdoor relief to able-bodied men under what is known as the stone-yard system, that is to say, the men are given a certain number of days' work in the stone-yard, in lieu of being taken into the workhouse."[2]

And Mr. Bagenal states that :—

> "A labour yard is a thing that has to be very carefully guarded and watched, because there are certain classes of the community who are perfectly willing, for some curious reasons to live on the most ridiculously small wage, so long as it is regular. They can get a regular subsistence out of a labour yard as long as it is there and they can go to it. These sort of people become stereotyped, and unless you can deal with them in varied ways, they will be on top of you all the time."[3]

458. This difficulty arises when the work in the labour-yard is less strenuous or continuous than work outside, and there is a great tendency in this direction :—

> "I myself," says Mr. Davy, "have known men who have been six or seven years in the stone-yard. The Order says that the man shall be kept on work during the time he is being relieved, which would mean he ought to be kept on work for six days a week. Now do what we can—and we have written some very forcible letters on the subject recently—we have the utmost difficulty in preventing boards of guardians giving a man one, or two, or three days a week in the yard."[4]

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[1] Twenty-third Annual Report, Poor Law Board [Cd. 396], 1871, p.33. [2] Davy, 2443. [3] Bagenal, 7662. [4] Davy, 2443.

459. One of the most striking instances of mal-administration of a labour yard is that of Leicester:—

> "An outdoor labour-yard has been opened in this parish for very many years. It certainly has never been closed since 1886."[1]

During the stress in the boot trade the numbers employed in the yard gradually increased:—

> "Yet, in spite of such an increase in numbers this was" says Mr. Walsh "the moment chosen by the guardians to augment the scale of pay and do away with the tasks of oakum-picking and stone-breaking and to reduce the task of wood-sawing. From this date up to the present time the number on the out-door labour test has shown a constant increase as compared with the corresponding periods of the years before; and with the exception of the two weeks when the Leicester Unemployed marched to London, the number has never gone down to anything like so low as previous to the adoption of an increased scale of pay."[2]

Unfortunately the relief was not confined to people of respectable characters, but was given to habitual drunkards and men who had frequently been convicted of crimes.

460. Another unfortunate instance occurred in the St. Olave's Union in 1895, regarding which Mr. Lockwood states:—

> "Before the commencement of the frost, which really put an absolute stop to all riverside labour for nearly two months, they had already opened a stone-yard, and the consequence was that when the real distress came they had on their hands a certain number of undisciplined men in an overcrowded yard, and then on the top of those, they had those who were driven to relief by the severity of the weather. They got a number of persons whom they practically could not control."[4] . . . "It was stated before the Select Committee on Distress that, including supervision, rents, plant and materials, the guardians spent altogether £17,000, bringing the cost of the stone broken to £7 a ton, whereas 5s. or less per ton is the usual cost. It was further stated in evidence before the Committee that the experiment was a great failure, owing, among other things, to the class of men employed; some would have honestly tried to do as much as they could, but were deterred by others."[5]

461. In 1905 a similar experiment was made at West Ham, with very similar results.[6] Mr. Lockwood thus sums up:—

> "If a stoneyard is opened you almost immediately get a considerable number of what one may call the undesirable class, who are quite content to earn just enough to keep them going for the week and no more; and you cause to be associated with them a more respectable class to whom, I think, association of that kind may be regarded as a hardship; in other words it is not deterrent to the class of persons whom you really wish to deter from receiving relief."[7]

Again, Mr. Rusbridge, superintendent relieving officer, West Ham, states:—

> "The effect of labour-yards when applied to such large numbers cannot fail to be demoralising to those who, through stress of circumstances, are driven for the first time to seek parochial relief, the breaking of stones and association with those whom, under any other circumstances they would shun, not being calculated to help them to retain their self-respect."[8]

462. Nothing could be more typical than this history of the labour-yard, of the way in which a form of relief, originated for the benefit of the genuine worker in times of distress, is taken advantage of by the good-for-nothing loafer. When once this has happened (generally as a result of weak administration), either the genuine worker will have nothing more to do with it, or he himself, by forced association with worthless characters, is dragged down to their level. Exactly the same process may be traced in the history of employment relief outside the Poor Law. If this form of relief is to be available for the assistance of genuine workers in times of exceptional distress, it is quite essential that the discipline and standard of work should be kept so high as to exclude the lowest class, and this class must be dealt with in some other way.

463. Nor can the relation of the labour-yard to the industrial world be neglected. In a Return made to us by the Local Government Board, we find that at Crickhowell:—

> "The relief acted to enable the prolongation of the strike which caused the distress."[9]

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[1] Walsh, Vol. I., App. xviii. (13). [2] *Ibid.*, App. xviii. (19–20). [3] *Ibid.*, App. xviii. (28–32).
[4] Lockwood, 13330. [5] Lockwood, 13338. [6] Lockwood, 13341. [7] Lockwood, 4086.
[8] Rusbridge 20415 (ii). [9] Memo. by Local Government Board, Vol. IX., App. xciii.

At Leicester :—

"The certainty of obtaining relief at need in this way operates to prevent men from migrating. At least one market gardener is now reported to dismiss men to the Guardians' farm till he should again require them." [1]

At Northampton :—

"Men actually gave up good outside work to enter the yard, and its closure did not cause distress." [2]

464. But these are not the only difficulties arising out of the relation of the labour yard to the industrial world. There are special difficulties connected with those trades which are carried on by the aid either of the rates or of charitable subsidies. We have had striking evidence brought before us to show that one industry at least has been much affected in this way, and many of its workers driven to seek Poor Law or charitable relief. The Secretaries of the English Firewood Trade Association and of the Scottish Firewood Manufacturers' Association have both given evidence to this effect ;[3] and our Investigators, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Pringle, report that :—

"In the matter of the Firewood Trade there seems little doubt that the competition of charitable societies and Poor Law Guardians is ruining the independent employer." [4]

They quote specific instances, and state :—

"We also had the names of sixteen men who had been compelled to seek parish relief through the reduction of self-supporting employment by charitable trading." [5]

In some places the Guardians are themselves the worst offenders in this way. In Mr. Dye's evidence will be found the case of the Paddington Union, which has a relief-yard for "Unemployed," where seven woodchoppers, who had become unemployed for the reasons complained of in this letter, were set to work at firewood making, and thus placed in the position of pauperising both their industry and themselves. Their employer had been driven out of the market by the competition of the Church Army and was unable to find them work, yet the Paddington Union put them to wood-chopping, sold the produce of their labour at a loss, and thus still further restricted the self-supporting employment of wood-choppers.[6]

465. We are not prepared to endorse all the opinions of those interested in a particular industry, but we think it advisable that, in organising the work of the able-bodied, the Public Assistance Authorities should aim at as great a variety of occupation as possible both in the interests of those relieved and also as minimising the disturbance to the labour market.

(2) Migration and emigration of paupers.

466. Though the labour-yard has been the method generally employed by the Guardians in dealing with the able-bodied outside the workhouse, it is by no means the only method available. As early as 1835 the Commissioners issued two Circulars, in the first of which they offered to migrate families from the congested districts of the South to the manufacturing districts of the North, and in the second called attention to the enactment contained in Section 62 of the Poor Law Amendment Act for promoting emigration.[7] This power of emigration still remains with the Guardians ; and, by the Local Government Act, 1888, power is given to County Councils to borrow money in aid of emigration.[8]

467. The largest number emigrated under the Poor Law would appear to have been in the year 1835–6, when 5,241 persons were sent out at a cost of £28,414. The next year the number fell to 1,112, and continued to decrease in subsequent years. In 1841, 1842, 1843 there is an increase, but the largest number sent is only 1,035.[9] Of late years the Guardians have seldom exercised their powers to send out able-bodied men. A few London Unions have sent small groups of men, but for the most part the emigration undertaken by them is that of children. Even at West Ham, where the congestion of labour has been so great, the Guardians have only just begun to regard the remedy with favour,[10] though this attitude on their part is not due to any reluctance on the part of the people, who indeed are said to be "willing and most anxious" to go. "They would go in swarms," says one witness, "if they had the money." [11]

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[1] Memo. by Local Government Board, Vol. IX., App. xciii. [2] *Ibid.* [3] Dye, 91804–56 ; Hall, Vol. IX., App. cx. [4] Report on Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed since 1886, as a means of Relieving Distress outside the Poor Law, Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, p. 67. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 68. [6] Dye, 91804 (29). [7] History of the Poor Law : Mackay : Vol. III., p. 169, also Adrian, 293. [8] Adrian, 281. [9] History of the Poor Law, Mackay, Vol. III., p. 228. [10] Rusbridge, 20928. [11] Rusbridge, 20930.

468. In the Report of the Local Government Board for 1906–7 a table is given from which we learn that the number of adults emigrated under the Poor Law, though still very small, is gradually increasing. The numbers emigrated to Canada for the ten years ended 1906 have been: 7, 7, 16, 15, 16, 26, 51, 70, 300, 479. The numbers emigrated to other countries are negligible.[1] It is a form of assistance which can be properly afforded only to men of good character and good physique; if those qualities are wanting the emigrant is not likely to succeed even if he pass the health test generally required in the new country.

469. Migration was more favoured than emigration by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834, owing to its lesser cost; and the early years of their rule saw a large migration from the Southern Counties to the northern. Owing to a change in the law under the General Consolidated Order it seems doubtful whether Guardians now have the power to migrate applicants for relief for the sake of improving their position, although they may "remove" them for the sake of saving the rates even to the applicants' own detriment. That excellent work can be done by assisting families to remove from places where there is no demand for their work is shown in the evidence given by Mr. Grisewood;[2] and of late in some districts the Guardians have apparently taken the matter into their own hands.

(3) Work for wages.

470. The unsatisfactory features of work in a labour-yard have always been seen, and have led enterprising Boards to attempt something more healthy and more remunerative. The earliest experiment of which we have record is one made in 1839 by the Chorlton Board. The information given in the Ninth Annual Report[3] of the Poor Law Commissioners is not very clear, but it seems to amount to this: that, in 1839, the Chorlton Board of Guardians, perceiving the increasing badness of the times, and anticipating that spinners and others would be thrown out of employment in large numbers, made an agreement with the proprietor of Chat Moss to let them put labourers to work in reclaiming some 9½ acres of the Moss. The principle on which this was based was not that of providing work at wages for the unemployed, nor yet economy in relief expenditure, but to afford an effective labour test to applicants: "It is the fact that we have work to offer—regular organised, and constant work—that deters the idle and worthless from applying for relief." On this some sixty men were set to work, at a payment of 1s. 6d. per day, the Guardians giving as many days' work as the necessities of the man and his family required, and leaving the men to take any other employment they could get on the other days. The result, as regards the Moss, was that, in two years time, bog which had not been worth 1s. an acre was covered with wheat, potatoes, and turnips not to be surpassed in the best managed farms in the best cultivated County in England, and was estimated as worth £50 an acre. As regards the paupers, the calculation was that, for £176 8s., being "the whole balance of outlay for which there is no apparent return," 385 able-bodied persons had been maintained for a period of a year and three-quarters, "who must otherwise have been relieved at an enormously increased cost without requiring labour in return, to say nothing of 135 positive refusals to work, and the hundreds of idle persons who had been deterred from applying by the knowledge that work would be offered."

471. This successful experiment is of special interest when compared with a similar experiment made by the Manchester Distress Committee in 1906. In Mr. Jackson's Report, he writes:

> "We understand that the large works which were carried out last year at Chat Moss by the Manchester unemployed will be entirely useless, as the land is to be allowed to revert again to its original state, which the peaty soil does very quickly. In the Manchester Distress Committee's Report the amount spent on this experiment is not very clear. Sheds for the men were erected at a cost of £171 8s. 4d., and as 252 men in all worked there in two batches of 100 for periods up to sixteen weeks each, the wages must have been very considerable, possibly over £2,000. At Oldham some few acres of moor were cultivated, and will probably have to be abandoned. The result obtained for an expenditure of some hundreds of pounds will be the growth of £20 worth of potatoes."[4]

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[1] Thirty-sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 402. [2] Grisewood, 37211–27; 37269–79. *Vide also* Abbott, 87178–90. [3] Ninth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 468, 1843, App .A., p. 49. [4] Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed since 1886 as a means of Relieving Distress outside the Poor Law: Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, p. 124.

472. The greatest stress to which the Poor Law has ever been subjected in connection with the able-bodied, was during the cotton famine (1861–4); and the occasion is remarkable for the close co-operation which was effected between the Poor Law and voluntary charity. A fuller account of the measures then taken will be found in Part VI., Chapter 2 of our Report*.

473. There has, happily, been no recurrence of distress equal in extent or acuteness to that occasioned by the cotton famine; but there have been times of crisis in particular industries, such as those consequent upon the recent introduction of machinery in the boot trade, or on the discharges of men at Woolwich Arsenal; there have been recurrent periods of general depression when the number of regular workers out of employment has increased; and in almost every large town there are now a number of the irregularly employed, who tend to be more or less in distress each winter. In so far as the able-bodied have had recourse to the Poor Law under these circumstances, they have received assistance mainly under the labour test, and as we have seen this fails chiefly when, under lax administration, a class of chronic *habitues* is allowed to grow up.

(4) Farms and Farm Colonies.

474. In several instances the Guardians have tried the experiment of taking a farm, and putting their able-bodied to work upon it. In so far as it is successful this plan has the merit of teaching the men something of work upon the land; but it has been found in practice that supervision is difficult, and that the men prefer it to taking up work under the ordinary conditions of the labour market. A member of the Leicester Board tells us:—

> "We have opened a wood yard away from the workhouse, where we have sent from 60 to 120 men, being the lame and others physically unfit to work on the land, to saw, chop, and bundle firewood, at which work we have incurred a great loss, year by year, and have practically shut up all the private firewood dealers in the borough."
>
> "We have also 48 acres of heavy land a mile out of the town, where we have employed the able-bodied men in digging, planting, manuring, and attending to vegetables, tomatoes, etc. Here we have also incurred a very considerable loss."[1]

An attempt was made to draft off some of these men to outside work:—

> "Eleven men were sent at various times between October 16th, 1905, and January, 1906, and of these only four retained their work. I advanced the money for their fares, which was to be repaid 1s. per week. Thirty-two shillings of this was never repaid, in addition to which three of them left their lodgings owing 16s. 6d. between them to the people with whom they had lodged.
>
> The rate of pay was to be 6d. per hour, or 28s. per week of fifty-six hours."
>
> "In April and May, 1906, work was provided by the Water Committee of the Leicester Corporation for twenty men who were on the labour test (at 6d. per hour) laying a new main some miles out of the town. The men were taken out by brake each morning and brought back each evening. These were all picked men many of them general labourers. Two of them refused the work immediately and six were paid off because they were not satisfactory."[2]

475. The Poplar Board has started a farm colony at Laindon to which able-bodied paupers are sent. A Committee of our members visited Laindon and Hadleigh last autumn, and reported as follows:—

> "At Laindon the superintendent was away and we saw his deputy, an intelligent man, very outspoken, and with considerable experience at Poplar Workhouse. We were taken, after seeing a dormitory and some men loafing about in a small day-room, to a large field which was being slowly forked over by thirty men. The greater part of the farm is most unsuitable for the purpose, being a heavy, sticky clay, which is unworkable after rain, so that frequently the men cannot be employed on it, and it is difficult to find any work for them. Sometimes they are put to gathering stones, and a little mat-making is done. There are 150 of them to 100 acres; in summer, when numbers fall, non-able-bodied are sent down to fill up.
>
> "It is a question whether the place should not be broken up at once and the men, so far as able-bodied sent to Hadleigh. The contrast between the two places and their management is very striking. At Laindon the men work an eight-hours' day, and then go where they like: they frequent the public-house in the evening and 'don't often come back drunk.' At Hadleigh discipline is much more severe; the men work ten hours, and are strictly prohibited from entering the public-house or touching alcohol in any form. At Laindon there is one ganger to thirty men;

* Vide also Memorandum on the Poor Law Board 1847–71, Professor Smart.

[1] Islip, 46914 (3 (a) (b)). [2] Kemp, Vol. IV., App. xxv. (B), 1, 2.

at Hadleigh and Ockendon one to eight or ten. At Laindon the work is listless, the men dissatisfied, rebellious and hopeless. At Hadleigh, judging from the men who were seen, the work was done with an energy which was refreshing to observe. The deputy-superintendent at Laindon expected to have the men on and off for the rest of their lives; there were lads of eighteen and nineteen coming there, he said, who learned all the vices of the older men, and would never be permanently off the Poor Law. That alone seemed enough to condemn the place. At Hadleigh it is stated that every man is sent out to a situation either in England or Canada; he is not lost sight of, but is passed on from one branch of the Salvation Army to another. There are possibly more failures than one knows, but the principle of dealing with the individual man and not with 'the unemployed' in bulk is clearly the only hopeful one."[1]

476. A considerable number of witnesses favour the treatment of the able-bodied in a farm colony, partly because of its deterrent effect :—

"Do you think the lot of these able-bodied men at Laindon was less comfortable than in the workhouse?—I do in a sense, from the point of view of the pauper. For instance, they detest being on the land. The greatest difficulty we had was to keep them on the land, they took their discharge and endeavoured to get back to the workhouse."

"I assume your experience is that a form of labour colony with strict regulations would be a real deterrent to this class?—It would, there is no doubt of it."[2]

477. We think that there are many advantages in getting the men away from the towns, not the least being the good effect upon their health. But, so far, the Guardians have had no marked success in this direction, largely from lack of sufficient discipline and supervision and the encouragement which reward gives. If the work is to be really regenerative, it will only be by an almost individual attention to each case; and we have been struck by the different spirit prevailing at voluntary institutions of this kind from that of those under the Poor Law. Discipline is much more strict, harder work is enforced, supervision is closer, but withal there is a spirit of hopefulness and energy.

478. We are aware that past experience does not greatly favour this course; and that the Salvation Army has shown no marked success in dealing with men sent by London Boards of Guardians. But it must be borne in mind that, in dealing with these cases hitherto, there have been no powers of detention, and that, as soon as the pauper began to weary of work, or to find discipline irksome, he was at liberty to take his discharge, and resume his life of loafing. He could even return to the workhouse, and force the Guardians to maintain him there, for although they have sometimes prosecuted such men for wilfully refusing to maintain themselves, the Magistrates have recently refused to convict. Mr. Jackson and Mr. Pringle in their Report[3] quote the following summary from the 1906 Report of the Stepney Guardians :—

"Since 1903, thirteen men have been sent to the colony, with the following results :—

*6	Absconded.
1	Found work.
*2	Left.
*2	Dismissed through drink.
1	Mentally deficient.
1	Still chargeable.
13	

(5) "Sudden and urgent necessity" relief.

479. Another method of relieving the able-bodied outside the workhouse has been by dealing with them as cases of sudden and urgent necessity. This is done sometimes by the relieving officer acting on his own discretion, sometimes by the instructions of the Guardians, acting under Article 10 of the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, which permits them under special circumstances in any case, to depart from the Regulations, and report to the Local Government Board that they have done so. In this way a large number of able-bodied men have, during the last few winters, received relief in certain Unions without doing any work in return, or submitting to any test. A Return handed in by Mr. Lockwood, shows that in the half-year ending Lady-Day, 1906, the number of men so relieved in Camberwell was 781, relieved 2,847 times; in Bermondsey the number of men was 344; while in Poplar, the numbers varied from 172 to 534 per week.[4] Very often the relief is repeated

* Of these 10 men, 6 returned to the workhouse. Of 3 who absconded and 1 dismissed through drink no more has been heard by the Stepney Guardians. The ages of the men who returned to the workhouse were 20, 25, 25, 35, 46 and 50.

[1] Visits: Miscell. [2] Clarke and Barnes, 95363–4. [3] Messrs. Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. , *cf.* also Bailward 78905. [4] Lockwood, Vol. I., App. vii. (Q).

week after week until it becomes practically continuous. This, of course, is reverting to the allowance system, pure and simple. At Poplar in 1904 the Guardians passed a resolution that :—

> "Relief should be given under Article 10 of the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order of 1852 to all applicants except those whom the Committee thought fit to exclude as habituals; that separate books be kept; that cases be reported fortnightly to the Local Government Board that relieving officers give interim relief in every case and that the power of offering the workhouse be taken from them and reserved to the Committee."
>
> "As might have been expected, as soon as the decision of the guardians to grant out-door relief to able-bodied men was known, the relieving officers were flooded by applications, and the weekly value of relief in kind rose in a few weeks from £88 at the beginning of the Christmas quarter, to over £300."[1]

480. It is quite clear that both the clause permitting relief in a case of sudden and urgent necessity, and Article 10, are intended to apply to exceptional cases only, and not to enable Guardians to avoid the use of a labour test.

(6) Modified workhouse test.

481. In 1887, a temporary Order was formulated by the Local Government Board, which is known as the Modified Workhouse Test Order, and which enables Guardians to give out-relief to the family of an able-bodied man, if the man himself goes into the workhouse.

> "It acts as an efficient test of distress, and as a lesson in providence to the man and his neighbour, yet without breaking up the home; that the relief is adequate to the wants of the whole family, and not, as in the case of labour-yard relief, given into the hands of a man who may or may not share it with his family; also, it withdraws from the market superfluous labour which is gradually absorbed again as the demand arises."[2]

482. The suggestion of a modified workhouse test Order came originally from Whitechapel, in which Union, as also in St. George-in-the-East, the practice has been adopted of relieving by private charity the families of the able-bodied men who accepted the workhouse test.

483. That the system contemplated by the Order is capable of abuse was noticed by us in visiting a provincial Union. While attending a Relief Committee we noticed that it was the practice to admit able-bodied men to the workhouse and relieve the families outside, but that, as soon as the families had got the relief, the man would come out to share it.[3]

Difficulty of defining "able-bodied."

484. In describing the methods of dealing with the able-bodied, we have in mind, of course, those who are not incapacitated from work by illness or physical defect. But in attempting to determine the number of these, we are met by the difficulty that there is no generally-accepted definition of the able-bodied, and that statistics are therefore difficult to interpret. The Pauperism Returns of able-bodied paupers include those who are relieved on account of temporary sickness, and it is only within twenty years or so that these classes have been separately distinguished. In the case of both indoor and outdoor male paupers, and of women relieved indoors, they form by far the larger proportion.[4] It is probable that some part at least of the reduction in able-bodied pauperism after 1834 was due to diminution in epidemic sickness. Analysing this class of able-bodied, we find that on 1st January, 1908, there were receiving outdoor relief 16,213 "able-bodied" men. But of these, 12,999 were relieved on account of their own sickness or that of their family; 482 on account of "sudden and urgent necessity," and 2,732 owing to "want of work, or other causes."[5] The figures do not suggest that the number to be dealt with by the Poor Law would be unmanageable under a definite, well-planned and firmly administered scheme.

485. The same difficulty of definition meets us in attempting to estimate the numbers of able-bodied in the workhouse. We can say confidently that the proportion of the inmates of the workhouse *classed* as able-bodied has fallen very much over a series of years :—

> "The able-bodied pauper disappeared very rapidly; for instance in 1842, 38 per cent. of the population of the workhouses were able-bodied; in 1860 the figure had fallen to 15 per cent., and in 1890 to 13 per cent., but unfortunately, in 1905 there seems to be something like a recrudescence of the able-bodied paupers, for the percentage went up to 18."*[6]

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* These proportions appear to include the able-bodied who are temporarily disabled.

[1] Report on Poplar Union [Cd. 3240], p. 23. [2] Lockwood, 13571. [3] Visits: Urban 14 A. [4] Half-yearly Statement of Pauperism, 1st January, 1908 (H.C. 130), p. xi. [5] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 57. [6] Davy, 2305.

486. But we cannot say whether a man who was classed as able-bodied fifty years ago would be so now, nor, indeed, whether a man classed as able-bodied in one Union to-day would be so classed in another. The indoor paupers classed as able-bodied are practically those to whom the Medical Officer assigns a certain diet.

> "What is an able-bodied pauper is still in doubt. We first of all exclude those who are sick but of the remnant, how many are men who actually are able to do a day's work and earn their own living we do not know." [1]

487. On 1st January, 1908, the number of indoor able-bodied male paupers in health was 11,413, and the number of healthy able-bodied women in receipt of indoor relief was 9,147.[2] On 1st July, 1907, the numbers were respectively 6,914 and 7,350.[3]

488. An interesting Return has been made by Mr. Wethered, Inspector for the West Midland Counties of England, of the number of males under sixty years of age in the workhouses of his district, able, mentally and physically, to earn their living. Out of 6,079 male inmates for the week ending December 11th, 1905, only 216 were able-bodied in this sense; more than half of these were in town workhouses.[4] In country workhouses it is very exceptional to find any who are able-bodied in this sense.[5] But some of the larger town workhouses show a growing tendency to attract able-bodied men, and are ceasing to have a deterrent effect. A Return obtained of the number of men in London workhouses on January 1st, 1906, considered by the masters to be able to do a full day's hard work showed 1,457 or 37·2 per cent. out of a total so-called able-bodied of 3,919.[6]

Decreased deterrence.

489. It is a condition of things which seems inevitably to arise in a large general workhouse. Mr. Lockwood says:

> "Particularly if it is an overcrowded workhouse, it is impossible to prevent the able-bodied class sharing in the comfort, and I may say the luxuries, of the older ones . . . you cannot prevent that class finding the condition of life in a mixed workhouse, such as, as a matter of fact, they are not entitled to, and which they ought not to share in." [7]

Another witness, speaking of the Marylebone Workhouse, says:

> "I do not think the present condition of things in the workhouse is satisfactory. The master tells me that the association in large numbers in the able-bodied blocks becomes an attraction; and it appears to me that some method of breaking up such associations, accompanied by systematic training under healthy conditions, would be advantageous.[8] . . . The master feels very strongly that what the men require is to be given continuous work, which they are able to do, and to be separated the one from the other. He regards the workhouse as a kind of club-house, in which they put up with a certain amount of inconvenience, but have very pleasant evenings." [9]

Another witness who has been in close contact with this class for many years, says:—

> "The pauper in the workhouse intends to be there; he is either going to be there or in some other institution all the days of his life. My experience is that the average have been in from ten to twelve years, and some of them nineteen years, and they are young men now."
>
> "The workhouse is no deterrent to any man. The workhouse simply harbours them, and as long as the workhouses exist, these men will exist.
>
> "That is your experience, not only fromPoplar, but from elsewhere?—That is my experience of fourteen years, not only in Poplar, but in the provinces, in large provincial towns."
>
> "Would you say from your experience that that is one of the defects of the present system of Poor Law administration that the workhouse is not a deterrent?—It is not. I say my experience is that it does not matter whether trade is good or bad, it is immaterial. When trade was good, and there was the Boer War and the Coronation, we had the same class of men in the Poplar Workhouse; it makes no difference whether trade was good or bad, they were still there. It is simply a kind of thing that grows and gets into the bones, and it will take years to get it out; it wants a moral and mental instructor. It is like taking a child by the hand and teaching it to walk, to get those men to work properly and be independent." [10]

Absence of "call-over" of inmates.

490. It is probable that a certain number on their first entry into the workhouse were in bad health, and have been restored by the regular life and good food. But in a large workhouse, in the absence of any regular call over, an inmate once admitted is practically lost sight of; and if he has come to like the life may remain there undisturbed for as long as he chooses. Or he may, at his pleasure, go out for a time and return when he likes. In this connection we wish to draw attention

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1 Davy, 3193. 2 Half-Yearly Statement of Pauperism, 1st January, 1908 (H.C. 130), p. x. 3 Half-Yearly Statement of Pauperism, 1st July, 1907 (H.C. 108–1), p. vi. 4 Wethered, Vol. I., App. xi. (a) (62–3). 5 Davy, 1939; Wethered, 9210. 6 Statistical Appendix, Part II., par. 97. 7 Lockwood, 13874. 8 Morris, 16624 (13). 9 Morris, 16686. 10 Clarke, 95353; 95361–2; 95365.

to the experience of a Metropolitan Board of Guardians, who have reported to us the result of a call-over of the inmates of their workhouse. The Committee appointed reported that there were fifty able-bodied men and fifty-three able-bodied women in the house; that:—

"In a large number of these cases there did not seem to be any tangible reason why they were in the workhouse at all.

"Every conceivable excuse was made as to the reason of becoming chargeable, but your Committee regret to say that the only opinion which could be formed, as the result of inquiries, was that many were in the workhouse simply through improvidence and drink.

"Many admitted they had done no work for years; in fact, could not give the date or place where they last worked—many of this class were so reduced in physique on admission that they could not be classed as able-bodied, but with the regular diet and absence of intoxicating liquors they rapidly recovered; but, unfortunately for the worst classes, the conditions of the house appear to be conducive to their disinclination to shift for themselves.

"Upon such cases again coming before the Committee it was found that several inmates, who appeared to be quietly settling down for the remainder of their lives, had awoke to the fact that the guardians were making investigations, and had taken their discharge; also several who had not been out for months had discharged themselves; but, failing to find work, had been re-admitted.

"That your Committee impressed on some of the inmates that the workhouse was not a home of rest, and that it was their duty, should they fail to find work on the first occasion of going out, to try again and again until they succeeded.

"That your Committee were very much struck with the number of men who, when their wives died, seemed to lose all energy for work, and came into the workhouse; also the number who, when their wives refused to keep them any longer, and, as some openly expressed it, 'the wife turned me out,' came to settle down in the house—in many cases drink and laziness were found to be the cause of the wives' action.

"Although the Chairman of the Committee pointed out to these men that work was better than idling, it is very doubtful if the good advice will have any permanent effect.

"In connection with this matter your Committee think it might be of interest to the Board to know the result of accommodating homeless men who have evidently decided not to work for their living, but settle down in comfort in the workhouse—to the casual wards. . . . Of the forty-eight cases ordered to be transferred, twenty-six did not go, but preferred to look for work, and have not been heard of since. Of the remainder, the number of admissions to the wards since are given:

Men - - -	8	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
Times admitted -	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	22

thus showing that if the conditions under which these men are maintained are too comfortable there is no incentive to seek work, but the moment some of the comforts are withdrawn the effect is to make them dissatisfied, and they then think it is time they sought work.

"Before your Committee decide upon this mode of dealing with the able-bodied habitual inmate, they ascertained that the system had been in force for some years at Islington Parish and other places in the Metropolis, had been found to be a great deterrent, and from the statement above it would appear that the system has been a great success in this union, as many men who for years had regarded the workhouse as their home are not now chargeable."

The Committee recommended:—

"That a call-over of the able-bodied inmates of the workhouse be held quarterly (in the same manner as the committee with reference to Parents in District Schools, etc.), so that inmates who, in the past, have quietly settled down in the workhouse may be frequently brought before the committee, with the view of inducing them to take their discharge and seek work." [1]

491. This periodical call-over is recommended by other witnesses,[2] and is, no doubt, essential to the proper administration of any institution, but having regard to the deteriorating effect of the workhouse upon its inmates we think also that every effort should be made to prevent them from entering in the first instance. Two of our members who visited a Relief Committee of this same Union report:—

"We were struck by the way in which young and able-bodied men and women, both with and without families, were admitted into the house as a matter of course, and with very little inquiry. The Chairman told us that there is nothing deterrent about their workhouse, and seemed to think the Guardians had no power to make it so. There is no test of work, and inmates are better off and more comfortable than outside. The consequence is that in every department they are overcrowded." [3]

492. We gather from this that reference to the casual ward only takes place after inmates have already degenerated into habitual paupers, and we think that if, in the first instance, more trouble were taken to inquire fully into each case, some, at least, might be saved from entering at all: while the others should at once be referred to an institution specially adapted to them, and not to a "general" workhouse.

[1] Vol. XI., App. . [2] Morris, 16837, *c.f.* par. 211. [3] Visits Met., 112.

493. It is to meet this problem that the institution of special test workhouses, to which the able-bodied only shall be sent, is strongly recommended by some witnesses :[1] "Test" workhouses.

> "I think," says Mr. Davy, "that in all large urban communities you must have a test house where you can have task work for the able-bodied loafer. . . . If you do not have a test house, you will have your workhouse crowded up with loafers, and you will have no means of keeping in check that class of the population who positively prefer an institutional life, if it is given under anything like tolerable conditions."[2]

One such workhouse was in use for London Unions at Poplar from 1871 to 1881, and one at Kensington from 1882 to 1905; since that date and until very recently there has been none for London, and there are not more than two or three in the provinces. Some few Boards, *e.g.*, Greenwich, have special workhouses for the able-bodied.

494. The following recent letter from a Metropolitan Board of Guardians to the Local Government Board is illustrative of the need of strict measures to be taken with the dangerous class which is growing up in the workhouses.

> ". . . The Guardians desire to call your earnest attention to the state of things prevailing at the workhouse. In spite of leave of absence granted frequently and continuously to men with families chargeable, there are at present (summer time), a great many young vigorous men, who ought to be out at work, and maintaining their families. From the figures hereafter quoted, the Guardians doubt whether the privilege as to leave has had a beneficial result. It will be seen that the men returning to the workhouse and those absconding represent a greater percentage to those who found work. Further, in regard to some of the men, the Guardians cannot but observe that there is a spirit amongst them, which it is feared, at any time, might break out into open mutiny. A short time ago the porter at the workhouse was nearly killed in the street through a sudden attack made upon him, doubtless by someone who had been an inmate, and at the last meeting of the Committee another man was not only rude to them, but, in their opinion, refractory. But the magistrate, before whom he was charged, dismissed him with a caution. This man, on being refused further leave that day, defiantly said he would get it somehow. Under these circumstances the Guardians feel compelled to request your Board to take steps to provide some remedy, and they suggest that labour colonies or a workhouse test house should be provided for the class of men referred to, who, in their opinion, are lazy and quite satisfied if they can only get leave out of the workhouse without their families. A very great loss has been felt since the abolition of the test-workhouse at . . . . and the Guardians have been placed at a further disadvantage in consequence of the Church Army having been unable to receive inmates for a considerable time. The Board are aware the workhouse is antiquated, and it is extremely difficult to maintain proper discipline, when it is overcrowded or even full up to its number."[3]

495. A Committee of the Commission visited this workhouse and report :—

> "This house is too cramped for dealing effectively with the class of inmates sent there. More space and more work seem to be required, and space could only be secured at reasonable cost by going further afield. It is another example of the futility of attempting to deal with the able-bodied class in such an institution. They are not dealt with as able-bodied men should be; they are housed! The best is made of the accommodation and of such facilities for employment as exist, but the inmates cannot be said to be undergoing disciplinary treatment, nor training in industrious habits, nor are they engaged in useful employment, nor is the treatment deterrent. The inmates may find it convenient to go in and out at will—and this, we think, is the only advantage of an institution for this class in such a situation."[4]

496. A similar state of things was found by us in another able-bodied workhouse in London :—

> "The most lamentable feature of the . . . workhouse was the inadequacy of the work provided for the inmates. Three-fourths of the men found in the 'smoke-room' and 'reading-room' were equal to some work, and that they were occupied as they were at mid-afternoon was deplorable. . . . . The master prepared a remarkably interesting report for the guardians in April last on the provision and supervision of the work provided for the inmates. He made certain suggestions as to the provision of additional workshop and laundry accommodation and the strengthening of the supervising staff. From statistics he had prepared relating to sixteen workhouses in London it appears that the average number of men under sixty (exclusive of sick) to each officer is about thirty. In . . . the average is seventy-seven. The following extracts from this report condemn the existing system of administration at this house in such unmistakable terms that they are worth repetition :—
>
> "The behaviour of the inmates on the whole is as satisfactory as can be expected under the circumstances, but the majority of men under sixty years of age do not miss an opportunity of shirking work and require more supervision in every respect than it is possible to give them with the present staff, and that is why so many prefer a comparatively easy life within the walls of the workhouse to earning, by honest labour, an honourable living outside. It is characteristic of many men to accept the thing that requires the least effort, no matter how loathsome and degrading it may appear in the first instance, and it is within the knowledge of every practical and observing workhouse official, and many guardians too, no doubt, that when a man enters the workhouse, no matter in what station of life he has previously been, or for what cause or forced

[1] Bushell, 23947–50; 23975–7, Scovell, 24700, Ingledew, Vol. v., App. xxvii (15); Lockwood, 4142, 13238. [2] Davy, 2365. [3] Visits Metropolitan, No. 119. [4] Visits: Metropolitan, 119.

circumstances he may have been compelled to enter, in many cases, in fact, one fears the majority of cases, he seems to lose selfreliance and respect and, above all, that manly and independent spirit without which he is greatly handicapped. Especially does this occur as time goes on and he gets used to the new state of things. Every day he is in the workhouse his chance of again earning his living outside is less hopeful. Therefore, the only practical way, as well as being the greatest kindness to the man, is not to allow him to settle down in the first instance if it can possibly be avoided." [1]

Inquiry into physical condition of inmates in certain English workhouses and Scottish poorhouses.

497. We call attention here to an inquiry which we have caused to be made into the physical condition of the able-bodied male inmates of certain Scottish poorhouses, and English workhouses and labour-yards. The object of the inquiry was partly to enable us to compare the results of the different methods of dealing with applications from the able-bodied in the two countries, and partly to ascertain the actual physical condition of the able-bodied. With regard to the first point :—

"With very few exceptions in England the pauper is admitted on a provisional order signed by a relieving officer. In giving this order, the man's physical condition is not considered, unless he applies for relief on the ground of illness. In Scotland, the pauper is admitted on an order signed by the Inspector of Poor, but this order is given only after a medical man has certified that the applicant is not in good health." [2]

498. Once admitted into the workhouse in England, the pauper is usually left undisturbed, the Guardians seldom exercising their power of discharge. In Scotland, on the other hand, it is usual to have a more or less methodical revision of the inmates of poorhouses, and to discharge those whom the Medical Officer certifies to be healthy and able-bodied.[2] In England, again, the able-bodied inmate is worked harder; while in Scotland the man who is discharged frequently returns after a few nights.[3] In comparing the two systems, Dr. Parsons sums up :—

"(1) I am of opinion that the population of the ordinary Scottish poorhouses is in all respects exactly similar to the population of the ordinary English workhouse.

"(2) The class known as 'turn-outs' or 'tests' in the Scottish poorhouses is exactly similar to the able-bodied class in English workhouses.

"(3) The system of refusing admission to the poorhouse except on a certificate of ill-health and the system of discharging the able-bodied from the poorhouses probably has some effect in reducing the number of able-bodied relieved in the poorhouses. The English system of placing the able-bodied upon hard and unpleasant work has probably an equally deterrent effect." [4]

499. With reference to the condition of the inmates, Dr. Parsons classified those whom he examined as follows :—

"*Class A.* includes all men physically and mentally capable of supporting themselves This class was sub divided into three :—

"*Class A.* (1).—Strong, healthy, and able-bodied men capable of doing a full day's ordinary labouring work. 'The proportion of these in the different institutions varied greatly. In Southampton labour-yard there were only three out of thirty-eight examined, while in Plymouth labour-yard there were twenty out of fifty. In Tame Street (Manchester) able-bodied workhouse there were forty-four out of eighty examined, and in Bradford General Workhouse seven out of ninety-six.'

"*Class A.* (2).—Men not so strong or robust as those in Class A (1), with occupations of a character not requiring much strength and capable of doing a full day's work at such occupations. This class includes such men as clerks, shop-assistants, painters, etc.

"*Class A.* (3).—Men capable of doing a full day's hard work, but suffering from some defect rendering it difficult for them to obtain work. . . . . .

"*Class B.*—Men suffering from some deformity or physical or mental infirmity greatly interfering with their obtaining continuous employment, but capable of doing a great deal of work and of partly maintaining themselves. . . . . .

"*Class C.*—Men suffering from some physical or mental defect rendering it impossible for them to support themselves." [5]

500. Of the last three classes Dr. Parsons says that many of them

"are deserving of great sympathy, and one feels that the workhouse, as at present constituted, is not the right place for them. It is obvious that a man who is very deaf, or who is dwarfed in stature, may be willing and anxious to work, but experience very great difficulty in getting employment. Many of those classed under the head A. (3) complained bitterly of the difficulty they found in getting work because they looked old. These, together with many suffering from such physical defects as deafness, impaired eyesight, or slight lameness, blamed the Employers' Liability Acts for the increasing difficulty they found in getting work." [6]

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[1] Visits: Metropolitan, 118. [2] Report on the Physical Condition of the Able-bodied Male Inmates of certain Scottish Poorhouses and English Workhouses and Labour Yards; Dr. Parsons, p. 8. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 9. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 14. [5] *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

501. One fact brought out by the examination, which has to be borne in mind, is the inferior physique of most of the workhouse inmates :—

> "Although . . . . . all those classed in A. (1) were fully capable of doing laborious work, and mentally and physically able to maintain themselves, a comparison of the averages of the physical measurements taken with the standard averages of the 1883 Report of the Anthropometric Committee of the British Association reveals some very striking and serious facts . . . . the best of the work-house inmates I examined, taken as a whole, are physically worse developed than the worst of the ordinary population. . . . . Notwithstanding these results, however, the fact must not be lost sight of that every workhouse and every poorhouse visited contained a number of men in every way as well developed physically as the average of the general population."[1]

502. Perhaps the most difficult section of the able-bodied are those known as the "ins-and-outs." It is not too much to say that this class has been created by our administration of the Poor Law, while the law itself affords no means of checking it now that it has come into existence. They are the men and women who frequent the workhouse for short periods, often taking families with them, and are constantly taking their discharge. They go out when they want more licence, and return when they need to recruit themselves after a debauch.[2] The mode in which we manufacture this class is graphically described by the master of the Bethnal Green Workhouse :—

> "This class of man is well known to the master of every London workhouse as the able-bodied loafer. As a rule, he is a strong, healthy fellow, knowing no trade, evincing great dislike to work, and possessing all the attributes of the soft-shelled crab, willing to live upon the fruits of the labour of the worker, so long as he can avoid the sharing of responsibility himself.
>
> There is no doubt that the moment this class of man becomes an inmate so surely does he deteriorate into a worse character still. Unless rigourously dealt with and made to work under strict supervision, he has a fairly good time in the House and after a month or so he has mastered every trick of the trade, and becomes a confirmed in and outer, taking his day's pleasure by merely giving the necessary notice, returning the same evening more contented than ever with his lot in the House. Something for nothing is degrading the man, until all the manhood has left him and their remains for the ratepayers to keep an idle, dissolute remnant."[3]

503. At the Marylebone Workhouse there are no less than 300 of these every week,[4] and many Boards of Guardians have a list of paupers on "long notice," *i.e.*, paupers who, having discharged themselves frequently without sufficient reason, are liable to detention for a maximum period of 168 hours, after having given notice to quit the workhouse. We have already explained (*vide* Part IV., Chapter 5, par. 206) the powers of detention which the Guardians possess under the Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act, 1871, and the Amending Act of 1899. But that this power is not always exercised when it might be, is shown by the fact that many of these people are in and out far more than fifty-two times in the year; while those who are on the list make a practice of giving notice directly on admission, so as to be free to leave as soon as the week is up. Many of them are perfectly capable of earning a living when they refrain from drink. Mr. Bagenal says :—

> "The able-bodied inmates of modern workhouses are, as a rule, very few. It is only in large centres of population where they appear in considerable numbers. The Sheffield Union is, perhaps, troubled more with this class than any other union in my district. I recently obtained from the master of this workhouse a Return showing all the admissions and discharges at the test house of the workhouse for the year 1903. The total number of admissions was 5,066, and the total number of discharges 5,072. The master states that this class gives infinite trouble. They have no fear of prison; in fact, many of them prefer it, and state that the work is not so hard and the food better. Many of them have got good trades, such as fitters, plumbers, puddlers, ironworkers, etc., and could earn from £3 to £4 a week if they chose. They prefer to go into the workhouse, where, however, they only work under compulsion, and give all the trouble they can to the officers. The master furnished me with a list of fifty-six men, ranging from the age of seventeen to fifty-two years, who are either now or have been frequently inmates of the workhouse test house, and have been sent to prison on various occasions."[5]

Children of "ins and outs."

504. In the Appendix to the First Volume of the Minutes of Evidence will be found a summary, giving the number of habitual "ins-and-outs" who are on the long-notice list in London; there are 908 adults and 217 children.[6] Through these children the evil is being perpetuated to another generation, for they get no chance of education, while they become habituated to constant appeals to the Poor Law and lack the advantages of either home or school life. To make the position clear, it may be pointed out that, except in special circumstances, parents are not allowed to leave their families in the workhouse when they go out, as it is felt that many might otherwise take this means of getting

[1] Report on the Physical Condition of the Able-bodied Male Inmates of certain Scottish Poorhouses and English Workhouses and Labour Yards; Dr. Parsons, p. 13. [2] Davy, 3956–9. [3] Bushell, 23944 (4-5).
[4] Morris, 16622 (12), 16792. [5] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (A) (67). [6] Lockwood, Vol. I., App. vii. (T).

rid of the burden of maintaining them. Hence each time one of these "ins-and-outs" enters and discharges himself, it means that his children, if he has them, go with him.

505. The Wandsworth Guardians have submitted a memorandum on the subject in which they say :—

> "From a Return prepared by the matron it would appear that during the last twelve months 422 children were sent to the school and 310 brought back, to be discharged to parents, etc., at a cost of £58 1s. 2d.; and the guardians feel that it is simply useless to try to educate children when parents have the power to claim them the moment they are sent to the district school."[1]

506. The Alton Board of Guardians cite the following case :—

> "Marshall has recently been allowed out in search of work, leaving his wife in the union with some of the children, others being at the district school at Crondall. Marshall did obtain work, but the guardians could not get anything from him for the support of his family, and on the guardians calling on him to take his wife and family out he, Marshall, came into the union again. Marshall has now, and avowedly to spite the guardians, taken his discharge with his family on a certain day (and this has necessitated sending to Crondall for three of his children), and has on the following day come back with his wife and family and applied and obtained admission again to the union, and has stated that unless he is allowed to go out leaving his wife and family chargeable he will repeat this performance at frequent intervals.
>
> "As the children have to be sent back to Crondall school and this, independently of other matters, puts the guardians to considerable expense besides being defied in the manner above mentioned by Marshall, and it is under these circumstances that I am directed to ask your Board to kindly advise the guardians as to what they can do under the circumstances."[2]

507. Another case was cited in a Question asked in the House of Commons on November 5th, 1906 :—

> "Mr. Leif Jones: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the case of an able-bodied pauper named Tasker, who, with his wife and three children is at present an inmate of the Malton Workhouse; whether he is aware that, in the last twenty-five years, Tasker has been twelve times convicted of various offences: that he and his wife were, in 1903, sentenced to four months imprisonment for cruelty to their children, and before that date they had drawn insurance money on the deaths of five of their children at the ages of fifteen months, twelve months, ten months, eleven months, and nine months respectively; that, since September, 1905, Tasker and his family have been in the Malton Workhouse for forty-three and a half weeks, and that, when not in prison or in the workhouse, Tasker and his wife wander about the country dragging their children with them; whether he is aware that the Malton Guardians are anxious to prevent the children from growing up into pauper vagrants like their parents, but are afraid to adopt them, because, if they do so, Tasker and his wife will leave the workhouse relieved of all responsibility for their maintenance; and whether in view of this and similar cases, he will introduce legislation to prevent parents from deriving profit from the death, through systematic neglect, of insured children, and also to confer upon boards of guardians greater powers of detaining and otherwise penalising parents who illtreat and neglect their children.
>
> "Mr. John Burns: The Guardians of the Malton Union have written to me on this subject They do not give all the particulars stated in the question respecting Tasker and his wife, but I should gather that the case is one in which in the interest of the children it is desirable that their care and control should be taken over by the Guardians. I may point out that where this course is adopted the parent is not thereby relieved from liability to contribute to the maintenance of the child. . . ."

508. The cost to the ratepayers is, of course, the least part of the evil. The injury done to the children is incalculable, and painful instances have been brought before us of young lives which have been ruined in this way.[3] We have also had many opportunities, in visiting workhouses and schools, of seeing how terribly neglected and backward the children of this class are, and how impossible it is for teachers to make any lasting impression during the few days or weeks that the children are under their care. Nor is the evil confined to them only, for in the great majority of Unions there is no separate provision for them, and they act as a retarding influence upon the others.

509. This question of the children is, to our minds, the culminating argument in favour of much stronger methods in dealing with this class. It is a disgrace that they should be allowed to live such a life themselves at the public expense; it is far worse that they should be allowed to force such a life upon their children. It is clear that the Public Assistance Authorities should have power to retain these children under their care; but that they should, at the same time, have power to take proceedings

[1] Vol. XI., App. [2] Vol. XI., App. [3] Poole, 33886–8.

to secure the detention and training of the parents in a suitable institution or colony until they are prepared to maintain themselves and their families outside.

Proposed detention of "ins-and outs."

510. We have received an overwhelming amount of evidence, from people of all shades of opinion, in favour of greater powers in respect to the treatment of the able-bodied loafer; and for the most part it is the power of detention which is asked for.[1] There are many reasons why this is needed. In the first place, it is the possibility of going in and out of the workhouse at his pleasure, treating it as his hotel, that forms the attraction to able-bodied loafers. We think that many of them, if they understood that they were liable to be detained, would cease at once to use it as a convenience, and find the means to live outside.

511. A certain number of the "ins-and-outs" are well known to be feeble-minded; and in their own interest, as well as that of the community, it is essential that they should be detained in suitable institutions.

> "In both England and Scotland the workhouse shelters a number of men whose mental capacity is below the average. These men are constantly taking their discharge from the workhouse and returning to it, managing to pick up a precarious livelihood outside for a few days at odd jobs. I find in my notes records of twenty such cases in Scotland, and twenty-three in England. It would be difficult to deal with most of these cases under the Lunacy Acts, and yet it is desirable both in their own interests and in the interests of the community that it should be possible to obtain powers of compulsory detention in their case. The life of some of them alternates between prison and workhouse with short intervals of liberty. One case which specially struck me was that of a man in an English workhouse who had just completed a twelve month's term of imprisonment for an unnatural offence. Most certainly this man's place was neither prison nor workhouse, but an imbecile asylum, though it would probably have been difficult to get a Justice of the Peace to sign the order for detention."[2]

512. These cases, both male and female, are fully dealt with by the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, whose recommendations we hope will be carried into effect.

513. Some of the "able-bodied," again, are incapable of maintaining themselves permanently, owing to want of discipline, application or skill. For these some provision is necessary, by which they would labour according to their strength and support themselves as far as possible. We think that by better organisation more varied work might be furnished, and their labour made more productive in supplying the needs of the institution to which they are admitted.

514. A considerable number of those frequenting Public Assistance institutions are confirmed drunkards and persons leading immoral lives, who come to be cured of the diseases they have brought upon themselves, which return as often as they leave. For these also there should be power of detention after their incapacity to lead a decent life has been proved. We fully recognise that these powers must be very carefully guarded, and that they are open to abuse; but the evils to be met are so grave, and the impossibility of checking them at present so obvious, that we are convinced that the risk must be taken.

515. On the other hand there are certain cases, such as those quoted by Mr. Bagenal, of paupers well able to work if they choose. In all such cases we think that relief should be given in an institution only, and that cases of persistent idleness should be referred to a detention colony under the Home Office (*Vide* also Part VI.).

Attempts to deal with able-bodied outside the Poor Law.

516. During the last twenty years, the prevailing tendency has been to attempt to deal with the able-bodied in some way outside the Poor Law. We deal at length under Part VI., Chapter 3, with these movements. They were started in the belief that the methods of the Poor Law are inadequate or unsuited to cope with distress of the able-bodied and need to be supplemented by other agencies. Whether such extraneous help is necessary, is a question we will consider further, and answer in a subsequent Part of our Report.

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[1] Chance, 27061 (60); Millward, 18607 (12a); Fleming, 9542; Jenner-Fust, 11244–5; Cooper, 36696–8; Thompson, 22597; Edwards, 23853–5; Elkerton and White, 26407 (29); Bushell, 23945 (28a), etc., etc.

[2] Report on the Physical Condition of the Able-bodied Male Inmates of certain Scottish Poorhouses and English Workhouses and Labour Yards: Dr. Parsons, p. 7.

Conclusions.

517. We will now sum up the situation as it exists at present. Speaking broadly, what we find is a multiplicity of agencies dealing with a class which is sometimes called able-bodied, sometimes unemployed, regardless of the fact that this class is not really a class at all but a heterogeneous mass of men with no characteristic common to all of them. They are very far from being all of them able-bodied, as we have seen; they are not even all unemployed, in the sense that employment is a thing they want but cannot get. The honest, the criminal, the unfortunate, the strong, the weak, the industrious, the incorrigible loafer, the indifferent, all, in the prevailing confusion, are shifting about from one agency to another; with the result that each agency in turn tends to become the prey of the worthless and least hopeful; while the better men stand aloof. A similar confusion prevails amongst the agencies themselves, which aim more or less promiscuously at relief, deterrence, employment, training, the work of a convalescent home and of an emigration society, of a casual ward, and a labour-yard, and in the confusion of ends fail too often to attain any of them. We are convinced that the first step to be taken is to bring some order into this confusion, to simplify the problem by careful sifting and classification of those to be dealt with, and to assign to each agency its appropriate work.

518. It is self-evident that the treatment of each class, and even of individuals within each class, should be differentiated according to their antecedents, failings or needs. But the whole policy of the future treatment of the able-bodied under the Poor Law is so mixed up with the subject of unemployment and the unemployed, that we propose to deal with both in a separate Chapter further on in our Report.

519. In conclusion we think that recipients of relief, instead of being classified as able-bodied or not able-bodied, should be classified as able to work or not able to work. Ability to work may be tested by actual experiments; and the work may be of different kinds. Bodily ability is ultimately a medical question, and can only be determined by medical tests. To be able in body is not the same as to be able to work. The latter is the simpler and more useful point for discrimination.

Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Chapter 9.

(1) *In organising the work of the able-bodied, the Public Assistance Authorities should aim at as great a variety of occupation as possible, both in the interests of those relieved and also as minimising the disturbance to the labour market.* (465.)

(2) *A periodical call-over of inmates should be recognised as essential to the proper administration of any Poor Law institution.* (491.)

(3) *Stronger methods—particularly detention—should be taken in dealing with "ins-and-outs." Public Assistance Authorities should have power to retain the children of such under their care, and to take proceedings to secure the detention and training of the parents in a suitable institution or colony, until they are prepared to maintain themselves and their families outside.* (509.)

(4) *Feeble-minded "ins-and-outs" should be detained in suitable institutions according to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded.* (511–2.)

(5) *For able-bodied "ins-and-outs" who are incapable of maintaining themselves permanently owing to want of discipline, application, or skill, provision should be made by which they would labour according to their strength and support themselves as far as possible; more varied work might be furnished, and their labour made more productive in supplying the needs of the institution to which they are admitted.* (513.)

(6) *For those frequenting Public Assistance Institutions who are confirmed drunkards and persons leading immoral lives, there should be power of detention after their incapacity to lead a decent life has been proved.* (514.)

(7) *Paupers well able to work,* i.e. *cases of persistent idleness, should be referred to a Detention Colony under the Home Office.* (515.)

(8) *Recipients of relief, instead of being classified as "able-bodied" or "not able-bodied," should be classified as "able to work," or "not able to work."* (519.)

Chapter 10.

THE CAUSES OF PAUPERISM.

520. We have had much evidence before us, from many various sources, as to the causes which lead to pauperism. We are aware that this is a difficult and to some extent a controversial subject, but we feel that the view we are taking as to future administration makes it incumbent upon us to report upon it. In so far as Guardians have aimed solely at relief, without regard to prevention or cure, they have naturally concerned themselves little with causes; but, as we hope that future administrators will constantly have in mind the preventive and curative side of the work, a close attention to causation becomes imperative. If they cannot themselves reach the causes, they can in annual and other reports draw attention to evils which come to light in the administration of relief and call for public discussion.

521. While there has been very general agreement in our evidence as to the principal causes assigned for pauperism, there has naturally been some difference as to the comparative weight to be attached to each. To a certain extent the difference follows the lines between urban and rural Unions. Life in the large towns runs the risk of temptations affecting it, both industrially and morally, that are hardly known in the country; while in the country a low rate of wage and a large proportion of old people are more general than in the town.

Old age.

522. The difficulty of assigning any one cause in a particular case has often been urged. To some extent we agree. Old age, for instance, which is perhaps the most often assigned, is hardly in itself a "cause" of pauperism. But when combined with, or following upon, other causes, such as low earning power, drink, or thriftlessness, it becomes a very large factor in the situation. And when old age appears, it naturally tends to obscure the previous causes which have played their part and disappeared. Hence a considerable number of witnesses put old age at the head of their list.[1]

523. There is, however, one connection in which "old age," or rather increasing age, has a special significance. We have found a very general opinion that the development of industry is such as to make increasing demands upon the worker, and thus to cause him to drop out of the industrial ranks at an earlier age. The evidence is not all to that effect. Some employers have told us that they prefer older

[1] Chub, Vol. VII., App. civ. (6); Twose, Vol. VII., App. lxxxv. (5); Savile, Vol. VII., App. lxxviii. (4); Rodber, Vol. VII., App. lxxiv. (4); Reed, Vol. VII., App. lxxiii. (8); Munckton, Vol. VII., App. lxv. (6); Harden, Vol. VII., App. xlv. (5); Hamlet, Vol. VII., App. xliii. (6); Hallett, Vol. VII., App. xlii. (5); Greenhill, Vol. VII., App. xli. (6); Goodden, Vol. VII., App. xxxix. (5); Goodden, Vol. VII., App. xxxviii. (6); Fox, Vol. VII., App. xxxv. (8); Peters, Vol. V., App. cii. (6); O'Reilly, Vol. V., App. xxxvii. (3); Smith, Vol. IV., App. cliv. (6); Wright, 39979 (5); Dearden, 41104 (12); Fothergill, 43825 (8); Neale, 49222 (4); Jones, 49739 (7); Hurworth, 52950 (14); Henniker, 67905 (17); Newman, 68237 (5); Clemas, 68686 (6); Young, 69536 (7); Moody, 71938 (6); Fitton, Vol. IV., App. lxviii. (7); Smith, Vol. IV., App. xcix. (18); Dickins, Vol. IV., App. cxxv. (7), etc., etc.

men, with their greater experience, to younger men with their greater strength.[1] Others maintain that they never discharge a man on account of age, but admit that they would not take on an elderly man.[2] But, speaking generally, wherever machinery is used there appears to be a speeding-up, and an increased tension, which tell hardly upon all who are past their prime. The movement is intensified in the first place by the necessity of earning the Trade Union minimum, since employers will not pay the standard wage to slow or inferior workers; and in the second place by the operation of the Employers Liability Act and Workmen's Compensation Acts. On this point a great number of witnesses from all parts of the country have laid stress, maintaining that the liability of the employer to pay compensation has made it much more difficult for elderly men to get employment. We may quote the following from a relieving officer as typical of a great mass of evidence to the same effect:—

Employers Liability Act, and Workmen's Compensation Acts.

> "From time to time a considerable number of middle-aged men have applied for assistance, who have stated that they have been unable to get work, employers giving the preference to younger men as being less likely to make any claims for compensation under the Act. These men have been mostly able-bodied, and, in my opinion, capable of doing a fair day's work."[3]

524. The following extract from the Report of the Peterborough Diocesan Conference is to the same effect:—

> "Other causes mentioned are the effect of the Workmen's Compensation Acts (in parishes "A," "B," and "C" alike) in depriving men of employment who have the slightest defect of sight, hearing, or bodily infirmity; and of the "Team" system prevailing in the shoe trade in Northamptonshire, whereby men of advancing years are said to lose their positions because they are too slow to take their place in the "team," or to earn the minimum wage insisted on by the trade unions. These undoubtedly contribute to prevent men not fully efficient from getting employment, which many of them might otherwise do."
>
> "The following is a sample statement from a very large factory parish (in Northamptonshire), which reveals what the Committee fear may be an increasing cause of unemployment as time goes on:—
>
> "There are workmen who are willing to work, but who are not quite as quick, strong, or capable as others, and the manufacturers are willing to employ them, but they cannot, or will not, pay them the fixed minimum. I have known also of several cases of worthy men, with slight heart trouble or other defect, *discharged* since the 'Liability' Act came into force."[4]

525. The situation is well summarised by Professor Archibald Barr, himself an employer, as follows:—

> "In the case of the skilled workman there is a progressive increase in skill and also in useful knowledge until he is past middle life, and hence he is unlikely to be displaced by a younger man. In the case of unskilled workers, whose labour demands strength and endurance, with but little skill, there may in some cases be such displacement. Advancing age is sometimes accompanied by irregularity of time-keeping, and makes it desirable to dismiss the workmen on that account. This, and the reduced efficiency of quite old men, when taken in conjunction with the action of some trade unions in prohibiting the employment of such men at a rate of pay proportional to this impaired efficiency, undoubtedly does lead to the displacement of such men, especially if they have, of their own choice or by force of circumstances, changed from one workshop to another; but employers of the best class are very willing, as a rule, to keep on old hands, though they may not be able economically to employ such men at the standard rates. Old men would no doubt much prefer to work at their own trades at reduced rates rather than be turned adrift into the unskilled class, and there is no valid reason why they should not be permitted to do so at rates of remuneration proportional to their productiveness."[5]

526. We think that this tendency for elderly men to be placed at a disadvantage in the labour market may be connected with the increase in male pauperism during the last ten or twelve years.

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[1] Thorne, Vol. XI., Ans. II. (*b*). [2] Denny, Vol. XI., Ans. II. (*b*). [3] Ball, 35451 (8); *Vide also* Bircham, 4937; Bagenal, 6957; Fleming, 8854, 9453–6; Jenner-Fust, 10856; Baines, 39600; Dearden, 41123; Blossom, 42875, etc., etc. [4] Vol. XIII., Diocese of Peterborough, Report of the Committee on Relief of the Poor, Sec. 1 (iii.). [5] Barr, Vol. XI., Ans. II. (*b*).

527. The following figures show the changes in male, female, and child pauperism in the cycle of 1896–1905 as compared with the cycle of 1888–95 :—[1]

	Increase (+) or Decrease (—).			
		Number.		Per cent.
Men - - - -	+	19,736	+	12·4
Women - - - -	+	21,119	+	7·1
Children - - - -	—	16,305	—	6·9
Total - -	+	24,350*	+	3·5

529. As illustrative of the causes which give rise to pauperism in large towns, we quote the following statement from a relieving officer at Leeds :— Causes of urban pauperism.

> "The most important causes of pauperism are : (*a*) Old age ; (*b*) the early marriage of persons dependent upon casual labour. Large families are the rule. Owing to the low wages earned no provision can be made to meet such contingencies as non-employment, sickness, or of imprisonment for debt. The latter is a crying scandal, and I have had to relieve the families of hard-working respectable men who have been committed for long period on non-compliance of a county court judge's order for a few shillings. . . (*c*) Imprisonment for criminal offences is a large factor in pauperism ; (*d*) venereal disease also contributes largely ; much of the misery entailed by this disease would be obviated if it were made notifiable. Its ramifications are appalling. (*e*) Intemperance is another contribution, and in this I find females to be the worst offenders. Many men are perforce paupers by the intemperance of their wives . . . (*f*) Indiscriminate relief by private persons and religious bodies also contributes largely to pauperism, and cases have occurred where relief has been in the first instance given in this manner and the recipients eventually become confirmed paupers. (*g*) Cases are not wanting to show that pauperism is hereditary—two generations being quite common, and third generations occasionally occur."[2]

530. We have quoted this statement as showing the diversity of evils, which have to be combated before we can hope to diminish greatly the number of those who, sooner or later, will inevitably become dependents upon other people. We will now refer briefly to some of those evils which have been most forcibly impressed upon us.

531. A great weight of evidence indicates drink as the most potent and universal factor in bringing about pauperism.[3] Some witnesses also indicate gambling as a serious and growing cause ;[4] but gambling, though it wastes the resources of its victims, does not lead to such physical and moral degeneration as drink. Drink and gambling.

532. Mr. Wethered, Local Government Board Inspector, offered the following evidence :—

> "The more that one inquires into the history of workhouse inmates, the more one is struck with the fact that drinking is one of the chief causes of pauperism. In support of this statement I have selected two workhouses, not because they are exceptional in the number of inmates addicted to inebriety, but rather because they are well administered workhouses, and the character of the inmates typical of paupers generally. I am indebted to the respective masters for the details."
>
> * * *Workhouse.*—"At the time the information was obtained, there were in the body of the workhouse, as apart from the infirmary, and excluding children and imbeciles, 170 men, and 109 women, total 279. Of these 279 persons, seventy-four men and thirty-six women were in the workhouse as the direct result of intemperance. Of the above, twenty-six men and twenty-seven women could not be allowed out for a day's leave without fear of their returning the worse for drink. The master of the workhouse reports that twenty-nine of the latter inmates continually take their discharge and return to the workhouse inebriated."

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* Deducting the number counted twice in the numbers for men, women and children.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part I., par. 33. [2] Wright, 39979 (5). [3] James, 23573, 23790 ; Bushell, 24064 ; Baines, 39540 (13*b*) ; North, 41761 (19) ; Waite, 43246 (9) ; Turner, 43565 (3) ; Burnet, 44420 (1) ; Dodd, 47190 (33 and 34) ; Evans, 48529 (7*a*) ; Owen, 48809 (12*a*) ; Blud, 70831 (6) ; Hood, 71522 (6) ; Kevill-Davies, 72681 (10*a*) ; etc., etc. [4] Blackshaw, 41394 ; Daniels, 44749 (5) ; Llewelyn, 49309 (20) ; Manton, 43626 (33) ; Gray, 52168 (8) ; Hurworth, 52950 (14), etc., etc.

* * * *Workhouse.*—"Taking the same data as in the case of * * Workhouse; there were in the body of this workhouse 258 men and 158 women, total 416. Of this number, there were 175 men and twenty women in the workhouse as the direct result of intemperance. The master also stated that of the 416 inmates in the body of the workhouse, 205 of these could not be allowed out for a day's leave without fear of their returning the worse for drink."

"I desire also to draw special attention to the number of inmates who cannot be allowed out without fear of their returning the worse for drink. This class of inmate are perhaps the most difficult to deal with. There is nothing to prevent them taking their discharge from time to time, and I cannot but think that such habitual drinkers should be dealt with under the criminal law rather than by the Poor Law. In this way they could be permanently detained for such time as may seem desirable, and rid the workhouses of their presence and, what is more, their influence." [1]

533. As an instance of the far-reaching effects of drink in creating pauperism we may quote the following case:—

"Widow, four children. Eldest boy, thirty-one, now in the union infirmary, an imbecile. Daughter, weak, bad eyes for years, and been sent to the Ophthalmia Hospital and partly recovered and now in service. Son living at home, carter, but drinks. Son aged ten at school. Father, dead some years, was a notorious drinker, constantly before the magistrates and fined. Was an invalid the last seven years, and he, or his wife and family, on out-relief list for sixteen or seventeen years. I estimate this one case has cost from £250 to £300, and is, in my opinion, due to the drinking habits of the father, though to anyone not knowing the history it would not be so classed. I believe this is typical of many." [2]

534. Pages of evidence might be quoted to the same effect; but perhaps the most striking corroboration is to be found in the unanimity with which the replies we have received from the Diocesan Conferences lay stress upon drink as one of the chief causes, often as the chief cause of poverty. We may quote the following summary of replies from 445 parishes in the Diocese of Peterborough as typical:—

"The chief *moral* cause of poverty in town and country alike is said to be excessive drinking—want of thrift, and bad management often, early and improvident marriages or gambling sometimes, accompanying it; in fact, in many parishes the reply on this point is practically that what little poverty exists is almost solely due to the drinking habits of the few whose families suffer in consequence. Even when there is little actual drunkenness, the proportion of weekly wages regularly taken to the public house is said to keep many families always poor." [3]

Sickness.

535. Of sickness as a cause of pauperism we have spoken in the Part of our Report dealing with Medical Relief;* but there is one form of disease in particular more directly and degradingly connected with pauperism than any other. Dr. James Allan gave striking evidence as to the extent to which venereal disease is a cause of pauperism, both directly, and indirectly, in its many after effects.[4] Very much of the physical incapacity of many of the inhabitants of larger towns must be attributed to this cause.

536. Much sickness, especially phthisis, is due to the conditions under which people live and work, hence these too must be regarded as causes of pauperism. Mr. Bircham says:—

"The number of houses unfit for habitation occupied by paupers is very large in my district. I think a main cause of pauperism is the disgraceful state of the houses in which many of the paupers live." [5]

537. We became impressed by the importance of this consideration very early in the course of our inquiry, and appointed two Investigators to report to us on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism. Amongst those conditions they rank bad housing as one of the most important. The insanitary conditions of a house are so frequently due to the character of the people living in it, that it is sometimes difficult to disentangle cause and effect:—

"Housing conditions produce or aggravate certain illnesses. From persons sick with such illnesses many applications are received for relief. Again, housing conditions produce or aggravate certain demoralised types of character, as it is demoralised persons of such a kind who form

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* *See* Part V. Chapter 3.

[1] Wethered, Vol. I., App. xl., A (119–22). [2] Thompson, Vol. IV., App. clvi. (6–7). [3] Vol. XIII., Diocese of Peterborough, Report of the Committee on Relief of the Poor, Sec. 1 (iv.). [4] Allan, 41231–346; *cf. also* Baines, 39540 (13*a*). [5] Bircham, 4987.

a large proportion of paupers. Beyond this it is difficult to go in the matter of direct proof. . . . At the same time our conviction as to the importance of housing remains unaltered." [1]

538. One point on which the Investigators lay emphasis is "the pressing need for further regulation of common-lodging-houses and furnished rooms." The latter are a "conspicuous evil," not only in London, but in many provincial towns :— Common lodging-houses and furnished rooms.

"We counted in the admission book sixty-four admissions (to the workhouse) from furnished rooms in Tabard Street in eight months. The same number in the street occurred over and over again."

They are habitually overcrowded, and are used for immoral purposes :—

"The relieving officer for this district gave us a great deal of information about these furnished rooms, and from him we learnt that they are nearly always in a filthy state. They are occupied by one tenant after another without any cleansing, and the bedding is found in a shocking condition. The rent paid by the landlord is about 17s. a week, and he received from 28s. to 35s. a week from the occupiers of the rooms. [2]

"Without further labouring the prejudicial effects of common lodging-houses and furnished rooms the two following quotations may be of interest. The first is the statement of the relieving officer in whose district the large common lodging-house, just mentioned, is situated :—

"We call it the 'Six Hundred,' but it really contains from 200 to 300 beds. I have had forty applications in a day from there."

"The second is an extract from the Annual Report for 1902 by the former medical officer of health, and deals with the character of furnished rooms :—

"It is probably correct to say that the lowest class of the community resort to these sub-let houses—lower and more degraded than the habitues of our common lodging houses. In addition to the obvious liability to insanitary conditions, these houses offer convenient residences for those persons of the working-class who are absolutely careless and reckless as regards their rights of citizenship. Their only possessions are the clothes they wear ; not even the towels, cups or saucers, kettles or saucepans in the house belong to them. Men and women live together, only to separate on the slightest excuse ; indeed, in the majority of cases these houses harbour the profligate and most reckless class of our cities." [3]

539. It is by offering the possibility of a life at a very low standard, and so encouraging the lowest form of casual labour, that common lodging-houses contribute to pauperism. The same is true in a still more marked degree of "shelters," and we have received a considerable amount of evidence on this point. [4] They encourage and foster a life cut off from all natural relations, calling for the least possible amount of self-control and energy, and leading almost inevitably to the workhouse. "Shelters."

540. There is a very general consensus of opinion that amongst industrial causes casual labour contributes more to pauperism than any other. [5] From all the towns where casual labour is employed, and more especially from districts where there are docks, we have found witnesses emphatic on the evils of casual labour. Our Investigators lay special stress upon it :— Casual Labour.

"In an analysis of application and Report books, the cases of pauperism among men which are the combined effect of casual work and drink are so numerous as to outweigh and obliterate altogether those caused by the most dangerous of occupations, unless the class of case to which they belong is carefully isolated and analysed. The same fact is revealed in the abundant testimony of relieving officers and others." [6]

541. It must not be assumed that all the casual labourers who come to the Poor Law owe their downfall to the nature of their work, undesirable though it may be.

"A prominent Guardian said he believed that :—Of the able-bodied paupers the majority were drawn from unskilled casual labour, with a few men from the decaying skilled trades.

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[1] Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism : Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 127. [2] Report on Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism in London : Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, pp. 69–70. [3] Final Report, p. 83. [4] Jenner-Fust, 11394–5 ; Millward, 18741–3 ; Craig, 19517 ; Ball, 35451 (6), 35627 ; Heathcote, 70440–1 ; Lockwood, 14046–8 ; Dyson, 20209–11., etc. [5] Alden, 27359 (20) ; Ball, 35479 ; Ayles, 45784 (12 b) ; Bulmer, Vol. IV., App. lviii. (4) ; O'Neill, Vol. IV., App. xc. (18) etc., etc. [6] Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire's Final Report, p. 124.

> Of the aged, some were brought to pauperism through lack of thrift and consequent absence of provision, while among the more able-bodied cases, consumption was accountable for a large proportion, but was not in his own mind connected with any particular trade. He believes that the casual trades do not more demoralise the people than that demoralised people go to the casual trades. There was a growing dislike of rules and regulations, and a feeling both against any need to think and against any regularity. He said he could not suggest any remedy under the specialised machinery, and lack of interest in work prevailing." [1]

542. There is, however, little doubt that to regularise casual labour would do more than any one remedy to diminish pauperism of the worst type :—

> "'Take away casual labour and drink and you can shut up three quarters of the workhouses,' is a sentence which typifies the opinion expressed by most officials of the Poor Law." [2]

543. So far as casual labour is the result and not the cause of moral deterioration the Poor Law itself as affording a free maintenance is partly responsible. But far more so is the growing and regrettable tendency amongst the lowest class for the women of a family to become the principal wage earners :—

> "Women's work and girls' work ruin the man's responsibility until it becomes almost *nil*. Many men before the Distress Committee did not know what the rent was or what was owing. One did not even know the names of his children. The reason is that the wives will sometimes do anything to keep the home together while the husbands loaf." [3]

544. We are glad to think that this tendency is confined to a particular and limited section of the community. For the most part there is a growing tendency for married women to leave wage-earning and devote themselves to domestic duties.[4]

Boy labour.

545. One point bearing upon the question of casual labour which strongly impressed us is the extent to which boys leaving the elementary schools are drafted into work which lasted only a few years, and then flung them out, unskilled and untrained, into the casual labour market. With a view to getting more exact information on this subject we appointed an Investigator :—

> "To inquire and report on the main occupations followed by boys on leaving public elementary schools in certain typical towns; the opportunities of promotion in such occupations, or of training for other occupations; and the extent to which such boys subsequently obtain regular employment (skilled or unskilled) as adults." [5]

546. The Report contains a great amount of valuable and suggestive information. We would refer also to the valuable evidence given by Professor M. E. Sadler, who sums up the situation in the following words :—

> "Under the industrial and commercial conditions which now prevail, it is easy for a boy of thirteen or fourteen to find some kind of virtually unskilled work for which are offered wages that for the time seem high, and flatter his sense of being independent of school discipline and of home restraint. In this work there is often little mental or moral discipline, though it may involve long hours of deteriorating routine. The work lasts for a few years, but leaves the lad, at the very time when he begins to want a man's subsistence, out of line for skilled employment and only too likely to recruit the ranks of unskilled labour. The same evil exists in the case of girls. Certain forms of industry which make large use of boys and girls who have recently left the elementary schools, are, in part (except where the employers make special efforts to meet their responsibilities) parasitic in character, and get more than they ought, and more than their promoters realise that they are getting, of the physical and moral capital of the rising generation. Many callings connected with transport and communication, and some branches of manufacture, use juvenile unskilled labour to a degree which, if no counteracting measures are taken, must cause grave and lasting injury to the national life. It should be added that in this matter some Government Departments are to blame. Evils resulting from such deteriorating forms of boy and girl labour are widely felt. But we have little statistical proof that these evils are increasing out of proportion to the growth of population. Such evidence, indeed, as is available points to the conclusion that in some callings the uneducative use of adolescent unskilled labour is rapidly extending; but part of the apparent increase may be due to a growing sense of the importance of the subject and to the consequently closer attention with which it is being observed." [6]

547. In the course of his evidence, Professor Sadler makes valuable suggestions as to the improvement of elementary education, and, from the point of view which we have under consideration, we wish more especially to call attention to the following :—

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[1] Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire's Report on London, p. 43. [2] Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire's Final Report, p. 130. [3] Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire's Report on London, p. 44. [4] Board of Trade, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (h), p. 698. [5] Report on Boy Labour, Mr. Cyril Jackson [6] Sadler, 93386 (3).

"E.—Ultimately, some form of compulsion to attend day or evening continuation classes, between fourteen and seventeen years of age, will be found desirable, not so much in the interests of exceptional individuals as in that of the rank and file. Some of the present evils of unemployment may be traced to the lack of educational care and of suitable technical training during the years of adolescence. Compulsory attendance at continuation schools should be accompanied by reduction in the hours of juvenile and adolescent labour where those are now excessive. Employers, including Government Departments, manufacturers, commercial firms, retail tradesmen and employers of young domestic servants, should be placed under statutory obligation to allow young persons of less than seventeen years of age who are in their employment, to attend courses of physical, technical and general instruction for four hours a week, at any rate, during the winter months, at times of day when the pupils are not too tired to profit by the teaching.

It is advisable that the Government should pay grants at a double rate to districts which may adopt a by-law making attendance at continuation classes (held in the day time or in the late afternoon wherever practicable) obligatory upon all boys and girls (if not otherwise at school) up to seventeen years of age. The attention of Government Departments should be drawn to the social evils resulting from the inconsiderate use of adolescent labour in callings which afford no hope of adult employment, and no preparation for a skilled trade. In the post offices, in large towns, classes should be organised (by co-operation with the local education authority) for the instruction of telegraph messengers, in shifts, during the hours of duty." [1]

548. We return to this subject in Part VI. With regard to unhealthy trades and insanitary conditions of work-places, our Investigators report that there is a definite but very small proportion of pauperism resulting from such conditions [2]:— Unhealthy trades and insanitary work-places.

"Even where such trades are prominent, it is only a small fraction of the whole. Of men engaged this is especially true. Among men over sixty practically no trace of such pauperism is discernible. In the case of men under sixty the influence of the occupation begins to be seen (in so far as statistics can be based on such small numbers) when the numbers of sick paupers are isolated from the rest and analysed. At the same time the unhealthiness of the trade means an early death. It is not, therefore, surprising that the clearest result of the effect of the occupation is seen when the class of younger widows and their dependents are considered." [3]

549. To "earnings habitually below what are required for healthy subsistence," a distinct degree of pauperism in certain occupations is assigned.[4] On the other hand:— Low wages.

"we have been unable to trace any connection between long hours of work and pauperism [5] .... The great example of an occupation when long hours are worked is that of railway employés and they are pre-eminently not pauperised." [6]

550. Our Investigators confine their conclusions to the case of men, and express their inability to unravel the complexity of the situation with respect to women:—

"The problems arising in the course of our inquiry from a consideration of the employment of women are too complex for us to attempt to offer any solution of them. Unhealthy conditions of work, excessive hours and low wages have been found in certain occupations, and that poverty and suffering are caused by them is indisputable. That pauperism directly results, except in individual instances, there is no evidence to show. Where any connection had been found it is dealt with in the sectional reports on towns visited, but no general conclusion can be drawn from these instances. Where industrial employment for women is plentiful the men tend to become parasitic. The laundry districts of London are only one such instance. It has been said to us on various occasions that the prevalence of female employment, by affording a supplementary wage, depresses the rate of the earnings of men in the locality, although there may be no direct competition of the sexes in the same industry. That this was the case did not appear on the face of the facts elicited by us and we have formed no conclusion on the point. Women's earnings are, rightly or wrongly, regarded for the most part by both employers and employed as merely supplementary to those of the head of the family and the rate of wages is fixed on this assumption. Women who are not dependent are paid on the same scale as others who are and on such a wage the single woman in lodgings and still more the widow with children can only exist in a state of poverty. In sickness or other emergency they must come for help to the Poor Law and in old age the workhouse is often inevitable Home-work is especially badly paid and women undersell one another by accepting any rate that is offered. Such low-paid work however has come to our notice in this inquiry more frequently as a means whereby pauperism is postponed than as causing it. On the other hand the result of the absence of any industrial occupation for women in a district where the employment of men is dangerous to health is that widows left destitute come at once for poor relief and remain throughout their widowhood on the rates. Whether the conditions by which pauperism is postponed are preferable to those by which it is accelerated it is not in our province to offer an opinion." [7]

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[1] Sadler, 93386 (42 E). [2] Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 124 (4). [3] *Ibid.*, p. 126. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 124 (5). [5] *Ibid.*, p. 124 (7). [6] *Ibid.*, p. 127. [7] *Ibid.*, pp. 121–8.

Charitable relief.

551. With the question of charitable relief in general we deal in Part VII. As a cause of pauperism, however, it cannot be altogether omitted here. The Reports from Diocesan Committees lay stress upon this :—

> "Another cause is the irresponsible giving of alms. It comes under both the economic and moral heads. The Ripon Diocesan Committee submits that this practice is a lazy way of avoiding responsibility, which puts a premium on professional begging and canting hypocrisy, to the detriment of the honestly unfortunate worker, and very rapidly causes widespread deterioration of character. The committee urges that every means—religious, moral, and legal—be used to stop this harmful Social evil, and that corporate responsibility for the cure of poverty be put forward strenuously as infinitely more beneficial than the temporary relief of individual distress by means of such a baneful habit. . . . A certain class of people both in the rural and urban parishes, look upon the alms from charity endowments as their right and count on such bequests in calculating their possible income; and it is more than probable that this form of charity—unless very rigidly and carefully administered—becomes enervating to the healthy self-reliance of many people." [1]

> "(iv.) *Charity.*—The existence of endowed charities has a direct effect in creating paupers. In Nantwich the decline of the boot and tailoring trades is not alone responsible for the increase of pauperism. The report from the Rural Deanery says that Nantwich "is an old market town with one church, to which are attached a number of rich charities, and this fact has naturally conduced to a certain amount of pauperism." Not infrequently cases of out-of-work destitution are traceable to the cruel kindness of individuals, especially visitors, who administer casual street charity." [2]

> "In attempting to arrive at the root cause of the poverty we are driven back again and again to the moral cause. The poverty is to be attributed to a failure in character rather than to any particular economic cause, making all allowance for the depression in certain trades which certainly exists in some of the towns. And we are obliged to record the fact that the expectation of relief appears to have contributed in no small degree to the encouragement of pauperism." [3]

552. Our Investigators in writing of the dangers which accentuate the general effect of casual work in London, say :—

> A similar demoralising effect was assigned to lax and undiscriminating charity. Extreme instances were narrated. Thus a lady after hearing a sermon on the conditions of life among the poor, drove down we were informed, in a carriage to a very poor street in the neighbourhood and there distributed promiscuously a dozen half bottles of champagne and a dozen half pound bunches of grapes. It was, however, from the multitude of less absurd acts that the great harm resulted in those unions where prosperous and poor districts were in juxtaposition.
>
> A West End Union furnishes similar cases in point. One working family earned 30s. per week by steady work, and the wife said to our informant :—
>
> "Can you expect us to go on doing this when last week the couple next door, doing no work but begging, brought home £2 in gold in one single day, together with a quantity of food?" [4]

Other causes of pauperism.

553. Amongst causes which are less prominent, but not, we believe, less real, we may note the following :—

(1) The failure of unsound Friendly Societies or dividing clubs.[5]

(2) Insufficiency of house accommodation, especially in rural districts.

(3) The payment of pensions at long intervals.

(4) Domestic ignorance and incapacity on the part of women.[6]

554. As regards (3), in the case of Army Pensioners, payment is as a rule, made quarterly, and the practice of Government offices is commonly the same. Pensions granted by private persons or firms and from charitable endowments are sometimes paid at even longer intervals. Such a system is not conducive to the formation of regular or thrifty habits. It encourages the pensioners to live on credit with all the attendant evils, and, in some cases, to waste on drink a large part of the sum received. We have had instances brought before us of men who are habitually in a workhouse, but leave it at regular intervals to receive and squander a pension. We recommend that all pensions should, as far as is practicable, be paid weekly, and we suggest that the Post Office should be utilised for the purpose.

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[1] Vol. XIII., Diocesan Committee Reports, Ripon, pp. 3, 4. [2] *Ibid.*, Chester, p. 3. [3] *Ibid.*, Canterbury, p. 2. [4] Mr. Steel-Maitland, and Miss Squire's Report on London, p. 44. [5] Chance, 27110; Oseland, Vol. VII., App. cxli. (6); Cheeseman, 73805 (5); Price, 67744–7; Blossom, 43093; Harwood, 73628 (5); Fox, Vol. VII., App. xxxv. (8); Hearn, Vol. VII., App. xlviii. (8); Newitt, Vol. VII., App. cxl. (5), etc., etc. [6] Stewart, Vol. V., App. xxi. (45–50); Evans, 48529 (7), etc.

555. As regards (4), a witness stated :—

> "Further there is urgent need to correct the idea in the minds of girls that because they are devoting themselves to the work of the factory, they may neglect the training of themselves for the duties of the home. Mothers who have spent years at the spinning frame or the loom are, as a rule, quite incompetent in the matter of choosing and preparing food, and in the other requisites of a healthy upbringing for children. Hence sickly appearances, which are too readily ascribed to want of food, and want of means to buy food, are often the result of wrong food—innutritious, badly cooked or combined—as well as of impure air, and generally mismanaged home surroundings. This better training of girls is the work of the schools but it is much impeded by the prevalent industrial conditions. No reform of the Poor Law will obviate the unhealthy, both physical and economic, that starts from ignorance and incapacity in the home."[1]

556. Other causes which have been urged upon us, but which we do not propose either to endorse or controvert, are :—

(1) Capitalism.[2]

(2) Free trade.[3]

(3) The system of land tenure.[4]

Administration.

557. We have left to the last the very difficult and controversial question as to how far the administration of the Poor Law is, or may be, itself a cause of pauperism. Technically, of course, if there were no Poor Law there would be no legal paupers ; and there are those who take the superficial view that, by abolishing the Poor Law and assigning its functions to other agencies, we could abolish pauperism. But we wish here to raise the question in a deeper sense, and to ask how far it is true that actual poverty and dependence may be increased or decreased by the way in which the Poor Law is administered. We have had much evidence offered to the effect that an unwisely administered Poor Law may be a true cause of pauperism in this sense,[5] and, that it should be so is, we think, inevitable. It will be generally acknowledged that, in so far as people are induced or encouraged to receive from the Poor Law, for themselves or their dependants, what they are capable of providing by their own exertions, to that extent a pauperism is being manufactured which would not otherwise exist.[6] And when the only qualification for relief is the absence of other means of subsistence, there are found to be many who will qualify by being without means. It is this which is meant by saying :—

> "I am often asked what is the main cause of pauperism, and I am obliged to say that the main cause of pauperism is the Guardian. It is the Guardians whose administration makes pauperism."[7]

558. The supporters of this view do not deny that much real poverty and distress exists, nor even that much of what exists is inevitable; but they do maintain that where administration is careless, or guided by a wrong policy, a large amount of the poverty and distress is due to it. It has destroyed the qualities of independence and mutual helpfulness, and substituted the desire to make out a good case for the relieving officer :—

> "We had an Inspector," says one witness, "and he found that this relieving officer went to the village only once a week, it was eight miles from him, and he said : 'What happens in that week if somebody is ill and wants relief ?' The relieving officer replied : 'No one is ever ill, or wants relief, when I am not there.'"[8]

Doubtless this statement was not intended to be taken literally, but it contains the important truth that the mere presence of a relief agency excites people to qualify for its benefits.

559. We need not say that there are many to whom these considerations do not apply There are some who are physically or morally incapable of independence under any administration ; and there are many who are not to be tempted from it by anything less

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[1] Martin, 63374 (14) [2] Ayles, 45784 (13) ; Morris, 69924 (15) ; Scott, Vol. IV., App. cxlix. (13) ; Jones, Vol. V., App. xxx. (12). [3] Kevill-Davies, 72681 (10*f*). [4] Lester, Vol. IX., App. xcii. [5] Davy, 2411, 3118 ; Lockwood, 4134 ; Preston-Thomas, 4492 ; Wethered, 5630 ; Court, 6284, 6513 ; Herbert, 8293 ; Fleming, 9354 ; Jenner-Fust, 10798, 11334, 11443 ; Wood, 15918–20 ; Crowder, 17387 (17) ; 17450 ; Chance, 27088, 27092 ; Baines, 39686 ; Dodd, 47190 (34 *g*) ; Joseph, 69292 (5) ; Pell, 74604 (5) ; Brown, 75897–903 ; etc., etc. [6] Walsh, Stat. [7] Davy, 2411. [8] Sharman, 75176.

than sheer necessity. But there are also very many who simply follow the line of least resistance, who are quite capable of earning their living and will do so in the absence of any temptation to the contrary, but who are easily drawn into loafing and thriftlessness by the prospect of relief. It is to these people on the borderland that an unwise policy of relief on easy terms is fatal; they quickly lose the habits of energy and foresight, and become in the true sense of the word pauperised.

560. The difference between a pauperised and a non-pauperised community does not lie only in the number of persons who have lost their independence; it can be seen also in the extent to which mutual helpfulness has developed into such institutions as Friendly Societies and provident medical clubs. Where poor relief is given freely, without making any claims on the providence of the recipients, these institutions never flourish; where there is careful administration, on the other hand, there is no difficulty in attracting even low-paid workers into them. It cannot be argued that, because in any given community such institutions do not exist, therefore gratuitous relief is necessary to take their place. It must be accepted as an axiom of social administration that gratuitous relief and provident institutions cannot flourish within the same field, and that the first step to the encouragement of the latter is the restriction of the former.

561. We have considered it necessary to state this position with some care, because of the tendency to lose sight of it when confronted with the condition of a given Union at a given moment. We may take as an instance the Union of Poplar. Between January 1st, 1895, and January 1st, 1905, the number of paupers increased from 5,000 to 11,600. The administrators maintain sometimes that the increase is necessitated by the destitution of the people, and doubtless many when they apply appear to be in a condition of destitution. But the question which the Guardians fail to ask themselves is whether, but for their policy, these people would have been in a state of destitution.

562. Sometimes, on the other hand, the administrators maintain that, though the people they relieve are not destitute, yet they are poor and need to have their means supplemented from the rates. This, again, stereotypes poverty by removing the inducement to individual energy and enterprise, and by ignoring the possibility of those provident institutions by which an independent people makes a small income more effective.

563. A comparison may be made between the extent and changes in pauperism in half-a-dozen London Unions in which the increase has been greatest and in the remaining London Unions. We will take those years during the last twenty which have marked the highest points of pauperism in England and Wales. In the six Unions of Islington, Strand, Stepney, Poplar, Bermondsey, and Camberwell, which had an aggregate population in 1901 of 973,523, the total number relieved on January 1st, 1888, was 19,335 or 22·7 per 1,000 of the population in 1881. In 1896, the number had risen to 27,595, or 29·3 per 1,000, and in 1906 it had grown to 38,613 or 39·7 per 1,000. By January 1st, 1908, the number had fallen slightly and the rate per 1,000 was 38·2. In the remaining Unions in the County of London the numbers fell between 1888 and 1896, and rose again in 1906 and in 1908 to rather more than the number in 1888. But the rate per 1,000 fell from 27·4 per 1,000 in 1888 to 23·1 per 1,000 in 1896, and, though it has risen slightly since 1896, the rate was still below 24 per 1,000 in 1908. These latter Unions comprise many poor districts, including the whole of the East of London with the exception of Poplar and Stepney.[1]

564. The increase in the numbers in the six Unions named occurred in both indoor and outdoor relief, but was relatively greater in outdoor relief. In the other Unions there was a much smaller increase in the number of indoor poor, and a considerable decrease in the number of outdoor poor. Of the increase of 17,817 between 1888 and 1908 in the numbers relieved in the six Unions, 10,790 were classed as adults not able-bodied, 2,729 as able-bodied adults, and 4,298 as children.[1] An analysis of the returns for July 1st, preceding the above dates, produces very similar results. We have not had evidence of any change for the worse in the conditions of the population of the six Unions sufficient to account for this growth. We are forced to the conclusion that a change in the principles on which relief is administered has been an important factor in bringing it about.

565. There are many other instances in which a relaxation of administrative caution has brought about a sudden accession of pauperism, but it generally happens that

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table xiv.

Guardians have not desired that result, and, when they have realised it, have endeavoured to check the evil. Bermondsey is a case in point. There was there a steady rise in the number of paupers from 4,274 in 1891, to 5,552 in 1896, and 6,416 in 1901, while, during the same period, the outdoor relief increased from £11,200 to £23,000.[1] In 1902 the Board appointed a superintendent relieving officer, since when :—

> "there has been a gradual decrease in outdoor relief due principally to the diligent inquiries made by the relieving officers into the applications for relief, the aid of the case-paper system and the more efficient administration."[2]

Owing to this improvement in administration the number of outdoor paupers diminished from 3,959 on January 1st, 1902, to 2,810 on January 1st, 1906; while the cost of the out-relief diminished from £23,677 in 1902 to £17,208 in 1906.[3]

566. The following statement was also made to us by Miss Baines, a member of the Leeds Board of Guardians :—

> "Indiscriminate and careless giving of outdoor relief, *e.g.*, one ward in the Leeds Union doubled its outdoor relief during the first year after the present board came in. There was some exceptional distress, but not anything in proportion to the increase of outdoor relief. The same ward has gradually been diminishing its out-relief for the last two years, although worked by the same guardians—and they themselves have acknowledged that the policy of the first year was unwise."[4]

567. Strong corroboration of the view that pauperism may be largely due to administration is to be found in instances where the adoption of a non-out-relief policy has resulted in almost abolishing pauperism. As an instance we quote the following account, given by Mr. Willink, of pauperism in the Bradfield Union :—

> "The pauperism during the last thirty-five years has been as follows, viz. (January 1st) :—

—	1871.	1881.	1891.	1901.	1906.
Indoor - - -	259	151	120	107	123
Outdoor - -	999	202	29	18	91
Total - -	1,258	353	149	125	214

> If on January 1st, 1906, the total pauperism, excluding lunatics and vagrants, of England and Wales had been in the same ratio to population as Bradfield on that date, it would have stood at 401,800 (or, taking the Bradfield, January 1st, 1901, basis at 235,538) instead of 802,068, its actual figure.
>
> The remarkable reform thus indicated was effected gradually without interference with existing cases (except in extreme instances); and by the steady and consistent application of a clear and intelligible principle, *i.e.*, the strict limitation of out-door relief, which was confined to temporary cases of sickness or accident and to widows during the first month only of their widowhood. The administration can scarcely be said to have been universally popular—but it was eventually accepted. The poor shaped their lives to it; the natural resources, of all kinds, personal, family, and charitable were stimulated; good friendly societies were encouraged; the market values of labour were left undisturbed; and for years there was little or no open objection to the system. It was widely known, a constant subject of inquiry at home and abroad, and was approved by Local Government Board inspectors, by other practical administrators and by business men of all classes. If it met with only partial imitation locally this was probably because of the usual rarity of driving power or initiative. Still Reading did and Wallingford and Abingdon to some extent do, aim at reducing outdoor pauperism. There were no scandals, and no waves of indignation. The population figures show that no exodus can be said to have resulted, as has sometimes been suggested."[5]

568. It is especially to be noted in the above table that, so long as the number of out-paupers were diminishing, the number of indoor paupers diminished also; *i.e., the poor were not driven into the house.* In 1900, Mr. Chaplin's Circular appeared; in April, 1901, the Bradfield Guardians resolved to give out-relief on the lines indicated in the Circular; the number of outdoor paupers rose, and simultaneously the *number of indoor paupers rose also.* The interpretation is obvious. The offer of relief on easy terms

[1] Dyson, 20184. [2] Dyson, 20117. [3] Dyson, Vol. II., App. ix., B. and C. [4] Baines, 39540 (13*c*)
[5] Willink, Vol. VII., App. ccxi.

tempted people away from their other resources and created more paupers than could be relieved on those terms. Those who proved to be ineligible for out-relief, were then forced to have recourse to the workhouse.

569. It has been adduced, as a proof of suffering entailed by careful administration, that the number of deaths attributed by coroners to starvation is higher in Whitechapel than in Poplar. We do not consider that the argument is a valid one. The deaths from starvation reported from Whitechapel occur amongst a floating population of the lowest class, attracted to that Union by the number of free shelters and low class lodging-houses, and unaffected by local administration. The comparison would only be fair if it could be shown that the same difficult conditions prevailed in Poplar, and no attempt has been made to do this.

570. We do not maintain that a strict administration may not in individual cases cause temporary hardship. As it is easier for a man to fall into dependence than to raise himself out of it; so, in the same proportion, it is easier to cause than to cure pauperism by administration. But the suffering caused by a lax administration is far more widespread and lasting than that to which a stricter discipline gives rise.

Historical Summary, Poor Law Commission, 1834–47.

571. Such, then, are the causes of pauperism, so far as we have been able to analyse them, and as they have been presented to us in the course of our inquiry. It remains only to summarise our narrative with a view to indicating what has been the relation of the Poor Law to them in the past, and what we hope it may be in the future.

572. It would not be true to say that hitherto the Poor Law has been directed only towards mitigating the symptoms of the social disease of pauperism. As we have already noted, the Assistant-Commissioners in 1840 were definitely urged to avail themselves of the means at their disposal to investigate the causes of pauperism with a view to their removal. From time to time also, and in certain branches of work, the administration has struck vigorously at causes, with conspicuously successful results in the mitigation of distress. But it is true to say that local administrators have often, and perhaps for the greater part, lost sight of the fact that pauperism is a morbid and not a natural condition; with the result that there have been expended, in maintaining an army of paupers, great resources of time and money which might under better direction have reduced pauperism to a minimum. The changes which we have recommended all have in view the strengthening of the spirit of hopeful attack upon the problem, and the complete abandonment of the attitude of acquiescence. If we succeed in this object, then we have little doubt that, with the greater scientific resources now at the disposal of the administrator, and with the widespread interest now aroused in social problems, a campaign may be initiated against pauperism which will be quite as effective as, and perhaps more lasting in its results than, that begun in 1834.

573. We said at the beginning of this Part of our Report that the progress of the Poor Law had been constantly towards a clearer differentiation of the problem and a closer adaptation of treatment to the needs of different classes. At first, the strength of the administrators was necessarily directed towards breaking up the mass of able-bodied pauperism which was eating into the very heart of the people, under a corrupt and panic-stricken administration. It was inevitable that in this task opposition should be encountered, but it was an opposition of noise and abuse rather than of weight, and no real obstacle was placed in the way of reform. In response to complaints Committees of Inquiry were appointed; but the result was to show that, where circumstances of real hardship occurred, the Commissioners were willing and able to relax the workhouse test, and that their administration though strict was never harsh. By the fact that it took no action upon the Reports of these Committees, Parliament practically endorsed the new policy; and it is significant, as well as hopeful for the future, that the more careful administration of 1834 was subsequent upon the Reform Bill of 1832, just as, a generation later, the more careful administration initiated in 1870 was subsequent to the Reform Bill of 1867. The greater interest shown by a more democratic constituency in Poor Law problems has for the most part led to wiser as well as more humane administration.

574. The chief difficulty in initiating a firmer policy is always the righteous fear of intensifying real distress instead of diminishing a fictitious pauperism. In support of this view, it is sometimes urged that the reform of 1834 owed its success less to improved administration than to the fact that it was introduced at a peculiarly fortunate moment, when the development of railways was able to absorb all the surplus labour of the country. No doubt the development of railways did much to

ease the situation, but it could not have done so unless the reform in the Poor Law had loosened the ties which bound the labourer to his parish, and brought about the mobility which was so essential, both to his own welfare and to the economic development of the country. Moreover, like most industrial changes, the creation of the railway "navvy" brought its own contributions to pauperism with it. The Eighth Annual Report, after describing the type of migratory labourer, says of the railways:—

> "They offer an almost imperceptible addition of employment to the resident labourers, which employment is of so demoralising a nature it would be better were it not offered at all; they bring heavy burdens on parishes by reason of the accidents they occasion; they increase bastardy; and they double, if not treble, the amount of crime."[1]

575. In other respects, a study of the condition of the people during the first decade of the administration of the Poor Law Commissioners shows that a more difficult time could hardly have been chosen for a reform of that particular nature. Only the first two years show any signs of prosperity, and even then agriculture was much depressed. It was, indeed, under conditions unparalleled in recent time for difficulty and distress that the new administration established itself, and approved itself to the country as wise and humane.

576. It is impossible not to recognise that in some ways the situation in 1834 was strikingly similar to that before us to-day. We have the same phenomenon of large numbers of able-bodied workers apparently incapable of earning a sufficient livelihood, and demanding to be maintained at the public expense; and we have the same result in a great congestion of labour in certain places. The fact that the maintenance provided is for the most part outside the Poor Law, complicates the problem, but makes no essential difference in its nature.

577. After 1842, industrial conditions improved, and it was in a year of comparative prosperity, 1844, that the opportunity was taken to issue the General Out-Relief Prohibitory Order.[2] Pauperism, which had been increasing under the stress of bad times, was checked for the time being; but it is characteristic of this earlier period that Poor Law returns are sensitive to every change in industrial and commercial prosperity, and, after the crisis of 1847, pauperism, vagrancy, and expenditure all increased. It was in this year that the duties of the Poor Law Commissioners were transferred to the Poor Law Board.[3]

578. The importance of the work done by the Commissioners in checking the evils of bad administration, is apt to overshadow the hardly less important work which they initiated in combating other causes of pauperism. From the first they recognised that sickness, more especially epidemic sickness, was constantly adding its victims to the ranks of the dependent, and it was due mainly to their exertions that the sanitary crusade was entered upon which has perhaps done more than any one movement to diminish pauperism.

579. If, on the other hand, their attitude towards medical relief was that of restricting it as far as possible to those already destitute, the difference is easily explicable. Sanitary measures for the most part lie beyond the reach of the individual, and are a common need which must be provided for in common; while medical treatment is essentially an individual need, and is for the most part easily attainable by the individual. Moreover, they saw before them the beginning of a provident medical system, and thought that this would be best encouraged by a policy of merely refraining from competition, without any active intervention to promote it.

580. From the very first, also, great stress was laid by the Commissioners upon the necessity of improving the condition of the children who were brought up by the Guardians. They found that neglect of these had been a constant source of renewed pauperism from generation to generation, and they took steps which resulted in cutting off that source altogether. It still remains to complete their work in this direction by extending it to those receiving out-relief.

581. The institution of the Poor Law Board marks a second period. With reviving prosperity from 1849 to 1853, the returns of pauperism show continuous

Poor Law Board 1847–70.

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[1] Eighth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners 389, 1842, App. B., p. 141. [2] Adrian, 194.
[3] 10 & Vict., c. 109.

improvement, and decrease in expenditure, and in 1852 the second of the great out-relief Orders, the Regulation Order, was issued.[1] Then came the Russian war, and expenditure greatly increased, owing to the almost unprecedented severity and duration of the winter, general depression, high taxation consequent on the war, and cost of maintenance of wives and families of men in the services. After the war, and up to the early sixties, Poor Law expenditure continues to fall, and in 1859 the Poor Law Board take occasion to point out that the average expenditure from 1835 to 1859 had been £5·1 millions, as compared with £6·5 millions from 1813 to 1834,[2] while the expenditure per head of the estimated population had fallen in the same years from 10s. 4d. to 6s. ½d., or 42 per cent.

582. The next decade was an eventful one for the history of Poor Law administration. In the first place, public attention was called to the question of medical relief in Poor Law institutions, and improvements were initiated which have culminated in what is practically a change of policy in this department. It is now generally recognised that the first consideration in the administration of Poor Law infirmaries is the cure of the patients where this is possible, and their adequate nursing and treatment where it is not. From one point of view, the change has been a source of constantly increasing expense, and is responsible for a large share of the growing burden of Poor Law expenditure in recent years. From another point of view, it must have resulted in a diminution of pauperism in so far as patients have been more speedily and in more instances restored to health; but it is not possible to measure to what extent this is the case.

583. In the second place, Poor Law administration was severely tested by the ordeal of the great Cotton Famine. It proved capable, when working during the latter phases of that calamity in co-operation with voluntary charity, of meeting the most acute and prolonged industrial crisis which has ever been known, and showed a power of resource, combined with firmness in the face of emergency, with which it is not often credited. But, although the distress of the Cotton Famine had subsided by 1864, Poor Law expenditure continued to increase, and the inquiries set on foot by the Central Authority showed clearly that local administration was mainly responsible. A new generation had grown up since the lax administration in the days before 1834 had flooded the country with pauperism; the lesson had been forgotten, and the need was now felt for its re-statement and re-inforcement. The Local Government Board marked its accession to office by a strenuous campaign in favour of more careful administration, with the result that, notwithstanding continuous improvements in institutional treatment, there was a diminution in expenditure between 1870 and 1875 from 6s. 11½d. per head of population to 6s. 3¼.[3] This is practically the last time there is any diminution in the burden of pauperism upon the ratepayer. With the exception of a slight check in the years 1885–6 to 1889–90, there is a steady rise in the total expenditure in years of distress and of prosperity alike, until in 1906 the expenditure stands at 8s. 2¾d. per head of population.[4]

The Local Government Board, 1871.

584. While the rise in expenditure was accompanied by a diminution in pauperism it was possible to regard it with some degree of acquiescence. It is worth while to pay highly for the restoration of paupers to independence. But there are indications that the present administration has reached the limits of its remedial powers, and needs once more to be re-inforced. It must, we are convinced, still further extend its policy both of cure and of prevention, and it is in this sense that we have made our recommendations. More especially, it must extend its policy of making the giving of relief conditional upon the recipient accepting a way of life likely to restore him to independence. This is no new principle. It was the leading note of the 1834 administration, and has been so ever since, that one class—the able-bodied—should be relieved only under certain conditions. It is now necessary to apply the principle to other classes. It has proved, indeed, impossible to push a curative policy any further in its absence; sickness cannot be cured, either in institutions or at home, unless the patient will accept conditions; economic evils cannot be combated unless those who suffer from them will conform to conditions; moral weakness cannot be strengthened unless the authorities have power to impose conditions. And what those conditions are to be must become manifest through a careful and progressive study of the causes of pauperism.

[1] Adrian, 195. [2] Thirteenth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1860–1, p. 7. [3] Sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 1865], 1877, p. xii. [4] Thirty-sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. 407.

PART V.

MEDICAL RELIEF.

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PART V.

MEDICAL RELIEF.

Chapter 1.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SYSTEM OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE POOR.

(a) Introductory.

Paucity of Statutory Enactments as to Medical Relief.

1. Of the services entrusted to the guardians, it is, perhaps, in connection with medical relief that the greatest development has taken place since 1834, and it is noteworthy that this development has been accompanied by a singular paucity of legislative reference to the care and treatment of the sick poor.

2. The Poor Law Commissioners seem to have considered medical relief to be "rather the outcome of practice than a creation of the law."[1] The Act of Elizabeth provided *inter alia* for the "necessary relief" of the "impotent"[2] who, doubtless, included the sick, but beyond this it contained no provision for a system of medical relief, and subsequent Acts of Parliament down to 1834 are all equally silent on the subject.[1]

3. Even the Act of 1834[3] itself did not specifically provide for such a system, but presumably left it to be established by the Commissioners under their general powers of regulating the administration of relief throughout England and Wales. One section (54) continued the power of the Justices to order medical relief in cases of sudden and dangerous illness, but obviously this was to meet the exceptional rather than the ordinary case to be dealt with by boards of guardians in their daily administration of the Poor Laws.

4. The same may be said of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1848,[4] Section 2 of which provided for medical or other assistance on account of "accident, bodily casualty or sudden illness." Another Act, the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1851[5] (Section 4), enabled the guardians to subscribe to "any public hospital or infirmary for the reception of sick, diseased, disabled, or wounded persons, or of persons suffering from any permanent or natural infirmity." But here again we have provision not for a general system of Poor Law medical relief but for something supplementary to it.

5. The absence of reference to Poor Law medical relief in the early statutes is due in great measure to the reliance placed on voluntary association for medical relief. The hospitals received patients from the parish at fixed charges, and patients generally were charged for indoor treatment.[6] There was also a number of dispensaries n the Metropolis and elsewhere. London was practically divided into voluntary dispensary areas. The general dispensary, in the eighteenth century and later, was used as a centre of teaching. The physicians and surgeons attended daily: "To give advice to such out-patients as came properly recommended," and they "afterwards visited the home patients at the places of their abode, as the case might require." "No persons were deemed objects of the charity, but such as were really necessitous," and the numbers treated were very large. This movement continued till about 1850, and many of the old dispensaries still exist.[7] Thus the hospitals and the general dispensaries played a part in the general administration of medical relief, which was afterwards reduced, as the two branches of relief, the Poor Law relief and the voluntary relief, became more and more dissociated, as they did after 1834.

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[1] Adrian, 231. [2] The Royal Commission of 1834 expressly include the sick among "the impotent." (Report, p. 42.) [3] 4 & 5 Will. IV. Cap. 76. [4] 11 & 12 Vict., Cap. 110. [5] 14 & 15, Vict., Cap. 105. [6] Growth of medical charities, *Charity Organisation Review*, p. 245, Vol. IV., 1898. [7] *Cf.* Hints designed to promote Beneficence, Temperance and Medical Science. Lettson, 1801, pp. 206, 211, Vol. III., and Dr. Calvert's Report, App. C.; Report of Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, 1834.

6. It was not until 1867, when the Metropolitan Poor Act[1] established sick asylums and dispensaries in London, that the Legislature directly provided for a system of medical relief, and even then it did so only as regards London. In the following year, the Poor Law Amendment Act,[2] applicable to the whole of England and Wales, empowered the Central Authority *inter alia* to order, if necessary, the provision of surgical and medical appliances in a workhouse without the consent of the Board of Guardians or of the ratepayers. Since 1868 there have been no enactments extending the provision of medical relief by Poor Law authorities, and, generally speaking, it may be said that the system in existence is almost entirely based upon the orders of the Central Authority.

(i.) *Definition of Medical Relief.*

7. While, however, the Legislature has been so largely silent on the subject, there has, in practice, been a considerable broadening of the conception of what is implied in "medical relief." At first the term seems to have been limited to medical attendance[3] and the usual bottle of medicine which accompanied a doctor's visit at that time.

8. The first definition of medical relief is to be found in the General Medical Order of 1842, which was embodied in the General Consolidated Order of 1847. In the latter, "medical relief" means "relief by surgical as well as by medical attendance"; "medical attendance" includes "surgical attendance"; and "medicines" comprise "all medical and surgical appliances."[4]

9. From time to time, the Central Authority appear to have been called on to interpret these definitions. Thus, it was decided that "bread for poultices" as being a "household article," and "cotton wool and calico used as dressings" as not being articles which "a medical man would furnish to a private patient," did not come within the meaning of the words "medical or surgical appliances."[5] It should be observed, however, that these decisions were merely interpretations of the contracts between the Guardians and the Medical Officers who had to supply the articles in question out of their salaries; the decisions did not affect the duty of the Guardians to supply the articles as part of the "maintenance" of the pauper. At the same time, the decisions are useful as indicating the scope of "medical relief" as defined by the orders of the Central Authority and as understood by the local authorities administering the Poor Laws.

10. In 1885, the Medical Relief Disqualification Removal Act[6] imported a much wider meaning into the expression "medical relief." Section 4 defines "medical or surgical assistance" as including "all medical and surgical attendance *and all matters and things supplied by or on the recommendation of the medical officer.*" That definition includes not only medical attendance and medicines, but, in the case of infirmary relief, it has been held to include food, lodging, nursing and all the other concomitants of treatment of the sick on a scale equal in many respects to the best equipped general hospitals in the country.[7]

(ii.) *Persons entitled to Medical Relief.*

11. Prior to 1834, the Overseers, "acting upon mere assumptions or conjectures as to the intention of the law,"[8] had not infrequently provided medical relief for the "sick poor" of the parish, and in the highly pauperised districts medical assistance was therefore given at the expense of the rates to practically "the whole mass of the labouring population."[9] This practice was put a stop to by the Poor Law

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[1] 30 & 31, Vict. Cap. 6. [2] 31 & 32 Vict., Cap. 122, Sec. 8. [3] This varied in different districts according as the medical officer possessed a degree in medicine, or in surgery, or in both. [4] Article 227, G. C. O., 1847. [5] Official Circular 102 : 119. [6] 48 & 49 Vict., Cap. 46. [7] *Cf.* Adrian, 114; Davy, 2033; Lockwood, 4140; Bagenal, 6962. *Vide* also the Old-Age Pensions Act, 1908, which provides that "medical or surgical assistance (including food or comforts) supplied by or on the recommendation of a medical officer"; or "any relief given to any person by means of the maintenance of any dependant of that person in any . . . infirmary or hospital" shall not be considered as poor relief. (Section 3 (1) (a) (i) and (ii)). [8] Instructional letter addressed to various Boards of Guardians on their formation. Third Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1837, p. 49. [9] "It is," writes Dr. Rumsey, "no exaggeration to say that, before the Act of 1834, throughout four-fifths of England, the majority of the inhabitants of those parishes which had not the advantage of charitable infirmaries or dispensaries were attended under the parish medical contract."—*Essays on State Medicine*, by H. W. Rumsey, 1856, p.

Commissioners who pointed out that, "as the poor rates are by law confined to the relief of absolute destitution,"[1] medical relief should be provided only for such persons "as could properly be deemed paupers." In this they effected a wide change in the administration of medical relief. Generally speaking, it may be said that medical relief was thereafter administered to the same classes as received ordinary relief, *i.e.*, it was confined to cases of "actual necessity or destitution" and was supplied under conditions which had as their ulterior object the dispauperisation of the labouring classes.[2] The opinion of the Select Committee of 1838 "that medical relief may with great propriety be given more extensively than any other kind of parochial assistance,"[3] does not appear to have been received with much favour by the Poor Law Commissioners, for we find them in 1840 unhesitatingly avowing the objects of their system of medical relief to be as follows :—

> "To provide medical aid for all persons who are really destitute, and to prevent medical relief from generating or encouraging pauperism; and with this view to withdraw from the labouring classes, the administrators of relief, and the medical officers, all motives for applying for or administering medical relief, unless where the circumstances render it absolutely necessary."[4]

In this statement of policy the Commissioners appear to have had in view only the system of outdoor medical relief. Medical relief in the workhouse was still, and for long afterwards, a part of the ordinary "workhouse system," administered under conditions sufficiently deterrent to prevent the encouragement of pauperism.

12. But, while the endeavour of the Commissioners was to restrict medical relief as far as possible, they had, even previous to 1840, been obliged to admit exceptions to their general policy. Thus, in 1837, they stated that the test of "absolute destitution" could not be applied to "cases of sudden and dangerous illness or accident."[5] Again, in 1840, the Commissioners decided that a sick member of a friendly society (who obviously is not destitute in the full meaning of the term) might be supplied with medical relief by the guardians if, in respect of his friendly society membership, he had not the right to medical relief and medicines.[6]

13. In practice, therefore, as we shall hereafter show, "destitution" as applied to medical relief has gradually come to mean no more than this, viz. :—inability to provide whatever medical treatment is necessary. As Dr. Downes has remarked to us :—

> "The Poor Law, therefore, has been obliged to provide for the sick on a scale continually advancing with the standard of care of the sick, and as, with medical progress, this provision becomes more complete, the more unequal, in the absence of effective organisation, is the condition of the man who tries to provide it for himself."[7]

The development of operative surgery has enormously widened the range of what may be regarded as being "absolutely necessary" for the cure of a patient. A man in fair circumstances may find himself called upon to undergo an operation the cost of which is beyond his means to defray. If, therefore, he is unable to gain admission to a general hospital he may apparently get the benefit of the operation in the form of medical relief, subject to the power of the guardians to recover from him part or all of the cost. The progress in medical science, and the growth of public opinion, have, therefore, imported into the expressions "actual necessity" and "absolutely necessary" a meaning which was unknown to the Commissioners of 1834. This applies more particularly to the indoor branch of medical relief.

(*b*) Poor Law Indoor Medical Relief.

14. The Report of 1834 contains no specific recommendation on the subject of medical relief in workhouses. At first sight this omission seems somewhat remarkable,

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[1] It is admitted that if the sick were contemplated at all under the Act of Queen Eliz., they were included among the "impotent." The Royal Commission of 1834 do not argue that they were so included, but insert the word "sick" in a short argument on outdoor relief to the impotent. If "medical relief" came under this clause, it was for the necessary relief of the poor who were not able to work. [2] Second Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, pp. 20 and 45; Third Annual Report, 1837, p. 49. [3] Report from Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act (1838), p. 25. [4] Report on the Continuance of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, p. 45. [5] Instructional Letter to Boards of Guardians, dated 31st January, 1837. Third Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1837, pp. 49–50. [6] Minute dated 27th March, 1840; Sixth Report Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, App. A., p. 55. [7] Downes, 22925.

because, from the Commissioners' graphic description of the deplorable state of the workhouses in the small pauperised parishes, it is clear that the condition of the sick therein must have left much to be desired. The sick were housed with prostitutes, ex-gaolbirds, tramps, and other characters of the worst description, and their sufferings were not infrequently aggravated by "the incessant ravings of some neglected lunatic."[1] "In such receptacles," said the Royal Commissioners, "the sick poor are often immured." The explanation of the apparent omission is perhaps to be found in the fact that the Commissioners proposed to set up a system of "well-regulated workhouses" with improved classification of the inmates, in the benefits of which the sick would be sure to participate.[2] On the other hand, we must point out that the report did not specify the sick among the classes for whom it was deemed necessary to provide separate accommodation. There is, however, specific mention of sick wards in the workhouse rules published in the first Report of the Poor Law Commissioners,[3] and, in their model plans for some of the larger workhouses, the midwifery cases were accommodated separately. Two classes of lying-in wards, "first" and "second" class,[4] were provided, thus anticipating apparently what has often been urged, viz., the separation of the more respectable from the vicious.

15. For thirty years subsequent to 1834, attention was chiefly directed to the question of outdoor medical relief, and little progress was made in the arrangements for the treatment of the sick in workhouses. Indeed, although a relieving officer was empowered to send an outdoor pauper to the workhouse for treatment, it seems clear that the sick wards "were originally provided for the cases of paupers in the Workhouse who might be attacked by illness,"[5] and that, even as regards such cases, the equipment was not always sufficient for their treatment. For example, in 1842, we find the Commissioners discouraging the performance of important surgical operations in Workhouses, and recommending that cases which require surgical treatment, or which have "long been the subject of medical treatment in the workhouse," should, if possible, be removed to an infirmary or hospital where they would enjoy "the practised skill and combined judgment of the medical men usually connected with such establishments."[6]

16. From time to time Select Committees[7] enquired into the subject of medical relief, and evidence was occasionally submitted showing ill-treatment of patients in the sick wards of the workhouse. The cases had, it appears, usually been investigated by the Poor Law Commissioners, and the delinquent officials dismissed or reprimanded prior to the cases being brought under the notice of the Committees. The Committees may also have regarded them as isolated instances rather than as typical of the prevailing conditions. But, at all events, their reports contain no recommendation for the improvement of the lot of the sick pauper in the workhouse. The Select Committee of 1864, after an inquiry extending over three or four sessions of Parliament, reported that "the poor were never so promptly attended to, or so effectually relieved during sickness, as they are at the present time," and that there were "no sufficient grounds for materially interfering with the present system of medical relief" which "appears to be administered with general advantage."[8] The tone of the Committee's Report, it will be observed, is extremely reassuring, and, in the light of the events which were so soon to follow, is significant of the general ignorance or indifference as to the condition of the sick poor in workhouses, which had generally prevailed up to this time.

17. The Report is dated May 31st, 1864; in the beginning of 1865, however, the circumstances attending the deaths of two paupers in London workhouses led to official inquiries into the treatment which they had received during their illness. "These inquiries disclosed serious defects in the state and management of the sick wards, and the publicity given to them led to further complaints, and attracted general notice."[9] The matter was taken up and investigated by the *Lancet*; and deputations were sent to the Poor Law Board, who finally ordered "a full and searching inquiry into the state of the infirmaries and sick wards of every workhouse" in the Metropolis.[10]

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[1] Report of Royal Commission of 1832 Report, p. 303. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 306. [3] First Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1835, p. 59. [4] *Ibid.*, App. A., No. 10. [5] Twentieth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1867–8, p. 28. [6] Explanatory Circular accompanying General Medical Order, 1842, *Vide* App. to Eighth Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1842, p. 82. [7] Select Committees on Medical Relief, 1844 and 1854, and Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1864. [8] Report of Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1864, p. 16. The only recommendation for the improvement of medical relief made by the Committee was that certain expensive medicines should be provided at the expense of the guardians instead of by the medical officer out of his salary. [9] Nineteenth Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1866–7, pp. 15–16. [10] *Ibid.*

18. Mr. Farnall's Report on the Metropolitan Workhouses[1] showed that the sick wards were badly constructed, imperfectly ventilated, and frequently insanitary; that the beds were insufficient, and, being filled with flock, were generally in a lumpy condition; that the eating and drinking vessels were in many instances unclean; that there was a deficiency of easy chairs, bed rests, wash-hand basins, and even of combs, brushes and towels; that, generally speaking, the food for the patients was cooked (often badly) by paupers, and was frequently served nearly cold; that, although the medical officers did their duty to the best of their ability, the attendance given and the salaries paid were inadequate to the needs of the sick; and that the patients, frequently during the day and almost entirely during the night, were nursed by paupers, many of whom could neither read nor write, whose love of drink often drove them to rob the sick of the stimulants which they should have given them, and whose treatment of the poor was, generally speaking, characterised neither by judgment nor by gentleness.

(i) *Establishment of Separate Infirmaries.*

19. The immediate effect of these revelations was the passing of the Metropolitan Poor Act, 1867, which has been described by Dr. Downes as "the starting point of the modern development of Poor Law medical relief."[2] Under the Act, which applied to London only, the whole of the unions and parishes in the Metropolis were formed by an Order[3] of the Poor Law Board into one district, called the Metropolitan Asylums District, for the treatment of insane, fever, and small-pox cases,[4] which had hitherto been generally dealt with in the workhouse.[5]

20. A number of the Metropolitan unions and parishes were also grouped together and formed into sick asylum districts with a view to providing separate infirmaries for the non-infectious sick. Almost within a year of the passing of the Act, the Board were able to report that six sick asylum districts had been formed, and that seventeen unions had been asked to "provide infirmaries on sites detached from the workhouse."

21. But the erection of separate infirmaries to supply the needs of the Metropolis, each estimated to cost from £45,000 to £50,000, involved an enormous capital expenditure, and the Board, in 1868–9, considered it expedient to modify their policy to a slight extent. They found, after inquiry, that, by appropriating existing workhouses to separate classes of inmates, they could, without involving "so serious an outlay," provide the requisite accommodation for the sick poor.[6] The sick asylum districts were thereupon reduced from six to two, at which number they still continue. This slight change of policy does not appear, however, to have been accompanied by any re-action on the part of either the Central or the local authorities in favour of abandoning the principle of separate infirmary treatment for the indoor sick. On the contrary, for many years subsequent to 1867, the reports of the Central Authority present an annual chronicle of steady progress; and in 1883–4 they were able to announce that the provision of hospital accommodation for the sick poor of the Metropolis, authorised by the legislation of 1867, was "nearly complete."[7]

22. It may be convenient to pause here for a moment to consider the nature of the infirmaries that were thus being provided. Though Poor Law establishments, they were quite separate from the workhouse. The cubic space per inmate, following upon the recommendations of the Committee of 1867,[8] was on a greatly improved standard. Instead of discouraging operations, it was impressed on the guardians that the infirmaries should be supplied with "all reasonable and proper appliances for the treatment of diseases of every kind," and that everything should be provided which might "tend to

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[1] H. C. 387, 1866. [2] Downes, 22989. [3] Metropolitan Asylum District Order, dated 15th May, 1867. [4] By an Order issued in 1897 the Managers have also to provide for certain classes of children suffering from various contagious diseases, more particularly ophthalmia or ringworm; for convalescent and mentally or physically defective children; and for children remanded by a Magistrate under the Industrial Schools Act. A recent Order (dated 11th September, 1908) enables the Managers to provide hospital accommodation for sick poor children generally. Since 1876 the Managers have also trained boys for the sea service. [5] On several occasions the Board pointed out the need for separate accommodation for infectious cases. In 1869–70 they remark that "the absence of such accommodation has in many cases led to deplorable results." (Twenty-second Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1869-70, p. xxxiv.) [6] Twenty-first Report, Poor Law Board, 1868–9, p. 16. [7] Thirteenth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1883-4, p. xxxi. [8] Report of Committee on Cubic Space of Metropolitan Workhouses, 1867. [H.C. 3786-1867.]

promote a cure or alleviate suffering."[1] Circulars[2] were issued containing "points to be attended to" in the construction of workhouses, and making suggestions as to fittings and medical appliances. The fittings of the sick wards were to be such as were "usually provided in the wards of general hospitals."[3] In addition to these improvements in the structure and equipment of the infirmaries, various measures were taken to improve their internal administration. The infirmaries were under separate administration, that is, they were placed under a resident medical superintendent with a resident doctor, or doctors, to assist him. The nursing staff was greatly augmented. To ensure that a higher standard of administration was maintained, the visiting committees were exhorted to perform their duties strictly and punctually,[4] and the workhouses and infirmaries were inspected by the medical inspectors of the Central Authority, two inspectors having been appointed, one for the Metropolis and one for the provinces.

23. Concurrently with the erection of the new infirmaries in London, the Central Authority, acting presumably under their general powers which had been reinforced in 1866[5] and again in 1868,[6] carried out an active campaign of reform in the provinces. The enquiry into the London workhouses was extended to provincial workhouses and the reports of the inspectors showed that, while the great majority of the workhouses provided adequately for the due relief of the classes of inmates for whom they were intended: "In some instances, and particularly in parts of the manufacturing district, defects and abuses of a serious kind . . . existed."[7] Following upon these reports, the Central Authority took measures to induce Boards of Guardians to improve their workhouses, these improvements to include the supply of proper accommodation for the sick and infirm. Where the Guardians refused or neglected to improve workhouses which were inadequate or unfit, orders were issued by the Central Authority directing the closing of the buildings after a certain day. Recalcitrant unions were even threatened with dissolution.[8]

24. The effect of this campaign was to give a great stimulus to the immediate improvement of workhouse accommodation. Indeed, the extreme parsimony displayed by Boards of Guardians of the older school had given way to extravagance. There was now a danger that the infirmaries would be regarded as "State hospitals into which all the sick poor of the country might be received for medical treatment and care."[9] In many cases the Board were compelled "to intervene in order to check the outlay which the Guardians would be willing to incur in the more ornamental part of the various structures," which they proposed to erect, and mention is made of a greenhouse for the supply of flowers to "one of the best infirmaries in the Kingdom" which had been erected by a Lancashire union.[10]

25. The progress thus initiated has continued. A number of the large provincial unions have provided infirmaries under management distinct from that of the workhouse, and in these the provision made for the indoor sick has been brought up to practically the same level as that obtaining in the Metropolis. In many other unions—rural as well as urban—the workhouse sick wards have been correspondingly improved.

(ii.) *Trained Nursing in Workhouses and Workhouse Infirmaries.*

26. As exemplifying the improvement in the indoor treatment of the sick, it will be convenient to outline briefly the great development that has taken place in regard to trained nursing. Under the General Consolidated Order of 1847 the only qualification prescribed for the paid nurse in a workhouse was that she should be able "to read written directions upon medicines."[11] For the rest, prior to 1865 the indoor poor were chiefly nursed by paupers who, as indicated above, were often illiterate, drunken, and altogether unsuited for such work. Immediately following upon the disclosures of that year the Board issued a circular[12] which had for its object the promotion of "a better system of nursing in the hospitals and sick wards throughout the country." The Board pointed out to the Guardians the expediency of providing a sufficient number of competent paid nurses, and recommended the discontinuance, as far as possible, of the practice of employing pauper inmates as assistant nurses.

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[1] Twentieth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1867-8, p. 28. [2] Circulars dated 13th and 15th June, 1868, *vide* Twenty-first Annual Report, Poor Law Board, p. 44 and 47. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 46. [4] Circular dated 6th July, 1868, *vide* Twenty-first Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1868-9, p. 51. [5] 29 & 30 Vict., Cap. 113, Sec. 8. [6] 31 & 32 Vict., Cap. 122, Sec. 8. [7] Twentieth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1867–8, p. 27. [8] Twenty-second Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1869-70, p. xxxv. [9] Twentieth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1867–8, p. 28. [10] Twenty-second Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1868–9, p. xv. [11] Art. 165 Gen. Consd. Order, 1847. [12] Circular dated 5th May, 1865, *vide* Eighteenth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1865-6, p. 24.

Visiting Committees throughout England and Wales were, in 1869, reminded that night-nursing should be provided in the sick wards of the larger workhouses. Meanwhile, in London, definite action had been taken under the Metropolitan Poor Act. In each of the separate infirmaries the nursing was now altogether performed by paid nurses, and in the sick asylums a beginning was made with the training of probationer nurses. In 1874–5 we find the Board expressing the hope "that ultimately the system will extend so that each of the separate infirmaries now rising in the Metropolis may be able to train and supply its own nurses as they may be required." [1]

27. By 1878–9 the Board were able to report that "in all the sick asylums and separate infirmaries" the system of employing pauper inmates as nurses had been "entirely superseded by the employment of paid nurses," [2] and in 1891–2 further progress—more especially in the Metropolis and some of the larger provincial towns—was again reported "both as regards the number of nurses employed and their qualifications for the office." [3]

28. But public opinion as to the standard of care of the sick advanced rapidly, and, in 1895, the Local Government Board found it necessary to urge Guardians generally to improve their nursing arrangements where these fell short of modern requirements. A Circular was issued to Boards of Guardians enclosing a Memorandum by the Board's medical inspector, Dr. Downes, on the subject of the employment of paupers as nurses, which set out the reasons for discontinuing such a practice.[4] In 1897 the Local Government Board took the further step of issuing an Order prohibiting such employment.[5] No pauper inmate of a workhouse may now be employed "to perform the duties of a nurse in the sick or lying-in wards of the workhouse," [6] and no pauper inmate may be employed "as an attendant in the sick or lying-in wards of the workhouse, or upon any pauper in the workhouse who requires nursing, unless such inmate shall be approved by the medical officer of the workhouse for the purpose, or shall act under the immediate supervision of a paid officer of the guardians." [7] With regard to the construction of the Order, the Local Government Board have stated that they consider that a pauper assistant may be employed in keeping the wards clean and in good order, in moving patients, in helping the nurse in changing wet and dirty cases, and in assisting in the distribution of food at meal times, but not in the actual feeding of the patients. The Order prescribed that nurses and assistant nurses should have "practical experience in nursing." [8] It required, in every workhouse having a nursing staff of three or more persons, the appointment of a superintendent nurse with a qualification of at least three years' training in a recognised school.[9] It also provided for the employment of a temporary nurse in the case of an emergency.[10] "The result of the issue of that Order," says Sir Hugh Owen, "has been to effect one of the most marked revolutions in Poor Law administration in the last quarter of a century." [11]

29. In 1902, a Departmental Committee of the Local Government Board inquired into the question of the nursing of sick poor in workhouses, and made recommendations as to :—

(1) The difficulties in obtaining an adequate supply of properly qualified nurses ;

(2) the qualifications and training of probationers and the qualification of superintendent nurses ; and

(3) the duties of the master and matron and of the superintendent nurse.

No general action appears to have been taken by the Board on the Report[12] of Committee.

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[1] Fourth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1874–5, p. xxviii. [2] Eighth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1878–9, p. xxxviii. [3] Twenty-first Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1891–2, p. lxxxvi. [4] Circular dated 29th Jan., 1895 ; *Vide* Twenty-fifth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1895–6, p. 107. [5] Order dated 6th Aug., 1897. [6] *Ibid.*, Art. I. (1). [7] *Ibid.*, Art. (2). [8] *Ibid.*, Art. II. [9] *Ibid.*, Art. III. [10] *Ibid.*, Art. V. [11] Fuller, Vol. I., Minutes of Evidence, App. xxi. (A) par. 47. [12] [Cd. 1366], 1902.

30. By comparing the number of nurses employed at different dates, an approximate idea may be formed of the development that has taken place in trained nursing since 1866, when, as has been stated, the sick were mainly under the care of pauper nurses. At that time there were only 111 paid nurses in the whole of the Metropolitan workhouses. In 1883–4 the Metropolitan nursing staff had risen to 610 nurses in Poor Law infirmaries and 174 in workhouses.[1] According to the latest published statistics,[2] the number of trained nurses employed in the workhouses or workhouse infirmaries of England and Wales in 1901 was as follows :—

In the Metropolis - - - - - - - - -	1,246
In the rest of England and Wales - - - - -	1,924

In addition, over 2,000 probationer nurses were employed.

> "Nothing is more striking in the recent history of Poor Law nursing than the enormous increase in the number of probationer nurses." [3]

These figures denotes a great improvement in the quality of the treatment of the indoor sick.

31. The improvement may be further exemplified by particulars as to :—

(*a*) The increase in the cost of indoor medical relief.

(*b*) The provision made for surgical operations and treatment.

(*c*) The improvement in the class of patients treated and a widening of the scope of medical relief.

(iii.) *Increase in the Cost of Indoor Medical Relief.*

32. There are no statistics showing the cost of treatment of the indoor sick prior to the passing of the Metropolitan Poor Act, 1867, so that it is impossible to ascertain precisely the effect which that Act had on the expenditure; but, as will be seen from the following table,[4] there has been a large and progressive increase in the cost of infirmary treatment since 1878 :—

COST PER HEAD PER ANNUM IN METROPOLITAN INFIRMARIES.

Years ended Lady Day.	Average.	Ranging from :—
1878 [5]	£37	£28 to £54 (exclusive of loan charges).
1888 [6]	£36	£21 to £69
1897 [7]	£48	£36 to £77 (inclusive of loan charges).
1906 [8]	£60	£43 to £95 (inclusive of loan charges).
	£50	£36 to £75 (exclusive of loan charges).

33. Evidence as to the increased capital expenditure [8] incurred in the erection of buildings for the sick between 1885 and 1904 was supplied to us by Mr. Davy, to whose evidence and statistical table we refer.[9] According to his table the cost varies, we find, not only from year to year and in different districts, but also as between different infirmaries in the same district. As an example of the latter, we may cite the Bethnal Green Infirmary and the Central London Sick Asylum at Hendon—both erected in the same year—the cost of the former exclusive of site being £274 per bed and the cost of the latter £377.

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[1] Thirteenth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1883–4, p. xxxii and xxxiii. [2] Report of Departmental Committee on Workhouse Nursing, Part II., App. iv., p. 156 [Cd. 1367], 1902. [3] *Ibid.*, Part I., p. 5 [Cd. 1366], 1902. [4] The figures have not all been compiled on the same basis, and they are not, therefore, strictly comparable. The difference in the method of compilation is not, however, sufficiently great to vitiate entirely their comparative value. The figures for 1877–8 are calculated from the number of days of maintenance, those for 1887–8 from the certified accommodation, and those for 1896–7 and 1905–6 from the number of occupied beds. The "average" of £48 per occupied bed given for 1896–7 is, however, merely the mean of the rates for 23 separate Institutions. [5] Eighth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1878–9, p. 339. [6] Second Report of Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals (H.C. 457–1891), p. 776. [7] Paper handed in by Dr. Downes, Vol. II., Appendix xiii. (B). [8] Exclusive of the cost of the site. [9] Paper handed in by Mr. Davy, Vol. I., Appendix v. (3)

34. The average cost in the country appears to be about £150. It is somewhat higher (about £250) in London, partly owing to the operation of the Metropolitan Building Act,[1] partly to the fact that the Central Authority have prescribed 850 cubic feet per bed in London as against only 600 in the provinces, and partly also to the higher cost of labour in London than in the provinces. Our attention has been drawn to the rise in the cost of materials and wages during the last twenty years as affecting the expenditure on workhouse infirmaries throughout the country,[2] but this in itself would account, we think, for only a small proportion of the increase. As Mr. Kitchin, the architect of the Local Government Board, has stated, the cost of hospital accommodation is a moveable and rising standard, and Guardians are allowed "to put in things now, which . . . ten or twenty years ago were not invented, very likely."[3]

35. In spite of their increased expenditure, however, the Poor Law infirmaries are, on the whole, much less costly than the general hospitals, both as regards current and capital expenditure. This does not, of course, imply extravagance on the part of the latter, but is mainly accounted for by the more acute type of cases treated, and the greater amount of surgical work done, which necessitate a larger nursing and general administrative staff than are required in an infirmary. Especially is this the case where the hospital is also a medical school. The standard of bed space and the style of building are also frequently better in the general hospitals than in the infirmaries.[4] On the other hand, as we shall hereafter show, we have received evidence to the effect that many Poor Law infirmaries are equal in these respects to the general hospitals.

(iv.) *The Provision made for Surgical Operations and Treatment.*

36. The Poor Law Commissioners, as we have shown, recommended that paupers requiring important surgical treatment should not be operated on in the workhouse but should be sent for that purpose to a general hospital. In the rural workhouses, and also in some of the urban infirmaries, this practice is still followed,[5] but in a number of the larger infirmaries the most delicate surgical operations are now performed by the medical staff.

37. About 3,000 operations, some of them of a most serious and important character, are annually performed in the London infirmaries.[6] We have no corresponding figures for the rest of England, but Dr. Fuller stated in evidence that, in some of the provincial Poor Law infirmaries, the percentage of recoveries from operations is higher than in the general hospitals.[7] At Sheffield Infirmary the equipment of the operating room cost £500.[8] Several of the London infirmaries have Röntgen ray apparatus, and Camberwell Infirmary has elaborate equipment for electrical treatment.[9] These examples indicate that a great development has taken place in the character of the institutions in which large numbers of the sick poor now receive treatment. The growth of aseptic surgery and a public demand for improved methods have doubtless contributed to this result. But, as our evidence shows, two other causes, one internal and the other external, have been equally potent. In the first place, the guardians have been obliged to train their own nurses in order to maintain an adequate nursing staff, which alone has necessitated a certain amount of surgical work; and, in the second place, the pressure on the accommodation of the voluntary hospitals has driven into the workhouse infirmaries many persons needing surgical treatment.

(v.) *Improvement in the class of Patients treated in Workhouse Infirmaries, and widening of the scope of Medical Relief.*

Decreased deterrence of Indoor Medical Relief.

38. The evils of the unreformed treatment of the indoor sick mainly arose from "the workhouse management—which must to a great extent be of a deterrent character—having been applied to the sick, who are not proper objects for such a system."[10] Since 1867, however, the treatment of the indoor sick has been conducted "on an entirely different system," and the bulk of our evidence clearly shows that the poor now gladly accept the benefits of treatment in the infirmaries, notwithstand-

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[1] Davy, 1637. [2] Kitchin, 3594. [3] Kitchin, 3677. [4] Spurrell, Vol. II., App. xiv.; Kitchin, 3590. [5] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 27; Visits: Provincial Urban Unions, No. 16, 20; Shaw, 33182; Stephens, 34753; Reid, 50856 (16a); Ainsley, 52911; Price, 67810; Packer, 70186 (5); Vulliamy, 73376; Mahomed, 76146; Hinnell, Vol. VII., App. clxxxii., par. 15. [6] Spurrell, 23303 (2); Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi., par. 37; Brit. Med. Assn. (Ford Anderson), 39247. [7] Fuller, 10343. [8] Fuller, 10334. [9] Downes, 23210; Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi. (A), pars. 38–9. [10] Mr. Gathorne Hardy, Hansard, 1867, Vol. 185, p. 163.

ing the investigation into their circumstances which the Poor Law requires. This is especially the case where the infirmary is separated from the workhouse, and where, as not infrequently happens, patients are directly admitted to and discharged from the infirmary without having to go through the workhouse.[1]

39. District medical officers make more use of the infirmaries than formerly. They find less difficulty in inducing patients to enter for treatment which could not be properly given in the home.[1] The relatives of poor persons sometimes persuade them to go to the infirmary "as if it were a private nursing home," [2] by telling them "how comfortable it is."[3] Guardians and relieving officers, Mr. Bagenal informs us, are always impressing on the applicants for relief that the infirmary is not like the workhouse.[4] Indeed, the deterrence has disappeared so completely in some districts, we are told, that poor persons are actually attracted from the country to the towns in order to obtain treatment in the infirmaries.[5]

Class of persons using Poor Law Infirmaries.

40. We have received a large body of evidence showing that, both in London and in the provinces, the infirmaries attract persons of a higher social position than formerly.

Thus, Mr. Davy says :—

> "We are . . . tapping a social stratum which was not formerly accustomed to yield pauperism, and a great many people go into sick asylums now who would not have gone into them in the old days."[6]

And again :—

> "The whole character of the administration has changed . . . and a class of sick come into the Poor Law Infirmaries now that never did come before."[7]

Mr. Lockwood says :—

> "The improved conditions of infirmary relief have had the effect of inducing an increased number of persons ordinarily above a *status* of poverty approaching destitution, to make use of them."[8]

And again :—

> "The evidence that a better class than formerly resort to the Poor Law infirmaries is to be found in the appearance of relatives and other visitors to patients, the number of cases where payments are recovered by guardians, and of those where funerals are conducted and paid for by friends or relatives."[9]

Mr. Lockwood also mentioned that domestic servants when sick are not infrequently, in certain parts of London, sent to the infirmary on the recommendation of a private practitioner :—

> "So excellent is the treatment and the provision for patients in Poor Law institutions that the family doctor says : 'Send them away to the infirmary.'"[10]

Mr. Court says :—

> "Many fairly well-to-do people go to the Edmonton Infirmary."[11]

Mr. Thurnall, Lambeth, says :—

> "They are a better class than they were. I recollect thirty years ago, and I should say that the class has improved steadily."[12]

Mr. Thompson, President of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, says :—

> "A large number of persons apply for admission to the infirmary who would not otherwise do so, or who do not need to do so. The standard of a union infirmary has been so improved that, generally speaking, it equals, if it does not surpass, that of the general hospitals, many people preferring the infirmary to the hospital. People now seek admission to the Infirmary who, formerly, never dreamt of doing so."[13]

Dr. McVail reports :—

> "In one district [Camberwell], a very large addition was made in 1903, yet the whole building [the infirmary] is again fully occupied, to some extent by a better class than had previously received

[1] Davy, 2858; Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (A), par. 28; Downes, 23105; Raw, 38177–8; Kemp, 46720–1; Report by Dr. McVail, p. 146. [2] Spurrell, 23387. [3] Herbert, 8179. [4] Bagenal, 7120. [5] Herbert, 8184, 8255; Morris, 16641. [6] Davy, 2342. [7] Davy, 3100. [8] Lockwood, 13437. [9] Lockwood, 13442. [10] Lockwood, 13608. [11] Court, 6604. [12] Thurnall, 15774. [13] Thompson, 22615.

Poor Law relief.[1] . . . In Camberwell it is alleged that the ordinary 'infirm' cases have been largely driven out of it [the infirmary], and drafted into a workhouse, in order to make room for better off patients, and there seems a good deal of foundation for the statement.[2] . . . The infirmary has attracted to itself many patients somewhat above the average level of pauperism, so that its wards are kept well filled, and many sick paupers of the ordinary class have to be retained in or sent to the workhouse." [3]

And again :—

"I was interested to learn that in some large cities the advantages of these maternity departments are coming to be so much appreciated that various underhand expedients are adopted to secure admission to the wards. A married woman will demand to get in on the ground that she is not married, or that her husband has deserted her. When this latter plea is advanced, if the application is made early enough to permit inquiry, a relieving officer usually visits the house, and, to meet this contingency, the husband, it is said, actually does go away to live elsewhere for a few days." [4]

A Committee of our number report :—

"Co-operation between the workhouse infirmary and the voluntary hospital is very complete, but poor people prefer the workhouse infirmary, as in larger towns direct admission to the infirmary is becoming common." [5]

Sir William Chance says :—

"As regards the Poor Law Infirmaries, there is not the same reluctance as formerly to enter their doors, and they are actually used by a class of people who, thirty years ago, would never have done so." [6]

Dr. Nathan Raw, Liverpool, says :—

"A very large number of people who are not destitute, and are not by any means paupers, do not hesitate to use them" [the Poor Law infirmaries]. [7]

And again :—

"The great majority of people who apply for Poor Law relief in consequence of acute sickness are not paupers." [8]

41. The rise in the social condition of the patients may further be illustrated by the payments for treatment made either by the patients themselves or by their relatives. Thus, Mr. Kemp, Leicester, informed us that, so far from there being any reluctance to come into the infirmary, he has actually had applications from persons to come in as paying patients.[9]

Mr. Cleaver, West Derby, Liverpool, says :—

"Mill Road has become now a general hospital, and is no longer a Poor Law hospital. You will understand that when I tell you that we collect from relatives over £5,000 a year. You will see from that the class of people that unfortunately come to us." [10]

Mr. Waite, King's Norton, Birmingham, says :—

"The advantages of the infirmary treatment are so obvious to some people that the more sensible of them will put their repugnance to its being a Poor Law institution altogether on one side; I have known cases where people come in for the sake of getting the treatment which they cannot get otherwise, and then a return is offered." [11]

Dr. Spurrell, Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, says :—

"Many medical practitioners, too, avail themselves of the presence of a Poor Law infirmary to recommend for admission such of their patients as, either by reason of their limited means or the nature of their illness, are unable to receive proper treatment in their own homes: in such cases the guardians making proportionate charges." [12]

(*Q.*) "And they would admit the patient on the understanding that so much per week was to be paid for the patient?"—(*A.*) "Yes." [13]

A Committee of our number, in a report on their visit to a Midland workhouse infirmary, say :—

"The matron, a very capable person, showed us part of the infirmary. They are very full, and building constantly new wards. Some paying patients are admitted, paying anything up to 10s. 6d., which is the maximum charge." [14]

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[1] Dr. McVail's report, p. 43. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 42. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 50. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 57. *Cf. also* Stansfeld, Vol. I. App. xxvi. (A), par. 2. [5] Visits: Provincial Urban Unions, No. 95. [6] Chance, 27061 (28). *Cf.* Fuller, 10225. [7] Raw, 37927 (26). [8] Raw, 38023. [9] Kemp, 46837. [10] Cleaver, 36142. [11] Waite, 43296. [12] Spurrell, 23303 (4). [13] Spurrell, 23389. [14] Visits: Provincial Urban Unions, No. 14.

Another committee report :—

> "The infirmary is practically a general hospital, and caters for a class slightly better than the ordinary *habitues* of a workhouse. A considerable sum is recovered each year from relatives, as much as 10s. a week being paid in some cases. One patient, a paralytic, was mentioned as being the brother-in-law of one of the richest men in * * *, who repaid the whole cost of treatment, etc., to the guardians." [1]

42. An instance of a further provision made for sick persons of social position above the usual pauper class is furnished by the Bradford Union. Mr. Crowther, the clerk, says :—

> "The guardians have provided for the phthisical sick in the incipient stages a sanatorium on a suitable site in the country, and all persons resident in the union found to be in that stage of the disease, whose income does not allow them to reside at a private sanatorium, are accepted on the recommendation of their private medical attendant." [2]

43. On the other hand, we must not fail to observe that indoor medical relief, where still given in the workhouse, is strongly deterrent to certain, and perhaps often the poorer and more self-respecting, members of the community, especially in country districts. For instance, there are the numerous cases of rural paupers that would be much better treated in the sick wards than at home, by whom "the workhouse sick wards . . . are . . . abhorred." To them, the sick wards are "distinctly and strongly repellent." [3] Even in towns there is, it appears, a strong prejudice in the minds of many poor people against entering the workhouse sick wards.[4] Again a respectable married woman, we are informed, is sometimes deterred from taking advantage of the maternity wards [5] because her child would be registered as having been born in the workhouse.[6] To overcome this objection it is said that resort is sometimes had to the expedient of registering the address under the number of the street in which the workhouse is situated, or by some other designation which will not connect it with the Poor Law. On the whole, however, we think there is no doubt that the great improvements in indoor medical relief—taken perhaps in conjunction with the operation of the Medical Relief Disqualification Removal Act—have done much to encourage poor persons to enter the workhouse sick wards and infirmaries.

44. The tendency to increased use of the Poor Law infirmaries has been augmented by other forces working silently but none the less powerfully. In the first place, the activities of the Sanitary Authorities have emphasised the importance of institutional or segregative treatment of infectious diseases. By educating public opinion in this respect a demand has been created for such treatment, but, except in a few places, the Sanitary Authorities have not provided isolation hospitals for any but the very highly infectious diseases. Accordingly, as Dr. Spurrell points out :—

> "The infirmaries are the only institutions to which such infectious diseases as erysipelas, puerperal fever, measles, whooping cough and chicken-pox can be sent for treatment." [7]

Such cases are, therefore, frequently treated in the workhouse infirmaries. And the same may be said of a large number of venereal cases which are unable to gain admission to the very few voluntary lock hospitals in existence.[8]

45. In the second place, the great advance in medical science during the latter half of the nineteenth century has led to increased pressure upon the accommodation of the general hospitals which, although extended from time to time, are insufficient to provide for all who seek to enter them. One of the effects of this pressure has been a transference, both directly and indirectly, of cases from such hospitals to the Poor Law—a matter to which we shall again have occasion to refer.

46. In the third place, in some parts of London and in certain provincial districts, *e.g.*, Camberwell, Woolwich, Bedwelty, etc , general hospitals are either non-existent or are too inaccessible. Accordingly, when an accident occurs, it is, as a matter of course, removed for treatment to the Poor Law infirmary, as the only place available. In such districts "absolute destitution," as implying an inability to provide the necessary medical or surgical treatment, acquires a new significance and may, as regards accident

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[1] Visits: Provincial Urban Unions, No. 25. [2] Crowther, Vol. IV., App. lxiii., par. 9 (*f*). [3] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 146. [4] Kerwin, 18175, 18383 ; Bushell, 24125 ; Holland, 32619, 32791 ; Raw, 37927 (12), 38186 ; Cameron, 41751 ; Bygott, 44022 ; Burnett, 44461 ; Parkin, 51466 (8). [5] James, 23566 (8) ; Raw, 38168-76 ; Bygott, 44051. [6] Tillyard, Vol. IV., App. clvii., par. 14. [7] Spurrell, 23303 (3) [8] *Ibid.*

cases at least, include within its scope the whole population of the district, rich and poor. The Poor Law infirmary here becomes *de facto* if not *de jure* a general hospital for the community.

47. As showing the tendency of the infirmaries to fill the place of general hospitals, the following selections from our evidence may be quoted. Poor Law Infirmaries as General Hospitals

Mr. Foster, Camberwell, says :—

"We are unfortunately placed, and that makes it necessary for Camberwell to make such medical provision for the poor as it does. . . . We are right in the middle of a very large district, with nothing but the medical provision that the guardians make to meet necessitous cases of sickness. Then it is rather alarming to some of us that we have to make provision out of our poor rate for so many cases of accident and urgent cases that we have to bring in. In the year ending Lady-Day, 1906, the police brought into our infirmary no less than 170 cases, and specially urgent cases had to be admitted to the number of 142, so that we admitted even with our limited accommodation of 800 odd beds . . . 312 cases from outside that would, if there had been hospitals, have been treated in hospitals rather than in a Poor Law infirmary. Of course, that makes our expenses for the infirmary go up very considerably, and deprives us of beds that the poor themselves should occupy." [1]

Mr. Cutter, Woolwich says :—

"An accident case is simply put upon an ambulance and brought to us, and the medical officer must admit it; he cannot be inhumane. Afterwards we recover, if we can, but as a rule from these street accidents we do not get very much." [2]

And again :—

(*Q.*) "Your infirmary serves to a large extent as a hospital?"—(*A.*) "It does to a large extent." (*Q.*) "You get casualty cases coming?" (*A.*) "A very large number." [3]

Dr. Spurrell, Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, says :—

"Cases of urgent sickness occurring in the streets, and those taken ill while in custody are brought by the police to the infirmary for admission." [4]

And again :—

"In some parts of London there is no general hospital anywhere near the infirmary." (*Q.*) "And so the infirmary takes the accidents?"—(*A.*) "Yes, and those cases that would otherwise go to the general hospital, if there were one in the neighbourhood." [5]

Mr. Cleaver, West Derby, Liverpool, says :—

"Unfortunately, there are more beds in the Mill Road Infirmary than in all the voluntary hospitals in Liverpool combined, and these hospitals have no beds at their disposal. The consequence is that the voluntary hospitals are continually refusing cases and sending them to Mill Road. Mill Road has become now a general hospital, and is no longer a Poor Law hospital." [6]

Dr. Brown, Bedwelty, says :—

"The workhouse infirmary has in this and similar districts come to be looked upon as the general hospital for the district, and cases of urgent illness and accident occurring to those on the border lines of pauperism have found admission and treatment there." [7]

And again :—

(*Q.*) "Does that bring cases under the Poor Law which, if there was an available general hospital, would not come under the Poor Law?"—(*A.*) "Yes, it does, and in certain cases the guardians have taken notice of these matters when compensation has been paid; where compensation has been paid to an injured patient, they have recouped themselves, or made him recoup them." [8]

Mr. Manton, Birmingham, says :—

"It [the infirmary] is a casualty hospital, for in the midst of great works and street risks casualties cannot be refused admittance, though the interests of ratepayers are safeguarded as much as may be." [9]

And again :—

"Our doors are not closed to anyone. A lady was thrown from her cycle a few months ago, and she was [in the infirmary] for three weeks, although it was not a Poor Law case at all. In that instance, I believe, the husband paid something to our treasury in acknowledgment of the services rendered." [10]

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[1] Foster, 16343. *Cf. also* Downes, 23211–2. [2] Cutter, 19033. [3] Cutter, 19365–6. [4] Spurrell, 23303 (6). [5] Spurrell, 23311–2. [6] Cleaver, 36142. [7] Brown, 34233(9). [8] Brown, 34352. [9] Manton, 43626 (11). [10] Manton, 43734.

In a report by one of our number on his visit to a country union, he says :—

> "The matron is a trained nurse. She had recently the pleasure of nursing the local Member of Parliament, who happened to have an accident of a serious nature whilst motoring in the district. He was exceedingly well pleased with the attentions he received. He sent a cheque to the clerk for his maintenance and £10 to the master to be spent on the inmates at the master's discretion." [1]

And in his report on another rural workhouse, the same member mentions :—

> "A serious accident occurred to a shunter of the railway on the day of my visit ; the man was removed to and nursed in the sick ward of the workhouse, it being the only institution for treating such a case." [2]

Another member reports :—

> "There is no large local hospital. Accidents are often brought to the infirmary, but relations are summoned to remove them as soon as possible. Paying patients allowed only under exceptional circumstances." [3]

48. It should, perhaps, be observed that our remarks as to the tendency for the infirmaries to become general hospitals and to attract persons of higher social standing than the ordinary pauper apply in the main to the Metropolitan and large provincial unions. In the majority of unions the workhouse sick wards—although greatly improved both structurally and otherwise—still form part of the general mixed workhouse and are occupied chiefly by workhouse inmates who may fall sick.

(c) Poor Law Outdoor Medical Relief.

49. Prior to 1834 arrangements, "almost infinitely various," [4] had been made by the Overseers for providing the outdoor sick with medical attendance, which the Royal Commissioners found to be generally adequate if "only the price and the amount of attendance" be considered.[5] Beyond giving their approval, therefore, to certain attempts that were being made to promote the establishment of provident dispensaries, their Report contains no proposal for the improvement of outdoor medical relief.

50. In their administration of outdoor medical relief, the Poor Law Commissioners had in view the restoration of the labouring classes to a position of independence. The Commissioners early realised that medical relief might be a more popular form of relief than ordinary relief, and that its development mght perpetuate the evils of dependence on parochial aid in districts where ordinary outdoor relief to the able-bodied had been abolished.[6] Applications for medical relief were therefore to be closely scrutinised [7]. It was to be given only in cases of actual destitution, and every endeavour was to be made to induce the labouring classes to join sick clubs or friendly societies. [8]

51. The system of outdoor medical relief set up by the Commissioners is, with a few exceptions the system now in force. Briefly, it is as follows :—The guardians were to divide the union into districts and to contract with a doctor, or doctors, to supply medical attendance and medicines. A poor person in need of medical relief might obtain it by an order from the guardians, their relieving officer, or an overseer. Permanently disabled aged and infirm paupers were to be entered on a list and supplied with a ticket entitling them to medical relief at any time without a special order. This list came to be described as the "permanent list." [9]

(i.) *Medical Officers' Districts.*

52. The sub-division of unions into medical relief districts, originally left to the Guardians as being "the most competent judges on the subject," [10] gave rise to much complaint on the part of the medical profession, and the Select Committee of 1838 reported that "in many instances" the districts "were inconveniently large." [11] Following upon that Report, the General Medical Order, 1842, and subsequently the General Consolidated Order, 1847, still in force, ordained that a medical officer's district should not exceed 15,000 acres in extent, or contain a population of more

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1 Visits: Rural Unions, No. 97. 2 Visits: Rural Unions, No. 104. 3 Visits : Miscellaneous Unions, No. 108, II. 4 "Continuance Report" of Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, p. 45. 5 Report of Poor Law Commission, 1834, p. 43. 6 Second Annual Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, pp. 21 and 45. 7 Second (1835) and Third (1836) Annual Reports of Poor Law Commissioners, also "Continuance Report," 1840. 8 The active measures taken by the Commissioners to promote the formation of independent sick clubs are described in pars. 91–2 *post*. 9 General Medical Order, 1842 ; and General Consolidated Order 1847. 10 Second Annual Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, p. 19. 11 Report of Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act (1838), p. 24.

than 15,000 persons,[1] unless in the case of Wales, or such other exceptional cases as the Commissioners might approve.[2] An Order of 1871[3] exempted the whole of the medical officers' districts in the Metropolis from the operation of the rule, the circumstances of the Metropolis being "so exceptional that . . . . the limit referred to is not required."[4] In practice it appears that the exceptions allowed by the Central Authority are fairly numerous.

(ii.) *Remuneration of Medical Officers.*

53. Originally the remuneration of medical officers was fixed by open competitive tender. This practice, adopted by the Poor Law Commissioners as an expedient for ascertaining what the medical profession themselves would regard as fitting remuneration for their attendance,[5] gave rise to loud and general complaint, and it was abolished by the General Medical Order of 1842. The chief difficulty of the Commissioners was to find a method of remuneration which, whilst securing sufficient and proper treatment for every pauper, would tend to check indiscriminate medical relief. It was felt that, if the medical officer were paid by a fixed salary, the guardians and relieving officers would have no inducement to restrict the granting of medical orders, inasmuch as an increase in their numbers would not cause a direct or immediate increase of the rates. On the other hand, it was feared that if the medical officer were paid by a fixed fee per case, it might operate in an exactly opposite direction, and that poor persons might not get the medical relief to which they were entitled.[6]

54. The Commissioners accordingly recommended a combination of both methods of payment, viz.:—a fixed salary for attending paupers on the "permanent list," and a fee per case for all other persons whom the medical officer might be called upon to attend. Among other advantages claimed for the combined method of payment, were these:—it enabled medical relief to be given on loan, and it secured prompt and effective treatment for aged, infirm, and helpless persons, on whom medical officers could attend without any specific order from the Guardians or their relieving officer. It does not appear that the combined method of remuneration ever came to be generally adopted. Medical officers were for the most part paid by fixed salary—a practice which largely prevails at the day.

55. In addition to his salary a district medical officer is, however, allowed special fees for surgical operations and obstetrical work, in terms of a scale originally fixed by the General Medical Order, 1842.[7] Special fees are also paid for work under the Lunacy and Vaccination Acts, and the Guardians may, with the approval of the Central Authority, award a gratuity to a medical officer for exceptional services, or to recoup him for necessary assistance.

(iii.) *Medicines.*

56. For about thirty years, all medicines which might be required were, as a rule, provided by the medical officer out of his salary. But, following upon the Report of the Select Committee of 1864,[8] the Poor Law Board advised the guardians to exclude such medicines as cod-liver oil and quinine from the medical officer's contract, and to make other arrangements for their supply.[9] Apart from these, it may generally be said that medicines are still supplied by medical officers out of their salaries—except in unions which have established dispensaries, where a different system is followed.

(iv.) *Poor Law Dispensaries.*

57. The Metropolitan Poor Act, 1867, which revolutionised the system of indoor medical relief in London, also provided for the establishment of dispensaries throughout the Metropolis.[10] These dispensaries were a great advance on the previously existing arrangements for the supply of outdoor medical relief. Thus, instead of the medical officer having to supply medicines out of his salary, they were now provided by the Guardians, and dispensed by a dispenser, giving his whole time to the work. The dispensary was conveniently situated. The poor who were able to go to the dispensary

1 General Consolidated Order, 1847, Art. 159. 2 *Ibid.*, Arts. 160 and 161. 3 Medical Officers (Metropolis) Order dated 13th Dec. 1871. 4 Circular dated 19th Dec., 1871, *vide* First Report, Local Government Board, 1871–2, p. 69. 5 First Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1835, p. 30. 6 "Continuous Report" of Poor Law Commissioners, 1840; also Seventh (1841) and Eighth (1842) Annual Reports of Poor Law Commissioners. 7 The scale of fees now in operation is prescribed by the General Consolidated Order, 1847, Art. 177. 8 Report, p. 45. 9 Circular dated 12th April, 1865, *vide* Eighteenth Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1865–6, p. 23. 10 3031 Vict., Cap. 6, Sec. 38.

were now certain of seeing the medical officer at a fixed hour every day. The system provided a better check on the medical officer's treatment of cases and secured a more effective control over the whole administration of outdoor medical relief.[1] The Central Authority also claimed that the appointment of a medical officer to a dispensary gave him greater publicity, heightened his responsibility, and stimulated his energies.[2]

58. Contrary to expectation, the cost of providing a dispensary was found to be "extremely small"; in many cases the dispensary was simply an ordinary dwelling house, with a waiting room for patients built on the ground behind; or it was sometimes combined with other buildings, such as an infirmary, relief office, or labour yard.[3] From time to time the Central Authority reported that the dispensary system had been followed by satisfactory results, and that it had "raised the standard and increased the efficiency of medical out-relief in the Metropolis."[4]

59. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the establishment of dispensaries was followed by a great reduction in the number of medical orders. Better organisation contributed, no doubt, to this result. But the decrease was, it appears, partly due to district medical officers sending "the great majority of serious cases" to the Poor Law infirmaries instead of treating them at home.[5] The crusade against out-relief, which commenced soon after the dispensary system was established, may also have caused a diminution in the number of orders.

60. Although the Metropolitan dispensaries were established under Statute, the Central Authority, acting presumably under their general powers for the regulation of poor relief, appear to have authorised the establishment of dispensaries in a number of the large urban centres, *e.g.*, at Birmingham, Leeds, Wolverhampton, Nottingham, Derby, Sheffield, Cardiff, and Plymouth.[6] Some of the provincial dispensaries were merely for the supply of medicines to the workhouse; but, in other cases, an organisation of outdoor medical relief was set up on parallel lines with that of the Metropolis.

61. On different occasions the Central Authority have considered proposals for the establishment of "medicine chests" or dispensaries in rural districts; but the practical difficulties of storing and dispensing the medicines and of keeping them fresh were regarded as fatal objections to the proposals. Indeed, on one occasion (1840), the Poor Law Commissioners indicated that the difficulty of obtaining medicines in a scattered union might be best obviated by reducing the size of the medical officer's district.[7] By 1878, the policy of the Central Authority had, however, undergone some modification. For, in reply to a *Lancet* Memorial, we find it stated that—

> "Where . . . . the circumstances of the union admit of the Guardians establishing a dispensary or arranging for a supply of drugs to be kept at the workhouse, or elsewhere, to be dispensed by the medical officers under proper restrictions, it is already the practice of the Board to encourage such an arrangement."[8]

This implied considerable improvement in the arrangements for the supply of drugs to the outdoor sick, but, as has been mentioned, medicines are still provided by the medical officer in the great majority of unions.

(v.) *Nourishment.*

62. The Central Authority decided that a medical officer had power to recommend, but could not order, extra nourishment (*e.g.*, milk, or beef tea,) to be supplied to a sick person under his charge.[9] If the Guardians doubted the propriety of supplying such nourishment at the expense of the rates, they were to require the medical officer to state in writing the grounds on which he made the recommendation, and to obtain from the relieving officer a report on the circumstances of the patient and his ability to supply the nourishment in question.[10] It was

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1 Twenty-second Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1869–70, p. xlvii. 2 First Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1871–2, p. xxviii. 3 Fifth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1875–6, p. xxix; *cf. also* Sixteenth Annual Report, 1886–7, p. xliv. 4 Sixteenth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1886–7, p. xliv.; *cf. also* Twenty-first (1868–9) and Twenty-second (1869–70) Reports of Poor Law Board; and First (1871–2), Second (1872–3) and Fifth (1875–6) Annual Reports of Local Government Board. 5 Sixteenth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1886–7, App. B, p. 91. 6 Fuller, 10541; Bagenal, 7448; Twenty-third Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1870–1; Twelfth (1882–3) and Fourteenth (1884–5) Annual Reports of Local Government Board. 7 "Continuance Report" of Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, p. 46. 8 Eighth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1878–9, App. A, p. 90. 9 Seventh Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1841, p. 10. 10 "Official Circular," Vol. 9, p. 134.

suggested, however, that, in emergency cases, the medical officer's recommendation should be considered by the relieving officer or the overseer as an order to be obeyed until the matter could be brought before the Guardians at their next meeting.[1]

63. The supply of extra nourishment has always been a matter of considerable difficulty. On the one hand, great responsibility rested on the Guardians and their relieving officers if, after refusing the nourishment, anything untoward happened to the patient. On the other hand, it was found that poor persons frequently applied for medical relief, not so much because they needed it as because they desired the nourishment which often accompanied it, and in this way it was frequently a cause of pauperism. The evidence which we have received on this latter point is practically to the same effect.[2]

64. Realising that any laxity in the administration of extra nourishment might lead to increased pauperism, the Central Authority took precautions to ensure that such nourishment should be administered with care and discrimination. Thus, in their instructions to the Poor Law inspectors in 1871 they stated :—

> "That, as the recommendations of Medical Officers for meat and stimulants are regarded as equivalent to orders for additional relief, they should, in all cases, be accompanied by a report from the Medical Officer in a prescribed form, setting forth the particulars of each case ascertained by personal inquiry." [3]

In 1878 a memorial from the *Lancet* on "Poor Law Medical Relief Reform" pointed out that—

> "Medical 'treatment' consists quite as much in the administration of a sufficient and appropriate diet as in the exhibition of drugs, and the object of the medical officer and guardians alike is to *cure*."[4]

The memorialists recommended, therefore, that the supply of "necessaries" for the sick should be under the control of the medical officers without the intervention of the relieving officer.[5] To this, Mr. Sclater Booth replied that—

> "The effect of substituting the authority of the medical officer for that of the relieving officer as proposed, would be practically to withdraw from the control of the guardians, a description of relief which, as it has a constant tendency to increase, requires to be most carefully watched." [6]

And he added that there were no just grounds for believing that the "reasonable recommendations of the medical officer in this respect" were not duly attended to by the Guardians and their officers.[7] Generally speaking, that reply may be said to represent the views of the Central Authority at the present day.

65. Our evidence shows that, as a rule, the Guardians give effect to the medical officer's recommendations for extra nourishment[8] but that they sometimes decline to supply alcohol on the ground that it cannot be safely administered in the pauper's own home, and that, if the medical officer thinks that alcohol is necessary, the pauper should come into the workhouse to receive it.[9] There is, however, sometimes, an undesirable delay in supplying sick paupers with extra nourishment.[10]

66. "There is," Mr. Davy says, "a continual struggle on the part of medical officers and others to give medical comforts, or what are called medical extras as a part of relief. . . ."[11] The expenditure on medical extras is said to be growing, probably because "sagacious paupers" seek medical relief for the sake of the medical extras and make a "fine art" of the practice.[12] It appears however that pressure is sometimes put upon medical officers to avoid giving medical comforts as far as possible,[13] but it is obvious that treatment at home is difficult unless the additional requisites and nourishment are found.

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[1] Seventh Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1841, p. 10. [2] Brown, 25029 ; Bushell, 23945 (9); Thompson, 22622; Thompson, 34074 ; Slade King, 69873. [3] Circular letter to Poor Law Inspectors dated 2nd December, 1871 ; *cf. also* Memo. as to the administration of Out Relief which was issued to Boards of Guardians in February, 1878. [4] Eighth Report, Local Government Board, 1878–9, App., p. 88. [5] *Ibid.* [6] *Ibid.*, p. 91. [7] *Ibid.* [8] Fuller, 10382 ; Walsh, 8807 ; Hewlings, 47501 (4) ; Biddle, 48888 (5); Stork, 75589 (3); Sharman, 75127 ; Harwood, 73751 ; Packer, 70272 ; Burgess, 72191 ; Exham, 72668 ; Bathurst, Vol. VII., App. xcviii. ; Adams, Vol. VII., App. xviii. ; Murray, Vol. VII., App. cxxxvii. ; *cf. also* Cox, 51901. [9] Davey, 2870 ; Walsh, 8808 ; Fuller, 10380–2 ; Paton, 50367 ; Sharman, 75130. [10] Stephens, 34775 ; Packer, 70307 ; Heathcote, 70453. [11] Davy, 2870. [12] King, 69873. [13] Hewlings, 47538–9, 47589.

(vi.) *Nursing of Outdoor Sick Poor.*

67. Although, as Mr. Sclater Booth informed the *Lancet* Memorialists in 1878, there was nothing to prevent the Guardians supplying a paid nurse to assist the medical officer in the domiciliary treatment of a sick person,[1] it was not until 1892 that the Central Authority issued an order empowering the Guardians to appoint district nurses.[2] This power has not been largely used. As a matter of fact, only the Guardians of a few urban unions have appointed nurses. But, as Dr. Downes has informed us, the Order has "had the indirect effect of stimulating subscriptions to nursing associations."[3] By means of these subscriptions, sometimes liberal but more frequently only nominal in amount, the Guardians in many unions now secure a certain amount of nursing for the outdoor sick.

68. There has been, during recent years, a remarkable expansion of voluntary effort for the provision of district nurses. As an instance of the voluntary associations we may quote the following from the evidence of Mr. Baldwyn Fleming:—

> "In Dorsetshire, the Dorset Health Society have a system of nursing which it was intended should cover the county, and which, if it is not already doing so, I hope in course of time will do so Their head-quarters are at Dorchester, and they are, I believe, more or less in connection with the county hospital. They have certain centres. . . . At these centres they keep one or two trained nurses who have some knowledge of midwifery. . . . Then under them they have what they call cottage nurses, and they are what you want so much in the country districts. They are not trained nurses, but they work under the supervision of a trained nurse. They do not do the trained nursing work, but they do the general work of getting the patient in a condition to benefit by trained nursing—that is, they clean the cottage, they are willing to live in the cottage, they will do the cooking, they will keep the windows open, they will take the sack of straw out of the chimney, and clean out the accumulation from under the bed, they will wash the people, and see that the beds are properly made and properly sheeted, and that the patients are properly dressed, washed, and kept clean."[4]

From a Memorandum sent in by the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for nurses we learn that:—

> "The total number of nurses in England and Wales on August 1st, 1907, in connection with the institute, including Queen's nurses and probationers, village nurses and midwives, was 1,803. . . . The total number of nurses in Scotland and Ireland on January 1st, 1907, in connection with the institute, including Queen's nurses and probationers and midwives, was 456." . . . . . Of the nursing associations in England and Wales affiliated to the institute, 242 have received annual grants from Boards of Guardians, amounting to £3,632 15s. . . In the same way, of the associations affiliated to county associations (employing about 493 village nurses) 144 have received grants from Boards of Guardians amounting to £386 11s."[5]

69. In two unions (Chichester and Merthyr Tydfil) the plan of making the nursing staff of the workhouse available also for district nursing among the Poor Law patients, has been tried with success, and it is thought by some witnesses that this system could be extended with great benefit.[6]

(vii.) *Medical Relief on Loan.*

70. Chief among the methods adopted for rendering the condition of the recipient of outdoor medical relief less eligible than that of the independent labourer, was the practice, recommended by the Poor Law Commissioners, of giving medical relief by way of loan. Apart, however, from the disinclination shown by local authorities to restrict the granting of medical relief, there was a practical difficulty in giving effect to the recommendation. Where the medical officer was paid a fixed salary, it was impossible to determine the proportion that might be charged in respect of any particular case. The suggestion of the Poor Law Commissioners, that the difficulty might be overcome by paying the doctor partly by fees, was not, as we have indicated, adopted by Boards of Guardians to any appreciable extent. Accordingly, in many parts of the country medical relief is not given on loan, or is limited to certain classes of persons, *e.g.*, as at St. Pancras,[7] to those having over 20s.

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[1] Eighth Annual Report, Local Government Board, 1878–9, App. A, p. 91. [2] Order dated 27th Jan., 1892. [3] Downes, 22986. [4] Fleming, 9337; *cf. also* Evidence by Mrs. Hudson and Miss Walsh, Salop County Nursing Federation, *Qs.* 72406 *et seq.* [5] Vol. IX., Minutes of Evidence, App. lv. [6] Fuller, 10377; Lowry, 12140; Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv., par. 130; Fleming, 9340; James, 48340 (24); Biddle, 48888 (6). [7] Craig, 19466 (19).

a week. Further, in some Unions where medical relief is given on loan, no attempt is made to recover the cost, while in others only a small proportion is recovered. For example, it appears from a return as to loan medical relief in London, that, in 1904—

> "The greatest amount that was recovered by any union was recovered by Camberwell; they got £6 2s. for midwifery and 19s. 6d. for ordinary medical relief. A great many unions recovered nothing; Lambeth recovered 2s. 6d." [1]

The amounts recovered in London are, it seems, paid into the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, so that there is not much inducement to an individual Board of Guardians to collect the cost of relief which they may have given on loan.[2]

On the other hand it appears that in Stow Union about two-thirds,[3] in St. Neots 10 per cent.,[4] and in another district about one-half of the loan relief is recovered.[5] In Yeovil, where recovery is successfully carried out, the relieving officer collects the money in small instalments.[6]

71. But although no portion, or only a small portion, of loan relief may be recovered, it is claimed that the mere granting it on loan has a tendency to prevent persons from applying for medical relief a second time.[7] If this be so, the practical result would appear to be that medical relief is made deterrent to the honest who would wish to pay, but not to those who easily repudiate their obligations.

72. The objection to free medical relief, forcibly put to us by Mr. Davy, is that it "will interfere with provident societies, and efforts of that kind to induce the poor to provide for themselves."[8] Indeed, a number of witnesses have recommended that all medical relief should be given on loan.[9] One witness said, however, that, in some districts, the poverty of the inhabitants would make it impossible to insist on this being done and that, to fix a small rate of repayment is objectionable on the ground that it would induce persons to apply for medical relief if they found that they could get it so cheaply.[10] Besides, any such system is apt to create an erroneous impression that the entire cost is being repaid.

(viii.) *Deterrence of Outdoor Medical Relief.*

73. In addition to granting medical relief on loan, various other expedients have been adopted for the purpose of restricting medical relief, or of making it deterrent. Thus, in some Unions, the "permanent list" of paupers has been abolished, and all medical relief must be obtained on the order of the relieving officer.[11] Again, there is frequently a rule that all applicants for medical relief must appear before the Guardians,[12]—a method which is made still more effective by limiting the duration of the order to, say, two weeks or a month, so that the cases come up periodically for review.[13] All of these expedients tend to keep the labouring classes from applying for medical relief in sickness. In one Union, indeed, outdoor medical relief, unaccompanied by other relief, has been entirely abolished.[14]

74. In the opinion of a number of witnesses, one of the greatest deterrents of outdoor medical relief lies in the mere fact that it is associated with the Poor Law and that the person who receives it is classed as a pauper. They have told us that sick persons often wait to the very last rather than apply; that aged persons living with married children are too proud to call in a Poor Law doctor; that amongst the wage-earning classes there is a deadly hostility to the acceptance of Poor Law relief; and that the decent poor prefer to suffer in silence rather than undergo the ban of pauperism.[15]

75. On the other hand there is a good deal of evidence to show that outdoor medical relief is decreasing in its deterrence; that less disgrace is felt or less reluctance is exhibited in applying for it than for ordinary relief; that the old-fashioned steady

[1] Downes, 23072. [2] Downes, 23087; *cf. also* Report by Miss Roberts, par. 38. [3] Wilkes, 75541. [4] Court, 6256. [5] Brown, 75922. [6] Young, 69558. [7] Downes, 23077; Briant, 15359; Thompson, 22619; Thurnall, 15879; Solomon, 50489; Young, 69557; *See also* Report by Miss Roberts, par. 39. [8] Davy, 2738. [9] Thompson, 22535 (9); Solomon, 50138 (15); Fleming, 9502; Slade-King, 69833; Peters, 19728 (7); Brown, 75895 (14). [10] Dyson, 20271. [11] Lockwood, 12749; Downes, 23233; Thompson, 34076, 34164; Halifax Union Rules, Vol. I., App. xv. (O). [12] Downes, 23073; Stonham, 21739; Report by Miss Roberts, pars. 37 and 40. [13] Visits, Provincial Urban, No. 2 E; Bristol Rules, Vol. I., App. x. (c); Bradford, Halifax, Leeds and Skipton Rules, Vol. I., App. xv. (O). [14] Emberton, 71420. [15] Burnett, 44453; Hawkyard, 42518; British Medical Association, 39389; Percival, 47926; Dodd, 25373 (157); Cureton, Vol. vii., App. cviii., par. 3; Cameron, 41545, 41629; Cooke, 44981; Broomfield, 49654; Bygott, 44002; Cox, 51863, 51899; Reid, 50887; Hewlings, 47547 (41), 47501; Abbott, 42291; Waite, 43247 (4); Holland, 32776; Davies, Vol. IX., App. xliv.; Dodd, 47209; Edwards, 38331; Asbury, 43453; Parkin, 51473.

abhorrence of the "parish" is a thing of the past; and that the fact of medical relief being associated with the Poor Law is not itself a deterrent because the Poor Law has lost its terrors.[1]

76. This decline in deterrence is, doubtless, partly due to the operation of certain outside influences, in principle contrary to any purely restrictive or deterrent system of outdoor medical relief, which have tended to undermine the policy consistently pursued by the Central Authority since 1834. As early as 1838, as we have already stated, a Select Committee of the House of Commons expressed the opinion "that medical relief may, with great propriety, be given more extensively than any other kind of assistance;" [2] in 1854 another Committee reported in favour of persons receiving medical assistance without being placed on the list of paupers;[3] in 1860 a Bill for securing more efficient medical relief to the poorer classes, provided *inter alia* that medical relief should not be deemed "parochial relief, alms, or charitable allowance;" [4] in 1885 the Medical Relief Disqualification Removal Act did away with the disfranchisement of the recipients of medical relief for all elections except that of a Board of Guardians;[5] and, still more recently, the preferential treatment of the sick has received additional emphasis under the Old Age Pensions Act, 1908, which provides that, while the receipt of poor relief is a disqualification for a pension, medical relief "shall not be considered as poor relief."[6]

77. We have no statistics showing the effect of the Medical Relief Disqualification Removal Act on the number of persons applying for medical relief throughout England and Wales. Mr. Ball, superintendent relieving officer, informed us that in Liverpool medical relief "rushed up" after the passing of the Act.[7] In London, after an almost steady decline in the number of dispensary orders from 1877 to 1885, there was an immediate and continued rise down to 1895. There is, however, no evidence that this increase was directly attributable to the passing of the Act. Sickness due to "severe weather" and an "epidemic of influenza" are mentioned by the Central Authority on different occasions as having been responsible for increasing the number of Orders, but no reference is made to the Act itself.[8] Moreover, the figures again commenced to fall after 1895, and have since reached a point below the previous low-water mark.

(*d*) Agencies for supplying Poor Persons with Medical Assistance outside the Poor Law.

78. At an early stage in our inquiry we were impressed with the magnitude and importance of the agencies for supplying the labouring and the poorer classes generally with medical assistance outside the Poor Law. We have, therefore, received much evidence on the subject, and we now proceed to give a short account of the work of the chief of these agencies.

(i.) *Voluntary Hospitals.*

79. As with the Poor Law infirmaries, so with the voluntary hospitals, great developments have taken place since 1834. The growth of operative surgery has increased the demand for hospital treatment, and, in spite of frequent extensions of the hospitals, the demand is still in excess of the accommodation.[9]

80. We do not propose to trace the history of voluntary hospitals since 1834, but we think it essential to show the relations which have always existed between such hospitals and the Poor Law. From 1834 down to 1867, during which period indoor medical relief was administered as part of the ordinary workhouse system it was to the voluntary hospitals that paupers were sent for surgical operations or special treatment, and in 1851 the Legislature emphasised the interest of the Poor Law in such institutions by empowering the Guardians to subscribe to them.[10] The sick poor themselves, without going to the Poor Law, also sought admission to the voluntary hospitals as being the only institutions equipped in a manner fitted for the treatment of their diseases. At the present day, especially in country districts and in Unions where no separate infirmary has been provided, Boards of Guardians are still in the habit of sending paupers to the hospitals.[11] But wherever a fully equipped separate infirmary has been erected this practice has diminished, and in some cases it has entirely ceased. Moreover, as has been indicated, the poor are now in many cases glad to seek the refuge of the Poor Law infirmary.

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[1] Thompson, 22896; Brown, 34364; Herbert 8394; Edwards, Vol. VII., App. cxiii, par. 4; Ainsley, 52845; Blackshaw, 41381; Raw, 37927 (47); Hogg, Vol. VIII., App. xxxvii., par. 4; Pochin, 74771 (3); Culross, Vol. VII., App. xxix., par. 3; Edwards, 51146; Lang, Vol. VII., App. lvi., par. 10; *cf. also* Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (A), par. 30; Fust, 11158. [2] Report of Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act (1838), p. 25. [3] Report of Select Committee on Medical Relief, 1854, p. iii. [4] Poor Law (Medical Relief) Bill, Clause xxxii. (Bill No. 87–1860). The Bill did not become law. [5] 48 & 49 Vict. cap. 46, Sec. II. [6] 8 Edw. VII., cap. 40, Sec. 3 (1) (a). [7] Ball, 35657; *cf., also* Fuller, 10640; Thompson, 22901. [8] Twentieth (1890–1) and Twenty-fifth (1895–6) Annual Reports of Local Government Board, pp. lxxxvii. and lxxxii. respectively. [9] *Cf.* Holland, 32526 (26). [10] 14 & 15 Vict. cap. 105, Sec. 4. [11] *Cf.* pars. 36–7 *ante*.

81. Although the voluntary hospitals have been greatly extended, their growth, measured by the number of beds, has been quite outstripped by that of the Poor Law infirmaries—which in the form of separately administered institutions were practically unknown until 1867. At the present time the number of beds in the London Poor Law infirmaries greatly exceeds the number in the voluntary hospitals in London, and is only about three or four thousand below the total number of beds provided by voluntary hospitals in all England and Wales.[1] Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and other large provincial towns have likewise more Poor Law infirmary beds than hospital beds.

82. The following table gives roughly, for certain of the large towns, the number of beds in Poor Law infirmaries and in voluntary hospitals for the year 1906:—

	Beds in Voluntary Hospitals.[2]	Beds in Poor Law Infirmaries.[3]
London	10,224	16,300
Liverpool	1,172	2,000
Manchester and Salford	1,270	3,250
Birmingham	838	2,200
Leeds	450	1,000
Sheffield	559	800
Newcastle	417	350
Cardiff	235	500
Leicester	200	500

83. Voluntary hospital accommodation being of necessity dependent upon private generosity its extent is regulated by impulse rather than by actual requirements. There is no recognised standard of accommodation; nor is there, outside of London, any public body or authority whose duty it is to guide the charitable public in applying their beneficence in districts where it is most needed, or where the best results are likely to be obtained. As a matter of fact, the voluntary hospitals are chiefly confined to London and some of the large provincial towns. London, as a whole, has more hospital accommodation in proportion to population than any of the provincial towns. This may be partly accounted for by the greater volume of charity in London, but, doubtless, it is also due to the fact that the London hospitals attract persons from a much wider area than London itself. In some respects the London hospitals, like the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, may be partially regarded as national institutions. The London hospitals are not, however, evenly distributed over its area, but are mostly located in the central districts where population is diminishing. Some districts, *e.g.*, Camberwell, have no voluntary hospitals. Again, some provincial towns are better provided with voluntary hospitals than other towns.

84. But whether there be no voluntary hospital in a town, or whether the accommodation be insufficient for the needs of its inhabitants, as is generally the case, one fact clearly brought out by our inquiry is that the absence or the deficiency is gradually, but surely, being supplied by the Poor Law infirmary.

85. At the same time, there is no doubt that the voluntary hospitals supply gratuitous medical assistance of the very highest quality—both indoor and by means of their out-patient departments[4]—to a very large number of persons of the same social *status* as those who apply to the Poor Law. For example, according to a census of the 709 patients in the London Hospital on November 28th, 1906, which the Hon. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the Hospital, was good enough to undertake at our request, it appears that 27 per cent. of the patients might be considered to be "to all intents and purposes paupers, *i.e.*, no money coming in, no savings, no club, and generally with wife and children to support," while another 13 per cent. were "on the very verge of pauperism, if not already paupers," altogether 40 per cent.[5] This figure, which relates to in-patients,

[1] *Cf.* Milson Rhodes, 38898 (2); Davy, 2387. [2] From Burdett's Hospitals and Charities, 1908, except as to London. The figure for London is taken from "London Statistics," compiled by the Statistical Officer of the London County Council, 1907–8, Vol. XVIII., p. 128; *cf. also* Ford-Anderson, 39238.

[3] Exclusive of beds in Metropolitan Asylums Board hospitals, which provide the following accommodation:—

Fever hospitals	7,878 beds.
Small-pox hospitals	2,040 „
Ringworm and Ophthalmia Schools for Children	1,020 „

(Annual Report of Metropolitan Asylums Board for the year 1907.)

[4] In Manchester the hospitals also provide domiciliary treatment; 12,569 persons were thus visited in their homes in 1905. [Niven, 33,380 (12)]. [5] Holland, Minutes of evidence, Vol. III., App. xvii. (A).

corresponds very closely with the out-patient results obtained by our Special Investigator Miss Roberts, who estimates that 38 per cent. of the out-patients attending certain London hospitals inquired into by her "may be said to be of similar class as applicants for medical relief from the parish."[1]

86. The following figures will show the extent to which medical assistance was during the year 1906, provided by voluntary hospitals in England and Wales[2] :—

	In-Patients.	Out-Patients.[3]
London[4] - - - - - - - - -	114,261	1,607,945
Provinces - - - - - - - - -	131,292	884,478

87. Accordingly, if the percentages above mentioned be generally applicable throughout the country, it would appear that, in the aggregate, much assistance is rendered by the voluntary hospitals to the class of persons who apply to the Poor Law. In addition they assist many persons just above the pauper class. The voluntary hospitals are, therefore doing a great work which, if they did not exist, would have to be peformed by the Poor Law authorities, or by some other public authorities charged with the provision of hospital accommodation or of other medical assistance for the suffering poor. On the other hand, as we have shown, the voluntary hospitals have been unable to meet the demand for institutional treatment, and their work has *ex necessitate* been taken up and supplemented by the Poor Law.

88. It will be observed from the above figures that much greater use is made of out-patient departments in London than in the Provinces. It would, further, appear from a return supplied by Lieut.-Col. Montefiore that the number of "out-patients and casualties" treated at the London hospitals has shown a marked increase of late years. Thus, according to that return the numbers increased 76 per cent. between 1887 and 1905, and 17 per cent. between 1900 and 1905.[5]

89. The benefits of the voluntary hospitals, ostensibly provided for the poor and necessitous, are, it appears, largely taken advantage of by the well-to-do. Instead of confining their work to the poor ("objects of charity") as was originally intended, the voluntary hospitals, Dr. Nathan Raw states :—

> "are now treating within their walls a class of the community very much higher in the social scale, who can in a very great number of instances, well afford to pay for medical advice."[6]

Some of the voluntary hospitals, *e.g.*, Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals have started "paying wards" for the more affluent patients, and Guy's and the London Hospital charge out-patients a small fee.[7]

90. Again, as regards their out-patient departments, a few of the hospitals have appointed almoners. "The broad aim of the almoner's work," says Miss Nussey, Almoner of the Westminster Hospital,[8] "is that of better organisation and an increased usefulness of the out-patients department of a hospital." Her endeavour is to "ascertain the home conditions of the patients with a view to :—

(*a*) Eliminating those who could afford to pay privately for advice ; and

(*b*) Ensuring, as far as might be, a fair chance to thosewho [are] eligible for treatment, of profiting by it."

As regards the first, Miss Nussey finds that "the proportion of patients attending Westminster Hospital during the years 1903–4–5, who might have arranged for their own treatment through a provident dispensary or friendly society, was 15·6 per cent., 13·6 per cent. and 17·2 per cent. respectively." As regards the second, "she teaches the patients the simple rules of hygiene, and explains to them how they can co-operate

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[1] Report by Miss Norah B. Roberts on "The overlapping of the work of the Voluntary General Hospita's with that of Poor Law Medical Relief," p. 15. [2] Burdett's "Hospitals and Charities," 1908 ; *cf. also* Holland, 32530–1. [3] These figures probably over-state the true number of out-patients as the system of registering cases seldom provides for the elimination of duplicates.—*cf.* Montefiore, 35015 (36). [4] According to a return handed in by Lieut.-Col. Montefiore, the numbers of in-patients and out-patients for the year 1905 were 119,099 and 1,859,809, respectively. (Vol. III. of Minutes of Evidence, App. No. xxii. (C). The figures given in Burdett's "Hospitals and Charities" do not appear to include the smaller voluntary hospitals. [5] *Ibid.* [6] Raw, 37927 (15) ; *cf. also* Theodore Thompson, Vol. IX., App. li. [7] *Cf.* Report of Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals, 1892 ; Montefiore, 35015 (32), 35043, 35305 ; Holland, 32538. [8] Nussey, 32917 (1), (2) and (12).

with the doctor in the treatment of such cases as phthisis, anæmia, rickets, etc. A large proportion of patients attend with preventable diseases; she points out to them how they can avoid a future application to the hospital by ordinary care." [1]

In her work she co-operates with the local doctors, the Education Authorities and the various charitable agencies whose object is "the improvement of the condition of the poor." [2]

(ii.) *Provident Dispensaries and Medical Clubs.*

91. Provident dispensaries existed prior to 1834, and reference is made to them by the Royal Commission in their Report.

> "It appears," they say, "that great good has already been effected by these dispensaries, and that much more might be effected by them; but we are not prepared to suggest any legislative measures for their encouragement." [3]

The Poor Law Act did not provide for the establishment of provident dispensaries, but, as has been shown, the Commissioners appointed under the Act endeavoured to administer medical relief under such conditions as would tend to promote the formation of "independent sick clubs" or other habits of thrift among the labouring classes. In addition to this indirect encouragement of sick clubs, whose leading principles were that they should be "self-supporting and independent of parochial aid," the Commissioners, in 1836, issued a circular to Boards of Guardians urging them "collectively and individually" to give all the aid in their power to the establishment of such clubs in their district. A model set of rules was also enclosed with the circular, ignorance of the rules for starting a club having been given as one of the reasons why clubs had not become general.[4] As a result of this appeal, medical clubs were established in many parts of the country.[5]

92. The Commissioners had, however, no statutory duties or powers in connection with the establishment of sick clubs, and it was therefore difficult for them to pursue an active propaganda or line of policy in the matter. Occasional references to such clubs are to be found in a few reports subsequent to 1836, but after that the Commissioners do not appear to have pursued the subject. We are not aware of any statistics showing the progress made since 1834 in the provision of medical attendance for the working classes on a self-supporting basis, but our evidence makes it clear that, at the present time, large numbers of the population provide for such attendance in one form or another, *e.g.*, by joining a provident dispensary, a medical aid society, a works' club, a friendly society, a tontine club, or a medical club.

93. As regards Friendly and other Provident Societies, it should be observed that the direct provision of medical attendance forms only a subsidiary part of their functions. The main object of a Friendly Society is the payment of sick benefit for the maintenance of members during illness; the additional contributions for medical attendance are not usually obligatory. Out of nearly £20,000,000 of benefits paid to the members of the Ancient Order of Foresters during the thirty years 1876–1905, 72 per cent. was devoted to sick pay, 16 per cent. to funeral allowances, and only 12 per cent. to medical aid.[6]

In the Foresters' Society about 95 per cent. of the members are insured for medical aid.[7] In the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society, on the other hand, the majority of members do not insure.[8]

94. In London there are forty-three provident dispensaries issuing over 60,000 cards, representing about 116,650 individuals;[9] in Leicester there are two provident dispensaries with about 60,000 members, or 1 in 4 of the population;[10] in Reading there are 17,578 members,[9] or 1 in 5 of the population; in Northampton there are 18,000 members, or 1 in 5 of the population;[11] in Shrewsbury there are 6,000 members, or about 1 in 5 of the population;[12] and in Salisbury there are 9,190 members, or 1 in 2 of the population.[9] Provident dispensaries exist also in some of the smaller towns, *e.g.*, Market Drayton and Leominster; but in rural districts the "medical club" is more prevalent. These medical clubs may include several medical men, in which case they differ little from the provident dispensary, or they may be organised by one doctor only. There are many varieties, but in one form or another they are almost universal and

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1 Nussey, 32917 (8). 2 *Ibid.*, par. 10. 3 Report of Royal Commission, 1834, p. 43. 4 Second Annual Report, Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, p. 45. *Ibid.*, p. 21. 6 Stead, 77468 (1). 7 Stead, 77480. 8 Bunn, 77651. 9 Charity Organisation Review, July, 1907, pp. 4 and 5. 10 Hewlings, 47501 (12), (14); Gibbons, Vol. IV., App. cxxxii., pars. 37 and 40. 11 Becke, 48224 (5). 12 Cooper, Vol. VII., App. cvi., par. 2.

within the reach of almost everyone. Of the rural district of Hardingstone we are told:—

> "Medical clubs have become so common in this district that it is only in exceptional cases that recourse is had to the Poor Law." [1]

And again:

> "They are almost universal in Northamptonshire. I do not know any village without a club." [4]

In Suffolk, the county medical club has 9,000 members, though a rule limits membership to persons whose earnings *per family* are under 20s. a week.[3] At Bosmere and Claydon "a very great many" belong to medical clubs outside the county club.[4] In the neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmunds, says Dr. Stork:—

> "There is only one [doctor] that I can think of who has not got a private medical club of his own." [5]

In towns also medical clubs are very common, and in certain districts, *e.g.*, South Wales, the "works' clubs" include almost the whole of the male working population, while medical clubs provide for the remainder.[6] In seven towns—Coventry, Eastbourne, Hartlepool, Kidderminster, Norwich, Southampton and Taunton a "public medical service" has been organised amongst the doctors for treating the poorer working class on a provident basis.[7]

95. During the past forty years a movement has been developed in many provincial towns for the combination of the advantages of a provident dispensary with those of the sick benefit society. There are now medical associations with a total membership of 250,000. The members of the various registered benefit societies in one of these towns meet together and agree to lease a house, provide their own drugs, and appoint and sometimes house their own medical officer, who devotes his whole time to the association. The introduction of the co-operative element into the work of these benefit societies appears on the whole to have been successful. But it is one of their incidental rules which lends to their operations a special interest. The members' families are allowed to join. Instead of joining a benefit society for himself and a provident dispensary for himself and his family, a man can thus avoid paying twice over for his own medical attendance, whilst his children, brought under the direct influence of the friendly society movement, will probably become members of some friendly society themselves.[8]

96. Perhaps the best measure of the progress made towards independence during the last century is got by comparing the membership of friendly societies with the number of paupers. A Parliamentary Return in 1803 states the number of societies in England and Wales to be 9,672, with 704,350 members, while the numbers relieved by the Poor rate in the same year were 1,039,716. A similar Return in 1815 gives the membership of friendly societies as 925,439, which exceeded the number of paupers by 29,446.[9] "On December 31st, 1904, the number of members in the ordinary friendly societies, and societies having branches, was 5,700,000," [10] while the total number of paupers of all classes on January 1st, 1905, was 932,000 [11]—an excess of friendly society members over paupers of nearly 5,000,000.

97. It is interesting to note the efforts of some Boards of Guardians towards inducing applicants for medical relief to form provident habits. The Paddington and St. Pancras Boards issue handbills with particulars as to provident dispensaries, and these are given by the relieving officers to applicants for medical relief.[12] The Reading Guardians paid the entrance fee of applicants to the provident dispensary, until the practice was stopped by the Local Government Board.[13] At Brixworth the Guardians started a medical club which superseded parish relief and developed into clubs for each parish in the Union.[14] At Frimley a medical club was started by a Guardian as an alternative to Poor Law relief, and now practically all the people except the members of friendly societies belong to it.[15] At Ipswich the district medical officer has a club, and the Guardians bring pressure to bear on applicants to join it wherever possible.[16] While from Risbridge comes the suggestion that medical officers should be required to start clubs at such rates as the Guardians may approve as being within the reach of the wage-earning classes in the district.[17]

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[1] Percival, 47919 (11). [2] Percival, 47942. [3] Waters, 73476 (2) and (4). [4] Harwood, 73737–41. [5] Stork, 75597. [6] Brown 34233, *et seq.* Compare also Neale, 49222 (7); Biddle, 48889; Creswell, 49171 (6), and Report by Brit. Med. Assn. on the Economic Conditions of Contract Medical Practice, 1905, p. 18. [7] Cox 51859 (8); Ainsley, 52840 (8), and Report by Brit. Med. Assn. on Contract Practice, pp. 23 and 80. [8] *Cf.* Memorandum by Mr. T. Hancock Nunn, as to Friendly Societies' Medical Associations, Vol. XI., Minutes of Evidence; also "The Foresters' Directory, 1907," pp. 569–73. [9] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1834, App. A, p. 446. [10] Brabrook, 35158. The number given does not include the members of Collecting and other special classes of Friendly Societies, who numbered upwards of 8,000,000 at the end of 1904. [11] Davy, 1465. [12] Alford, 31946; Craig, 19466 (21); Warren, 33487 (47–8). [13] Warren, 33704. [14] Bury, 48031 (10). [15] Chance, 27113. [16] Vulliamy, 73302. [17] Brown, 75895 (14).

98. The fees for membership of a provident dispensary or medical club vary slightly in different parts of the country; but it may be said that the members generally obtain medical assistance at lower rates than if they went as ordinary patients to a doctor. The weekly charge for an adult runs from about 1d. at Leicester[1] and Manchester[2] to 1½d. at London[3] and Northampton.[4] Children are admitted at about ½d. per week, a reduction being usually made if the whole family are members. Thus, in the Metropolitan Provident Dispensary Association not more than four,[3] and in the Suffolk County Club[5] not more than five, children are charged for; while in Northampton[4] and Leicester[1] a weekly payment of 3d. and 3½d. respectively entitles a whole family (including the father and mother) to membership of the provident dispensary. The above fees do not always include midwifery attendance, for which special charges are made. Generally a maximum income limit for members, varying from about 14s. to 50s. per week, is fixed with a view to excluding the well-to-do, who are, it appears, not above taking advantage of the medical attendance at the cheap rates offered by the dispensaries and medical clubs.[6]

99. As a rule, members of a provident dispensary have a choice of doctors.[7] The remuneration of the doctor is sometimes based on the number of visits paid, and sometimes it represents a fixed annual payment (from about 2s. to 5s.) per member under his care. Special fees are allowed for midwifery cases and surgical operations. Representations have been made to us, not, we think, without justification, that the doctors of provident dispensaries and friendly societies are frequently underpaid.[8] But, while this may be so, we consider it right to point out that the low rates of remuneration are partly due to competition among the doctors themselves. As Mr. Lister Stead, of the Ancient Order of Foresters, has stated:—

> "These rates are not fixed by us, but they are the prices suggested by the medical men themselves. In my experience in some of the larger towns, I find, I am sorry to say, that medical men are offering privately to do the work at a less figure than the medical men already appointed are doing it at."[9]

And again:—

> "We do not want in our societies to raise any idea that this medical benefit is in the form of a charity. We are quite content in the society to pay a reasonable sum for the service, and we do not want the man to feel that he is under any stigma because he happens to go to the club doctor."[10]

100. In addition to the large number who make provision on the insurance system, there are many also, even among the poorer working class, who prefer to pay as private patients and appear well able to do so. The Medical Officer of Health for Manchester, in reply to the question:—

> "Does it follow that medical relief for those below 30s. a week is, as a rule, gratuitous in Manchester?" says:—
>
> "No, not at all. I have made a special inquiry into a large number of individual cases with a view to see what actually does occur, and, as a matter of fact, I find that a large proportion of people earning far below that amount go to private practitioners."[11]

In some rural districts even the agricultural labourers prefer to pay fees:—

> "In Kent every agricultural labourer paid . . . private fees, but the wages were very good there."[12]

In two rural districts in the eastern counties, Committees of our number were told, when visiting, that, though the men were in clubs themselves, they preferred to pay private fees for their families.[13]

101. It is true, no doubt, that sometimes poor people pay absurdly small fees for very indifferent treatment, but the incompetent doctor is the exception and not the rule. In rural districts it is generally the case that both rich and poor are treated by the same doctor, who is also the district medical officer. In the towns, the general practitioner in a working class neighbourhood may be quite as competent, if not so wealthy, as the practitioners at the other end of the town.

> "I know," says Dr. Stonham, "a good many doctors in the East End; many of them are very good men indeed, I think."[14]

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[1] Hewlings, 47501 (12). [2] Niven, 38380 (47). [3] Warren, 33487 (17). [4] Becke, Vol. IV., App. xxvi. (A). [5] Waters, Vol. VII., App. x. [6] Stork, 75619; Waters, 73476 (2); Craig, Vol. II. App. vii. (D); Warren, 33487 (14) and Report by British Medical Association as to Contract Practice, p. 76, &c., &c. [7] Thompson, 34169; Warren, 33487 (23); Becke, 48251; Percival, 47921 (7); Cropley, Vol. IV., App. cxxii. par. 6; Williams, Vol. V., App. lix., par. 11; Jenkin, 50848; Exham, 72533; McCarthy, 67620; Marlow, 77322; Stead, 77475, &c., &c. [8] Shaw, 33334; British Medical Association, 39151; Dodd, 47191 (9), 47324; Cameron, 41717; Turner, Vol. IV., App. civ., par. 2; Longbottom, Vol IV., App. lxxxiii., par. 15; Young, 38845; Exham, 72540; Hall, 70631 (7); Williams, Vol. VII., App. xcii., par. 8; *cf.* also Warren, 33837; Chance. 27161; Abbot, 42269; Waters, 73522, Report by Dr. McVail, p. 159. &c., &c. [9] Stead, 77528. [10] Stead, 77531. [11] Niven, 38392. [12] McCarthy, 67584. [13] Rural Visits, Nos. 82 and 84. [14] Stonham, 21479.

That their fees are unduly low is more often due to the unfair competition of charitable agencies and the competition among the doctors themselves than to the low value of their services.

A medical officer in the Potteries says :—

> "There is absolutely no difference, except in individual character, between the man who comes to me as a private patient and who comes through the Poor Law. One puts into a dispensary, or saves money and pays the doctor; the other finds it leaves more for drink if he sends to the relieving officer. They find it so easy to get medical relief, why should they bother to provide in any other way."[1]

(iii.) *Free Dispensaries.*

102. One striking feature brought out as the result of our inquiries into the methods of providing poor persons with medical assistance is the existence, in certain large urban centres, of extensive free dispensaries, while in other centres, with not dissimilar industrial conditions, such dispensaries are practically, if not entirely, absent.[2] Thus, on the one hand, we have such towns as Birmingham, Leeds and Newcastle with flourishing free dispensaries. The Newcastle Dispensary, we are informed, does the greater part of the outdoor medical work for the poor of the city. It has seven whole-time doctors; it treats about 12,000 patients per annum; and, as compared with the Poor Law, it does ten or twenty times as much work among the poor.[3] On the other hand, Sheffield has no free dispensary,[4] and Leicester is mainly served by provident dispensaries. There are, it may be observed, a number of free dispensaries in London.

103. Many of the free dispensaries are old endowed institutions, established before the hospitals had out-patient departments. Some of the dispensaries date from the latter half of the eighteenth century; others are comparatively recent in their origin.[5] All are dependent more or less on charitable subscribers, and Boards of Guardians and town councils sometimes contribute to the funds.[6] The object of these dispensaries is to provide medical attendance and medicines to poor people who cannot afford to pay for a doctor. At Oxford, however, a witness informs us, the reason for starting a free dispensary was to prevent people being disqualified from voting.[7] Occasionally a free dispensary forms part of a "medical mission."

104. In some cases the patients are treated only at the dispensary, but in others domiciliary visits are also paid by the doctors to patients who are unable to attend at the dispensary.[8] At Birmingham, in addition to medical attendance and medicines, patients are sometimes supplied with milk, bovril, cod-liver oil, and other medical extras.[9]

105. The quality of the treatment at the dispensaries is said to be of a high order, and this, together with the fact that it is free, attracts large numbers of persons to apply.[10] In some dispensaries treatment is mainly confined to persons who produce a subscriber's ticket, but in others no tickets are necessary.

While the beneficiaries of the dispensaries consist chiefly of those who are "only a step removed from pauperism,"[11] or may even comprise "the very poor to the superior artisan,"[12] our evidence clearly shows that the benefits of the free dispensaries are abused by many who could well afford to pay ordinary fees to a doctor, and by still more who are in a position to join a provident dispensary.[13] Thus, Dr. Trout, Birmingham, informs us :—

> "A person attending a Bible Class or P.S.A., on payment of ½d. or 1d. per month can obtain a subscriber's ticket, entitling him to six weeks' continuous medical advice, attendance, and medicine, and also extras in the shape of food, notwithstanding that the person may be in full work, and the recipient of a wage up to £6 per week."[14]

Mr. Stableforth, Newcastle :—

> "I get a big number of tickets to give away every year; if I gave them to everybody that applied, I should be giving them to men with £2 10s. and £3 a week wages who come and apply, not isolated cases, but weekly."[15]

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[1] Final Report on the Relation of Industrial Conditions to Pauperism by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss Rose E. Squire, p. 101. [2] *Cf.* Davy, 2442. [3] Parkin, 51466 (12), 51495. [4] Smith, 43153. [5] Montefiore, 35015 (29); Warren 33593; Forrest, Vol. IV., App. cxxix., par. 4; Stephens, Vol. V., App. cx., par. 4. [6] Parkin, 51466 (5); Stonham, 21597. [7] Thompson, 34147. [8] Forrest, Vol. IV., App. cxxix., par. 6; Lupton, Vol. IV., App. lxxxv., par. 1 (5); Barlow, 38656; Parkins, 51466 (13) (18); Stephens, Vol. V., App. cx., par. 4; Pinchard, Vol. IV., cxlvii., par. 5. [9] Forrest, Vol. IV. App. cxxix. par. 8; Tillyard, Vol. 4., App. clvii., par. 6. [10] Warren, 33593; Bygott, 44006. [11] Hudson, Vol. IV., App. lxxx. par. 7. [12] Forrest, Vol/IV., App. cxxix., par. 14; Cameron, 41554. [13] Thompson, 34170; Warren, 33591; Alford, 31977; Pinchard, Vol. IV., App. cxlvii., par. 5; Bygott, 44006; Armstrong, Vol. V., App. lxvi., par. 3; Russell, Vol. V., App. civ., par. 9; Armstrong, Vol. V., App. lxviii., par. 6. [14] Trout, Vol. IV., App. clix., par. 6. [15] Stableforth, 51317.

From a table handed in by Miss Simey, Newcastle, giving the results of an investigation by the Charity Organisation Society into the circumstances of forty-nine applications to the Newcastle Dispensary on a given day (February, 1902), it appears that seventeen applications were from families in receipt of £1 6s. to £2 17s. a week, while other eight "should, it was thought, have been independent of charitable medical treatment."[1]

106. Where a free dispensary provides medical aid to thousands of the poorer classes in the course of a year, it must inevitably keep many persons from having recourse to the Poor Law.[2] But, when the dispensary also admits to its benefits those who should be self-dependent, there is little doubt that, by destroying their incentives to thrift, it has a distinctly pauperising tendency. Witnesses have told us that the free dispensaries are powerful and successful competitors of the provident dispensaries and the medical clubs, and operate with hardship on the medical profession.[3]

107. The Report of an Inquiry by a Committee of the British Medical Association into the Economic Conditions of Contract Medical Practice in the United Kingdom, states that: "Provident dispensaries appear to have been established originally as public charities,"[4] and several witnesses have given instances of free dispensaries having been transformed into provident dispensaries. One of the largest provident dispensaries in the country, the Leicester Provident Dispensary with 50,000 members, began as a free dispensary,[5] and in London two free dispensaries have recently adopted provident principles.[6] The latter, being endowed dispensaries, were converted under schemes of the Charity Commissioners, which retained a portion of the income for the use of a certain number of free patients.[7] Such a change is wholly beneficial. A free dispensary on a scale equal to that obtaining in some towns does not appear to be essential to the welfare of the inhabitants, nor would much hardship be inflicted on many of the beneficiaries if they were obliged to provide for their medical assistance by means of some form of insurance against sickness.[8] Moreover, the fact that a dispensary is endowed may not be an insuperable obstacle in the way of transforming it into a provident institution.

(iv.) *Sanitary Authorities.*

108. Soon after 1834 we find the Poor Law Commissioners impressing on the Government the economical need for legislative action with a view to improving the sanitary condition of the country. All infectious disease, it was pointed out, was accompanied by "immediate and ultimate" charges on the poor rates.[9] The labourer was suddenly reduced to a state of destitution necessitating immediate relief, and, if he died, his widow and children had to be cared for at the expense of the parish. The Commissioners thereupon recommended that Boards of Guardians should be empowered to act as an authority for the removal of nuisances. For years, sanitation meant little more than this, and it may be said that it was not until after the passing of the Sanitary Act of 1866 that the modern system of preventive medicine commenced.

109. It is, perhaps, not quite germane to our Report to trace in detail the development of sanitation in England since 1834, or to estimate its effect on pauperism. But we think it essential to a proper understanding of the problem of medical assistance of the poor at the present time, that we should outline briefly the chief functions now exercised by Sanitary Authorities in regard to the prevention and treatment of diseases in individuals. By so doing, we shall also be able to form a general idea of the extent to which the medical functions of the Poor Law and Sanitary Authorities at present overlap.

110. A number of witnesses, chiefly medical officers of health, have described what is being done by the Sanitary Authorities in their respective districts. From a Memorandum

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[1] Simey, Vol. V., App. ix. (B). [2] Burnett, 44421 (15); Bygott, 44006; Parkin, 51466 (6). [3] Warren, 33487 (41–3), 33773; Parkin, 51524. [4] Report, p. 4. [5] Hewlings, 47684. [6] Warren, 33487 (44). [7] Warren, 33695; Montefiore, 35043. [8] *Cf.* Nussey, 32917 (13); Mears, Vol. V., App. xciii., par. 10. [9] Fourth Report Poor Law Commissioners, 1838, App. A. (1), p. 62.

dated 11th March, 1908, on the Unification of the Official Medical Services for the Poor, prepared by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, we take the following enumeration of some details of the work performed by Sanitary Authorities throughout the country:—

> "They have hospitals for the treatment of cases of the more serious acute infectious diseases, and occasionally they lend out nurses for the home treatment of cases of these diseases, especially of puerperal fever, erysipelas and enteric fever. They provide, in many instances, antitoxic serum for the gratuitous treatment of diphtheria, both for prophylactic and for curative purposes. The medical officer of health acts both in consultation with practitioners and independently in diagnosing doubtful cases of these diseases; and either he or his medical assistant visits infected or suspected houses, with a view to the detection of 'contact' cases and 'missed' or overlooked cases. A large proportion of sanitary authorities also provide gratuitously for the diagnosis of doubtful cases of diphtheria, enteric fever, and phthisis by bacteriological means. A few sanitary authorities pay doctors' fees when they have been sent for by midwives in difficult cases. Much work is also being done by sanitary authorities in the treatment of phthisis (consumption). Free examination of sputum is provided. Voluntary or compulsory notification of cases is followed, to some extent, by action beneficial both to the patient and his family. The patient's room is disinfected and cleansed; spit-bottles and handkerchiefs are supplied; sanatorium training and treatment may be, and is sometimes, provided (in Brighton half the total notified cases have been treated and trained in the sanatorium). Similar instructions as to the management of the patient's illness and the prevention of infection are given to the patient at home. Any relatives found to be flagging in health are encouraged to secure medical aid or helped by its provision. The new work opened up by the compulsory medical inspection of scholars under the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, will lead to the detection of much disease, advice being given to parents as to the appropriate medical aid. School clinics have been begun in some towns for the treatment of certain diseases, especially the neglected chronic communicable diseases of the scalp and skin. The school nurse and health visitors are following up this work by school and domiciliary visits. The responsibility for lunacy is divided, the guardians paying for most of the patients in asylums, with the help of a capitation allowance from the Government, while county councils and county boroughs administer the asylums.
>
> "This statement is incomplete, but it discloses the facts that the line has never been strictly drawn between the prevention and the treatment of disease, and that sanitary authorities are already responsible for the treatment of a very high proportion of the total acute sickness among the poor. If lunacy be included under this head, sanitary authorities, including county councils, probably treat more than half of the total sickness institutionally treated at the expense of rates and taxes."[1]

111. In addition to these varied activities, mention should be made of the powers possessed by Sanitary Authorities under the Public Health Act, 1875,[2] and the Public Health (London) Act, 1891,[3] of providing general hospitals for the sick inhabitants of their district.[4] The Sanitary Authority may either build a hospital, or contract for the use of one, or combine with another Sanitary Authority in providing a common hospital. There is no limitation either to the diseases which may be treated in such hospitals, or to the classes of persons who may participate in their benefits.[4] Accordingly, a town council, may, at any time erect a general hospital for the use of the inhabitants of the borough, no matter from what disease they may be suffering.

No London borough appears to have made use of these powers, but in the provinces the Urban District Councils of Widnes and Barry have each provided accident hospitals.[5] Diseases such as strangulated hernia and laryngitis are treated in the Barry Hospital, which Dr. McVail informs us is a very popular institution and is about to be extended.[6]

It also appears that the town council of Portsmouth have been contemplating the establishment of a maternity hospital "for the express purpose of preventing women from having to go to the Poor Law."[7]

Liverpool Municipal Hospital, although provided nominally for the treatment of cases of infectious diseases, admits cases which are not ordinarily regarded as falling within that category, *e.g.*, bronchitis, cystitis, abdominal tumour, appendicitis, and poisoning.[8] And, as was mentioned by Dr. Newsholme,[9] some towns, *e.g.*, Brighton,

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[1] Vol. IX., Minutes of Evidence App. liv. [2] 38 & 39 Vict., Cap. 55, Sec. 131. [3] 54 & 55 Vict., Cap. 76, Sec. 75. [4] Downes, 22940. [5] Downes, 22942; Neale, 49232. [6] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 43. [7] Downes, 22946. [8] Report of Medical Officer of Health, Liverpool, 1905, pp. 202–9. [9] Newsholme, 92534 (4).

are now making institutional provision for the sanatorium treatment of phthisis, a disease which, until recently, was not considered to be one of the infectious diseases within the scope of the Sanitary Authorities.

Town councils may also subscribe to the funds of a general hospital, *e.g.*, the town council of Newcastle contribute £315 annually to the Royal Infirmary,[1] and in Liverpool the corporation have made a grant of £5,000 to the children's infirmary.[2]

112. But, in addition to these powers of providing for the institutional treatment of disease, Sanitary Authorities may, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, also provide or contract with any person to provide a temporary supply of medicine and medical assistance for the poorer inhabitants of their district.[3] In this connection it may be mentioned that the Manchester Town Council distribute medicine during the diarrhœa season,[4] and a number of towns supply anti-toxin serum. Manchester Town Council also pay the fees of a medical man called in to assist a midwife.[5] Medical extras are sometimes provided by the Sanitary Authority in cases of violent epidemic.[6] In actual practice the distribution of medicine is mainly confined to cases of infectious diseases, but the Statute has placed no limit, other than the sanction of the Local Government Board, to the types of diseases for the cure of which medicine and even medical attendance may be provided by the Sanitary Authorities.

113. In London power is given to recover the cost of treatment of any patient who is not a pauper and is not suffering from an infectious disease: in the provinces, the cost may also be recovered in respect of infectious cases.[7] In practice, however, the treatment of patients by the Sanitary Authorities is usually gratuitous.

114. The two essential differences between the Sanitary Authority and the Poor Law medical service are that the function of the first is preventive and of the second curative. The one acts, as it were, in the interests of the community in its work of prevention, and is, therefore, almost invariably gratuitous: the other in the interests of the endividual who may be called upon for payment. These characteristics must not be forgotten, for they are inherent in the nature of the services rendered and constitute a difference which is not infrequently lost sight of in schemes of suggested reform.[8]

(v.) *Education Authorities.*

115. Mention should be made of the work of the Education Authorities in connection with diseases among school children, especially as their sphere of activity promises to extend in the near future. Under the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, Sec. 13, they have power:—

(1) To provide for the systematic medical inspection and supervision of school children; and

(2) To make "such arrangements as may be sanctioned by the Board of Education for attending to the health and physical condition of the children."

116. As a means of ameliorating "the evils revealed by medical inspection," the Board of Education indicate, in a Memorandum dated November 22nd, 1907, that "the establishment of school surgeries or clinics," "in centres where it appears desirable," may ultimately be necessary. The subject of specific medical treatment being, however, one for "subsequent consideration in the light of findings of medical inspection and the collateral issues raised thereby," the Board have, meantime, only called upon the Education Authorities to apply measures of amelioration to what "are commonly, though in a sense erroneously, regarded as minor ailments." At the same time the Board point out that, "properly administered, the Act must become something more than a mere record of disabilities and defects," and that it "lays upon Education Committees duties involving 'treatment' in a broad conception of the term."[9]

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[1] The Town Council also subscribe £105 annually to the Newcastle Dispensary. Parkin, 51466 (5). [2] Raw, 38137. [3] Sec. 77, Public Health (London) Act, 1891; and Sec. 133, Public Health Act, 1875. [4] Niven, 38380 (40). [5] *Ibid.* (42). [6] Stonham, 21680. [7] Sec. 76, Public Health (London) Act, 1891; and Sec. 132, Public Health Act, 1875. [8] *Cf.* Niven, 38380 (33). [9] Memorandum, pars. 14 and 15.

117. The Education Authorities are also required to send blind and deaf children to special institutions and pay the cost of their maintenance therein, or they may themselves provide a school for such children. They are further empowered to provide special classes or special schools for physically or mentally defective children and for epileptics.[1]

(*e*) Conclusions.

Indoor Medical Relief.

1. We have seen that indoor medical relief, administered under the purely deterrent principle of the workhouse system, ended in failure and was abandoned in 1867 in favour of a system in which "curative treatment" became the dominant principle. That principle, inculcated by the Central Authority, adopted by the Local Authorities, nurtured by the influence of public opinion, and developed by the logic of circumstances, has gradually revolutionised the treatment of the indoor sick poor in those unions which have established infirmaries under separate management. These separate infirmaries are now fulfilling functions far beyond those for which they were originally intended; they constitute a useful adjunct to the voluntary hospitals; and in some cases they even supply the want of a voluntary hospital. The anomalous situation that has arisen may be said to represent the effect of the unsatisfied demand on the part of the community for hospital treatment. In short, the separate infirmaries are practically "State" or rate-aided hospitals.

2. That there still exists in the minds of certain of the respectable poor a prejudice against entering the Poor Law Infirmary, is undeniable, but it is equally true that the prejudice is fast disappearing. On the other hand, in spite of great improvements, medical relief, when administered in the workhouse, is still repellent to large numbers of the sick poor.

Outdoor Medical Relief.

3. The chief improvement in the system of outdoor medical relief has been the establishment of dispensaries in the Metropolis and in a few large urban centres. A beginning has also been made towards providing a system of trained nursing for the sick outdoor poor.

4. It has been the aim of the Central Authority in their administration of outdoor medical relief to leave the independence of the labouring classes unimpaired and, in this respect, the administration has had a fair measure of success, for, as we have shown, large numbers do now make provision for medical aid in sickness by some form of insurance.

5. As regards those who have not made such provision, outdoor medical relief is an attraction to many who are quite able to join a medical club or a provident dispensary. On the other hand, the stigma which still accompanies the receipt of that relief deters many poor persons—probably the most respectable of the poor—from seeking medical aid at times when they are sorely in need of it.

Agencies for Supplying Poor Persons with Medical Assistance outside the Poor Law.

Voluntary Hospitals.

6. While the voluntary hospitals provide gratuitous medical assistance (both indoor and by means of their out-patient departments) to a large and increasing number of persons of the same social *status* as the pauper classes, the relation of these hospitals to the community has been materially changed by the establishment and rapid growth of the infirmaries under the Poor Law. Originally, the voluntary hospitals provided, practically, the only means of dealing with sick paupers in need of medical or surgical treatment in an institution; at the present time, the accommodation provided by the Poor Law Infirmaries far exceeds in extent that provided by the voluntary hospitals.

7. Generally speaking, the accommodation provided in the voluntary hospitals is insufficient; different districts are unevenly supplied with such hospitals; while some districts are without them altogether.

8. The benefits of the voluntary hospitals are largely taken advantage of by the well-to-do classes.

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[1] Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act, 1893; and Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899.

Provident dispensaries, medical clubs, etc.

9. Great progress has been made since 1834 in the provision of medical assistance for the working classes on a self-supporting basis. In certain towns and rural districts large numbers of the wage-earning classes make such provision by some form of thrift, *e.g.*, by becoming members of a provident dispensary or a medical club.

Free dispensaries.

10. On the other hand, in certain other towns, free dispensaries flourish on a large scale. The benefits of these dispensaries are, it appears, abused by many who might become members of provident dispensaries.

Sanitary Authorities.

11. The Sanitary Authorities, in addition to their functions connected with the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, have been empowered to provide out of the rates :—

(*a*) General hospitals for the sick ;

(*b*) Medicine and medical assistance for the " poorer inhabitants."

So far, these powers have only been very slightly used. The range of infectious diseases dealt with by the Sanitary Authorities and the methods of preventing and treating such diseases would appear however, to be widening.

Education Authorities.

12. The Education Authorities, in addition to their educational functions, have recently been empowered to provide a system of medical inspection and supervision of school children, and they may arrange for the treatment of diseases revealed by such inspection. They have also power to make provision in institutions, or in special schools, for children afflicted with certain diseases.

13. The public provision of medical assistance, which, in 1834, was entirely in the hands of the Poor Law Authorities is now shared between these authorities, the Sanitary Authorities and the Education Authorities.

Chapter 2.

REVIEW OF THE SYSTEM OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE POOR.

118. Having outlined the historical development of Poor Law medical relief since 1834, we have now to consider its present position, not only as an independent organisation but also in relation to the larger question of the methods adopted for supplying the poorer classes generally with medical assistance.

We have shown that great advances have been made since 1834. We can say that the sick poor were probably never so well looked after as they are at the present day. But, at the same time, we have received much evidence to the effect that the system of Poor Law medical relief suffers from palpable defects, and requires recasting and enlargement. To these considerations we now devote our attention.

(*a*) Inspection of Medical Relief by Central Authority.

119. For the whole of England and Wales the Local Government Board have two Poor Law medical inspectors, a senior inspector, whose work is chiefly confined to London, and a junior inspector for the provinces.

120. The senior medical inspector is one of the general inspectors for the Metropolis. He makes such inspections and reports as may be requisite from time to time. He also advises the Board on any questions of Poor Law administration in the Metropolis, or in the provinces, which may be referred to him.[1]

121. The duties of the junior inspector are somewhat more circumscribed. His primary duty is to visit annually six workhouse infirmaries or sick wards, or Poor Law schools, etc., in each of the thirteen Poor Law districts into which England and Wales (excluding London) is divided.[2] The institutions to be visited are chosen by the general inspectors as being institutions which they consider "may with most advantage be visited . . . in the course of the year."[3] The medical inspector usually visits these institutions in company with the general inspectors. Reports on the joint inspections are not made "unless specially requested by the Board." But, during the last five years, the general inspectors and the medical inspector have, in practice, made a report whenever they considered it desirable to do so. On the whole the arrangement is said to work harmoniously.[4]

In addition to the routine inspection of institutions, the provincial medical inspector, on requisition to the Department, is available "for any particular inspection which [the general inspectors] may require to be made," even if this latter work should involve the sacrifice of some of the routine inspections.[5] The policy of the Board being to maintain the responsible supremacy of the general inspector in his own particular district, the medical inspector practically acts in the capacity of an assessor at inquiries held by the general inspector. The medical inspector for the provinces also advises the Board as to plans for infirmaries, etc., submitted for their approval, and, generally, as to questions involving medical knowledge.[6]

122. Looking to the fact that there are some thousand Poor Law institutions in England and Wales, and only two medical inspectors, it is obvious that a very large proportion of the institutions cannot receive any medical inspection on behalf of the Central Authority except at long intervals. Indeed, it would appear that the medical inspector for the Metropolis has "not had much time of late years to make systematic routine inspection"; his inspections "have been practically inspections for a particular purpose."[7] The Poor Law institutions throughout England and Wales are, of course, regularly inspected by the general (lay) inspectors, and, were these institutions occupied only by healthy inmates, this might suffice. But, almost every workhouse contains some sick inmates, and a larger number on the border line between infirmity and sickness—all of whom are more or less in need of medical care. The children in the Poor Law schools are in a large measure physically or mentally backward, and in addition, each school

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[1] Davy, 1790; Downes, 22909. [2] Davy, 1790; Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (A) par. 2. [3] Minute of Local Government Board, dated 10th June, 1889; Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (B). [4] *Ibid.*, *See also* Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (A), pars. 6, 7 and 10. [5] Fuller, 10243. [6] Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (A), par. 12. [7] Downes, 22910.

has its own infirmary. And Poor Law infirmaries, when separated from the general workhouse, are entirely devoted to medical work upon which a lay inspector cannot pass an expert opinion.

123. Yet, notwithstanding these considerations, the medical inspection of a particular institution primarily depends upon whether the general inspector considers it to be of advantage that it should be so inspected. We have no reason to suppose that the general inspectors do not supervise, to the best of their ability, the medical arrangements in the various institutions in their respective districts, or that they do not make a judicious selection of the institutions to be inspected by the medical inspector. But it must be remembered that the general inspectors have had no training which would qualify them to detect shortcomings in an institution of so special a character as a workhouse infirmary. The Local Government Board, it is true, directs the local medical officers to report from time to time on the condition of the institutions under their charge, and guarantees the independence of their judgment by giving them security of tenure. From our knowledge and observation of the zeal and ability of these officers, we feel sure that this trust is not misplaced, but we have it in evidence that their reports are sometimes of a perfunctory character.[1] An officer can hardly be expected to invite criticism of an institution for the good management of which he is primarily responsible.

124. Dr. McVail informs us that every one of the institutions visited by him "would be the better of a rigid examination at not very infrequent intervals," and we agree with his recommendation that there should be on behalf of the Local Government Board "systematic medical visitation of all Poor Law institutions."[2]

125. As in this section we shall largely quote from Dr. McVail's Report, it may be well to state now the circumstances which gave rise to his appointment as an Investigator. Certain complaints having been made to us as to the system of Poor Law medical relief in England and Wales, we felt that it was very desirable that an outside and independent medical authority should give us his views upon the efficacy of the system, and we selected Dr. McVail for that purpose. Dr. McVail has established a high reputation in the discharge of his duties as medical officer of health for the counties of Stirling and Dumbarton, and is an acknowledged authority on hospital treatment. His instructions were: "To inquire into and report on the methods and results of the present system of administering indoor and outdoor Poor Law medical relief in certain unions to be selected from a list drawn up by the Commission." His Report, which is printed in the Appendix, is a thorough and close examination of the various localities and institutions that he visited.

126. Except in London, the arrangements for outdoor medical relief have not been subjected to central inspection either lay or medical. The need for such inspection was strongly urged upon us by medical officers;[3] it is further borne out by Dr. McVail's Report[4] and by our own observation of cases in receipt of out-relief.

The inspection of out-relief cases, as we have seen, has not been considered to be part of the ordinary duties of the general inspectors. It has never been accepted as part of the duty of the Poor Law authorities to treat the recipients of outdoor relief as being within their tutelage and guardianship in the same sense as are the inmates of institutions. The result has been in many localities to exempt the treatment of outdoor patients from any supervision whatever.

127. The primary responsibility of the Public Assistance Authorities* for adequate inspection and supervision of the medical relief arrangements should, we think, be clearly recognised and carefully maintained. With the extension of the administrative area it should be the policy of the Central Authority to establish this responsibility still further. But, meanwhile, we recommend that the Local Government Board's staff of medical inspectors should be increased, and that the arrangements for outdoor and indoor medical relief throughout the country should be periodically submitted to medical inspection on behalf of the Board.

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* *i.e.*, the new proposed Poor Law Authorities.

[1] Fleming, 9319; Report by Dr. McVail, pp. 28 and 63. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 62 and 149. [3] Stephens, 34566 (6), 34648; Mears, Vol. V., App. xciii. (5); Williams, Vol. VII., App. xci., par. 6. [4] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 149

(*b*) Remuneration of Medical Officers—Indoor and Outdoor—and Supply of Medicines.

128. The Poor Law medical officers are permanent officials whose appointments and salaries must be approved by the Local Government Board. We have received a considerable body of evidence as to the want of uniformity in and the general inadequacy of the salaries of district and workhouse medical officers and infirmary superintendents.[1] It is alleged that the guardians rely on the deficiency in the salary being made up by the vaccination fees which the medical officer receives.[2] Dr. Fuller says, "it is undeniable that the majority of medical officers in- or outdoor are paid salaries miserably inadequate." A medical officer, in referring to the effect of the alleged underpayment of doctors, candidly states that "the outdoor parish doctors are so underpaid that they cannot be expected to give sufficient attention to the sick poor";[3] while another qualifies this by stating that the work "is not badly done, but it is underpaid, and so far as it is underpaid it is not well done."[4] A Committee of our number also report:—

> "The medical officer quite frankly admitted that he was not able to give to the patients as much attention as they ought to have. This he laid at the door of the guardians, who, he said, would neither remunerate him sufficiently nor provide him with an assistant."[5]

On the other hand it would appear, from an analysis of certain returns obtained by the Departmental Committee on Vaccination Expenses, that the average remuneration per visit received by district medical officers in respect of Poor Law work was 2s. 6d. and over in about 40 per cent. of the unions. This is as much as an artisan could pay. In 9 per cent. of the unions the average remuneration was under 1s. per visit. The variations are striking: from 6d. to 44s. 7d. in neighbouring unions, possibly due in some cases to changes in population since the district was formed.

129. Representations have been made to us that a medical officer, who may require to call in another medical practitioner (*e.g.*, an anæsthetist) to assist at an operation, has often a difficulty in obtaining payment from the Guardians for the fee of the assistant.[6] Further, it has frequently been pointed out to us that the scale of fees allowed to medical officers in respect of surgical operations, which was fixed so long ago as 1842, is urgently in need of revision.[7] As Dr. Downes has put it:—

> "Since 1842, operative surgery has been extended and revolutionised beyond all anticipations. . . . It follows that the list of operations which a medical practitioner may be expected to perform at any time or on urgent necessity is many times greater now than it was sixty years ago. This has necessitated a very large addition to the schedule of possible operations which may have to be performed. The scale is obsolete in several particulars. It provides a very fair fee for the operation of strangulated hernia, but it does not provide anything for abdominal operations, which were, of course, not dreamt of in those days. There is a considerable allowance for amputation, but no provision for conservative surgery, so, as the scale stands, there is an inducement to amputation, and no inducement to conservative operations. I am not suggesting for a moment that weighs, but it is a fact that in the thing which exists there is no inducement."[8]

Moreover, in the opinion of Dr. McVail, this antiquated scale of fees has a tendency to encourage certain kinds of operation and to discourage others.[9] But we do not think it necessary to dwell on the point, as we understand that the Local Government Board have under consideration the issue of a new Order.[10]

130. In many instances, although the salary nominally paid to the medical officer appears to be fairly adequate, it is much diminished by his having to provide out of it any medicines that may be required by the sick paupers under his charge.[11] This system offers an inducement to an unscrupulous medical officer to stint the supply of medicines, or to supply drugs of an inferior quality, or to order alcohol (which is paid for by the guardians) in lieu of medicines.[12] The practice is an objectionable one. A medical officer should not be put in the position where his treatment of a case can be influenced by his ability or inability to supply certain medicines which he may consider necessary.

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[1] Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (25), 10459; *cf.* Alden, 27359 (16); Hawkyard, 42690; Fleming, 8920, 9311 (28); Thomas, Vol. I., App. viii. (37); Peters, 20061, 20099; McVail, p. 119; Greenwood, 33391 (8), Stork, 75684–6, 75589 (13); Pochin, 74870–3 (9); Clark, Vol. VII., App. cv. (1–9); Burnet, 44526; Downes, 23005; Russell, Vol. V., App. civ. (2); British Medical Association, 39448; Emberton, 71433; Slade-King, 69859; Spurrell, 23332–7 (14); Stonham, 21366; Williams, Vol. VII., App. xci. (5). [2] Bygott, 44226; British Medical Association, 39068–80; Greenwood, 33391 (9). [3] Mears, Vol. V., App. xciii. (5). [4] Dodd, 47275. [5] Visits: Urban, 20. [6] Biddle, 49014, 48888 (26); Packer 70186 (5); Piggott, 75819–20; British Medical Association, 39447; Greenwood, 33391; Fleming, 9301. [7] Hall, 70631 (9); Exham, 72652–5; Waters, 73529; Greenwood, 33391 (7), 33413–7. [8] Downes, 23022; Hall, 70775–9; *cf.* Stork, 75736. [9] *See* Report of Dr. McVail, pp. 88, 110-1 and 122. [10] Fuller, 10614; Fleming, 9305. [11] Clark, Vol. VII., App. cv. (2); Russell, Vol. V., App. civ. (2); Bircham, 4934; Fuller, 10541; Slade-King, 69865; Packer, 70259; Emberton, 71432; Biddle, 48938; Neale, 49222; Dodd, 47311; Culross, Vol. VII., App. xxix. (3); Routh, Vol. VII., App. lxxv. (4); Anderson, Vol. V., App. lxv. (3); Visits: Rural, 93. [12] Fuller, 10199; Williams, Vol. VII., App. xci. (5); White, Vol. VII., App. clix. (8).

Dr. Fuller has graphically described some of the evils arising from the underpayment of medical officers in the provinces. He says :—

> "About three weeks ago I was inspecting a workhouse, and I noticed a case in bed; I asked the medical officer what the case was, and he told me that it was a case suffering from syphilitic disease, and apparently from what he said it was curable. I asked him if the case was having drug treatment. He said: 'No, I cannot afford it; my salary is not sufficiently adequate for me to find the expensive drugs necessary.' I asked him then whether he had reported this matter to his guardians, and he said: 'No,' and I advised him to do so." "(*Chairman.*) *Q.* Is that the only case?—That is the latest case. I think that is a very good example of cases that frequently come under my notice." [1]

131. It is, we think, only fair to add that the blame for the inadequacy of the medical officers' salaries cannot always be laid at the door of the Guardians. The competition of the medical men themselves, and their want of cohesion in the matter of any attempt to raise the salaries, have, we are told, both tended to keep the remuneration at a minimum.[2] Moreover, it is alleged that the appointment of district medical officer is valuable to its holder apart altogether from the monetary emoluments attached to the post,[3] and that low salaries may be sometimes taken for the sake of a collateral appointment such as that of public vaccinator.[4] While a very large proportion of the medical officers do, we believe, perform their work faithfully,[5] and without any regard to such considerations as have been indicated above, we think it essential for the efficiency of any system o public medical service that the medical officers should receive adequate compensation for their services. We also consider that medicines should be directly provided by the Public Assistance Authorities and, where this is impracticable, that some equitable arrangement should be made whereby the cost of drugs and medical appliances should be provided without forming a charge on the salary of the medical officer.

132. We do not feel qualified to determine the actual amount or method of remuneration which should be fixed for the various grades of medical officers employed; this is a detail which can, we believe, be safely left to the judgment of the new authorities which we propose to set up. The salary should, as far as possible, however, be settled on a consideration of the Poor Law services concerned and without taking into account any collateral appointment.

(*c*) Institutional Medical Relief.

(i.) *Accommodation for the Sick.*

Rural Sick Wards.

133. Dr. McVail informs us that the sick wards of the rural workhouses not infrequently provide less cubic space than the standard laid down by the Local Government Board. The wards are also frequently defective as regards such matters as ventilation, light, water supply (hot and cold), bathing arrangements and the sanitary conditions in the immediate vicinity of the building; but in commenting upon these deficiencies Dr. McVail observes :—

> "A comparatively moderate expenditure would yield a sufficient remedy for most of the objectionable conditions."[6]

Judged simply by the number of beds, the accommodation provided for the sick in the rural workhouses is generally equal to the demands made upon it.[7] This is partly due to the practice of sending surgical and special cases to the voluntary hospitals for treatment, and mainly to the prejudice of the rural sick pauper against entering the workhouse. Many of the latter would, as our evidence shows, be much better in an institution than at home. Accordingly in some cases the surplus accommodation in the rural workhouses would *pro tanto* be reduced, or would vanish altogether, if that prejudice could be eradicated, or if the Poor Law authorities could remove such persons compulsorily to an institution.

Urban Infirmaries

134. Our evidence shows that the structural arrangements of the urban infirmaries are, on the whole, very good, and Dr. McVail reports :—

> "The best of them are excellent . . . the wards of most of them are quite equal to those of a first class general hospital." [8]

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[1] Fuller, 10610. [2] Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi., Stat. 25, but *cf.* Greenwood, 33391 (5). Dodd, 47191 (7). Edwards, 51188. Fuller, 10629–39. [3] Greenwood, 33419–20. Percival (15), 47946–7. Pochin, 74833. Fleming, 9320. Shaw, 33199–02. [4] British Medical Association, 39078–84. Greenwood, 33401. [5] Preston Thomas, Vol. I., App. viii. (37). [6] Dr. McVail's Report, pp. 20–26. [7] *Ibid.* [8] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 44.

Indeed, we think that as regards ornamentation of structure, and even as regards equipment, money might easily have been saved in some cases without any sacrifice of efficiency. In this connection a Committee of our number reports of one of these infirmaries as follows :—

> "The wards resemble those of a hospital, and are, in every respect, as well equipped. . . . The steward's room is more expensively furnished and decorated than the writing rooms of a first class hotel or club. It has a polished wood block floor, covered with a very fine carpet and the fireplace is of marble and glazed tiles. . . . Taking the entire annual cost, viz., £28,000, and dividing by the accommodation, the annual cost, including debt charges, works out at £85 a bed, *i.e.*, 33s. a week. This figure would be increased if calculated upon the average number of inmates. . . . Money has been, and now is, poured out in an unwarrantable manner upon its provision and upkeep, with no regard for those from whom the money is compulsorily obtained. . . . . Speaking generally, we are of opinion that it is impossible to justify the expenditure incurred in the provision of these buildings."

It seems clear, therefore, that more effective control on the part of the Local Government Board is required for the protection of the ratepayers from unnecessary expenditure. To this matter we have already referred in an earlier chapter.†

Unlike the rural workhouses, "nearly all the urban infirmaries are full to overflowing."[1] As has been indicated, this congestion is partly due to the increased attractiveness of the workhouse infirmaries and partly to the want of accommodation at the voluntary hospitals.

(ii.) *The Provision of Hospital Accommodation and Overlapping of Agencies.*

135. As we have shown, hospital accommodation for the poorer classes may, at the present time, be provided by three different bodies—by the Poor Law Authorities, by the Sanitary Authorities, and by the authorities in charge of the voluntary or charitable hospitals.* Although all three are providing or may provide similar services for the benefit of the community, each proceeds on its own lines. There is little co-operation among the various bodies. For example, an important factor in the problem of providing hospital accommodation for a district is the incidence of various kinds of diseases in that district. No class of persons is better acquainted than the Poor Law medical officers with the incidence of disease amongst the very poor, and accordingly facilities, apart from those given by the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, have been provided under a General Order dated 12th February, 1879, whereby these officers may supply information of this character to the medical officer of health. We understand, however, that practically no attempt has been made to take advantage of these facilities.[2]

136. Services thus duplicated and not co-ordinated tend neither to economy nor efficiency; nor has any valid argument been placed before us in favour of the continuance of the present system. A mere recital of some of the existing anomalies is sufficient to indicate how great is the confusion that prevails.

In the hospitals under voluntary organisation, treatment is generally gratuitous. In the Poor Law institutions all patients become paupers and are liable to be sued for recovery of the full cost of treatment. The Sanitary Authority practically gives all treatment free of cost. There are exceptions to this practice, but they are few and far between. Let us note what follows from this diversity.

First as regards the individual patients :—

(*a*) A sick person in affluent circumstances who may gain admission to a voluntary hospital is, as a rule, treated gratuitously; at least he is seldom placed under an obligation to repay the full cost of his treatment.

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* To these may be added a fourth class, viz., institutions provided by the Education Authorities for epileptic children and other classes of defective or diseased children. The establishment of "school clinics" indicates the possibility of indefinite extensions in this direction.

† See Part IV., Chapter 5, pars. 204–5.

[1] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 43 (5). [2] Newsholme, 92878.

(*b*) A sick labourer, on the other hand, suffering perhaps from the same malady as the previous case, but unable to gain admission to the voluntary hospital, is obliged to go to the workhouse infirmary. In respect of his treatment therein he is at once made a pauper. Moreover, in addition, he may be called upon by the Poor Law authorities to repay the entire cost of his treatment, and, if he himself is unable to pay, the cost may be charged upon his relatives.

(*c*) A workman meeting with an accident in, say, Camberwell (where there is no voluntary hospital) would be taken to the Poor Law infirmary, while if he lived in another part of London, he would, without any disabilities, be taken to a voluntary hospital; or, again, if he resided at Barry, he would be treated in the municipal hospital provided by the Sanitary Authority.*

(*d*) A phthisical case in Bradford or Liverpool, might be treated by the Poor Law Authorities, while in Brighton it might be treated by the Sanitary Authority. In the former instance repayment might be enforced; in the latter the case would be treated free.†

(*e*) As regards the disfranchisement of a person receiving medical relief in an infirmary (which includes maintenance), the Courts of Law have decided on appeal that no disqualification shall follow the treatment received if the maintenance is incidental to the medical relief; but, if not, then disfranchisement follows. The interpretation of this exceedingly fine point rests in the first instance with the revising barrister, and, as might be expected, the decisions appear difficult to reconcile. Two persons in adjacent unions may each be receiving identically the same class of relief, yet one may be disfranchised, and the other not.

Secondly, as affecting the authorities having control over the institutions :—

(*a*) In some areas phthisical cases are in practice dealt with almost exclusively by the Sanitary Authority; in other areas by the Poor Law Authority; while in others again both authorities are dealing with such cases.

(*b*) Isolation hospitals for infectious diseases are frequently provided by the Sanitary Authority, but in other places the Poor Law Authority provides the only institutions available for the treatment of such diseases.

(*c*) Accident cases may be dealt with by the Poor Law, the Sanitary, or the voluntary hospital authorities.

(*d*) Epileptic and other classes of children may be provided for by the Poor Law or by the Education authorities or by voluntary institutions, whether certified or not by the Local Government Board or by the Board of Education.

137. No clear line can be drawn between the sphere of activity of voluntary charity and that of the Poor Law. In certain acute illnesses a person of the pauper class may find himself in a voluntary hospital, whilst another person of higher social standing may, after a few months' chronic or incurable illness, be transferred to the Poor Law infirmary.[1] That transfers from the voluntary hospitals to the infirmaries frequently take place, not only in London, but in the large provincial towns we have abundant evidence to show.

Thus, Mr. Lockwood says :—

> "Patients in public hospitals are not infrequently, when their cases become chronic, transferred to Poor Law infirmaries."

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* The treatment in the Barry Municipal Hospital is entirely gratuitous, "except in the cases of sailors from ships." (Neale, 49241–2.)

† The Municipal Isolation Hospital at Brighton, "is free to ratepayers and their children." (Newsholme 92534 (4) (I.), (i.).)

[1] Dr. Lauriston Shaw, in "British Medical Journal," June 20th, 1908, p. 1471; Lockwood, 13438.

Mr. Craig, St. Pancras, says :—

"We have also had many cases, when there has not been room in the hospital, referred from the hospital to the relieving officer of the district, and they have had to be dealt with." [1]

Dr. Spurrell says :—

"Cases are frequently sent to me, both from the London Hospital and from the Poplar Hospital; . . . they are incurable cases. . . . I should say that on the whole they are of rather a higher class than our average patients." [2]

Dr. Fuller says :—

"At Sheffield, and Halifax, and other large union infirmaries that might be named, there are always a large number of cases that are not, strictly speaking, Poor Law cases, under treatment; and the reason for that is, to a great extent, that the local general hospitals have not sufficient accommodation to take those cases in. They may go for two or three days, and then they are transferred to the local union infirmary either because they are incurable or deemed to be incurable, or else they are not quite the class of case they would keep in a general hospital." [3]

Mr. Jenner Fust says :—

"A good many apply at this particular infirmary (West Derby Poor Law Infirmary), that have been refused admission for want of room at the voluntary hospitals." [4]

Mr. Wethered says :—

"The public hospitals now send cases to the workhouse infirmaries who, in former days, would have been received and retained longer in public hospitals; probably this arises chiefly from want of room." [5]

Patients are also frequently transferred to an ordinary workhouse. In some cases this is a matter of serious annoyance to the patient thus transferred. For instance, a military officer, sent from King's College Hospital to the Strand workhouse, was under the impression that he was going to some branch establishment of the hospital. [6]

138. This transfer of cases from the voluntary hospitals to the infirmaries and workhouses, without any guiding principle as to the respective classes which should be dealt with by these two authorities respectively, and without any appellate tribunal in cases of dispute, leads, we are told, to a good deal of friction. Thus, our special investigator reports :—

"An extraordinary antagonism seems to prevail between the two agencies. Relieving officers are fretful of the constant claim on their time taken up by applications for removal from their local hospitals of the homeless or people who do not belong to that particular union. It was said that the wrong class of person is sometimes sent from the hospital to the infirmary; and that the hospital encourages people to demand relief, sometimes giving them open slips addressed to the relieving officer. The hospitals, on the other hand, complain of the great dilatoriness of the relieving officers in coming to the rescue, and accepting the responsibility of distinctly destitute patients. . . . Constant conflict seems to prevail in all parts of London." [7]

139. We have received strong representations as to the need for co-operation between the voluntary hospitals and the Poor Law, but no real automatic interchange can be established so long as the patients in the Poor Law infirmaries *ipso facto* become paupers, no matter under what conditions they may have been admitted. Dr. Lauriston Shaw suggests, as a practical method of co-operation, that the dividing line between the voluntary and the Poor Law medical institutions should be determined upon a medical basis, instead of, as at present, upon the economic condition of the patient. Thus, he would transfer the chronic cases to the Poor Law infirmaries and reserve the voluntary hospitals for acute cases or cases requiring specialised treatment. As Dr. Downes points out :—

"If specialisation advances, the Poor Law must either refuse to provide the treatment, or it must specialise. I do not think public opinion would permit it to lag behind in treatment, and unless some organisation and co-ordination of the relief is arranged, we shall have extensive specialisation set up for persons who qualify for its receipt by becoming paupers." [8]

Dr. Lauriston Shaw's proposals would involve either the gratuitous treatment of patients in Poor Law institutions, or the legal recovery from patients in both sets of institutions upon the same principle. As a matter of fact, at present, the majority

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[1] Craig, 19523. [2] Spurrell, 23307. [3] Dr. Fuller, 10225. [4] Jenner-Fust, 11040. [5] Wethered, Vol. I. App. (11a) (80). [6] Visits: Urban, 4, 20. [7] Report by Miss Roberts, p. 13. [8] Downes, 23193.

of patients in hospitals, whether they be voluntary or supported by public funds. obtain gratuitous treatment, and the recovery of payment for treatment in either set of establishments compared to the total cost of treatment is small. But gratuitous treatment in Poor Law institutions makes the person so treated a pauper, whilst in the voluntary institutions he is subject to no such penalty.

140. We endorse the opinion expressed in 1892 by the Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals that "some more satisfactory organisation of medical charity is most desirable." As the Committee pointed out—

> "The establishment of Poor Law infirmaries and rate-supported asylums under the Metropolitan Poor Law Act, 1867, has in a great measure altered the relations between the poor and the hospitals, and every thing associated with medical charity." [1]

(iii.) *Indoor Medical Attendance.*

141. As regards the rural workhouses visited by him, Dr. McVail is of opinion that the small amount of medical attendance required in such institutions is, on the whole, efficiently rendered.[2] On the other hand, Mr. Baldwyn Fleming states that the time spent by the workhouse medical officers in the performance of their duties is sometimes too short to secure adequate and careful attention to the health of the inmates.[3] Rural Workhouses.

142. As regards the urban infirmaries visited by him Dr. McVail reports that "the medical staff is hardly ever sufficient" to undertake the work to be performed,[4] and other witnesses have furnished us with evidence as to the need for appointing more doctors.[5] Dr. McVail observes:— Urban Infirmaries.

> "My general conclusion is that even where guardians provide excellent or, perhaps, extravagant modern buildings, and equip them most elaborately with modern medical and surgical appliances, and furniture and furnishings, yet when they come to the appointing of a staff to do the work of these fine institutions, liberality of policy fails them, and parsimony takes its place." [6]

143. In addition to the evidence as to the need for the appointment of additional doctors, we have received strong representations in favour of rendering available for the infirmaries the services of a staff of specialists and consulting physicians and surgeons.[7] The adequacy or inadequacy of the medical staff of a workhouse infirmary is, however, a question which, subject to general regulations, must be decided on the spot, and this we consider should be one of the first duties of the new authority which we propose to set up.

(iv.) *Indoor Nursing.*

144. It appears that the great improvement in workhouse nursing, which has taken place since the issue of the Nursing Order of 1897, "has led many Guardians to suppose that very little more remains to be done."[8] Such, however, is not the case. As regards the rural workhouses visited by him, Dr. McVail is of opinion that the nursing arrangements are, with few exceptions, inadequate. A number of witnesses hold similar views especially as to the inadequacy of the night nursing.[9]

145. Rural guardians, it appears, frequently experience a difficulty in obtaining nurses for their workhouses. This has been ascribed to the inadequacy of the nurses' salaries, the unsatisfactory accommodation provided, the long hours and monotony of the occupation, the absence of companions of an equal social *status*, and the general dislike of young people for quiet country districts.[10] The difficulty of maintaining an adequate nursing staff in small rural workhouses is not, however, entirely one of securing nurses, but, from the Guardians' point of view, is largely one of economical administration. The Rural Workhouses.

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[1] Report of Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals, Par. 624. [2] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 27. [3] Fleming, 9316. [4] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 45. [5] Reynolds, Vol. IV., App. xlvi. (22); Lea, 36931, (14–15); Bygott, 44023–5 (25); Hawkyard, 42509 (21), 42529; British Medical Association, 39013 (45); Reynolds, Vol. IV., App. xlvi. (22); Fuller, 10259; Downes, 23220. [6] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 46. [7] Hawkyard (21) 42509. [8] Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi. (46–9). [9] Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (28); Dansey, Vol. I., App. xii. (25); Fust, 11177; Thomas, Vol. I., App. viii, (42), 12336; Young, Vol. IV., App. cviii. (28); Workhouse Nursing Association, Vol. IX., App. lvii. (A); Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (A) 130.; Stephens, 34767; Thomas, 4593; Bircham, 4990. [10] *Vide* Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (130), and Stephens 34766–8.

numbers of sick, although small, are liable to considerable fluctuations, and, as Dr. McVail points out, if an additional nurse were appointed she would often have very little to do. The powers of the medical officer and the workhouse master to call in an additional nurse in an emergency are, of course, excellent so far as they go; but they are too exiguous to be accepted as a guarantee that the nursing staff of a rural workhouse will always be sufficient. We endorse Dr. McVail's opinion, therefore, that some of "these very small institutions are in constant risk of inefficiency," and that "the only practical remedy is the formation of larger administrative areas,"[1] with institutions set apart for sick inmates. This remedy would also, we think, remove many of the objections which nurses are now said to have against accepting service in a rural workhouse.

Urban Infirmaries.

146. The proportion of nurses to patients in the urban infirmaries is much lower than in the voluntary hospitals, especially where the hospitals are also medical schools.[2] This does not necessarily imply insufficient nursing in the Infirmaries, but is partly accounted for by the difference in the character of the cases treated in the two classes of institutions. Thus, acute cases, which predominate in the hospitals, require more nursing than chronic or senile bedridden cases, which predominate in the infirmaries; but, after allowing for this distinction, Dr. McVail is of opinion that the nursing staff of several of the institutions visited by him is insufficient.[3] Various witnesses have also expressed similar views. Miss Stansfeld thinks the strain is very much too great upon young nurses.[4]

147. Apart from occasional insufficiency of nurses, the quality of the nursing in the workhouse infirmaries appears to be of a high standard, and this may also be said to apply generally to the training which the probationer nurses receive in the infirmaries recognised as training schools.[5]

Under the Nursing Order, 1897, we think that the objectionable features of the employment of paupers in workhouses and workhouse infirmaries have been removed, and we should not wish to see its provisions made more elastic.

148. Before leaving the subject of indoor nursing, we would add that it has been represented to us that the system of superannuation of nurses and attendants on the sick calls for revision, more particularly as to the age limit (which is too high), and we recommend that the law should be altered in this respect.

(v.) *Classification of Sick Inmates.*

149. The question of classification has been dealt with generally in another Part of the Report (Part IV., Chapters 4 and 5*), wherein we recommend separate institutions being set apart for separate classes of poor persons. It is therefore unnecessary for us to do more here than point out one or two obvious defects in connection with the classification of the sick.

Phthisis.

150. As regards phthisis, the three Liverpool unions have combined for the purpose of erecting a sanatorium for the treatment of cases in the early stages of the disease.[6] The Bradford Board of Guardians have themselves provided a sanatorium for similar cases.[7] A number of Boards of Guardians are in the habit of sending cases to non-Poor Law sanatoria; while others have set apart special wards in the infirmary or have erected open-air shelters in the infirmary grounds. In the great majority of unions, however, the provision made for the treatment of phthisis leaves much to be desired. On this subject we have received a number of representations from Boards of Guardians and Dr. McVail reports:—

> "Such consumptive patients as I found in rural workhouses were being treated side by side with other patients in ordinary wards, not suited for modern methods of dealing with consumption."[8]

And as regards the urban infirmaries he reports:—

> "In some wards about one-half of the inmates are ill with diseases other than phthisis, and even then, the precaution is not invariably followed of ranging the consumptive patients on one side of the ward, and the rest on the other."[9]

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[1] Report by McVail, p. 28; Davy, 2385; Fust, Vol. I., App. xxii., Stat. 74 (5). [2] Report by McVail, p. 48; Lauriston Shaw, 33131. [3] Report by McVail, p. 49. [4] Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi., 42; Ainsley, 52914; Stansfeld, 14550. [5] Fuller, Vol. I., App. xxi., 48. [6] Raw, 37927 (35). [7] Crowther, Vol. IV., App. lxiii. (9 f.). [8] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 91. [9] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

* See also Part IX.

The treatment of phthisis is at present in a transition state. The Sanitary Authorities are gradually coming to regard it as an infectious or sub-infectious disease falling within their purview, and this has been given as a reason for Boards of Guardians not taking active steps to provide accommodation for the treatment of cases. Meantime, however, much improvement might be effected at a moderate cost, for, as Dr. McVail points out, the rural workhouses have "abundant spare accommodation which could be so altered or arranged as to make it quite suitable for the treatment of phthisis."

We consider that phthisis cases needing aid from public funds should remain under the care of the Public Assistance Authorities and accordingly that more suitable provision should be made for their treatment.

151. What we have said as regards phthisis may, in a modified degree, be said as regards certain other diseases. Generally speaking, further facilities for classification of the sick are almost universally requisite.

While, however, much improvement is possible under the present *regime*, we are of opinion that the only satisfactory method of securing an efficient classification is to enlarge the administrative area and thereby give one authority control over groups of institutions within that area.[1]

(vi.) *Compulsory Detention of Sick Inmates.*

152. We have received a large body of evidence in favour of Poor Law authorities obtaining power to detain compulsorily sick persons who, by discharging themselves prematurely, render nugatory the treatment received by them in the workhouse infirmaries.[2] At present the workhouse master, on certificate of the medical officer, has power to detain persons who may be suffering from diseases which render them a danger to others, but the power does not extend to non-infectious diseases. The medical officer is sometimes, it appears, able to persuade a poor person to continue his treatment rather than risk any injury to health by leaving the sick ward, but frequently persuasion is of no avail and compulsory powers of detention are suggested as the only remedy. The types of sick cases for which such powers are chiefly sought are :—

(1) Persons seriously ill and aged persons, partially bedridden, who have no one to look after them outside ;

(2) Persons suffering from phthisis ;

(3) Persons suffering from venereal disease ; and

(4) Diseased children of in-and-out parents, especially when suffering from ophthalmia.

153. The subject of the compulsory detention of these classes of paupers is one of considerable difficulty. Unless the powers of detention were carefully safeguarded, they might easily lead to much abuse on the part of those exercising them. Moreover, the knowledge that the Poor Law authorities possessed such powers would increase, rather than diminish, the objection of poor persons to enter the infirmaries. There would also be a difficulty in securing an effective co-operation and transference of cases between the voluntary hospitals and the Poor Law infirmaries. We consider, therefore that the power of detention should be limited to a few well-defined classes of cases, and even then should be exercised as seldom as possible.

154. With respect to the aged, regard for their sufferings rather than danger to others is the justification for detention, and the power of detention should, if exercised at all, be exercised, we think, only with some regard to the feelings of those affected. Accordingly, we are not disposed to recommend the extension of the power of detention to such cases, unless they be friendless or unless the relatives who are responsible for them acquiesce in the detention. The Aged.

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[1] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 36. [2] Fleming, 8909 ; Brown, 24875 ; Wright, 40006 ; Dearden, 41105 (16 b) ; Best, Vol. IV., App. cxii. (13) ; Wilson, 40085 (35) (a) ; Macdonald, Vol. IV., App. xlv. (8) ; Broomfield, 49625 (9 b) ; Stewart, Vol. V., cxi. (58) ; White, 26408 (13) ; Carryer, 46515 (21b) ; Recommendations from Boards of Guardians and their Chairmen ; Adrian, 1435 ; 30 & 31 Vict., c. 106 ; Sec. 22 Lunacy Act, 1890 ; Davy, 2490.

Phthisical Cases.

155. As regards phthisis it has been strongly impressed upon us that, from a public health point of view, it would be very desirable in the interests of the community to allow detention of infectious cases. On the other hand, attractive as the proposal is, its general adoption is beset with administrative difficulties. In the first place, we understand that it is a moot point at what period of its development phthisis may for practical purposes be regarded as infectious. It would, therefore, be difficult, or at least controversial, to place on a doctor, or on a magistrate, the duty of deciding a dubious scientific point which was to involve the question of a man's detention or freedom. This difficulty is enhanced when it is considered that, in many cases, it would be necessary that the detention should continue for some considerable period. We cannot fail to remember also that, to the extent to which phthisis is known to involve the danger of detention to that extent will concealment of the disease be encouraged, and to that extent will it be less possible to attract patients for treatment at the earlier and curable stages. Public opinion is not likely to sanction such drastic powers of detention as would be involved in the proposal to detain all cases of phthisis which might be pronounced to be infectious. We think, therefore, that, meantime, the spread of phthisis must be checked mainly by a wider diffusion of the knowledge of its dangers and of the means of its prevention, and by a stimulation of the efforts of the authorities concerned with its prevention and its cure.

If, however, anything is to be done in the direction of detention of phthisis, a beginning might be made, perhaps, with advanced cases, in which :—

(1) The medical officer pronounced the patient in such a condition as to be likely to communicate the disease, and

(2) The home conditions of the patient are such as to lead with practical certainty to the spread of the disease.

Venereal Cases.

156. The Law Officers of the Crown have, it appears, expressed the opinion that venereal diseases do not fall within the type of contagious and infectious diseases in respect of which the workhouse authorities have power temporarily to detain poor persons. If this be correct, we consider that the law should be altered, subject to the imposition of certain safeguards against abuse. We consider that an order for detention should be obtainable whenever sufficient proof is adduced that an individual suffering from venereal disease is in such a condition as to be a danger to the community amongst whom he is living. This was practically the view taken by the Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals.[1] Though the knowledge that the local authority had power to obtain an order for detention, might occasionally lead to concealment of the disease, in our judgment the benefits of compulsory detention far outweigh its evils. It may be urged that action such as we suggest will infringe the recognised liberty of the subject. We admit the imputation, but infringement of the liberty of the subject is the foundation of all recent legislation dealing with infectious diseases of a dangerous character. Venereal diseases are dangerous to the health not only of existing but also of future generations. Evidence, supported by facts and figures, as to the havoc which these uncontrolled sources of physical poison work upon the health, stamina and physique of the whole community, has been placed before us by many witnesses.[1]

Thus, Dr. Allan, Leeds, says :—

> "During the past twenty-five years the number of inmates treated in the Leeds Union Infirmary for early venereal disease has been fairly constant, 120 to 140 cases annually, and an average of sixteen to twenty at any one time under treatment . . . and having been patched up they do not stay, but discharge themselves long before they have had sufficient treatment. Such people are a public danger before admission and continue to be so after discharge." [2]

In addition to the cases actually suffering from venereal disease, Dr. Allan states that its sequelae, *e.g.*, ulcerated legs, various nervous diseases, stricture, etc., cause a large percentage of pauperism. Thus :—

> "An analysis of the cases of 550 adult inmates resident at the time of the examination, 300 men and 250 women, shows that of the men eighty-five, and of the women sixty-four were patients on account of some sequel of venereal disease. . . . From an examination of the notes of 560 consecutive male admissions, it was found that of that number 242 had suffered from these diseases." [3]

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[1] Third Report, 1892, par, 594; Cutter, 18462 (*a*); Elkerton & White, 26407 (19); Whitaker, 39492; Waite, 43363; Wright, 39880 (5); Wheatley, 40310 (50), etc., etc. [2] Allan, 41233 (7); *See also* Baines, 39541 (13–15). [3] Allan, 41233 (8); *Cf.* Russell, Vol. V., App. civ. (18).

Dr. Allan also supplied figures as to the effect of venereal disease on infant mortality :—

> "I have full particulars of the family history of fifty married men and of fifty married women in the above series of 550 resident inmates. The fifty men had 193 children, of whom eighty-five lived to maturity, the fifty women had 250 children, but of this number only fifty-three lived to grow up." [1]

In this connection Dr. Ainsley, Hartlepool, says :—

> "These (venereal diseases) exist to a larger extent and in worse form than is usually supposed ; they constitute one of the greatest evils of the age. . . . I am convinced the greater majority of children born in the poorest districts (slum) are tainted with syphilis ; and that this taint added to the conditions of environment . . . is largely responsible for the awful mortality amongst children in these districts. Even if these children survive they become an expense to the community. They are mostly feeble in body and mind, possess no inhibitory power and readily give way to the vices by which they are surrounded. It is difficult to call them immoral because they do not know what morality is. It is from this class that paupers and criminals are made, and that prisons, asylums and workhouses are filled." [2]

Dr. Nathan Raw, Liverpool, also says :—

> "All cases of venereal disease are now practically debarred from the general hospitals, to the great detriment of the community and the sufferers. The result is that the Poor Law is compelled to provide special accommodation for such cases as will come within its jurisdiction whilst the other cases are not isolated, with the result that venereal disease is spread through the city by women who are not properly cured." [3]

We recommend, therefore, that, subject to certain safeguards against abuse, the Public Assistance Authorities should have power to detain cases of venereal disease, when medically certified to be dangerous to others.

157. As regards ophthalmic children of in-and-out parents, we have already recommended (Part IV., Chap. 8, Par. 394) that such children should be detained. Ophthalmic children.

(vii.) *Use of Poor Law Infirmaries for purposes of Clinical Instruction.*

158. We have received a number of representations as to the expediency of using the Poor Law infirmaries for purposes of clinical medical instruction. [4] The infirmaries contain, as we have shown, a much larger number of beds than the voluntary hospitals ; they also contain a considerable proportion of chronic cases which are not to be found in such hospitals. Yet in spite of these considerations the doors of the Poor Law infirmaries are closed to medical students. Mr. Smith Whitaker, one of the witnesses on behalf of the British Medical Association, stated that :—

> "The difficulty as to chronic cases is very strongly felt by the profession ; that the medical student in the ordinary hospital does not really see a sufficient number of the cases that he will be likely to meet in private practice, and that he would see a far larger number of those in the Poor Law infirmaries." [5]

Dr. Ford Anderson, another of the witnesses on behalf of the Association, stated that :—

> "There is one aspect of the case that I think ought to be impressed upon this Commission ; it is that you see in those Poor Law infirmaries the termination of diseases to an extent which you cannot see them in voluntary hospitals ; such a case as disseminated sclerosis, in which the system degenerates through the nervous system, and the patient dies a lingering death. It is very important for the practitioner to know those cases. You see them in Poor Law infirmaries, but the medical student in the voluntary hospital never sees them. Also cases like rheumatoid arthritis, which is a very prevalent disease ; you see that in its termination in infirmaries, but you do not see it in the voluntary hospitals. Then there are many casualties and many operations, so that the opportunities for a medical student in the Poor Law infirmary are perhaps in a different degree, but to a great extent, nearly as good as in the voluntary hospitals." [6]

In this connection we may cite the following quotation from the Report of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals. The Committee observed that :—

> "A very useful field for medical instruction is at present closed to students, viz., the Poor Law infirmaries. It was the opinion of nearly every witness that these infirmaries could be usefully opened for clinical instruction. In this, the Committee heartily concurred." [7]

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[1] Allan, 41233 (8), *cf.* Hawkyard, 42703. [2] Ainsley 52840 (15). [3] Raw, 37927 (10)
[4] British Medical Association, 39237–42 ; Lea, 36931 (16) ; Shaw, 33373 ; Hawkyard, 42748–52 ; Stonham 21436–55, 21538, 21607 ; Spurrell, 23501–2, 23557 ; Millward, 18732 ; Allan, 41323–6 ; Bygott, 44041–3 ; Raw, 37995–6 ; Newsholme, 92857–61. [5] British Medical Association, 39239. [6] British Medical Association, 39240. [7] Third Report, 1892, par. 591.

159. The main objection raised against the proposal to open the Poor Law infirmaries for purposes of medical training is that the patients resent being made the subject of lecture, and dislike having students round their beds.[1] This may be so in a small proportion of cases, and in every well-administered hospital due consideration should be had to the feelings of such patients. But, apart from this consideration, we think that the advantage which would accrue to the medical profession and to the community at large far outweighs this objection, and we agree with the British Medical Association witnesses that the exclusion of medical students from the Poor Law infirmaries "is a very serious loss"[2] to medical science. We are also convinced that one result of the proposals would be the maintenance of a high standard of administration in the Poor Law infirmaries and an improvement in the treatment and welfare of the patients themselves. We recommend, therefore, that under suitable safeguards, these infirmaries should, in future, be open for purposes of clinical instruction.

(viii.) *Defective Records of Clinical Treatment.*

160. A defect in existing medical arrangements is the absence or insufficiency of requirements for recording the clinical treatment of each patient.[3] The irksome duty of keeping the medical relief book has long been a subject of complaint on the part of the workhouse medical officers, and the book in its present form was condemned by the Departmental Committee on Workhouse Accounts.[4] The Committee recommended that, in future, the medical officer should keep instead a "case paper," on which he should enter the medical details of the case and other particulars in the manner usual in hospitals and in most of the separate Poor Law infirmaries.

We endorse this recommendation and we consider that fuller records of treatment should be required in the case of the outdoor sick also. We believe that these are indispensable to efficient control and supervision of medical relief.

(*d*) Outdoor Medical Relief.

(i.) *Outdoor Medical Attendance.*

161. Looking to our evidence we are satisfied that the great majority of medical officers efficiently and punctually perform the duties entrusted to them, and that, as we shall show hereafter, many bestow on the poorer classes a considerable amount of attention for which they receive no recompense. We have, however, received from a number of witnesses evidence to the effect that the sick poor are often deterred from applying for assistance from the Poor Law because they lack confidence in the medical attendant provided for them. Thus, Dr. Hawkyard, Leeds, says:—

> "The present plan of medically assisting the poor under the Poor Law is not an efficient system. The average Poor Law medical officer (outdoor) does not give the satisfaction he ought to his patients. Consequently, the private practitioner is often called upon to attend parish patients. The remedy for this state of affairs would be to appoint all practitioners in a district Poor Law medical officers who would be willing to act."[5]

Dr. Innes Smith, Sheffield, says:—

> "I think the working classes have an idea that the attention they get from the Poor Law medical officer is not satisfactory."[6]

Dr. Barlow, Bootle, says:—

> "Another serious objection to the present system is that a great many people object to a visit from the parish doctor as a parish doctor, and often they will pay 6d. or 1s. (which they cannot afford) to another doctor, rather than go to him, or they will travel a long distance to the out-patient department of a hospital rather than go to the parish doctor. I do not know why this should be so, since they are both forms of free medical relief, but, nevertheless, it is so in my experience."[7]

Dr. Burnet, Birmingham, says:—

> "They seem to feel that they are not paying for your services; . . . they do not seem to realise that they are getting enough attention compared to what they would if they had to pay for it, provided they had the means."[8]

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[1] Williams, 45640–1; Shaw, 33370–7; Spurrell, 23559–61; *Cf. also* Fleming, 9551–4, and British Medical Association, 39243–7. [2] British Medical Association, 39239. [3] British Medical Association, 39013 (24). [4] [Cd 1440], 1903. [5] Hawkyard, 42509 (2), 42516. [6] Smith, 43150. [7] Barlow, 38631 (17). [8] Burnet, 44452 (17).

Dr. Paton, Newport, says :—

"I also say for the people themselves it is an advantage to have more than one (doctor). It is easier to get at him, he may live among them."[1]

Dr. McCarthy, Sherborne, says :—

"The great hardship on the poor is that their doctor is chosen for them, and willy-nilly they must have him, or in most cases they can have none. Something in the plan of a provident dispensary would meet the case in most districts."[2]

And again :—

"They (the poor) are like the rest of us, probably, they like to choose their own doctor. They take a fancy to a particular man, and would like to have him; there ought to be no reason why they should not have him, although they are poor."[3]

162. Confidence in the doctor is an aid to recovery, and a want of confidence may fairly be assumed to operate in the other direction. We fully endorse the principle laid down as long ago as 1838 by the Select Committee, who, reporting upon the subject, felt "it to be most important that the poor should be perfectly satisfied with their medical attendants."[4]

163. When the scheme which we propose is in full working order, the member of a provident dispensary* will be able to choose his doctor from the list of those working with the dispensary. We recommend that certain cases in receipt of public assistance, such as the aged and widows with young children might be enrolled as members, and their fees paid by the Public Assistance Committee. To ensure prompt attendance in cases of sudden and urgent necessity, we think that every doctor who joins the dispensary should be required to give an undertaking to attend any such case for a suitable fee. We hope that, ultimately, it may be possible to dispense altogether with the service of the district medical officer, and that his duties will be shared among medical men practising in the district. Meanwhile, arrangments might be made to retain the district medical officer on the staff of the provident dispensary.

(ii.) *Outdoor Nursing.*

164. The voluntary nursing associations, of which there has been a great development of late years, have doubtless done much to alleviate the sufferings of the poorer classes—including those under the care of the Guardians. But such associations are not yet universal. Where they do exist it appears that the Guardians frequently contribute only a nominal sum to their funds, or do not subscribe at all. But, whether the Guardians give a substantial donation, or not, the association is seldom able to provide a nurse whenever called upon by the Guardians to do so. Few Boards of Guardians have appointed Poor Law nurses under the Outdoor Nursing Order of 1892. Few contract with a voluntary nursing association for the care of their outdoor sick. On the whole, it may be said that adequate provision has been made for the nursing of the outdoor sick poor in only a small proportion of unions. Indeed, in many instances the sick are still left to the care of some neighbour or casual helper, frequently underpaid, whose services the guardians are able to obtain. And it not infrequently happens, that a sick person may even be left without any nursing or attendance whatever.

165. While the Guardians cannot altogether be exonerated from blame for having failed to realise their responsibility in the provision of suitable nursing for the outdoor sick paupers, we think it is only fair to point out that they sometimes experience great difficulty in obtaining a suitable attendant; and that, owing to prejudice and ignorance, the poor often resent the intrusion of a trained nurse whose ideas of cleanliness and order are not in accord with their habits.

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[1] Paton, 50328. [2] McCarthy, 67566 (5). [3] McCarthy, 67580. [4] Report of Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1838, p. 24.

* As to this, *vide* "Scheme of Reform," par. 237.

166. There is, we think, no doubt that the want of proper nursing for the outdoor sick paupers, especially in rural districts, "is a serious defect in the present system of medical relief,"[1] and that this has a prejudical effect on the health of the paupers.[2] One witness describes the outdoor nursing question as the most important question with which rural Guardians have to deal. Another, a district medical officer of a rural union, states :—

> "Many cases die simply from want of proper nursing." "I cannot," he says, "speak strongly enough on this point. It is one of the medical officer's greatest drawbacks that he cannot get efficient nursing for his outdoor cases."[3] (*Q.*) "The lack of nursing is not confined to the pauper class only?—No, it is not quite, but it is very different in the next class, because their friends seem to manage that much better." "I never seem to have much difficulty from lack of nursing except in the parish cases."[4]

167. The inadequacy of the outdoor nursing is not, however, entirely confined to country districts, although in towns there is perhaps less real suffering from want of nursing than in the country.[5] This is partly accounted for by the fact that the poor have not the same objection to go to the Poor Law Infirmary; that a larger proportion of pauper sickness is treated in institutions; and that nursing charities are more accessible to those sick paupers who are treated at home.

168. Owing to variations in local circumstances, the method by which the nursing of the outdoor poor can best be improved is not one in regard to which it is possible to lay down any general rule. In many instances, as Dr. McVail points out, trained nursing is not actually required:—

> "What many paupers need is a little skilled guidance in attending chronic complaints, and in others it is housekeeping rather than nusing that is wanted—the washing and cleaning of an aged man or woman, attention to body and bed clothing, the keeping of the house clean and fresh."[6]

In many cases these services may be rendered by relatives, but, where paid attendants have to be employed, they should be paid a fair remuneration for their work. It is also desirable that there should be, where possible, trained supervision of these cottage nurses. In many, probably in the majority of districts, it may be found that trained nursing, when required, may be best supplied through a voluntary association. With this object it may be well to encourage the extension of existing associations, or the formation of associations in districts where they do not exist. The subscription paid by the Public Assistance Authority to the funds of the association should not be, as it frequently is at present, merely a nominal sum, but should bear some relation to the monetary value of the services rendered. In other words, the Public Assistance Authority should contract with the association to provide such trained nursing to the outdoor sick paupers as may be required by that Authority. Or again, in both urban and rural districts it may be possible to utilise the services of the indoor nurses for outdoor cases.[7] Or, failing either of the above alternatives, it may be found expedient, particularly in populous districts, for the Public Assistance Authority themselves to maintain a staff of outdoor nurses.

169. But, while the precise method by which improvement may be effected is a detail which may be left to the judgment of the Public Assistance Authority, we are of opinion that the urgency and importance of the question is such that one of the first duties of that Authority is to take steps for the organisation of a satisfactory system of nursing or attendance for the outdoor sick poor. Further, to insure that the arrangements are being properly maintained we think that they should, from time to time be inspected on on behalf of both the Public Assistance Authority and the Local Government Board.

(iii.) *Compulsory Removal of Sick Cases to Infirmary.*

170. The difficulty of providing proper treatment for the sick outdoor poor might, it appears, be considerably diminished if powers were granted to the authorities to remove compulsorily to the infirmary certain cases which obviously would be better looked after in an institution than at home. Such cases include, among others, persons

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[1] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 112. Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv., 143 (13), 7453. Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (22) 9336. J. Lowry, 7931. Fuller, 10568. Court, 6386. Slade King, 69900. Kendrick, 22368. Randolph, Vol. IV., App. lxxii. (9). Stephens, 34669. Percival, 48003. Visits, Rural 75. Hawkyard, 42509 (4). Piggott, 75774 (12), 75797. [2] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 112. Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv., 143 (13), etc. [3] Stephens, 34566 (6c). [4] Stephens, 34803. [5] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 112. [6] *Ibid.* [7] Quarry, 21268. Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv./Stat. 130. Fleming, 9164. Fuller, 10377. Lowry, 12140. James, 48348 (24.) Biddle, 48888, (6).

suffering from incurable malignant diseases, aged sick persons living alone, who have no friends or relatives to look after them, and phthisical cases whose home conditions are not only bad for the patient, but are likely to lead to infection of the family. We have received representations from a very large number of Boards of Guardians, their Chairmen,[1] and witnesses,[2] as to the need for Poor Law authorities having such powers of compulsory removal. Dr. McVail also reports :—

> "In Rural Unions, I met with many outdoor paupers, old men or women, receiving or requiring medical attention, who ought certainly to be in an institution. Chronic ulcers were being treated or neglected by the patient himself, sometimes without proper dressings, with the result that the sores were in a filthy condition and the whole house pervaded with a sickening odour when the ulcers were exposed. In such houses there was sometimes no nurse or attendant of any kind, yet the mere suggestion of removal to the workhouse sick wards was received with indignation. Quite unquestionably the patients would be much better off in the workhouse, but equally unquestionably they had the strongest objection to going."[3]

171. The cases to which we have referred above, especially cases of aged paupers living alone, sometimes impose a serious responsibility on Poor Law authorities and their officers, and one or two instances have been brought to our notice of fatal accidents having occurred, chiefly through the patient falling into the fire, or otherwise setting fire to himself.[4]

172. We recommend, therefore, that, subject to the same procedure as is adopted in the removal of cases to an Infectious Diseases Hospital under the Public Health Acts, the relief authority should have power to remove compulsorily to an institution aged sick persons, living alone and without relatives or friends to look after them, or persons suffering from a disease which cannot be properly treated at home or which is a danger to the health of others living in the same house.

(iv.) *Unconditional Outdoor Medical Relief.*

173. "Some Boards (of Guardians) certainly do not seem to appreciate the value that ought to attach to medical out-relief."[5] In these words, Dr. McVail characterises a defect frequently observed by us in the course of our visits to the various unions. As a rule, the medical orders issued by the relieving officer since the previous meeting of the Relief Committee were passed *en bloc*, and without comment. Occasionally, a question might be raised as to reimbursement, and occasionally also the relieving officer might report that the district medical officer considered the case one for treatment in the infirmary. But, the Guardians seldom went over the cases seriatim, to satisfy themselves that the domiciliary conditions, or the habits of the applicants, were conducive to a successful treatment of the ailment.[6] Moreover, in still fewer cases, if at all, did the Guardians see that the treatment recommended by the medical officer was being carried out by the sick pauper. In regard to unconditional medical relief, Dr. McVail reports :—

> "Phthisis cases are maintained in crowded, unventilated houses where there is unrestrained facility to convey the disease to their own offspring. Diabetes cases live on the rates, and eat what they please . . . Outdoor medical attendance is freely and unconditionally provided by the guardians for the drunken and the immoral."[7]

174. Where, as usually happens, the doctor is paid a fixed salary it is obvious that a few medical orders, more or less, do not affect the pockets of the ratepayers. Accordingly, by distributing these orders freely and unconditionally, the Guardians travel comfortably along the line of least resistance. They neither trouble to ask, nor have they been told to consider what is the effect of their action upon the recipients of their vicarious philanthropy or upon the morals of the community at large.

But, while many Boards of Guardians grant medical orders unconditionally, it appears that, even in Unions where relief is strictly administered, the Guardians have great difficulty in exercising an adequate supervision over outdoor medical relief. Thus, Mr. Crowder, Chairman of St. George-in-the-East Union, says :—

> "It is too much to expect a relieving officer to take the responsibility of refusing; it is a doctor's question. I do not think we should do very much good by having all these cases up."[8]

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[1] *Cf.* Recommendations received from Boards of Guardians and their Chairmen.
[2] Burnet, 44420 (3); Bygott, 43996 (25); Cameron, 41487 (39); Fuller, 10412; Wilson, Vol. V., App. cxxii. (6); Yeates, Vol. V., App. cxxv. (6); *cf.* Newsholme, 92854. [3] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 114.
[4] *Cf.* Dr. McVail's Report p. 115. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 122. [6] Ball, 35691, etc., etc. [7] Dr. McVail's Report, p. 149.
[8] Crowder, 17333. *Cf.* Vulliamy, 73303.

175. Although, therefore, the evils of unconditional medical relief may be aggravated by lax administration, they cannot be altogether removed by the simple process of tightening up the administration. It would obviously be unsafe to refuse relief in all cases where the home conditions or habits of the applicants were unsatisfactory. It would be equally unsafe to withdraw the relief in all cases where the medical officer's treatment was being wilfully ignored. Indeed, we think that a system of conditional medical relief must carry with it as a necessary corollary the power to remove, under certain conditions, sick poor persons to an infirmary [1]

176. Being desirous of pushing the principle of "curative treatment" into all branches of relief, and, above all, into that branch which deals with the sick, we recommend that outdoor medical relief when granted should be subject to conditions to be imposed by the Public Assistance Authority which conditions should include *inter alia* the maintenance of a healthy domicile and good habits.

(*e*) Inaccessibility of Medical Relief and its Results.

177. While many witnesses have told us that medical relief is often granted too freely, we have also received a good deal of evidence to the contrary. In other words, the fact that medical relief is *normally* obtainable on an order from a relieving officer, instead of by means of direct access to a doctor, is said to lead to delay, which, it is alleged, is sometimes attended by serious, if not fatal results. In sparsely-populated country districts it is obvious that such a system of obtaining medical aid would break down entirely if medical officers adhered to the strict letter of the law.[2] The overseers are, no doubt, empowered to grant an order for medical assistance in case of an emergency, but it does not appear to be sufficiently known among the poor that the overseer has this power; indeed, in one union (Ellesmere) it is said that the Guardians themselves do not know that they can give medical assistance to any person who is not in receipt of other relief.[3]

178. The prescribed routine of obtaining medical relief was illustrated by Dr. Stephens, a district medical officer for the North Witchford Union. He says:—

> "For instance, if the parish patient wants an order quickly from me he really by law would have to go to Chatteris, that is eight miles, and come back four miles. He would have to go past my house four miles, and come back to my house again, and then I should have to go four miles. As a matter of fact that is not done. . . . It would take a man walking three hours to deliver the order to me according to this arrangement." [4]

179. In the rural districts visited by Dr. McVail "the almost invariable practice" is for the medical officer, who is frequently the only doctor in the neighbourhood, to attend without an order any poor person who may come to him for advice.[5] In one union (Weobley) the difficulty has been circumvented to some extent by the ingenuity of the relieving officer, who (regardless of its irregularity) is in the habit of leaving with shop-keepers in the district, medical orders, duly signed, but with the space for the name left blank, to be given away to any poor customers who may apply for such orders.[6]

180. While doctors attend cases freely without an order from the relieving officer, our evidence shows that this leads to confusion in practice and causes considerable dissatisfaction to the medical profession. In this connection we give the following extract from the evidence of Mr. Smith Whitaker, one of the witnesses who appeared on behalf of the British Medical Association:—

> "We have again and again had instances where doctors were called in to attend cases, and they can either accept or refuse. They go, perhaps, at considerable inconvenience, with the probability that they will not be paid for going, or that they will have to take the risk of not being paid. If they do not go and anything goes wrong, then they are accused of cruelty and inhumanity. If they do go the rule is that they do not get paid."[7]

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[1] *Cf.* Final Report by Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 134. [2] Slade-King, 69921. [3] Emberton, 71423. [4] Stephens, 34631. [5] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 124; Beabey, 52426; McCarthy, 67612; Hall, 70730; Parkin, 51538; Burnell, 68233; Griffiths, 71275; Rhodes, 38987; Exham, 72522; Parker, 70303; Farrant, Vol. VII., App. xxxv. (2). [6] Hall, 70671. [7] Whitaker, 39315.

181. The duty of a medical officer, on visiting a case without an order, is to report it to the relieving officer, but an inherent dislike to correspondence on the part of the country doctors apparently leads many of them to ignore this part of their duty in cases requiring medical attendance and medicines only. Should extras or sustenance also be required, the case is usually reported, but, occasionally, even these necessaries are supplied by private charity. If challenged for his seeming neglect of duty, the answer of the doctor is that he has regarded the applicant as a non-pauper case. In this way a considerable amount of medical assistance to poor persons of the pauper class—estimated by Dr. McVail at 15 to 20 per cent. of the Poor Law cases receiving medical relief—is administered by medical officers without being recorded as medical relief.[1] Conceivably, therefore, to take an extreme instance, the statistics of a union might show that no medical relief was being granted, while actually the Poor Law medical officer *qua* private practitioner might be dispensing a large amount of gratuitous medical assistance in the course of a year.

182. The inaccessibility of medical attendance in country districts also applies to medicines and medical extras. As regards medicines, the difficulty has been minimised by the medical officer carrying with him a stock of compressed medicines, or sending the medicines by the postman or by a messenger. But, as regards medical extras, the medical officer neither has the power to supply them nor to order them. All he can do, as has been stated, is to make a recommendation to the relieving officer that such extras as food or stimulants are necessary. The relieving officer has thereupon to make the necessary inquiries into the pecuniary circumstances of the patient. Accordingly, by the time that the extras are delivered, a considerable interval may have elapsed.[2]

183. Although the above remarks apply to country districts, it is alleged that medical relief is not always readily accessible in large centres of population where doctors abound. Sometimes, it appears, the poor do not know to whom to apply for medical assistance. Serious delay is also caused in certain unions where medical orders are obtainable only during office hours.[3] In this connection we desire to draw attention to the Children Act, 1908, Section 12 of which renders the parent or guardian of a child liable to a penalty if he fails to provide such child *inter alia* with adequate medical aid, or if, being unable otherwise to provide such medical aid, "he fails to take steps to procure the same to be provided under the Acts relating to the relief of the poor."(*)

184. We have received much evidence to the effect that the health of the community suffers because of inadequacy in the amount and quality of medical assistance.[4] In this connection we may refer generally to the evidence cited throughout this chapter. Mr. Theodore Dodd has supplied us with a number of extracts from reports of medical officers of health, showing that a great deal of preventable disease and mortality among infants and children is due to the neglect of parents to call in medical aid soon enough.[5] A number of other witnesses have tendered similar evidence.[6] We may also refer to the returns of deaths from starvation in London, cited by Mr. Dodd, some of which, he contends, might have been prevented if medical aid had been forthcoming earlier.[7] Mr. Benjamin Purse, on behalf of the National League of the Blind, informed us that a very large percentage of cases of blindness occurring in infancy might have been prevented if the infants had had proper medical attention; he also mentioned that "at least 33 per cent. of the blind are directly assisted by our Poor Law authorities."[8]

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[1] Report by Dr. McVail, p. 124. [2] *Ibid*, p. 123. *Cf.* Continuance Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1840, pp. 75–6. [3] Barlow, 38704. Hewlings, 47501 (5), 47560. Barlow, 38631 (13). *See also* Young, 38802. Buchan, Vol. IV., App. xxxiv. (11). Hawkyard, 42521. Cameron, 41489 (27), 41556. 41489 (25). Scurfield, 41979. Cooke, 45253. Burnet, 44563–5. Armstrong, Vol. V., App. lxxiii. (4). Parkin, 51554. Evans, 48600. Jenkin, 50773. British Medical Association, 39309. [4] Wilson, 44618: (16). Burnet, 44565. Duncan, Vol. V., App. xx. (7). *Cf.* Mears, Vol. V., App. xciii. (6) (19). Colmer, Vol. VII., App. xxviii. (7). Meredith, Vol. VII., App. lxiii. (6). Wilson, 44618 (10). Scurfield, 41944. Waters, 73584. Hewlings, 47536, etc., etc. [5] Dodd, 25373 (5) (*et seq.*). *Cf.* Young, 38817. Cameron, 41489 (26). [6] Maclean, 49515. Young, 38809 (33). Barlow, 38631 (5), (6) 38637–8, 38642. Scurfield, 41946–7. *Cf.* Alden, 27359 (18). [7] Dodd, *cf.* Vol. III., App. iii. (G). [8] Purse, 28165 (6).

(*) Children Act, 1908, 8 Edward VII., Cap. 67, Sec. 12 (1).

As regards midwifery cases, we find that a number of boards of guardians refuse to grant a midwifery order unless for a fourth or fifth child. Dr. McVail, in commenting upon this practice, remarks :—

> "Necessarily under the Poor Law the point of view in these cases is solely the financial circumstances of the applicant, not the future health of the prospective mother. Manifestly for her health the most important confinement is not the fifth but the first. If not properly guided in it, illness may result which will lead to permanent ill-health." [1]

185. On the other hand, we must not fail to observe that a large number of witnesses have stated that the health of the community does not suffer on account of the inadequacy in the amount or quality of medical assistance.[2] Again, while medical relief is sufficient as to amount and quality, it is averred that the health of the community suffers because of the want of co-ordination among the various agencies supplying medical assistance.[3] Dr. McVail, who made special inquiries on this point on our behalf, reports that he found very few cases "resulting in death or in severe illness or prolonged bad health" in consequence of want of proper medical attendance.[4] The medical officers whom he questioned on the subject stated that outdoor relief was "freely asked for and freely given."[5] It appears, however, that the medical officers in making that assertion had in mind "the pauper class as distinguished from the poor or borderland class."[6] As regards the latter :—

> "One doctor who had given attention to the subject was strongly of opinion that in his own area the class just above the grade of pauperism was much worse off in respect of medical attendance than the paupers themselves. Poor people who were expected to pay for a doctor often felt the financial burden too great, and delayed sending for him, or asked him to discontinue his visits before the patient ought to have been out of his control."[7]

Other witnesses have expressed similar views :[8] home medical assistance is deferred to the last moment, credit is obtained, clothes are pawned and then money is borrowed to pay the doctor in advance. Incipient or subsiding illness and convalescence are left to providence, and it may even happen that a visiting doctor is not told of a fresh case in the house on account of the expense.[9]

186. We, therefore, recommend that medical assistance be more readily accessible to all who are in need of it.

(*f.*) Overlapping of Agencies Providing Non-Institutional Medical Assistance.

187. As regards the want of co-ordination, and the consequent overlapping of effort among the various agencies supplying non-institutional medical treatment to the poorer classes, we have already shown that such treatment is being supplied by the Guardians, the Sanitary Authorities, the Education Authorities, the out-patient departments of the voluntary hospitals, the free dispensaries and the provident dispensaries, medical clubs, and friendly societies.

Except to a very limited extent there appears to be no real or effective co-operation between the Poor Law and the other agencies providing medical assistance. We recommend that there should be co-operation, and in the next chapter we shall submit proposals by means of which we hope to accomplish this end.

188. But, meanwhile, we desire to draw attention to the question of what is the right sphere of the voluntary hospital in regard to out-patients. This problem, in our opinion, lies at the very entrance to any radical reform of the system of medical assistance. In the Metropolis, as we have shown, the out-patient departments of the hospitals steadily and enormously enlarge their sphere. Much of this increase is due, rightly and properly,

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1 McVail's Report, p. 110 (a). 2 Hounsell, Vol. VII., App. cxxvii. (6); Ross, Vol. VII., App. cl. (8); Brash, Vol. VII., App. xxiv. (12); Culross, Vol. VII., App. xxix. (10); Routh, Vol. VII., App. lxxv. (16); Randolph, Vol. VII., App. lxxii. (9); Williams, Vol. VII., App. xcii. (7); Sydenham, Vol. VII., App. lxxxii. (8); Hoffman, Vol. VII., App. cxxvi. (9); Plews, Vol. V., App. xxxix. (10; Percival, 47919 (14); Jenks, Vol. VII., App. cxxviii. (7); Macqueen, Vol. VII., App. cxxxiii. (6); Nicholls, Vol. VII., App. lxvi. (8); Marsh, Vol. VII., App. lxi. (10); Hall, 70630 (12); Gourlay, Vol. VII., App. cxxi. (9); Biddle, 48888 (14); Leigh, Vol. VII., App. cxxxi. (8); Beatty, 47745 (12); Berkeley Murray, Vol. VII., App. cxxxvii. (7); Adams, Vol. VII., App. xviii. (8); Cresswell, 49147 (12); Renny, Vol. V., App. ciii. (18); Stewart, Vol V., App. cxi. (22); Williams, Vol. V., App. cxx. (6); Yeates, Vol. V., App. cxxv. (6); Ainsley, 52839 (27); Slade-King, 69790 (12). 3 Davies (17), Vol. V., App. xvli. 4 Dr. McVail's Report, p. 144. 5 *Ibid.*, p. 144–145. 6 *Ibid.*, p. 145. 7 *Ibid.*, p. 145. 8 Bygott, 44009; Niven, 38380 (79); Vulliamy, 73417–73427; Emberton, 71323 (16); Mahomed, 76157; Edwards, Vol. VII., App. cxiii. (2). 9 Wilson, 44618. (11).

on the one hand to increase in population, and the increasing facility with which the poor in country districts can travel to London, but chiefly to the expensive equipment for dealing with special diseases which science has now placed in the doctor's hands. But these valid grounds for an increase in the work of the out-patient departments render it all the more necessary to save them from certain abuses of which we have had ample evidence.[1]

In the first place, the out-patient departments are dealing with a large number of cases for whose treatment the Poor Law authorities are, or should be responsible. Thus, our Special Investigator, Miss Roberts, concludes that, if the three hospitals selected for her inquiry be fair samples, " at least 11 per cent. of out-patients at the voluntary (general) hospitals in London are actually Poor Law cases, being in receipt of some form of Poor Law assistance either at the very time they are treated, or within a half-year of treatment." [2] Under a co-ordinated system, it might be expedient to refer certain pauper cases to the out-patient department for a second opinion, or for special treatment, but this does not appear to be done to any great extent at present. Accordingly, it may be said that the out-patient departments are performing a great deal of work which should properly be done by the Public Assistance Authorities.

In the second place, it is for consideration whether the Public Assistance Authorities should not also deal with the two following classes of cases which, at present, receive treatment from the out-patient departments :—

(*a*) Persons who are suffering from chronic ailments.

(*b*) Persons whose home conditions will not allow them to reap any commensurate benefit from such treatment.

In the third place the benefits of the out-patient departments are being extended to :—

(*a*) The well-to-do who can afford to pay private practitioners.

(*b*) Persons sufficiently able to join a provident institution.

189. Until, therefore, the work of the out-patient department is delimited in such a way as to prevent overlapping between its sphere and that of the Public Assistance Authority, and to leave full scope for private practice and provident effort, any endeavour to reform the system of public medical assistance will be locally thwarted. Indeed, all attempts to create order out of the present chaos will be disappointing. Even in the interests of the out-patient departments themselves a reform appears to be expedient in order to secure the greatest benefits from the treatment which they so lavishly bestow [3] and to prevent those benefits from being abused by the well-to-do. Suggestions for remedying the abuses of the out-patient departments have been laid before us by many witnesses,[4] but by none more fully than the representatives of the British Medical Association. We are convinced with them that a strenuous effort should be made to circumscribe the work of the out-patient departments. They should be used almost exclusively for :—

(1) Casualties.

(2) Consultations.

(3) Cases requiring expensive equipment tor the treatment of special diseases and defects.

To this end the "letter" system should be thoroughly reformed or abolished, and, except for casualties, the recommendation of a medical officer or private practitioner substituted.

190. We recommend therefore that the work of the out-patient departments of the voluntary hospitals should be reorganised on these lines ; that they should be protected from abuse by the well-to-do ; and that a strong endeavour should be made to bring their work into co-operation with that of the new organisation of medical assistance which we propose to set up.

191. We desire also to draw special attention to the position created by the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, to which we have already referred. Under that Act the Education Authorities have far-reaching powers of providing medical assistance to school children out of the rates. Unless their work in this respect is co-ordinated with that of the Public Assistance Authorities, the evils of overlapping and consequent waste of effort and money will be accentuated. For example, we have recommended that there should be more medical inspection of all children under the Public Assistance

[1] Marsh, Vol. VII., App. lxi. (4) ; Wilson, 44618 ; Rhodes, 38922 ; Hawkyard, 42531–42764 ; Packer 70185 (4) ; Wallace, Vol. V., App. liii. (7) ; Becke, 48238 ; Cox, 51873–4 (4) ; Morrison, 52466, etc., etc.

[2] Report by Miss Roberts on Overlapping, &c., p. 6.

[3] Nussey, 32917 (16) ; Lauriston Shaw, 33118 (6) (*b*) ; British Medical Association, 39124 (23), 39127.

[4] Niven, 38380 (13) ; Rhodes, 38914 ; Scurfield, 41934 (10) ; Edwards, 38322 (7) ; &c., &c.

Authorities. Of the 38,000 children of school age who were, on January 1st, 1907, being maintained in Poor Law establishments, about 18,000 were attending public elementary schools. In addition, out of the 171,000 children in receipt of out-relief on that date,[1] it may be said that practically all who were of school age were attending such schools. In the absence of co-operation, therefore, it is conceivable that all these children might, simultaneously, be the subject of medical inspection on the part of both the Public Assistance and the Education Authorities, and a large proportion of the children might, likewise, be receiving simultaneously two kinds of medical treatment.

Such a contingency would be regrettable, even if it were to obtain in only a modified degree. We are, however, hopeful that it may be possible to avoid it altogether. We are pleased to observe from the Board of Education Memorandum, dated November 22nd, 1907, explaining to the Education Authorities their duties as to medical inspection and treatment of school children, that the principle of co-operation with other local authorities is not lost sight of. For example, it is recommended that "the work of medical inspection should be carried out in intimate conjunction with the public health authorities, and under the direct supervision of the medical officer of health." Again, as regards the treatment of children by the Education Authorities it is recommended that it be done, meantime, "through such agencies as are conveniently available."

192. We have here an opportunity of establishing, at the outset, an effective method of co-operation, or division of labour, in the performance of a public duty. The medical inspection of pauper children attending public elementary schools may, no doubt, be effectively carried out as recommended in the Board of Education Memorandum, but any treatment for diseases required by such children should, we think, be provided through the agency of the Public Assistance Authorities.

Further, we think that this principle should be applied to all children attending public elementary schools. Thus, the Sanitary Authorities, whose functions are mainly concerned with the prevention of infectious disease, would be responsible for the medical inspection of all children. On the other hand, the Public Assistance Authority, whose functions would be to provide medical treatment, would provide such treatment for all school children, so far as they require to be treated at the expense of the rates.

(*g*) Summary of Recommendations and Suggestions in Part V., Chapter 2.

1. The primary responsibility of the Public Assistance Authorities for the inspection and supervision of medical assistance should be clearly recognised and carefully maintained; but, meanwhile, the arrangements for both indoor and outdoor medical assistance should be periodically inspected by medical inspectors on behalf of the Local Government Board; to this end the Board's staff of medical inspectors should be increased. (127.)

2. More effective control should be exercised by the Local Government Board over unnecessary expenditure on Infirmaries. (134.)

3. Medical Officers should receive adequate compensation for their services; and medicines should be directly provided by the Public Assistance Authorities, or, where this is impracticable, some equitable arrangement should be made whereby the cost of the medicines would not form a charge on the medical officer's remuneration. (131–2.)

4. Consideration should be given to the question of the sufficiency of the medical and nursing staffs in the Public Assistance Authorities' institutions for sick persons. (143–6.)

5. The system of superannuation of nurses calls for revision, particularly as to the age limit for retirement, which is too high. (148.)

6. To secure proper classification of the sick, with adequate nursing, sufficient institutions should be specially set apart for the treatment of the sick, and to this end an enlargement of the administrative area is necessary. (145 and 151.)

[1] Thirty-sixth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1906–7, pp. cxxiii–v.

7. Institutions for the treatment of sick persons under the Public Assistance Authorities should be open for purposes of clinical instruction, subject to suitable safeguards. (159.)

8. Improved methods of recording the clinical treatment of sick cases should be adopted: "Case-papers" should be introduced and used for both the indoor and the outdoor sick. (160.)

9. Phthisis cases needing aid from public funds should remain under the care of the Public Assistance Authorities, who should, however, make more suitable provision for their treatment. (150.)

10. Medical treatment should be more readily accessible to all who are in need of it. (186.)

11. Outdoor medical assistance should be conditional on the maintenance of a healthy domicile and good habits. (176.)

12. In certain cases, power of compulsory removal to and detention in an institution should be given to the Public Assistance Authorities under proper safeguards. (153–7, and 172.)

13. Certain classes of paupers, such as the aged and widows with young children might be allowed to choose their own doctor from the list of doctors working with the provident dispensary[1]; every doctor who joins the dispensary should give an undertaking to attend for a suitable fee any case of sudden and urgent necessity; it is hoped that it may be possible ultimately to dispense with the services of the District Medical Officer whose duties will be shared among medical men practising in the district; meanwhile arrangements might be made to retain the District Medical Officer on the staff of the provident dispensary. (163.)

14. Immediate steps should be taken for the organisation of a satisfactory system of nursing, or attendance, for the outdoor sick poor; the nursing arrangements should, from time to time, be inspected on behalf of both the Public Assistance Authority and the Local Government Board. (169.)

15. There should be co-operation between the Public Assistance Authorities and the other agencies providing non-institutional treatment to the poorer classes. (187.) To this end especially:—

(i.) The out-patient departments of the Voluntary Hospitals should be re-organised so as to bring their work into co-operation with that of the new organisation of public medical assistance, and to prevent their benefits from being abused by the well-to-do. (190.)

(ii.) The Education, and Sanitary Authorities should co-operate in the medical inspection of school children; any medical treatment, so far as it is provided out of the rates, to school children, should be provided by the Public Assistance Authority. (192.)

[1] As to this, *vide* "Scheme of Reform," par. 237.

Chapter 3.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS.

193. We have now completed a somewhat lengthy survey of the existing system of dealing with the sickness of the poor, and the defects of that system. We have felt bound to devote much space to the subject, because we are impressed with its importance.

The effects of a system of medical relief under the Poor Laws on a principle of restriction, hedged in by difficulties of attainment, and, till lately, accompanied by political disfranchisement, have been clearly shown in the evidence given before us :—

(1) It has to some extent produced the result which was intended. It has deterred men from applying to the Poor Law, has fostered independence, has called into existence and stimulated the growth of Friendly Societies, medical clubs, provident dispensaries and the like.[1]

(2) It has, however, probably, led to a neglect on the part of many to provide themselves, their wives and familes with medical attendance, and so helped to impair the health of the present generation.[2]

(3) It has called into existence a vast amount of medical charity. The out-patient wards of hospitals are only one instance of the eagerness with which men avail themselves of free medical advice, often no doubt as a second opinion where there is grave apprehension or want of confidence in a medical man.[3]

(4) It has helped to develop on a large scale the sale of patent medicines, and has created a class of practitioners who give advice and supply medicines at an almost inconceivably low price. As to the value of that advice or of those medicines, we pronounce no opinion. In matters of health the lessons of experience are learned but slowly and sometimes too late to profit the learner, and it may be said that the system tends to encourage inefficiency and to demoralise both him who gives and him who takes.[4]

194. The first point to which we would call special attention is the large number of institutions and of social agencies dealing with sickness. We have hospitals, convalescent homes, and retreats for the dying, maintained by voluntary effort. We have infirmaries under the care of the Guardians, and infectious hospitals managed by the Sanitary Authorities. All these provide institutional treatment. For domiciliary treatment, we have outdoor medical relief from the Poor Law, provident dispensaries and free dispensaries. We have also a far-reaching organisation of friendly societies which put medical aid in the forefront of their programme, and which are of great value to the nation because not only do they aid the growth of thrifty and provident habits but they give an opportunity for the exercise of self-government. As things stand, we have not merely much overlapping and consequent waste, but the illogical result that, whereas the inmate of a workhouse infirmary runs the risk of disfranchisement, the patient in a voluntary hospital incurs no such liability. In what follows, we shall endeavour to show how reform can be carried out by co-ordinating, utilising, and developing existing agencies for the provision of medical assistance. But first we shall summarise the evidence which we have received as to the close connection of sickness with pauperism.

(*a*) The Influence of Sickness on Pauperism.

195. The history of the development of the public system for the prevention of disease in England is itself a testimony to the connection between sickness and pauperism. It was the Poor Law Commissioners, who, convinced of the pauperising influence of sickness, agitated for and obtained the first sanitary legislation for the prevention of disease.[5] And for many years the Poor Law Guardians were in the country, as the Local Government Board still is at Whitehall, the chief authority entrusted with this prevention of disease.

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[1] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 91 to 101. The experience of the Bradfield Union is also full of interest on this point (*vide* Willink, Vol. VII., App. ccxi. (A)). [2] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 43; 70–77; 177–186. [3] *Ibid.*, pars. 85–87; 102–107; 188–9. [4] Edwards, 38375–5; Scurfield, 41888 (10b); Bygott, 43998 (58), 44102; Burnett, 44570–6; Wilson, 44618 (15–16); Silk, Vol. IX., App. l.; also Memo. by Medical Officer of Local Government Board, Vol. IX., App. liv.; and Report by Dr. McVail, p. 159. *Cf.* Part V., par. 108.

196. Tables have been furnished by witnesses showing that, of the applications for poor relief (not merely medical relief) received during a given year in the union of Nottingham, over 40 per cent.,[1] and in the Parish of Glasgow,[2] about 50 per cent., were due to sickness or ill-health.

After a careful examination of 4,000 cases of consumption in the wards of a union infirmary, Dr. Nathan Raw, Liverpool, came to the conclusion that nearly 30 per cent.[3] were paupers because they were consumptives, and not consumptives because they were paupers. He adds: "there are at present in England and Wales over 200,000 men afflicted with tubercle, the majority of whom will ultimately have to resort to the workhouse, unless released by death." "The sad part of it is that highly respectable people in all ranks of society are dragged down to destitution by this fell disease, finally becoming chargeable with their families to the Poor Law."[4] Our Special Investigators, Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, found "no reason . . . to doubt the estimate of Dr. Nathan Raw."[5]

The effect of sickness on pauperism may be further demonstrated, firstly by the large number of sick (about 30 per cent. of the total paupers)[10] under the care of the Guardians, and, secondly, by the chief characteristic—the chronic nature—of the diseases from which the poor persons suffer. In this latter connection, Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire point out:—

> "An illness of a prolonged nature implies a greater strain on the resources than one which is acute. In the latter case, if the patient recovers, the special strain is comparatively soon ended, both as regards himself and his family. If he does not recover, the widow, and, if there are any, the young children may come upon the Poor Law. Even, however, if such should be the case, there is still the chance of re-marriage, whereas in the case of a lingering illness, the wage-earner will become a pauper, and his wife and children no less, with the added liability on the latter for his maintenance when they are earning or beginning to earn."[6]

Another of our Investigators, Miss Roberts, also reports:—

> "Where the application is for the head of the family, the illness is usually of a chronic nature."[7]

197. Sickness is therefore admittedly one of the chief causes of pauperism[8]; and the more chronic its character and the longer its duration, the greater the likelihood of its producing dependence upon the rates.

We estimate that at least one-half of the total cost of pauperism is swallowed up in direct dealing with sickness. To this burden we must add the indirect contributions of sickness, viz., the widows, children, and old people cast upon the rates through preventable deaths of bread-winners, and the host of degenerate, imbecile, maimed and blind, with whom disease helps to populate our workhouses. It is probably little, if any, exaggeration to say that, to the extent to which we can eliminate or diminish sickness among the poor, we shall eliminate or diminish one-half the existing amount of pauperism.

198. The action of preventive medicine will doubtless do much in the future to reduce sickness resulting from non-infectious diseases, as it has done so successfully in the past as regards infectious diseases. Meantime, however, we must be prepared to continue a system of therapeutic treatment, and, in the circumstances disclosed by the evidence, it seems to us that it would be neither prudent nor right to restrict medical aid by making it less accessible than it is at present.[9]

(*b*) Objections to Gratuitous Medical Assistance.

199. Sickness being then so large a factor in pauperism, it may well be asked if there is not a strong case for providing a gratuitous public service for dealing with it. Is it not in the interests of the State to pay whatever may be necessary for eradicating so costly an evil? In our mind, the answer to the plea for a gratuitous medical service is twofold. In the first place, so far as the prevention of

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[1] Herbert, Vol. I., App. XVII. (A), par. 53; *also Qs.* 8095–6. [2] Motion Vol. VI., Minutes of Evidence. [3] Raw, 37927 (34). [4] *Ibid.*, 37927 (33) & (35). [5] Final Report, p. 130. [6] London Report. p. 16. [7] Report by Miss Roberts, p. 8. [8] *Cf.* Alden, 27359 (20); Dodd, 25373; Barlow, 38753–5; Young, Vol. IV., App. cviii. (13); Dearden, 41134–7; Niven, 38430, 38439; Buchan, Vol. IV. App. xxxiv. (10); Rhodes, 38898 (3–4); Devonald, Vol. V., App. xviii. (10); Stewart, Vol. V., App. cxi. (23); Newman, 94287 (31); Newsholme, 92534 (10–17); also Vol. IX., App. liv., &c., &c.; *Vide also* par. 156 as to pauperism caused by venereal disease. [9] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 177–186. [10] Statistical Appendix, Part III., par. 5.

disease is concerned, the free medical service already exists. As we have shown, the Sanitary Authorities at present not only freely apply preventive measures against sickness, but also, with few exceptions, freely cure or attempt to cure many classes of disease where the danger to the community extends beyond the mere danger of losing the individual attacked by the disease.[1] It is true that the classes of infectious or contagious diseases dealt with by the Sanitary Authorities might perhaps with advantage be extended.[2] But on the whole it is clear from the figures supplied by Dr. Newsholme that, aided by the improved standard of living and well-being of the people generally, the Sanitary Authorities have in the last forty years very materially reduced the death rate due to preventable diseases.[3] It is, therefore, a fair assumption that they have to a large extent also diminished the pauperism due to preventable diseases. We are, in fact, at the present time enjoying the benefits of a great and growing free public medical service whose efforts are directed towards preventing diseases which contribute to pauperism. So far as the prevention of disease is concerned, the question of a free medical service is, therefore, confined to considering the extent to which the activities of Sanitary Authorities should be extended.

200. As regards a gratuitous medical service for the cure of disease, we recognise the attractiveness of the proposal, but we are unhesitatingly opposed to it on various grounds. We believe that the disadvantages of the proposal outweigh its advantages; and we are confident that the greater part of these advantages are attainable by other measures. We shall now proceed to develop these propositions.

201. The first objection to a gratuitous system of medical assistance is that it would be impossible to confine it to the very poor, or even to the poor. The class that avails itself of a gratuitous public service naturally tends to grow, and, in proportion as this class increases in numbers, the prejudice against using the service will diminish in intensity; each beneficiary recruits several others from among his friends, and what was at first an arithmetical soon becomes a geometrical progression in numbers, till none but the rich or the eccentric will continue to provide, at their own expense, benefits which are provided freely by the State for the vast majority of their neighbours.

More especially is this the case in a public service such as medical relief, where it is essential that what the State provides should be the best possible, and where it is, as a fact, often far better than can be individually provided by any except the rich. Instances in point are the use by well-to-do tradesmen and farmers of the free outdoor medical relief in Ireland;[4] while, even with the deterrents at present in force in England, we are faced with the fact that the improvements in indoor medical relief have, in sixteen years, doubled the number of ordinary able-bodied inmates who come for indoor relief in sickness.[5] We have also quoted evidence to show that an increasingly higher class of society avail themselves of the advantages of indoor medical relief, even under the present system.[6]

We are convinced, therefore, that, if the State were to provide an absolutely gratuitous and attractive medical service, the classes availing themselves of it would so increase that we should be faced with one of two alternatives. Either the accommodation would be inadequate, and we should be confronted generally with a situation such as that at Camberwell Union, where the comparatively well-to-do absorb the best accommodation to the exclusion of the very poor;[7] or else the State would be obliged to provide gratuitous medical treatment for practically the whole population. The conscience of the community would, in the end, cause the latter alternative to prevail; and it is a consideration of the conditions which would then ensue which brings us to our second objection to the system of free medical assistance.

202. The second objection to such a system, as was recognised so long ago as 1869 by Mr. Goschen, is that it must inevitably tend to kill all the existing voluntary organisations for medically assisting the sick poor.[8] We have shown what a vast and useful work on behalf of the sick poor is being done by the friendly and provident medical societies, medical clubs, and the voluntary hospitals.[9] We do not believe that members of friendly societies and subscribers to voluntary institutions would continue to support these institutions if, at the same time, they were called upon to contribute, through

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[1] *Cf.* Part V. pars. 108–114. [2] British Medical Association, 39103 (28), 39268. [3] Memorandum by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board on the Unification of the Official Medical Services for the Poor, Vol. IX., App. liv. [4] M'Gonigle, 52708 (31), 52757; also Memorandum on Poor Law Dispensary Medical Relief in Ireland, by Dr. Stafford, C.B., Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland, and evidence by Dr. Stafford, *Q.* 99835. [5] *Cf.* Part II, par. 122. *Cf.* Part V. pars. 40–42. [7] Report by Dr. McVail, pp. 42 & 50; Foster, 16343. [8] Twenty-second Report of Poor Law Board, 1869–70, pp. xlviii.–lii. *Cf.* Part V. pars. 85–7; 91–101.

rates or taxes to a more efficient and, in a sense, a competing public medical service which would deal gratuitously with precisely the same class as those for whom the voluntary institutions were intended.

We therefore concur with the majority of our witnesses who are of the opinion ttha gratuitous medical assistance would undermine both the voluntary hospitals and the provident and charitable societies which provide non-institutional medical relief.[1]

203. It is to be expected also that, if practically the whole, or even a large proportion of the population, resorted to the gratuitous public medical service, the practice of the majority of private medical practitioners would be gone.[2] With the exception of a very limited number of those who might attend the wealthiest classes, medical practitioners would either be absorbed in the public service or would be obliged to change their profession. We cannot contemplate with equanimity the extinction of an independent medical profession, which may not only serve as a recruiting ground for the more responsible posts in a public service, but will also, by its originalty and independence of criticism, preserve that service from excessive officialism.

204. Finally, we turn to the probable cost of gratuitous medical assistance. Any estimate of the cost must be largely speculative, but, in our opinion, the cost of gratuitous medical assistance would, alone, render its adoption prohibitive.

205. Accordingly, any proposal to establish a system of gratuitous medical assistance would be opposed by the medical profession, by millions of members of provident societies, by the supporters of the voluntary hospitals, and, generally, on account of its enormous expense, by the ratepayers and taxpayers. Such an opposition in the aggregate would, independently of other considerations which might be urged against the scheme, make its realisation quite impossible.

We are of opinion, therefore, that, while one of the first objects of a change in the present system of medical assistance should be to render it more accessible to and more readily obtainable by the working classes,[3] it should be administered in such a way that those who contribute towards their own medical assistance should obtain it on more eligible terms than those who do not so contribute. The method should be such as not to diminish, but to encourage and stimulate, a feeling of independence and self-maintenance.

(c) Objections to Transfer of Medical Assistance to Sanitary Authorities.

206. It has been suggested by numerous witnesses—a considerable proportion of whom were medical officers of health—that the proper remedy for the existing chaos in the organisation of medical assistance of the poor is to hand over the administration of medical assistance to the Sanitary Authority, thus uniting in one body the responsibility for the public prevention and treatment of disease.[4] These witnesses have by no means insisted as a corollary of their scheme that the new service should be gratuitous; but we shall proceed to show why we think that the proposed transfer is inconsistent with any but a gratuitous system, the evils of which we have indicated above.

207. An adequate inquiry as to the means of a patient is the only foundation on which we can build up a system of public medical assistance in which each patient, other than the very poor, contributes according to his ability towards the cost of his treatment at the public expense. Unless such inquiry is energetic, capable, and rigorously enforced, all experience goes to show that the public service will be more and more utilised gratuitously by the well-to-do, instead of by the poor for whom it is intended. But, for an inquiry of this kind, the Sanitary Authority has no existing staff; it would have to create one, and this would duplicate the expense and *personnel* of

[1] Davy, 2738; Shiel, Vol. V., App. cvii. (6); Rogers, Vol. V., App. xliii.; McCarthy, 67603; Reed, Vol. VII., App. lxxiii. (16); Stephany, 30560; Stead, 77468 (16), 77506; Davis, 72681 (44); Pochin, 74689; Brown, 50009 (19); Bonar, 27987 (16–17); Chadwick, 47015 (12); Harben, 98129 (3); Foster, 16577; Curtis, 28810; Lindsey, 50999; Lackland, Vol. V., App. xc., &c., &c.; *cf.* also Twenty-Second Report of Poor Law Board, 1869–70, p. lii. [2] *Cf.* Barlow, 38671; Edwards, 38342–3; Raw, 37927 (20); Reid, 50872; Shaw, 33306–8; Montefiore, 35028; Becke, 48240; Bygott, 44316; Scurfield, 41985; *see also* Twenty-Second Report of Poor Law Board, 1869–70, p. li. [3] *Cf.* Part V., par. 186. [4] *Cf.* Memo by Medical Officer of the Local Govt. Bd., Vol. IX., App. liv.; Report by Dr. McVail, pp. 152–5; Newsholme, 92965; Newman, 94287 (30–4); Butler, Vol. IX., App. xliii. (18); Davies, Vol. IX., App. xliv. (29); Pattin, Vol. IX., App. xlvi. (31); Richards, Vol. IX., App. xlvii. (25–9); McCleary, Vol. IX., App. lxv. (28); Hutton, Vol IX., App. lxvii. (21); Stonham, 21369, 21529, 21675; Spurrell, 23516; Alden, 27359 (17), 27860; Raw, 37927 (47), 37948; Dodd, 47191 (19), 47285; Hewlings, 47501 (44 I); Bygott, 43998 (54); Lea, 36982, 37062; Young, 38758 (15–19); Burnet, 44424, 44588; Cooke, 45078–9; Scurfield, 41888 (9); Barlow, 38639–41; Neale, 49222 (2); Biddle, 48912, 48987–91; Armstrong, Vol. V., App. lxviii. (14); Morris, 70184; Macnaughton-Jones, 73054; Willis-Bund, 76589, &c., &c. *Vide also* Leslie Mackenzie, 56605 (113–134) and "Some Notes on Public Health and its relation to the Poor Law in Ireland," by Dr. Stafford, C.B.

the machinery for inquiry that the Poor Law authority already has and of necessity must have. Even if the necessary staff were created, the Sanitary Authority would find it difficult or impossible to adopt a policy of obtaining contributions from patients towards the cost of their treatment. One of the chief features of the Sanitary Authorities' treatment of infectious diseases is that its services are, with very few exceptions, rendered gratuitously to the individual. It has doubtless been felt that it is so overwhelmingly in the community's interest for an infectious patient to be treated in an infectious hospital, that it would be inadvisable to do anything to lessen the attractiveness of the hospital. In fact, whereas it is dangerous for the Poor Law authority to attract for treatment any but those who are unable to provide for themselves, it is the duty of the Sanitary Authority by propaganda, persuasion, and forethought, to make its services attractive to all classes of the community, independent of their economic position. It is, as a rule, in the community's own interest that even a well-to-do citizen stricken with infectious disease should be treated in the public hospital, where proper precautions can be ensured, rather than in his own home, where it is possible that such precautions may not be observed. Moreover, the Sanitary Authority can by its own efforts largely diminish—in some instances to vanishing point—the number of cases of infectious disease it will be called upon to treat. At any rate the fact remains that, rightly or wrongly, the Sanitary Authorities have allowed to fall into desuetude the power of recovering the cost of treatment in their hospitals which, except in London, they legally possess.[1] It would, therefore, be against the tradition of the Sanitary Authority that they should henceforth rigorously enforce a system of contribution according to the patient's ability.

208. But there is yet a more serious objection to transferring the administration of medical assistance to the Sanitary Authorities. These authorities in England and Wales number over 1,800. There are only 643 Poor Law unions. To hand over medical assistance to the Sanitary Authorities, would therefore be to hand it over to a larger number of authorities with smaller areas than at present. We should, as regards medical assistance, be reverting to the small area system that existed prior to 1834 instead of encouraging the large area system of 1908. It is beyond our reference to consider the question of reorganising the Sanitary Authorities of England and Wales, and to make the proposed transfer to the 1,800 existing Sanitary Authorities, would be to stultify the main contention of our Report, viz., that there is in every branch of the Poor Law a crying need of a larger area for purposes both of administration and of classification.[2]

209. There is the further consideration that medical treatment at the present time is largely a question of dieting the patients. To hand medical assistance over to the Sanitary Authorities would, therefore, involve extending their functions to the provision of maintenance, and, in the case of a family, this would almost inevitably lead to the anomaly that certain members would be receiving maintenance from the Sanitary Authority and others from the Poor Law authority. In other words, we should be creating two relief authorities where only one exists at present. This, also, would be contrary to another of our recommendations, viz., that in each area there should be only one authority administering public assistance. There would, again, be a difficulty as regards indoor cases. A poor person, when well, would be under the Poor Law authority and, when sick, would be transferred to the Sanitary Authority. An aged person whose condition alternated between health and sickness would, therefore, be in danger of constant transfer from the institution of one authority to that of another. This we conceive to be in the interest neither of good administration nor of the patient himself. Indeed, it would probably be found in practice that the aged and infirm would tend to gravitate to the institutions of the Sanitary Authority and to remain there.

210. Finally, before the functions of an existing authority are enlarged by transferring to it the duties of another authority, evidence is generally required that the authority so enlarged or elevated has discharged satisfactorily the primary duties entrusted to it. This cannot be said of many Sanitary Authorities, especially in rural districts, and is, in our opinion, a further objection to the transfer proposed.[3]

(*d*) The Limits of the Practicable in the Reform of Medical Assistance.

211. But, without incurring the dangers of a universal gratuitous public medical service, and without provoking the administrative and other difficulties which we believe

[1] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 113–4, 136. [2] *Cf.* Report by Dr. McVail, p. 153; also Memo. by the Medical Officer of the Local Govt. Bd., Vol. IX., App liv. [3] *Ibid.*

would ensue from transferring medical assistance to the Sanitary Authorities, we think that there are measures available which will go far to remedy the principal defects of the present system.

We do not pretend that the system we propose will realise the ideals of those enthusiasts who contemplate unfettered and unintermittent medical control, supervision, and treatment of every human being from the cradle to the grave. A system which thus made every human life the helpless subject of relentless and aggressive medical inspection and, to some extent, of medical experiment, might tend to encourage morbidly some of the human ills it was designed to destroy. A race of hypochondriacs might be as useless to the State as a race of any other degenerates. Good health is no doubt a matter of the greatest importance to all, but it is not the sole aim in life, and it is possible to exaggerate the part it plays in the attainment of human welfare.

Moreover, in considering the desirability of endeavouring to provide for the poor, regardless of expense, a theoretically perfect armoury against sickness, it must be remembered that a complete defence against illness does not at present exist even for the millionaire. Many of the more expensive "cures," from time to time prescribed by science and tried by the rich, are largely experimental, and often end in costly failure.

212. Our aim is that all methods for the prevention and cure of disease which have been generally approved by science and are reasonably accessible to the citizen of average means, shall also be obtainable by his poorer neighbour upon payment of a contribution according to his means, and shall be made available for the very poor without any payment at all.

We have seen how the present system falls short of this ideal, and it may be convenient now to summarise the nature of its defects, in order to see how they may be met by the proposals we shall make.

(*e*) Analysis of Defects of Present System and Remedies Indicated.

213. The defects in the existing system of medical assistance fall conveniently under three headings:—

(i.) Defects in quality.
(ii.) Defects in extent.
(ii.) Defects from overlapping.

(i.) *Defects in Quality; and Remedies.*

214. When we consider the enormous improvements which have been made in the last thirty years in the quality of the medical assistance available for the sick poor, we feel that a great debt of acknowledgment is due, not only to the Local Government Board, by whose orders and initiative, as we have seen, the improvements have been chiefly carried out, but also to the Local Authorities, who, to the extent of their understanding, have in most cases endeavoured to respond to the stimulus of the Central Authority. The Local Authorities have also themselves in some cases initiated important changes and have in turn stimulated the Central Authority. But, notwithstanding the improvements which have taken place, it is clear from the Report of our medical investigator, and from our evidence, that there still exist blemishes which cannot be justified in the service of both indoor and outdoor medical assistance. It cannot be right, for instance, that the suffering poor who come to the Guardians for assistance should be left in the workhouse with insufficient nurses, and in their own homes with no nurses at all.[1] It cannot be right that aged paupers should have their sores improperly dressed, that diabetes patients should have their deaths accelerated by improper diet supplied at the cost of the rates, or that sufferers from phthisis should be associated in close wards with ordinary patients.[2] We do not think that, in view of the enormous advances in medical science and facilities, the conscience of the community will allow blemishes such as these to continue to exist in our treatment of the sick poor. We do not intend to imply that such negligences are deliberate, nor have we any evidence to show that they are widespread; but they have been shown to exist in the limited, though typical, areas submitted to scrutiny, and their existence points, we think, in no uncertain manner to the need of more effective central and local medical supervision and control over the whole field of medical assistance.

[1] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 144–6; 164–7. [2] *Cf.* Report by Dr. McVail, p. 149.

215. We have already indicated[1] that, as regards the Central Authority, the needful increase of medical supervision should be effected by an increase in the staff of Poor Law medical inspectors, of whom at present there are only two available for the whole of England and Wales.

216. As regards the Local Authority we think that the increase of medical control should be obtained by associating with that authority the assistance of some independent medical men. We cannot conceive that any medical institution could be efficiently managed by a Committee who had at hand no medical experience except that of the actual medical officers responsible for the very arrangements which it was the duty of the Committee to direct, control, and criticise. Yet this is the system which the law practically imposes on the managing authorities of the largest system of medical institutions in the country. Unless by the caprice of the ballot, there is nothing to ensure that there shall be a single man with medical knowledge on any of the 643 Boards of Guardians which are to-day responsible for the proper medical treatment of tens of thousands of the sick poor.

217. In the interests both of the sick and of the medical officers, we feel that there should be associated, with every Authority responsible for medical assistance, men competent, as occasion may demand, to criticise, supplement, or support with expert knowledge the arrangements proposed or countenanced by the medical officers for the care of the sick poor.

218. We, therefore, recommend that the Public Assistance Authority should appoint from among their number a Medical Assistance Committee to which shall be added representatives of various organisations which will be more fully described later on. It would be the duty of this Committee to make a thorough survey of existing medical arrangements to study the needs of the locality, and to suggest a complete system of medical assistance and inspection. It is only by thorough revision and rearrangement of existing methods that we can hope to remedy the present defects in medical assistance.

(ii.) *Defects in Extent, and Remedies.*

219. But whether the service of medical assistance be good or bad, our survey has shown that it is deficient in extent. It is not wide enough, either in its indoor branch or its outdoor branch, to reach a number of cases by whom in our opinion it ought to be used.[2] This deficiency in extent is chiefly due either to the physical inaccessibility of the service or to the mental aloofness of the people. Both these causes of present evils can, in our opinion, be eradicated through the machinery of a larger authority with special knowledge both of the medical requirements and of the medical facilities of its area. The duty of this Medical Assistance Committee would be to review, as has never been done before, all the available organisations for medical assistance in its district; and as far as may be practicable to adjust those organisations, as a whole, to the medical needs of the district. For instance, the extent of the need for medical officers in a particular district would be gauged by the character of the population and by the strength or weakness of provident dispensaries, and not, as sometimes at present, by misleading formulæ of acres and population. The need for rate-supported hospitals and their situation would be decided by considering the incidence of disease requiring institutional treatment, and the number of existing institutions available for such treatment. But if the Medical Assistance Committee is to have this knowledge of the medical needs and medical facilities of its district, it again becomes apparent that it must have available on its councils that independent medical knowledge which to-day is absent.

220. But is a waste of public money to provide facilities for medical assistance if the persons for whom they are intended will not use them; and we have seen that the present system does deter certain classes who ought to benefit by it.[3] We are not prepared to say to what extent, if any, this aloofness of the people is to be attributed to the association of medical relief with the Poor Law. The reluctance to call in a doctor is not confined to the poorer classes, and it may well be the attribute of a temperament of which there are examples in all ranks of society. But, on the other hand, the evidence shows that, where the association of medical relief with the Poor Law has been lessened or disguised, as in the case of the separate infirmaries, there has been an increase in the number availing themselves of the system.[4] The additions are, however, as we have seen, to an undefined extent, taken from the well-to-do rather than the poorer classes. We are not inclined therefore, to make medical assistance so attractive that it may become a species of honourable and gratuitous self-indulgence

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[1] *Cf.*, Part V., par. 127. [2] *Ibid.*, pars. 43–7; 73–4; 79–84; 134; 141–3; also Report by Dr. McVail, p. 148 *et seq.* [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Cf.* Part. V., pars. 38–42.

instead of a somewhat unpleasant necessity resorted to because restoration to health is otherwise impossible. Again, we conceive that the right degree of attractiveness and deterrence for the right class of people can best be decided by an authority which, while possessing the economic experience of the Poor Law authority, shall also possess the experience of the medical habits of the people, acquired by independent medical practice among the poor and by association with provident medical societies. We think that only an authority so constituted will be able to make a public system of medical assistance attractive to the needy sick, while at the same time stimulating and educating those who, though sick, ought to have themselves made provision against sickness.

221. We are, therefore,strongly in favour of associating with the new Medical Assistance Committee representatives of provident medical societies, and we think that the encouragement of such societies should be one of the duties of the Public Assistance Authority. The presence everywhere on the Medical Assistance Committees of representatives of provident medical societies would have a double advantage; it would tend to give the poor increased confidence in the system of medical assistance, and it would ensure that that system did not become unduly competitive with the societies.

(iii.) *Defects from Overlapping; and Remedies.*

222. The last of our three classes of defects in the present system is the overlapping and lack of co-ordination between the various agencies ministering to the needs of the sick poor. We have given frequent illustrations of the overlapping in this respect between the Sanitary Authorities, the Education Authorities, the Poor Law Authorities and the provident and charitable institutions.[1] This overlapping involves three dangers, all of which in varying intensity occur in the present sytsem.

The first is that a class of sick poor may be unprovided for because each authority thinks it is the duty of another authority to make the provision. Thus, at present there is an uncertainty as to whether the Poor Law or the Sanitary Authority ought to provide for consumptives, with the consequence that, in the greater part of the country, there is no proper institutional provision for these cases. There is also a doubt as to what is really requisite, and what is the best policy.

The second danger is that if two separate authorities are dealing independently with the same class of sick poor, one authority may be proceeding on principles directly subversive of the principles upon which the other authority acts. In this way the proper educative force of medically treating that class will be lost. For example, a Board of Guardians may be administering outdoor medical relief on such lines as will induce the poor to join provident societies; whilst a neighbouring voluntary hospital may be dispensing to the same class gratuitous and unconditional outdoor relief, and so the lesson of thrift in that district is negatived.

The third danger of overlapping is the possible waste of money (sorely needed in other directions) by different authorities establishing, supervising, and staffing competitive organisations for dealing with the same class of cases. This, and all the other pressing dangers of overlapping authorities, clearly point to the need of co-ordinating and organising as a whole the medical activities of each district.

223. We think that that result could be best achieved by ensuring that the Medical Assistance Committee should have available on its councils representatives of the other authorities and organisations engaged in the medical assistance of the poor.

For example, there are at present about 1,800 extra-Metropolitan sanitary authorities in England and Wales with approximately 700 hospitals containing some 21,000 beds for the reception of cases of infectious disease. Moreover, apart from infectious disease, they have been empowered to provide general hospitals for the use of the community, and medicines and medical assistance for the "poorer inhabitants."[2]

As regards children, we find that simultaneous efforts are being made:—

(1) By Sanitary Authorities and health societies to deal drastically with the diseases of infancy with a view to the prevention of infantile mortality.[3]

[1] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 85–7; 135–9; 187–192. [2] *Ibid.*, pars. 108–114. [3] *Ibid.*, par. 110; also Niven, 38380 (22); Greenwood, 37621; Scurfield, 41888 (1*d*); Newman, 94287 (23–31); Davies, Vol. IX., App. xliv; McCleary,Vol. IX., App. xlv. (20–4) &c., &c.

(2) By the Friendly Societies to promote juvenile courts and lodges of friendly societies in the elementary schools.[1]

(3) By the Education Authorities to bring to light through medical inspection the diseases and defects from which the children suffer, and to arrange for the treatment of such diseases and defects.[2]

Again as regards the voluntary hospitals, we have shown that their work overlaps very largely that of the Poor Law.[3]

224. Any scheme for preventing overlapping between the agencies for medical assistance would certainly fail, therefore, if it did not obtain the adhesion of these numerous, and, in many cases, active authorities. But, if their co-operation were secured in every area, the Medical Assistance Committee would then have full knowledge of what medical work was being done by other authorities, could decide how best to allocate the work between these authorities, and could arrange that they should not proceed on principles mutually subversive of one another's interests and policy.

We recommend, therefore, that the Sanitary Authorities, the Education Authorities, the Voluntary Hospitals, the Provident Societies, and other organisations providing for the poorer classes in sickness should be represented on the Medical Assistance Committee.

225. Apart from the defects above classified, there are one or two so important that we feel we ought to devote separate attention to them and to the remedies, if any, to which they point.

(iv.) *Medical Assistance as a Cause of Pauperism.*

226. In the opinion of a large number of witnesses, many of them persons of the widest Poor Law experience, medical relief owing to its association with the Poor Law frequently leads to other forms of poor relief, and may even result in the permanent pauperism of the recipient. Indeed, the frequency with which this opinion is reiterated might almost entitle it to rank as a Poor Law axiom.[4]

227. In so far as a person becomes ill, and by reason of his illness, becomes temporarily or permanently unable to maintain himself, the statement is, of course, true that medical relief leads to, or rather, is followed by other relief. But this is only another way of saying that sickness is a cause of pauperism, both directly as in the case of a man and his family thrown on the rates by the sickness of the breadwinner, and indirectly, as in the case of an able-bodied man who loses his position through sickness, and is unable temporarily or permanently to find another. In such cases, it is not the medical relief, but the sickness and its disabilities, which cause the persons to come upon the rates for maintenance.

228. We think that very probably it is the prevalence of such cases which explains the point of view of many of the witnesses above referred to. At any rate, we have been unable to find sufficient statistical basis for the narrower view that medical relief, by reason of its association with the Poor Law, causes persons to become either a temporary or a permanent burden on the rates after their sickness has been cured.

Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire report that, "taking the cases for an isolated year in Hackney, it was found that, of a total of 237 male operatives in the boot and shoe trades, a medical order formed the kind of relief first given in thirty-four cases, or about one-seventh of the total." But they qualify this statement by remarking, "it is, however, disease that, in our opinion, is one of the most important causes of pauperism."[5]

Dr. McVail ascertained, as regards the rural unions visited by him, that in only one per cent. of the paupers, was it possible to say that outdoor medical relief had preceded other forms of relief, and that, even as regards this one per cent. it could not be assumed that they were led into pauperism by having received medical out-relief. In short he found it impossible to get on a statistical basis any evidence of the alleged evil influences of medical out-relief in the rural unions.[6] As regards the urban unions, however, he formed the opinion, without having any real first

1 *Cf.* Toynbee, 30622 (51). 2 *Cf.* Part V., pars. 115–6. 3 *Ibid.*, pars. 185–7; 135–9; 188–9. 4 Fuller, 10303; Dansey, 6127–31; Vol. I., App. xii. (23), Lockwood, 4138, 13433; Wethered, 5624; Herbert, 8399; Stonham, 21736; Thompson, 22618, 22622, 22896; Bushell, 23945 (9); 23957; Peters, 19780, 19940; Brown, 24741 (46), 25024, 25037; Dodd, 25575; Battersby, 28919; Alford, 31693 (11*b*), 32000, 32044; Holland, 32857; Warren, 33487 (47–8); Thompson, 34072 (9), 34073; Montefiore, 35048, Booker, 40854 (17); Bygott, 43998 (23), 44147; Bray, Vol. IV., App. xxxii (27); Hill, Vol. IV., App. lxxviii (9); Thompson, Vol. IV., App. ciii. (11); Williams, Vol. V., App. lix. (30); Burnell, 68090 (9); Blake, Vol. VII., App. xxiii (7); Edwards, Vol. VII., App. cxiii. (4); see also Report by Miss Roberts, pars. 45–6. 5 Report on London, p. 15. 6 Report by Dr. McVail, p. 142.

hand statistical data at his disposal, that there was "a somewhat greater statistical possibility" of outdoor medical relief being an inducement to pauperism.[1] Having failed to obtain any direct statistics on the subject, we endeavoured to ascertain whether, inferentially, the contention that medical relief is a cause of pauperism could be supported by statistics. If medical relief causes pauperism, one would naturally expect to find a high rate of pauperism in districts where medical orders are freely given, but here again it is impossible to base upon the figures any reliable generalisation that pauperism is increased by the granting of outdoor medical relief. For instance, in St. George in the East and Whitechapel, both unions in which outdoor pauperism has almost been reduced to vanishing point, we find that medical orders are freely given. Mr. Crowder, chairman of the former union, admitted that the excellent results in the administration of the Poor Law had been obtained in his union without any very special strictness with regard to medical relief.[2] But this does not agree with the experience of relieving officers, who are almost to a man convinced that medical and out-relief are connected as cause and effect.[3]

229. It is indeed possible that the fact of an applicant being in receipt of medical relief may be considered by a lax Board of Guardians as sufficient proof of the necessity for other relief. It is also a fact that medical relief is in many unions given with the utmost laxity and without any adequate inquiry at all. In such unions there may well occur cases, such as that cited by Miss Roberts, where a person who had applied for medical relief with a view to obtaining ordinary relief and had obtained both was subsequently proved to have been a night watchman earning his livelihood during the hours of darkness, and remaining in bed during daylight with a view to hoodwinking the releving officer and supplementing his income from the rates.[4]

230. In unions such as these, there is no doubt that medical relief will come to be considered by the population as a pretext and excuse for obtaining medical comforts and ordinary relief. But any unnecessary pauperism thus caused cannot be said to be the result of medical relief; it is rather the result of a generally lax administration.

We do not think, therefore, that the allegation that medical relief leads, under the present system, to other forms of relief, furnishes on examination any reason for dissociating it from the work of the Public Assistance Authorities.

(v.) *Deterrence of Medical Assistance, and Remedies.*

231. On the other hand, we have received a very large and important body of evidence to the effect that certain features in the administration of poor relief do, in their application to medical relief, tend to deter people from seeking medical assistance when they properly should do so. Thus, for instance, it has been argued that it is the relieving officer who gives the order for medical relief, and his tradition is to consider the economic, rather than the medical, necessity of the applicant,[5] whereas, in the interests of the community, it is of the utmost importance that the applicant should first be treated, and the question of his economic position and his capacity to pay determined afterwards. Accordingly, we think that this is the principle upon which the medical assistance authority of the future should proceed.

Similarly, it has been alleged, and we think with justice, that the mere association of sick persons in a general workhouse with ordinary paupers deters many sick persons from accepting indoor relief.[6] Accordingly, we propose that the medical institutions of the Public Assistance Authority should in future be dissociated as far as practicable from institutions dealing with other classes than the sick. This involves as a corollary a wider area for purposes of classification by institution.

Again, although it was apparently the intention of the legislature that persons receiving medical assistance should not suffer the disability of disfranchisement, yet, at the present time, it would appear that the definition of what comes under the head of medical relief, in regard to which there have been several appeals, is open to very great doubt.[7] We think, therefore, that it should be made clear by statute that no person shall lose his local government or Parliamentary franchise by reason of the receipt of any form of medical assistance.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 143. [2] Crowder, 17539: The Jews are said to get medical orders with a view to obtaining substantial advantages from other sources. [3] *Cf.* Report by Miss Roberts, pp. 11–12. [4] *Ibid.* [5] *Cf.* Part V., pars. 73–4; 177–186. [6] *Ibid.*, par. 43. [7] *Ibid.*, par. 136 (*e*); also Adrian, 114–116.

In this connection we may point out that we are recommending an extension of the exceptions to the rule of constructive pauperism, so that those exceptions would include cases of dependants suffering from certain infirmities. In the case of such exceptions the person liable for the support of the dependant would no longer be the subject of disfranchisement.

Another deterrent feature of the present system is alleged to be that the applicant for medical assistance must appear before the body whose ordinary duties include the distribution of relief to the wastrels, and derelicts of society.[1] In so far as this feeling of reluctance is due to the fear of investigation by the relieving authority, we, as will be seen hereafter, do not think it can be entirely removed.

232. In so far, however, as it reflects a genuine reluctance of the respectable to make application to a relieving officer, or to a pauperising tribunal and classed with ordinary paupers, we think it can and should be met, and we accordingly propose that an applicant for medical assistance should be allowed to apply directly to a medical officer for treatment, and that his application should be dealt with as soon as possible afterwards by a committee of the Public Assistance Authority. In other words, investigation should follow upon treatment.

The constitution of a committee of the Public Assistance Authority, dealing solely with medical assistance will have the double advantage of decreasing the reluctance of the poor to resort to it, and increasing the likelihood of each case being dealt with and supervised successfully from a medical and curative point of view.

(vi.) *The Proper Objects of Medical Assistance and Necessary Safeguards.*

233. If these concessions to the feeling as to the deterrence of Poor Law medical relief are made, we think a system can be set up which will meet the medical needs of the poorer classes without, at the same time, making it probable that assistance would be administered on lines likely to sap their independence. For we hold strongly that medical assistance, while not being deterrent, should at the same time be such as will encourage rather than discourage independent provision against sickness by every class that is able to afford it.

234. The present situation would seem to be that medical relief is not legally deterrent in the sense that there is no legal disability attached to it. In practice, however, it is deterrent to those who dislike having recourse to the Poor Law, and to those who do not care for the Poor Law doctor; while it is unduly attractive to those who like getting something for nothing. Thus, the service rendered is in proportion neither to merit nor to needs.

The need for deterrence disappears, if the application for medical assistance can be made the introduction not to pauperism but to a provident dispensary on the lines which we shall hereafter recommend.

Accordingly, we recommend the following inducements to self provision against sickness:—

I.—The power of recovering the cost or part cost of medical assistance should be retained and enforced in all cases where, in the opinion of the Public Assistance Committee, the recipient of the assistance could have afforded to become a member of a provident dispensary, and had not become so. But it should be part of the powers of the Committee that they should be able to recover such cost in instalments, and that they should have discretion to remit the payment of any or all of such instalments upon proof that the recipient of the assistance had joined a provident dispensary. It should also be understood to be the policy of the Committee to use their powers as to recovery as a lever to lift the applicants for medical assistance into a position for making independent provision against sickness. For example, when it can be done without hardship to the individual, the charge for medical assistance at home should be at least higher than the subscription to a provident dispensary for the period during which the medical assistance is given.

II.—Another unattractive feature of the present system, which must remain as a corollary to the right to recovery, is the power of the Committee to make investigation into the means of applicants who have received medical assistance. This investigation is in our opinion, absolutely necessary to prevent the well-to-do from abusing the system of medical assistance. It might, however, perhaps be omitted in cases of members of provident dispensaries, provided a proper wage-limit for membership of these institutions were established and maintained.

[1] *Cf.* Part V., par. 73.

235. While we think the time is ripe for a great development of provident dispensaries and benefit societies, and we strongly recommend that the system of public medical assistance be organised on a provident basis, it must be confessed that the present attitude and position of the mutual provident societies on the one hand and of the medical profession on the other hand is one of difficulty. Largely, no doubt, owing to the close competition of its own members, medical men have contracted to give their services to the friendly societies at a lower rate than was desirable from any point of view. Some concordat on this question of remuneration is of pressing importance. There is another point of medical etiquette which might seriously hamper the progress of the mutual provident associations, viz., the refusal of the medical profession to allow any canvassing for provident institutions with which its members are connected. Again, the refusal of the friendly societies to impose a wage limit for members paying the ordinary fee for medical attendance, is a permanent source of friction. There is also the further question as to the part that should be played by the medical profession in the management of the dispensaries and other provident institutions.

With a view to removing any difficulties as to the fees to be paid to the doctors and as to the wage limit for members of the provident dispensaries that we propose to set up, we recommend that the British Medical Association be requested to suggest a general scheme or scale of fees and wage limit to be applied by their local branches as local circumstances may suggest. Difficulties as to management of the dispensaries will, we hope, be removed by the associated system that we have suggested.

236. We think that a system such as we have outlined is the best that can be devised under present conditions. Medical assistance would be available for all; the rich and the well-to-do, if they took it, would have to pay for it; the necessitous would obtain it gratuitously. The independent workman who joins the dispensary would be guaranteed adequate medical assistance in sickness at a cheaper rate than he could obtain it from an ordinary medical practitioner. He would have a choice of doctor. He would secure for himself institutional treatment if such treatment were necessary. And his self-respect would be additionally increased by dispensing in his case with all the irritating requirements of investigation into his pecuniary resources. The ratepayers would be protected from improper use of their institutions owing to the misrepresentations of the well-to-do and from unnecessary use of them owing to the thriftlessness or negligence of the poorer classes. The medical community, the Public Assistance and Sanitary Authorities and the people themselves would combine to provide an adequate and honourable system of co-operative medical assistance at the minimum cost, and a genuine attempt would be made to transform into a living and helpful organisation the existing medley of independent and often harmful agencies for dealing with the sick poor.

(*f*) Scheme of Reform.

237. It is in the hope of attaining this end that we submit the following scheme of reform which assumes that the area of administration of the future Public Assistance Authority will be the county and the county borough, and that within each area this authority will have local committees working under it.

General.

1. That medical assistance should be re-organised on a provident basis.[1]

2. That in certain cases power of compulsory removal to and detention in an institution should be given to the authorities under proper safeguards.

3. That there should be systematic co-operation between the Public Assistance Authorities, the Sanitary Authorities, the Education Authorities, and the voluntary medical institutions, based on a clear definition of their respective functions.

4. That no disfranchisement should be attached to any form of medical assistance.

5. That the arrangements for indoor and outdoor medical assistance should be periodically inspected by medical inspectors on behalf of the Local Government Board.

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[1] *Cf.*, Report by Dr. McVail, pp. 157-162; Report of Committee of British Medical Association on Contract Practice; Evidence by Dr. Lauriston Shaw, &c., &c.

Functions of the Public Assistance Authority as to Medical Assistance.

6. That in taking over the existing powers and duties of Boards of Guardians in regard to medical relief the new Poor Law authority, or, as we shall call it, the Public Assistance Authority, shall undertake the following functions :—

(i.) To co-ordinate and, when necessary, supplement the medical institutions of the county or county borough and to suggest methods of co-operation with the Sanitary Authorities and the Authorities in charge of Voluntary Hospitals.

(ii.) To organise an outdoor and provident medical service easily accessible in all parts of the county or county borough, this service to include the provision of competent midwives.

(iii.) To develop an adequate nursing service throughout the county or county borough, preferably in connection with voluntary nursing associations.

(iv.) To subscribe, when necessary, toward these purposes.

(v.) To arrange for adequate supervision of, and report on the efficiency and adequacy of the medical institutions and medical service through the county or county borough.

Establishment of Medical Assistance Committees.

7. That, to assist the Public Assistance Authority in carrying out the above functions, they shall appoint a committee from among their number, to which shall be added representatives of the Health Committee of the County Council or of the County Borough Council, and of the local branch or branches of the British Medical Association. This committee shall be called the County or County Borough Medical Assistance Committee, as the case may be, and shall have power to co-opt representatives of local hospitals, county or county borough nursing associations, dispensaries, and registered friendly societies.

8. That, where necessary, a local committee on similar lines shall be appointed by each Public Assistance Committee for the purposes of the local administration of medical assistance. This committee shall be termed the Local Medical Assistance Committee

9. That all, or any, of the functions defined in No. 6 may be referred by the Public Assistance Authority to the County or County Borough Medical Assistance Committee.

10. That the following shall be the lines of procedure for carrying out the functions mentioned in No. 6 :—

Institutions.

(i.) To consider in conjunction with each " Local Medical Assistance Committee " the needs of the county or county borough and the needs of each relief district in the way of hospital (including infirmary) accommodation.

(ii.) To reorganise existing Poor Law medical institutions throughout the county, or county borough, with a view to making them most effective for different classes of patients. (This would be done in conjunction with the committees in charge of workhouses, schools, etc.)

(iii.) To organise schemes of co-operation between Public Assistance institutions and voluntary hospitals.

(iv.) To develop a system of paying and free cottage hospitals in conjunction with voluntary and endowed charities, these to include provision for confinement cases.*

(v.) To arrange schemes of co-operation between hospitals and provident dispensaries or outdoor medical service.*

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* It is not suggested that this should be done suddenly or that it should be thrown mainly upon the rates. It is a popular form of charity, and to publish the needs of a district would be a guide to charitable donors. Also there is much evidence in favour of small self-supporting hospitals, or nursing homes, and these might be organised in conjunction with the local medical men and, to some extent, upon a provident basis.

Outdoor Medical Service.

(i.) To require the "Local Medical Assistance Committee," in conjunction with the local doctor to map out their district into convenient medical districts or "dispensary areas."†

(ii.) To approach any free or provident medical institution, including private medical clubs, already existing in the district, and invite them to fall in with the scheme. (Refusal not to check procedure.)‡

(iii.) The local authority may subscribe to the provident dispensaries, subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, and under the conditions mentioned in Section 10 of the Poor Law Act, 1879.

Relation of the Poor Law to Provident Dispensaries.

11. That where any applicant for medical assistance is not a member of a provident society, he shall apply to and at once be treated by a district medical officer.§

12. That the relieving officer, or as he will be called in future the Assistance Officer, shall enquire into and report the case to the Public Assistance Committee, whose action shall be directed towards :—

(*i.*) Recovery of cost.

(*ii.*) Strengthening of provident agencies.

13. That with a view to enlisting the services of all competent medical practitioners in the locality of a provident dispensary, the British Medical Association be requested to suggest a general scheme or scale of fees and wage limit to be applied by their local branches as local circumstances may suggest.

14. That under such scheme, all local medical practitioners consenting to come under it shall be on the list of dispensary doctors, and any applicant who is a member of the dispensary shall be entitled to select such practitioner as he may prefer.

15. That arrangements should be made, where necessary, for the reception of patients in voluntary and general hospitals by the payment of their cost or by some other agreement between the Public Assistance Committee and those in management of the hospital.

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* This scheme would have to vary with local conditions. In London the Central Hospitals Council and the Hospitals Committee of the British Medical Association are in favour of preferential treatment to dispensary members who may be sent for consultation by dispensary doctors, and of using the out-patient departments of the hospitals mainly for consultative purposes. *Cf.* Holland, Vol. III., App. xvii. (B) and Montefiore, Vol. III., App. xxii. (A)). We have no evidence to show whether provincial hospitals would follow the same line, but at Manchester the hospital authorities refer out-patients to the provident dispensary. The British Medical Association witnesses say: "It is remarkable how many hospitals who only give general replies on other matters go out of their way to say that they would welcome co-ordination of the provident dispensaries." (Whitaker, 39191.)

† The nature of the "dispensary" to be established in each area would vary with the nature of the district. In large and sparsely-populated districts a room in a cottage, with a locked cupboard for drugs, might be sufficient. In a crowded area, a complete building with waiting rooms, etc., and a dispenser might be necessary; while in medium districts attendance at the doctor's own house might be preferred. The determining factor would be the distance to be travelled by the patient. Existing buildings might often be utilised, *e.g.*, public assistance, provident, and free dispensaries.

‡ It is probable that in many cases these would join at once. The Secretary to the Metropolitan Provident Medical Association says that already some of the free dispensaries have been converted into provident dispensaries, and that he is constantly approached by others with the same object. (*Cf.* Warren, 33487 (44), 33692–4.) Want of funds is generally the motive, and with the establishment of a universal provident system this motive would probably increase The head of a large free dispensary in Birmingham is strongly in favour of a provident system. *Cf.* Evidence of Dr. Bagster Wilson, 44618 *et seq.*) Doctors also are glad to come in with their private clubs, thus saving themselves the trouble of management and collection and friendly societies arrange for their members to join.

§ This procedure may be slightly modified if, and when, the office of District Medical Officer is abolished (*Cf.* Part V., par. 163). *See* also as to cases of sudden and urgent necessity. (*Ibid*).

16. That any practitioner attached to a provident dispensary may, where the patient is a member of such dispensary and in need of institutional treatment, recommend him for admission to the local Public Assistance infirmary, and in certain cases, where arrangements have been made, to a voluntary or general hospital.

17. That, so far as the patient is concerned, admission under such conditions shall be covered by the subscription to the Provident Dispensary.

18. That as regards certain cases in receipt of public assistance (such as the aged and widows with young children), the Public Assistance Committee may enroll all such cases as members of a provident dispensary by paying the necessary fees.

PART VI.

DISTRESS DUE TO UNEMPLOYMENT.

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Chapter 1.

SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1834.

1. Since 1834 there has been so much change in industrial, legislative, and social conditions that it may be well to indicate briefly the principal movements since that date which, it seems to us, must be taken into account in determining to what extent a change is called for either in the methods of the Poor Law or in the character of the legislation dealing with distress outside the Poor Law.

2. The scope of our reference and the difficulty of deciding where to begin and where to stop our inquiries, are clearly illustrated by this Chapter. It was impossible for us to ignore causes other than administration which occasioned fluctuations in pauperism and in the number of applicants for relief. But a full investigation into such causes would have entailed an inquiry into the whole of our social and industrial structure, and such a scrutiny was clearly impossible, if only from the length of time it would involve. We were, therefore, obliged to concentrate our attention upon certain definite questions, and we obtained upon these points sufficient evidence, together with that which, previous to our inquiry was public property, to enable us to shape and formulate a series of propositions which will be found later on. We have avoided economic subjects of a contentious character, except where their elucidation was necessary for our purpose. The following statements are, we hope, so drawn as to present an accurate and impartial picture of the historical developments of the past, and of the evidence we have obtained.

(1) Population and Wealth.

3. The Census of 1831 showed that the population of the United Kingdom, which had already grown very rapidly during the great war, had increased by 15 per cent. in the previous decade, viz., from 20,893,000 in 1821 to 24,000,000 in 1831; that the increase as regards Great Britain was almost wholly in the large towns and the manufacturing districts; and that less than one-third of the population of Great Britain was engaged in agricultural pursuits.

4. This rapid growth of the towns was due to the "industrial revolution" which began about 1770. In 1725 Defoe had said that, in England, "the country south of the Trent is by far the largest as well as the richest and most populous." But when steam became the chief motor power and proximity to coal and iron determined the geographical distribution of industries, the population began to move north to the cotton and woollen, the potteries and hardware districts.

5. At the end of the war, in 1816, the chief towns were populated approximately as follows: London had 1,100,000; Manchester and Salford, 140,000; Glasgow, 125,000 to 130,000; Liverpool, 120,000; Birmingham, under 100,000; Bristol, once the second city in England, 80,000; Leeds, 70,000 to 80,000; Sheffield, 60,000 to 70,000; Plymouth and Portsmouth, 50,000 to 60,000; Norwich, once the third city, 40,000.

6. In Ireland, on the contrary, where in 1831 the population was about 7¾ millions, the increase, thanks to the multiplication of small holdings, was mostly in the rural districts, and about two-thirds of its population were engaged in agricultural pursuits. Dublin, however, in 1815 was the second city in the United Kingdom, with a population of 180,000.

7. The decennial Censuses which succeeded showed a much slower rate of increase in the population of the United Kingdom, viz., 11·2 per cent. for 1831–41; 2·5 for 1841–51; 5·7 for 1851–61; 8·8 for 1861–71; 10·8 for 1871–81; 8·2 for 1881–91; 9·9 for 1891–1901.*

* The highest rate ever reached was between 1801 and 1811, when the population of England and Wales grew by no less than 21½ per cent. The increase of the previous decade was estimated at 14 per cent.

8. It is to be observed, however, that these very considerable variations of rate were caused mainly, though not entirely, by the decline in the population of Ireland which began with the Potato Famine. In the same decades (1831–41 to 1891–1901) the population of England and Wales increased successively by 14·3, 12·7, 11·9, 13·2, 14·4, 11·7, and 12·2 per cent.; and Scotland by 10·8, 10·2, 6·0, 9·7, 11·2, 7·8, and 11·1. The population of Ireland, on the contrary, which had increased by 14·2 per cent. during 1821–1831, and by 5·2 during 1831–1841, lost over 1,500,000 in the decade 1841–1851 which included the great famine, when it decreased by no less than 18·9. Since then the decline, though irregular, has been constant, viz., 11·5, 6·7, 4·4, 9·1, and 5·2 per cent.

9. In 1901 the Census gave the population of the United Kingdom as 41,458,721; England and Wales having 32,527,843; Scotland, 4,472,103; Ireland, 4,458,775. As regards England and Wales the rate of increase was 12·17 per cent. during the decade, as against 11·65 per cent. during the previous one. The urban population was now more than twice as great as the rural, while its rate of growth in the previous ten years was three times that of the rural area. In many rural areas, indeed, actual depopulation had taken place, the rate of decrease being greatest in the Counties of Huntingdon, Rutland, Montgomery, and Cardigan.

10. The population of the chief towns in 1901 was as follows: London (Administrative County), 4,500,000; Glasgow, 761,000; Liverpool, 684,000; Manchester, 543,000; (Salford, 220,000); Birmingham, 522,000; Leeds, 428,000; Sheffield, 380,000; Belfast, 349,000; Bristol, 328,000; Edinburgh, 316,000; Dublin, 290,000; Bradford, 279,000; West Ham, 267,000; Kingston-upon-Hull, 240,000; Nottingham, 239,000; Newcastle, 215,000; Leicester, 211,000; Portsmouth, 188,000; Bolton, 168,000; Cardiff, 164,000; Sunderland, 146,000.

11. Putting on one side rough estimates, such as that of Mr. Spencer Walpole that between 1815 and 1831 wealth increased twice as fast as population, the annual income of the United Kingdom was first calculated on definite statistical principles by Dudley Baxter who estimated it at £814,000,000 for the year 1867. For 1875 it was calculated by Sir Robert Giffen, on a method* now generally accepted, at £1,200,000,000, and for 1885 at £1,350,000,000. For 1891 it was estimated at £1,600,000,000, and in 1904 Mr. Bowley considered it very probable that in 1903 the national income fell very little short of £2,000,000,000.

12. The bearing of this on our present problem needs little emphasis. If there is any accuracy in these calculations, wealth in this country seems to be increasing so fast, as compared with population, that we might have expected to find that by this time industrial poverty at least was disappearing.

(2) Industries

13. By 1834 England had fairly embarked on her career as pre-eminently a manufacturing country, and the factory system was well under weigh. The great textile inventions in spinning and weaving were already fifty years old, and were all at work. The epidemic of machine breaking had passed. Owing to the introduction of the "hot blast" in 1830, the annual output of pig iron was nearing 1,000,000 tons. The stationary steam engine was in general use. The "Rocket" was drawing a load of 9½ tons at the rate of 13 miles an hour on the Liverpool and Manchester line, and it was only two years afterwards that the attention of the Poor Law Commissioners was drawn to the new demand for labour in the building of railways—"these stupendous works of art." By that time—1836—nearly 8,000 labourers were

* The method was: (1) as regards capital, to take the gross annual income returned for Income Tax purposes, deducting Schedule C. and a proportion of Schedule D., adding a percentage for incomes that escape, and another percentage for incomes below the tax limit which may be ascribed to the possession of capital in the shape of tools, small retail stocks, etc.; (2) as regards labour, to take Schedule E. of the Income Tax returns ("salaries"), and a proportion of Schedule D. as due to the labour engaged in trades and professions, and to add an estimate of the income earned by working people and others under the Income Tax limit. The total may be regarded as the sum that would be assessable to Income Tax if all incomes whatsoever were subject to it, and no incomes escaped it. For an analysis of the justification and shortcomings of this method, and how far it gives an adequate reflection of the national income of commodities and services—"at once the aggregate net product of, and the sole source of payment for, all the instruments of production within the country."—*Vide* Smart, *The Distribution of Income*, pp. 5–92.

engaged in the construction of the London and Birmingham line, and all the important manufacturing towns were being connected. "From this source alone" said one of the Poor Law Commissioners, "I anticipate at no distant date the entire absorption of all the surplus labour of the country." Already too, it was twenty years since Henry Bell's little steamer of 25 tons had made headway on the Clyde against wind and tide, without oars or sails, at the rate of 7 miles an hour. In 1838 the *Great Eastern* crossed from Bristol to New York under steam. Two years thereafter Cunard launched a steamer for regular Atlantic voyages; two years more and the average passage under steam was reduced to fifteen days.

14. In 1845 there was an extraordinary outburst of speculation in railways. Ten years before there had been but one passenger line in England, and another, seven miles long, in Scotland. Now railway schemes were laid before the country asking, it was estimated, for no less than £700,000,000, and in 1847 a disastrous commercial crisis was due to the mania. It was the railways that finally broke up the stagnant life of England, and diffused the population over the face of the country at the call of the employers.

15. In 1846 came the repeal of the Corn Laws, and, in 1849, that of the Navigation Act, so far as it affected foreign trade. By 1852, Free Trade was generally accepted by all parties as the policy of the country, though it was not till 1860 that Mr. Gladstone made "a sweep—summary, entire and absolute—of what are known as manufactured goods from the face of the British tariff." The effect of the cotton famine, 1861–3, when Lancashire was practically out of work, recalls the fact that by this time a large portion of our manufacturing operatives were engaged in the making of cotton goods.

16. In 1855 the Limited Liability Acts were passed. In 1865 the Atlantic cable was laid by the *Great Eastern*. In 1868 the telegraphic system was acquired by the Post Office. In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened. About 1884 it began to be noted that much dislocation and distress were due to the transition from wood to iron and steel in the construction of ships.

17. These few dates are perhaps sufficient to show that nearly all the great features of modern industry are at least thirty years old, and that, consequently, there has been considerable time both for the evolution and for the study of the industrial problems with which we have to deal.

(3) Agriculture

18. Although 1821 is usually taken as the year when England began to change from an agricultural to a manufacturing country, and when the conversion of arable into pasture and the introduction of threshing mills began to reduce the demand for agricultural labour, still the Census of 1831 showed that nearly one-third of the population of Great Britain was still engaged in agricultural pursuits.

19. Agriculture had been protected, first by the high duty of 24s. 3d. since 1804, and then by the sliding scale since 1828, and yet great fluctuations in price were characteristic, keeping the farmer in perpetual uncertainty about his profits and the landlord about his rent. Of the fifteen harvests between 1832 and 1846 eight were good—some of them extremely good—and seven were bad. But, whatever the crop, the "agricultural interest" was always complaining of distress, fine harvests bringing hardship to some, bad harvests to others.

20. The repeal of the Corn Laws, and of the Navigation Act made it possible for foreign countries to throw agricultural produce freely into Great Britain. The passing of the Elementary Education Act in 1870 powerfully affected the agricultural labourers' position by restricting juvenile labour, and diminishing the aggregate amount of the family earnings. For the next few years the Trade Union agitation to a great extent destroyed the old patriarchal relation, and brought agricultural labourers more into line with other working men.*

21. In the early 'seventies, farming was prosperous; the value of land was at its maximum (the assessment of "lands" under Schedule A. in Great Britain, which is now

* Report by the Board of Agriculture on the *Decline in the Agricultural Population of Great Britain, 1881–1906*, p. 10.

£42,000,000, was then nearly £60,000,000); wheat was never below 45s. a quarter on average.*

22. About 1875, however—the last of the six years of abounding prosperity—the cheapening of transport from America caused the collapse of prices of agricultural produce, which threw certain lands out of cultivation, reduced rents, and sent the labourers flocking to the towns. In 1879 British agriculture entered upon a new era.

23. By 1894 the cultivated area of Great Britain was almost equally divided between arable and pasture—16,000,000 acres of each; 4,000,000 acres of grass being added since 1871. But, in spite of this very large reduction of the sphere for agricultural labour, migration into urban districts had gone so far, that, instead of a surplus of labourers, there was a scarcity.† The Census of 1901 showed that there had been a decline of about 20 per cent. in the number of agricultural labourers in Great Britain within the decade. Since 1901—coinciding with the loss of another 1,000,000 acres of arable since 1894—there has been some further reduction in the number of men employed on farms, but the diminution is proceeding at a slower rate than during the ten or twenty years preceding that date.‡ It is noted that the reduction in numbers—thanks to the general use of machinery, particularly the self-binders introduced in the early 'eighties—has been greater among the casual labourers, who used to be employed at special seasons, than among the permanent staffs. In several Counties of England, for instance, the Irish harvester has ceased to be a yearly visitor. And the Board of Trade correspondents for the last few years generally report "regular employment" in agriculture.

24. Of late years, then, the phenomena of agriculture seem to suggest that equilibrium between the demand and supply of labour, and, consequently, more settled conditions, have been arrived at, on the one hand by the passing of arable into grass, and the extension of dairying and market-gardening, and, on the other, by the check, in many places at least, to rural depopulation. Farms have not gone further out of cultivation, and the number of labourers probably approached an almost irreducible minimum at the time of last Census.§

(4) Movement of Wages.

25. The difficulties attending wage statistics—particularly comparative statistics—are obvious.

26. In many of the large factory and workshop industries, where there is a standard wage arrived at by collective bargaining, there has not been much room for error since the first appearance of the *Labour Gazette* of the Board of Trade in May, 1893, although even here it has to be remembered that the mean of standard rates is apt to reflect somewhat tardily the actual changes in wages of trades as a whole. Where, however, the rates are by the piece, or are matters of individual bargaining, there is no such basis, either of ascertainment or of calculation.

27. But when the endeavour is made to compare these wages, of which the basis at least is known, with wages in the past of whose basis we generally know very little, the margin for error is almost incalculable. We put forward the brief statement which follows with full consciousness of its defects.

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* *Ibid.*, p. 10.

† This scarcity caused an upward movement of agricultural wages, which continued till 1892. By 1900, it is worth noting, the Board of Agriculture reported that the employment of women and children in agriculture in England had nearly ceased to exist.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

§ As regards Ireland, Mr. Cyril Jackson points out that the tendency towards depopulation has, perhaps, gone too far. "The stream of emigrants who have passed to the United States, and, to a much smaller extent, to other countries, during the last sixty years, has effectually relieved the labour market of any absolute surplus, but it may be doubted whether, during the last few decades, at any rate, the departure of so many of the most enterprising Irish men and women has not had a more serious effect in checking development than in relieving pressure. That in the country districts there is a dearth rather than any surplus of labour, seems to be fairly well established." Report, 1908, p. 6.

28. Previous to 1888, the most authoritative attempt to estimate the movement of wages of the half century preceding was that of Sir Robert Giffen, in his Inaugural Address as President of the Royal Statistical Society in 1883.*

29. Basing his calculations on the records begun by Porter at the Board of Trade fifty years previously, such as the wages of carpenters, bricklayers, masons, miners, weavers, spinners, he found that, in all cases where it was possible, from the apparent similarity of the work, to make a comparison, there was an enormous apparent rise in money wages, ranging from 20, and in most cases from 50 to 100 per cent.—in one or two instances more than 100 per cent.—with a mean percentage of increase of over 70. In seamen's wages from 1850, the same rise was witnessed. In agriculture also—conspicuously in Ireland—the rise had been universal. And all this had been accompanied by a reduction in the hours of labour, which he put at very nearly 20 per cent.

30. As to the purchasing power of money, the sovereign went as far in 1883 as it did forty or fifty years before, the level of prices—after the moderate rise between 1847–1850 and 1862, and the subsequent decline—being very much the same. If anything, prices were on balance lower and not higher, while there were many new things in existence, and at low prices, which could not then have been bought at all.

31. Taking the articles on which the working man spent his wages, the price of wheat was lower, but, what was more important, it was steady. "What we have to consider is that, fifty years ago, the working man, with wages on the average about half what they are now, had at times to contend with a fluctuation in the price of bread which implied sheer starvation." Sugar had fallen largely, and clothing was cheaper. On the other hand, the rent of houses was probably one and a half times more than it had been fifty years before, and the price of meat had about doubled. These exceptions, however, were insufficient to neutralise the general advantages which the workman had gained—for he had little more concern with the price of meat than with the price of diamonds—and Sir Robert Giffen went on to show how the longer life, the increased consumption of the chief commodities used, the better education, the greater freedom from crime and pauperism, the increased savings, the increase in estates paying probate duty, the increase in the number of persons paying tax on incomes above £150, were contributory and cumulative evidence that the mass of the people were immensely better off than they had been fifty years before.

32. He concluded: "Thus the rich have become more numerous, but not richer individually; the 'poor' are, to some smaller extent, fewer; and those who remain 'poor' are, individually, twice as well off on the average as they were fifty years ago. The poor have thus had almost all the benefit of the great material advance of the last fifty years."

33. The only census of wages yet taken in this country is that of 1886, and, although necessarily very incomplete, as being confined mainly to the principal manufacturing and other organised industries, and based wholly upon voluntary returns, it affords somewhat of a basis for comparison with later years.

34. From a Memorandum prepared for us by the Board of Trade (Vol. IX., Appendix xxi., E,† to which we must refer for details), we gather the following as results of comparison—so far as that is possible—with the figures of 1886:—

(1) Between 1881 and 1901 a large increase took place in the proportion of employment afforded by the building, mining, iron and steel trades among the great industries, and by the chemical and paper works, among those of secondary importance, while the textile and leather trades showed, particularly in the decade 1891–1901, a large decline. In all these groups of industries, there has been a rise in wages since 1887, but the rise of wages has been greatest in those industries where the proportionate increase of employment has been greatest; that is to say, in building, mining, iron and steel industries, as compared with textiles and leather trades (and agriculture).

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* *Economic Inquiries and Studies*, Vol. I., p. 382.

† *Estimate of Numbers of Wage-earners grouped according to wages earned (distinguishing between male and female, juvenile and adult) and an Account of the Movements in the Wages in certain Groups of Industries and in the Cost of Living over a period of twenty years.*

(2) Since 1897, among the rapidly growing class of railway servants—now about 500,000 in number—there has been a rise, over the twenty-seven chief companies of the United Kingdom, of, roughly, 1s. a week.

(3) In the wages of public employés, there has been a general upward tendency, not appreciably affected by the general conditions of the outside labour market.

(4) Between 1886 and 1907, the average weekly amount earned per employé has risen as follows:—In cotton manufacture, from 15s. 2d. to 19s. 5d.; in woollen, from 15s. 6d. to 18s. 2d.; in worsted, from 12s. 2d. to 14s. 7d.; in linen, from 9s. 10d. to 12s.; in jute, from 10s. 1d. to 14s. 4d.; in silk, from 11s. 9d. to 13s. 5d.; in hosiery, from 15s. 2d. to 15s. 7d.; in boots and shoes, from 18s. 4d. to 19s. 2d.

(In comparing these figures, however, due regard must be had to possible changes in the proportion of men, lads, women, and girls employed in the trades. The apparent absence of change, for instance, in the weekly earnings of the hosiery and boot and shoe industries is most probably due to the increased proportion of female workers included in the returns in these two industries.)

(5) In agriculture, the rise in the rate of wages from 1874 to 1906 has fully kept pace with that of the aggregate of the other groups, although the distribution of this rise over the period has been abnormal. There was, for instance, no general tendency to rise from 1874 to 1897; the most marked feature being a depression in the later 'eighties. But from 1897 till 1901 there was a steady and considerable rise, and the subsequent years maintained the higher level reached in that year. The *local* diversity of the rates, however, was more marked in agriculture than in any other large department of industry, except in certain of the building trades, ranging from 11s. 11d. for Dorset in 1906, to 20s. for Durham. The greater part of the difference, apart from the varying value of allowances in kind, appears to be due to the relative proximity of remunerative employment in other occupations with expanding labour markets, chiefly large manufacturing or commercial centres, and the great coal fields.

35. To sum up: "The general results of records in several trades, covering some thirty years, and of comparative statistics based upon the census of wages of 1886 are that, in all these groups of industries, allowing for trade cycles, a general tendency of wages to rise is perceptible through the last thirty years."

36. The change in money wages, however, has to be supplemented by a calculation of the changes in prices of the commodities on which the wage-earners spend their incomes. The information here available is so complicated that it will be prudent to refer to the calculations contained in the Memorandum itself, merely quoting the summary:—"The rise of nominal wages has been accompanied by such a fall of wholesale and of retail prices as implies a rise of 'real' wages, or wages as measured in commodities, considerably greater than the rise of money wages. The fall of prices does not, however, benefit the various grades of wage-earners in direct ratio to their wages. Rent and certain other necessary elements of expenditure, such as fuel, which have risen in amount for the large majority of workers, play a relatively larger part in the budget of the lower grades of workers, reducing to that extent the gain from the general fall of prices. The poorest classes, whose retail purchases are made in very small quantities, also gain least from the lower prices of other commodities than housing and fuel."

37. "Although except in agriculture, no exact measurements in actual earnings expressed in money or in commodities is possible, there is ample evidence for concluding that every grade of skilled or unskilled male labour, in regular employment, enjoys a higher income than in 1886 when the census of wages was taken, and that upon the whole this rise has been steady and of general application."

38. But it must be remembered that "it is mainly as regards labour in organised industries, and especially skilled workers, that any exact data with regard to wages are available. While there is reason to believe that unskilled and even casual labour is generally remunerated at a higher rate than formerly, it is possible that the

large mass of casual time labour is not making any substantial advance in weekly or yearly earnings."

39. "Of women's employment and wages it is even more difficult to speak with any confidence than of men's, because of the much smaller proportionate part they take in the large staple industries respecting which reliable statistics are available. Domestic service, still by far the largest occupation of women wage-earners, certainly has afforded a general rise of wages to the 39 per cent. of women, who, in 1901, were engaged in this work, while the increased proportion of women in the public services, and probably in the lower branches of the professions and of commerce, indicates an increase of wage-earning power, and a wider choice of occupation. Though the proportion engaged in the textile trades and in dressmaking shows a falling off, the absolute amount of this employment remains very large; and the tendency of wages, in the factories and large workshops which have absorbed a greater proportion of these trades, has been upwards, though probably the advance has not been so large as in the case of the more skilled and better organised male industries."

(5) Trade Unionism.

40. Since 1834 the labour of the country has come to a great extent, directly or indirectly, under the dominance of Trade Unions. Coming into existence, practically, after the industrial revolution, with the cleavage of interests induced by the spread of machinery and the factory system, Trade Unionism had scarcely attained to any strength when it was driven underground by the fear and hatred of revolution, which took effect in the Combination Act of 1799, making Trade Unions unlawful associations "in restraint of trade." On the repeal of that Act in 1824, and after the industrial disasters of the next few years were over, there came a rush of activity between 1830 and 1834—notable for the foundation, among others, of the Boilermakers and Shipbuilders' and the Operative Stone Masons' Unions—and the movement entered on an almost revolutionary phase of somewhat reckless and aggressive agitation, largely under the influence of Robert Owen, and, later, much mixed up with Chartism. It was not till this revolutionary chapter was closed, and the magnificent hopes of the period had ended in bitter disillusionment, that Trade Unionism settled down, about 1843, to its more limited work of building up the great associations of skilled artisans.

41. Between 1843 and 1860 the chief characteristics of Trade Unionism were:—The absence of aggressive policy; the deprecation and dislike of strikes; the favouring of conciliation and arbitration; the large Friendly Society element; the centralising of funds and responsible powers; the restriction of membership to legal apprentices—based on the analogy of the protection against quacks provided by the medical profession; the agitation against piece-work and overtime. These characteristics were almost, one may say, embodied in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers founded in 1851, which became for the time the model of trade societies.

42. After 1860 the administration of complex affairs and of large finances in the various unions brought to the front, as might be expected, a number of able officials, who thereafter appeared very much as spokesmen and interpreters—if not directors—of the movement, and the formation of trades councils in the leading industrial centres consolidated it. Under these men Trade Unionism became for some years actively political.

43. The need of leaders and of the adoption of political methods, indeed, was soon seen. In 1867 the Trade Unions were attacked from two sides. On the one hand, the outrages and intimidation at Sheffield—assumed to be a usual and necessary incident of Trade Unionism—roused a body of public feeling very hostile to the movement; and, on the other, came the embarrassing legal decision that Trade Union funds were not protected, as had been supposed, by the Friendly Societies Act of 1855.

44. A Royal Commission of Inquiry was appointed to consider the whole subject of Trade Unionism and its effects. Thanks to the ability with which the Trade Union case was put before the Commission, a complete change was effected in the attitude of the governing classes towards the movement. When the Commission reported in 1871, the

Majority Report, while criticising the theory of Trade Unionism and condemning some of its practices, was found to have proposed no hostile legislation against the Unions, and the more friendly Minority Report, drawn up by Thomas Hughes and Frederic Harrison, put forward several recommendations which practically passed into law. By the Trade Union Act of 1871, the Unions became legalised —"restraint of trade" ceasing to be the test of illegality—and provision was made for such registration as gave complete protection to their funds, at the same time as they themselves became protected from being sued in a Court of Law.

45. During the years of abounding prosperity (1871–1875) the movement made enormous strides in almost every trade, but particularly among the hitherto badly organised—even the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, in 1872, could boast of nearly a hundred thousand members. In 1875 the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871, which had practically made picketing of any kind impossible, was repealed: "peaceful picketing" was expressly permitted: and the principle was laid down that "an agreement or combination by two or more persons to do, or procure to be done, any act in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute between employers and workmen should not be indictable as a conspiracy if such act committed by one person would not be punishable as a crime." Thus "collective bargaining, with all its necessary accompaniments, was, after fifty years of legislative struggle, finally recognised by the law of the land."

46. By 1879, however, the movement met with a serious set-back, when a long depression culminated almost in paralysis of trade. The membership fell off; the Agricultural Labourers' Union broke up; hundreds of trade societies were swept into oblivion; in South Wales Trade Unionism practically ceased to exist; the Unions that survived were denuded of their reserves.

47. For half a dozen years thereafter the various societies were occupied in sedulously building up again the membership and funds so greatly reduced, little moved by the reproaches of the more ardent spirits that care for the Friendly Society funds was blinding them to their militant duties.

48. In 1889, the Gas Workers obtained an eight-hours day, and the successful London Dock strike of the same year was followed by a great extension of Trade Unionism among the unskilled labourers.*

49. In 1896 the number of separate Trade Unions was at its maximum, viz., 1,309, with a membership of about a million and a half. From that time came a steady concentration, by amalgamation and absorption of the smaller Unions, till, in 1906, in 1,161 Unions, the membership reached the total of over two millions—showing an increase of nearly 40 per cent. since 1892. "The membership of many Unions varies with trade conditions, with its activity or depression, and to this cause the fluctuations in total membership are mainly due; it will be seen that the years of declining employment, 1902–4, witnessed a falling-off in Trade Union membership, as had been the case a decade earlier; and that this was followed by a slight recovery in 1905, when employment began to improve, followed by a very rapid advance in 1906."† It appears probable that something like one-fifth of the total adult male population is now organised in Trade Unions.

50. Apart from the broad historical fact that, since 1834, the working people of this country have become to a large extent a disciplined industrial army, under leaders of their own choosing who claim to have secured rises of wages and improvements of conditions of many kinds, there are certain points of Trade Union policy which have come strongly before us in evidence as bearing on the problems with which we are concerned.

51. (1) Trade Unions, as a whole, insure their members against the accidents and incidents of life by devoting a very large amount of their funds to what is usually

* The above, it need hardly be said, is merely condensed from Mr. and Mrs. Webb's *History of Trade Unionism*.

† Memorandum prepared at the Board of Trade for the Commission on *The Growth of Trade Unions with particular reference to the Payment of Unemployed Benefit*. Vol. IX. App. xxi., C.

called "Friendly Society benefits." It has been calculated that, during the eleven years from 1892 to 1902, the 100 principal Trade Unions spent 61 per cent. of their total income on such benefits, and only 19 per cent. on labour disputes. In this we have the explanation, to a great extent, of the well-known fact that few Trade Unionists come within the scope of the Poor Law or the Distress Committee.

52. Unfortunately, while the Friendly Society element as a whole enters into the great majority of Trade Unions, there is one form of it which is not by any means general—that which provides directly for those fluctuations which have hitherto formed a permanent feature of modern industry.

53. It has always been a principal aim of Trade Unions to assist their members to find work. One of the common rules in many Unions is that any member knowing of a vacancy must give notice of it immediately to the branch secretary, or be fined. But many of the most important Unions connected with engineering and shipbuilding, such as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and the Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders' Union, make, besides, a feature of the weekly allowance to members out of work, called "unemployed benefit,"—usually 10s. for a limited number of weeks—conceiving it, indeed, part of their policy to prevent the unemployed workman from being tempted to break away from his allegiance to the standard wage principle. They give also "travelling cards," facilities or allowances for travelling in search of work; and in certain circumstances pay railway or steamer fares and expenses of removal. Other societies make travelling allowances—usually about 1s. 6d. per day—without any further unemployed benefit,* and some few even give or advance sums to emigrate members. Sir Edward Brabrook says that, roughly, one-sixth of the benefits provided by Trade Unions are out-of-work benefits.†

54. Another provision of Trade Unionism insures against the unemployment due to age, namely, "superannuation benefit." The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, for instance, which shows a continual increase of men on superannuation, has 5,300 on the list at a pension of from 7s. to 10s. per week, the average being about 9s. But where physical unfitness to earn a living is proved, men are eligible, after certain years of membership, at the age of fifty-five, and there are large numbers on the list between the ages of fifty-five and sixty.‡

55. Superannuation benefit is paid, however, by a comparatively small number of the 100 principal Unions, chiefly those in the engineering, shipbuilding, building, and printing trades; but these included, in 1906, 633,000 members, or about one-half of the total membership of the 100 principal Unions, and £306,089 was paid under this head. Few of the miners', and none of the weavers' and labourers' Unions pay this form of benefit; but in the case of the miners it is given by the Miners' Permanent Relief Societies. The weekly amounts range from 2s. to 12s., the majority ranging from 5s. to 10s. In some cases the benefit is given only when incapacity (more or less complete) accompanies old age.§

56. There is, then, some ground for the contention that the Trade Unions are the most extensive and effective agencies at present dealing with the problem of unemployment. In many respects they can administer unemployed benefit as no other body can; not only because, in a Union, every man's circumstances are likely to be known to the local officials and to the rest of the members, but because the Union, as the owner of one fund which may be drawn on for many purposes, has every inducement to get the unemployed member off the "vacant book" by finding

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* Travelling benefit was originally intended for men travelling in search of work; it is now mainly used to enable men to reach places in which work has actually been found for them. Report of Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, p. 91.

† Evidence, Vol. III., 35147. In 1906, of the 1,161 Unions in existence, 747 (with a membership of 1,456,977, or 69 per cent. of the total trade union membership) paid one or more forms of unemployed benefit in the course of that year, so that rather more than two-thirds of the organised workmen were in Unions which gave some kind of help to their unemployed members. In 1904—a year of bad trade—the amount thus spent reached its maximum of £652,471; in 1906, it was £421,292. Memorandum on *The Growth of Trade Unions*, referred to above, Vol. IX, App. xxi., C.

‡ Mr. George N. Barnes, M.P., Evidence, Vol. VIII., 82814–22, 82906, 83088.

§ Memorandum on *The Growth of Trade Unions*, Vol. IX., App. xxi., C.

him a situation, and to see that he takes it when offered. Thus some Unions give a bonus on situations found, and fine unemployed members if they do not accept them when found. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, again, has the following rule: "Any member under fifty years of age who is on donation (unemployment) benefit, refusing to remove to other places, shall be suspended from donation, when the branch shall at once investigate the case and decide upon his claim to donation, and what other penalty, if any, should be imposed." And where the Union is very large and well organised, it is a common thing for employers to apply to the local branch for the men they want. In the Unions belonging to the printing, bookbinding, and kindred trades also, the finding of employment as well as the giving of relief while out of work is prominent.

57. In the building trades, however, which are largely seasonal, unemployed benefit is far less common, although it is a feature of the largest of these Unions, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners.* The textile industries do not make such provision to any great extent. In coal-mining, again, unemployed benefit is quite exceptional, dull trade being usually met by reducing the number of working hours per week.

58. Two points emerge here. One is that the giving of unemployed benefit in any form is confined to the Unions of skilled workers. For the unskilled, it is broadly asserted that the provision of such benefit is impossible on account of the cost, the ordinary estimate being that the extra weekly contribution necessary for this purpose is no less than ninepence a week.†

The other is that of the skilled Unions, only comparatively few—chiefly in the engineering, shipbuilding, building, and printing trades—make provision of superannuation benefit.

59. But it is significant of later developments that the rate of increase since 1892 has been greatest in the case of Unions which give some kind of unemployed benefit, and that the number in receipt of superannuation relief at the end of 1906 was nearly treble the number in 1892, and almost exactly double the number in 1896.‡

60. (2) One of the points on which Trade Union theory lays most stress is the prohibition of its members from accepting less than the standard wage. It is not our place to do more than state the fact that the Trade Union body considers that its cardinal principle—protection of the Standard of Life once attained—can be secured only by the prevention of any member from "cutting" under his fellows. The counterpart, of course, is that, so long as there is any choice, no employer will engage workers who, either as regards age or capacity, are below the standard of work on which the standard wage is presumably based.§

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* The Union of House and Ship Painters and Decorators, with a membership of 16,056 at the end of 1904, paid £22,039 for unemployed, travelling, and emigration benefits in that year, and over £25,000 in the winter of 1905–6. (Report of Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, Appendix W., p. 417.)

† Evidence, Vol. III., 35147. On the other hand, at least one Union, the British Amalgamation of Labour (Manchester), an association of unskilled, chiefly, dock labour, has different sections, enabling the more careful members to insure against unemployment. It has been suggested among the bricklayers that a scheme could be devised by which a short period of unemployed pay, *e.g.*, for six weeks, between November 1st and March 31st, could be arranged without any undue increase of contributions. (Report of Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, p. 97.)

‡ Board of Trade Memorandum on *The Growth of Trade Unions*, Vol. IX., App. xxi., C.

§ Note, however, that trade unions in which operatives are paid by time do generally make special allowance for old men, and permit them to work at lower rates. (Evidence, Vol. I., 9097.) "In the Amalgamated Society of Engineers we do not require a man to shift from one town to another after he is fifty years of age, and, putting it generally, we do not require him to get the standard rate of wages—according to the discretion of the committees who may deal with the matter—after about fifty-five years of age." But the percentage of men who take advantage of this is very small. "In fact, although we allow men to work under the rate at fifty-five years of age, it is rather the case that the men at fifty-five, or even sixty, do not avail themselves of the opportunity. So strong is the sense of discipline in the Trade Unions and their sense of loyalty to their fellows, that in most cases a man would rather give up work altogether than accept work at the lower rate. So that, instead of Trade Unions standing in the way of the men accepting lower rates, the opposite is the fact, and the Trade Unions rather encourage it."—(Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., Evidence, Vol. VIII., 82805, 82812.)

61. (3) Trade Unionism has declared bluntly and unmistakeably for the solidarity of the working classes as againstthe employing classes. The "patriarchal relation" between employer and employed, which prevailed very extensively till at least the third quarter of last century, is neither desired nor thought desirable. The workman has, practically, chosen the "cash nexus" as the only tie between him and his employer. This is seen, perhaps, most clearly in the official attitude towards "labour co-partnership." Even the fact that, under such a system, the men are partly their own employers, only emphasises the contention that it separates them from their fellow workmen and gives them an interest outside that of their own class.*

62. (4) Trade Unions generally have set themselves against piecework and overtime.

63. As regards piecework, the opposition to it has perhaps been too summarily condemned outside trade union circles as merely a device to prevent the more efficient workman from casting an unfavourable reflection on the less efficient. Against this should be set the striking statement of a great employer relative to the "black squad"—the men who build together all the iron frame of the ship:—"The workmen have a feeling that it is sometimes used to drive men to work harder than is good for them. This is a very great feeling amongst trade union leaders, and very likely they are right about it. There is always the danger of the man working harder than he can do permanently and so pulling himself to pieces in a few years. The fact that the trade unions complain of it has come under my notice a good deal. They have taught it to me. I should not have thought of it for myself. They put great stress upon it; and I think they probably know more about it than I do, and probably they are right."†

64. As regards overtime, the trade union argument is not only the questionable one that it tends to spread employment over a smaller number of men, but that the individual worker requires—as in the case of piecework—to be protected against his own anxiety to earn extra wages at the cost of health‡ as well as against the natural anxiety of employers to keep their plant working as long as possible. The example of Lancashire, again is given, where, by resisting overtime, the cotton operatives "steady the demand and resist the seasonalising of trade," whereas, in the woolcombing trade, after each of the five wool sales, the machinery of the East Riding is set agoing night and day, the wool is soon used up, and employment becomes irregular.§

(6) Industrial Combinations.

65. The restrictions and obligations put upon employers by Trade Unions and by industrial legislation, and their increasing risks, due, partly to the continual struggle among themselves to take and hold markets by reducing prices, partly to the rapid superannuation and scrapping of machinery owing to invention, have tended naturally during the past century to throw employment more into the hands of firms and corporations having the command of large capital, and to handicap the smaller man.

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* *Vide passim* Evidence of Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., Vol. VIII., 82764.

† Sir Benjamin C. Browne, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86422–86424.

‡ "There is small doubt but that a tendency to break down, leading in some cases to recourse to poor relief, is caused by excessive overtime, especially in those occupations where it is accompanied by intensity of strain."—(Report of Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 21.)

§ It may be noted that employers, as a rule, are quite emphatic as regards systematic overtime. In answer to a question in our schedules to employers (*vide* p. 71), the expression was almost unanimous that systematic overtime is bad, should be discouraged, and is actually discouraged. Overtime costs more—even night shifts often cost one-third more in wages—and it is not economically profitable that the workers should prolong their exertions beyond the normal day. To this extent the trade union contention seems justified. But occasional overtime, it is urged, is not only inevitable, but in the interests of all classes, both because, if it were absolutely prohibited, some work now considered necessary could not be accepted at all, and because permanent staffs could not be kept to overtake work that only requires, perhaps, a week or two of overtime without reduction of the employment as a whole. Besides, as we are reminded, "it is necessary for a certain number of men to work overtime to prevent other men from being kept idle and waiting." But, of course, the majority add that the ground on which trade unions generally oppose overtime, namely that its prohibition would spread the limited work over a wider field, is quite indefensible. On the contrary, its prohibition would lead to the giving up of many jobs which must be done at high pressure or not at all. And one witness adds the valuable reminder that "when trade is very bad, the only people who order goods are the people who want them very badly indeed," as when a ship is lost or a property burned. (Sir Benjamin C. Browne, Vol. VIII., 86394.)

Hence one characteristic phenomenon of the present day is the enlargement of the "unit of employment"—the organisation under a single employing control.

66. From the point of view of wealth production, there is nothing against such combinations. They make possible the economies of production on a very large scale—economies in manufacture, in buying, in selling, in office work, in warehousing, freighting, financing, and in the utilisation of bye-products; they save the waste involved in keeping up, pushing, and advertising separate and rival businesses; they secure the stimulus of competition within the various similar branches; and they can specialise in plant, processes, and labour to the utmost limit. They practically involve the elimination of the unnecessary person, the unnecessary process, and the unnecessary thing in the production and distribution of goods.

67. On the other hand such large combinations tend very seriously to become monopolies, and monopolies have at least three dangerous powers—over price, over improvements, and over labour: that is, power to maintain and inflate prices, to do without the improvements which competitive enterprise would ensure, and to keep down wages by eliminating the many competitors to buy the services of labour.

68. Perhaps all that need be said here is that the evils which have attended the formation and working of Trusts in America do not seem to have emerged to any dangerous extent in this country. Under Free Trade, "combines" are an entirely natural development of the competitive system, and none of our witnesses has connected them with unemployment otherwise than as their economies tend to displace labour.

69. We owe it to Sir Benjamin C. Browne, however, to remind us that attention is perhaps too much attracted by the very large combinations. "I do not think people realise how much more important the small employer is than the large employer. You find far more workmen employed by small employers than are employed by the large ones. If you define the large and small employers as men who can or who cannot pay heavy compensation claims without feeling them, I think you might say that more than two-thirds of the working class work for small employers."*

(7) The Co-operative Movement.

70. In 1844 a few poor flannel weavers out of employment in Rochdale established the first Co-operative Store under the name of the Society of Equitable Pioneers, with a capital of £28. Their success was soon followed up in other places, and in 1852 the Pioneers attempted to form a wholesale department, which might supply the stores in Lancashire and Yorkshire, but failed. In 1863, however, their chairman, Abraham Greenwood, formed a wholesale agency by the union of various co-operative societies, which, in the following year, became the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Industrial and Provident Society, Limited. (In 1873 the name was changed to that of the Co-operative Wholesale Society). Both in the retail stores and in the wholesale, the features were present from the beginning of charging the ordinary market prices, dividing profits according to purchase, and giving no credit.

71. In 1868 the Scottish Wholesale Co-operative Society was founded on similar lines, the only difference of any importance being that the Scottish Society has given employés a bonus since 1870 (8d. per £ on wages, half being retained at credit in the Bonus Loan Fund) and has admitted them to membership, allowing them to take up shares to the amount of £50 each, while the English Society, since 1876, has given no bonus, and admits co-operative stores only as members.

72. The bulk of the general trade of these wholesale societies is in goods bought by their buyers at home and abroad—the principle adopted being, where possible, to go direct to the source of production. But both societies have for some time been manufacturers as well as distributors. The factories of the English society are grouped for the most part round Manchester, Newcastle and London, but boots are made at Leicester, clothing at Leeds, and cocoa at Luton, etc. The society has also creameries in Ireland, a bacon factory in Denmark as well as one in Ireland, and a tallow and oil factory in Sydney. The Scottish Society began manu-

* Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86248, 86421.

facturing in 1881, with the making of shirts; soon added tailoring, upholstering and cabinet-making; then went on to the making of boots, hosiery, printing, clothing, confectionery, tobacco, etc. Most of this manufacturing is now concentrated in Shieldhall, near Glasgow, but the society owns, besides, three great flour mills, tweed mills, soap works, creameries, an aerated water factory, etc. The two societies together own a tea estate in Ceylon.

73. The great part which this "state within a state" plays in modern life may be suggested by a few figures.

74. At the end of 1905, the total annual sales of the Co-operative Societies in the United Kingdom were close on £95,000,000, and their net profits, including interest, £11,681,000. The number of members was 2,259,479. The capital, share and loan, amounted to £38,000,000, and the reserve funds to £2,561,000. The sum devoted to education amounted to over £80,000.*

75. The accounts of the (English) Co-operative Wholesale Society, Ltd., at the end of 1906, showed that 1,131 societies, representing a membership of 1,703,564, held shares; that the share capital (paid up) was £1,388,338; that the sales for the year were £22,510,035, and the net profits, £410,680. The number of employés in October, 1907, was:—in the distributive departments, 6,691; in the productive works, etc., 10,291; a total of 16,982.

76. The accounts of the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, Ltd., for the year ending 1906, showed that 365,907 shares were subscribed by societies and 12,863 by employés; that the share capital (paid up) was £375,198; that the deposits, including reserve and insurance funds, were £2,575,422, the net sales, £7,140,000, and the net profit, £280,434. The number of employés in June, 1907, was—in distributive departments, 1,595; in productive, 5,514; in all, 7,109. About a fourth of the population of Scotland is connected with the stores.†

77. The strength of the co-operative movement is that it starts, one may say, at the other end from ordinary competitive industry. Ordinary employers build mills, work up to the full limit of their capacity, and throw their goods on the market for sale, speculating on a demand which will take off the goods at a paying price. The co-operators, on the contrary, first build up a known and calculable demand from the Stores, and then, as it were, instruct the Wholesale Societies to meet it—thus avoiding, to a very large extent, miscalculation and dislocation. As is obvious from the figures, the goods which the Wholesale Societies manufacture constitute only a small portion of their business; the great majority of the goods supplied to the Stores they purchase from private firms. (In the Scottish Society the proportion is about £2,000,000 to £7,000,000.) Thus the element of speculation—which is universal in private manufacturing—scarcely enters into the manufacturing departments of the co-operators, and the equilibrium between their demand and their supply is easily kept. Hence the claim that, in both the Societies "a strong effort is made to avoid seasonal pressure, and to give continuous employment to the workers—a matter of no difficulty in a rapidly growing organisation, with an extensive and certain market for its goods."‡

78. Without entering on controversial matter, it may be said that the chief success of co-operation has been among the artisan class—not to any considerable extent either among the poorest classes or the better off; and that, in towns where the co-operative

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* The returns for 1907, as given at the Twenty-first Co-operative Festival in August, 1908, are as follows: Sales, £105,717,000; profits, £12,000,000; number of members (in 1,582 societies), 2,434,000; share capital, £32,000,000; loan capital, nearly £10,000,000. Close on £100,000 was spent on education and £57,000 on charities.

† See *passim* evidence of Mr. William Maxwell, Vol. VI., 57764 *et seq.*

‡ "Managers of a boot-making, a cabinet-making, and a weaving concern (co-operative) informed us that, during the many years' existence of their establishments, they had never turned off a hand because of slackness. . . . They consider that the tone of employés improves greatly when they have been for some time in co-operative concerns. This is largely due to the steadiness of the employment. What enables them to give constant employment is the steadiness of the demand from the co-operative stores." (Report, Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, pp. 31–2.)

stores have taken a firm hold, the retail trade tends more and more to be divided between them and the owners of "multiple shops."*

78*a*. But another form of co-operation under the title of co-partnership should also be noted. It has been established on a large scale in connection with the South Metropolitan Gas Company, and has brought a large number of the workers into the position of owners of the stock of the company, and has conferred upon them many advantages at the same time. Mr. Vivian has shown to how great a variety of businesses the system is now applied.†

(8) Municipal Industries.

79. A notable feature of the last twenty or thirty years has been the rise and vast extension of what is generally called municipal industry—the provision and working of great public services or "reproductive undertakings," generally more or less of the nature of monopolies, the most prominent being gas, water, electric lighting, tramways. In these cases the force of circumstances has generally led to great extensions over what was probably contemplated at first; on the one hand, driving these services outside the local area undertaking them, and, on the other, leading to the sale or hire —sometimes manufacture—of accessories such as fittings in electric supply, grates, stoves, ranges, and particularly residual products in the case of gas.

80. The extent of these undertakings may be surmised from the fact that, in 1900, 173 municipal Boroughs in England and Wales, and 53 in Scotland supplied water: that n March, 1899, 222 Local Authorities were authorised to provide gas, and 300, roughly, authorised to provide electric lighting, of which latter 99 plants were in work in 1900. Seventeen Corporations were working their own tramways in 1900

81. Outside of these staples, many Local Authorities construct, own, hire, or manage telephones, markets, slaughter-houses, cemeteries and crematoria, recreation grounds, quays, docks, harbours, piers (including concert rooms, lavatories, refreshment rooms, etc.), baths and wash-houses, ferries, golf-links, houses, warehouses, shops, building ground, allotments, milkshops, refrigerators and cold storage, supply of paving stones, etc., and there exists a strong tendency to extend their operations to more questionable undertakings, such as banking, insurance, pawnbroking, mining, etc.

82. In 1902, of 317 municipal Corporations in England and Wales, no less than 299 were carrying on "reproductive undertakings" of some kind or another; and, of the local debt of England and Wales, which stood at over £370,000,000 in March, 1903, over one-half was computed to be capital invested in undertakings producing profit.

83. To take a concrete instance; in Glasgow, with a population of 800,000, the numbers in the permanent service of the Corporation (excluding members of the police force) in May, 1908, were 14,651. Of these, 4,766 were in the tramways department; 2,776 in gas; 739 in electricity; 644 in water; 131 in markets; 1,561 on the cleansing establishment; 827 on the lighting; 836 on sanitary and public health work; 510 on statute labour (roads, sewers, etc.); 276 engaged in the parks; 220 on libraries; 195 on baths and washhouses; 157 on sewage purification; 175 on the fire establishment; 165 on improvements generally; and 125 on the police establishment (outside of the police force). So far as the servants of the Corporation are concerned, a "living-wage" of 21s. a week is given for able-bodied men, and, in all contracts given out, there is a clause directing that no men shall be paid less than the standard rate of wages applicable to the district and paid to the particular trade affected.

84. The result of such municipal activity is that, in some large centres, an appreciable proportion of the working-classes—and a still larger proportion of the electors—is in the pay of employers who are influenced not so much by the ordinary

* It is sometimes forgotten that J. S. Mill, who not only recorded with delight the rise and progress of the Rochdale Pioneers and other co-operative associations, but lived long enough to quote the Pioneers' balance-sheet of 1864, said: "The form of association which, if mankind continue to improve, must be expected in the end to predominate is not, that which can exist between a capitalist as chief and workpeople without a voice in the management, but the association of the labourers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations, and working under managers elected and removable by themselves."—*Principles*, Book IV., Chap. VII., par. 6.

† Livesey, 83136, 83161, 83144. Vivian, Vol. XI., and Special Committee on Unskilled Labour: Charity Organisation Society. Evidence of Mr. Horn, p. 238.

economic object of making a profit by the rendering of a service, as by the purely social one of rendering the service—with the curious issue that, where a municipality goes beyond its own area and makes a loss, its own ratepayers pay something for the benefit of the people outside. Local bodies, backed by rates, enter the loan market for enormous sums of capital, and—often with compulsory powers of purchase—compete for custom with private employers. They influence the labour market as "model employers" by offering as a rule higher wages, shorter hours, and better conditions than are given by outsiders. One notable feature is that, as a rule, they discourage casual labour, and employ permanent staffs, for whose continuous employment it is in their power to provide by postponing or anticipating work.*

(9) Friendly Societies.

85. It would be outside our province to give any detailed account of the rise and present condition of the various thrift societies, which provide relief during sickness or other infirmity, bodily or mental, in old age, widowhood, and orphanage, insure against death and funeral expenses, loss of tools by fire, etc.

86. The great place they fill in modern society is suggested by their membership—which in 1904 was no less than 14,000,000—and by the fact that the funds in their hands increased, in the five years, 1899 to 1904, from £340,000,000 to £402,000,000.†

87. What is important for our purposes is to note that the Friendly Societies do not compete with the Trade Unions to insure against unemployment. Exceptionally, indeed, the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows—the largest, richest, and best organised—has, in many of its lodges, a voluntary or compulsory out-of-work fund, and the central funds liable for relief to those obliged to travel in search of employment. The Hearts of Oak, again, have power to remit, under due conditions, one quarter's subscription to a member during a time of unemployment. The Foresters grant a "travelling licence" for six weeks. The accounts of the Ancient Shepherds and some other societies show considerable sums paid for out-of-work benefit, distress grants, exemptions from contributions, and travelling relief.

88. But as regards Friendly Societies generally, it may be said that they make little or no attempt to provide unemployed benefit. "The only out-of-work benefit provided by Friendly Societies is the payment of the member's contribution, so as to keep him entitled to benefit if he should fall sick when out of work."‡

(10) Factory Legislation.

89. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 came into operation just a year after the first great Factory Act. Two Acts, indeed, had preceded. In 1802, the Health and Morals of Apprentices Act was passed, for the protection of parish apprentices—who were in great demand at a time when mills were erected wherever there was water power to drive them—limiting, *inter alia*, their hours to twelve. This, however, was rather a Poor Law measure than a Factory Act; the State, of course, having the right to impose such safeguards as it thought fit on the employment of the children whom it practically adopted. But, as Sir Robert Peel explained in 1815, parish apprentices ceased to be important persons in the new industry when the introduction of the steam-engine enabled the workplaces to be built wherever the labour was abundant.

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* On the other hand, it must be noted that, in times of depression, several municipalities, in the carrying out of large undertakings beyond the powers of their permanent staffs, have made a virtue of employing local unskilled men. This, of course, is a direct discouragement of the gangs of skilled labour which contractors employ more or less continuously and move from place to place as the work calls. It seems sound economic doctrine that the best service a municipality could do, in times of exceptional distress and consequently of contracted demand for labour on the part of private employers, is to undertake works of recognised public utility, and provide the labour necessary either by increasing their own staff of skilled workmen, or by giving the work out to contractors without any obligation of employing the "unemployed." At such times it is at least quite as necessary to prevent regular labourers sinking into casual employment as to give unsuitable employment to those who are already to a large extent casual. Far from this, however, our Special Investigators report that they have found few municipal authorities interested in making their work regular; few municipal officials who thought it possible to do so; and some who held that the attempt would be disastrous. (Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, p. 30.)

† Sir Edward Brabrook, Evidence, Vol. III., 35158–9, 35282.

‡ *Ibid.*, 35147 (14).

In 1819, owing largely to the activity and the example of Robert Owen—whose proposals, however, went much further, and would, if accepted, have anticipated a great deal of later legislation—the hours of children between the ages of nine and sixteen employed in cotton mills were limited to twelve per day, exclusive of meal times, and the employment of children under nine was prohibited. But this Act was confined to the cotton mills, and, outside of these (except in the case of parish apprentices) there was no restriction whatever on the labour of children. In wool and silk mills they were known to be usually working thirteen, and, sometimes, fourteen hours, and hardly a soul had called out against the cruelties thus inflicted.* Happily the extension of manufacturing drew attention to its possible abuses: Richard Oastler's letters in 1830 on "Slavery in Yorkshire" started the popular agitation of the short-time committees—those "strange combinations of Socialists, Chartists and ultra-Tories": and the reports presented to Parliament between 1831 and 1833 hurried on the passing of the first general Factory Act in the latter year. This Act applied to cotton, woollen, worsted, hemp, flax, tow, linen, and silk mills—lace-making and some subsidiary industries being expressly exempted. In spite of the strenuous opposition raised by manufacturers and economists alike—and one finds it difficult to understand nowadays how the argument could be met that ten hours were the limit of the labour of the adult male convict—young people between thirteen and eighteen were limited to twelve hours' work per day, or sixty-nine per week; children from nine to thirteen were limited to forty-eight hours per week, not exceeding nine hours per day; children under nine were prohibited from working in such factories altogether; and night work was forbidden to all under eighteen. Four official Factory Inspectors were appointed. Unfortunately, the Act did not extend, as regards the minimum age limit, to silk mills, where the proportion of children was larger than in any other industry, and where the children were "preferred at eight years and upwards."

90. In 1842 the issue of "the most sensational Blue-book of the century," the Report of the Children's Commission (for which, it is said, the sober economist Tooke was responsible), brought about the passing of an Act prohibiting boys from being employed in mining and colliery labour under the age of ten—the Bill as introduced proposed thirteen, and the coal-masters stood strenuously for eight—and appointing Inspectors. By the same Act women were excluded from mines and collieries. This was the first restriction of the century on the labour of women, but it was soon followed up. The Act of 1844 restricted the labour of women in factories, bringing them under the same category as "young persons," and limiting their hours to twelve per day, to be taken at any time between 5.30 a.m. and 8.30 p.m., and nine hours on Saturdays. By the same Act the minimum age limit for children was put back to eight, and the hours of those between the ages of eight and thirteen were fixed at six and a half, with compulsory school attendance for two and a half hours in winter and three in summer.

91. But the complete purpose of the promoters of this Act was only carried out in 1847, when the Ten Hours Act for women and young persons passed into law, among "rejoicings throughout the manufacturing districts such as had never been known before."

92. Although from 1847 to 1860 no great extension in principle took place, factory legislation made another advance in the Act of 1850, making the normal day of women and young persons from 6.0 a.m. to 6.0 p.m. (or 7.0 a.m. to 7.0 p.m.) with one and a half hours for meals, work to stop on Saturdays at 2.0 p.m.

93. In 1853 this was supplemented by an Act extending the normal day to children; while their hours remained as before—six and a half hours every day or ten hours on three alternate days—they could not be employed before 6.0 a.m. or after 6.0 p.m.

* The remarkable advance in our ideas about cruelty to children since these days is indicated by the arguments then used for restriction of their long hours. Sometimes the restriction was urged on the ground that it would give employment to male adults who were kept out of work by their competition; very often on the ground that it would practically result in limiting the hours of adults; seldom on the ground of the cruelty to the children themselves. "Not a single witness that came before me to give evidence," said Tuffnell, a Parliamentary Commissioner, in 1834, "in favour of the Ten Hours Bill . . . of whatever trade or station he may have been, supported it on the above grounds (cruelty and ill-usage). I am perfectly satisfied that motives of humanity have not the smallest weight in inducing them to uphold the Ten Hours Bill." (Quoted in *A History of Factory Legislation*, Hutchins and Harrison, p. 50.)

94. Meanwhile, in 1845, children and young persons employed in calico printing had been brought under Factory Acts. Between 1845 and 1860 even the opponents of such legislation were converted, and Roebuck and Graham were instrumental in passing the Act of 1860, which extended similar restrictions to bleach and dye works. In 1861, women, young persons, youths, and children in lace factories were placed under the regulation of the Factories Acts.

95. In 1864 a new principle was introduced into factory legislation by an Extension Act, bringing under Government inspection and regulation not only several manufactures, such as earthenware, lucifer matches, percussion caps and cartridges, in no way connected with textiles, but certain employments as well, notably paper staining and fustian cutting. To bring these industries under the Factory Acts, "factory" was now defined as any place in which persons worked for hire.

96. By 1867 the country was ready to go much further in this direction. The Factory Acts Extension Act brought a number of new industries under legislation, giving a new definition of the word "factory" as "any premises where fifty or more persons are employed in any manufacturing process," and the Workshops Regulation Act brought workshops employing under fifty persons—with certain limitations—under factory provisions.

97. In 1873 a Local Government Board Inquiry, on account of the great strain put upon operatives by the amount and speeding-up of machinery, recommended a Nine-Hours Day (which had already become the recognised limit in the engineering trades) for textile factories, and a Bill to the effect was introduced by Mundella. In 1874 an Act was passed which added half an hour to meal-times, thus making the hours per week fifty-six and a half; implicitly forbade overtime; and raised the age at which children were permitted to work in textile factories to ten.

98. In 1878, with the view of getting rid of the anomalies caused by the various classes of manufacture being regulated by various Acts—particularly as regards children—and to correct the administrative weakness of the Workshops Regulation Act, a General Factories and Workshops Consolidation Act was passed. Under the same Act, the employment of children and young persons was forbidden in certain branches of the white lead and other factories.

99. In 1883 special protective legislation was enacted as regards employés in white lead factories.

100. In 1886 an Act to regulate the labour of children and young persons in shops limited the hours to seventy-four per week, but made no provision as regards women.

101. In 1889 the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Acts gave children employed in theatrical entertainments the benefit of the Factory Acts. From the Report of the Lords' Committee on the Sweating System dates the beginning of the agitation for protecting women engaged in their own homes.

102. In 1891 another Factory Act instituted safeguards against sweating in sub-contracts, and enacted that no child under the age of eleven should be employed in any workshop. In 1895 the important "particulars clause," which had been applied to certain classes of textile workers only, was extended to all textile workers, with permission to the Secretary of State to extend it to non-textile factories and workshops.

103. In 1901 the Factory and Workshop Consolidation Act *inter alia* gave increased powers to Local Authorities, requiring that lists of out-workers should be sent to the District Councils, and that the Medical Officers of Health should keep registers of the workshops within their districts.*

104. The important bearing of all this legislation on the present unemployed question is not always remembered.

"The ultimate end of factory legislation," it has been said, "is to prescribe conditions of existence below which population shall not decline." † It comes to this, that,

* For details of the above legislation, see *A History of Factory Legislation*, by B. L. Hutchins and A. Harrison, 1903.

† *The Times*, June 12th, 1874.

however willing employers may be to employ those who apply for work, they are not at liberty to do so unless they conform to a whole system of restrictions, regulations, inspections, and prohibitions.

105. Where women, young persons, and children are employed, they must limit themselves to certain hours in the twenty-four—the "normal day." They cannot employ children of tender age at all. They cannot employ half-timers without making arrangements to permit of their education. They cannot employ women or young persons except for a limited number of hours in the week, giving due time for meals and shutting down on certain holidays. They must provide and keep open to Government inspection expensive sanitary appliances. They must fence and guard their machinery. In certain dangerous trades they are under still closer limitations.

106. The definite and avowed object of these restrictions was, of course, the protecting of the health of the younger and weaker workers from injury by overwork or unwholesome conditions. But, as everyone knows, these restrictions, most of them primarily applying to women, young persons, and children, have practically imposed similar limitations on the employment of adult male labour. And, of late years, as regards all their workpeople employers have come under the distinct provisions of the Employers' Liability Act and the Workmen's Compensation Acts.

107. A much heavier task, then, is thrown upon our employers than was dreamed of in 1834. They have to earn the wages of organising and supervising labour, and to compensate themselves for taking the manifold risks of supplying a fluctuating human demand, while conforming to a large and complicated code of limitations which the wisdom of the nation has laid down for the protection of those whom they employ.

(11) Education.

108. Practically the education of the people in England and Wales dates back only seventy years.

109. When the first general Factory Act was passed in 1833, a clause was inserted which authorised the Inspectors to establish or procure the establishment of schools for "half-timers," but the clause was practically inoperative, as no provision was made for starting such schools.

110. The year which saw the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act witnessed the first Parliamentary grant towards education. It was £20,000, distributed partly through the National Schools Association (which was strictly Church of England), partly through the British and Foreign Schools Society (which was unsectarian), in proportion to the sum already provided by the applicants for the building of schoolhouses. (It has been noticed that this was less than one-third of what was being granted annually for education by the State of Massachusetts alone.)

111. In 1837—the year of the late Queen's accession—attention was attracted to the deplorable education of the people. Round Oldham, for instance, in a population of 105,000 souls, there was not a single public day school. About one-fourth of the total children in England and Wales received no instruction whatever. It was stated in the House of Commons that 49 per cent. of the boys, and 57 per cent. of the girls of thirteen and fourteen years old, could not read, and that 67 per cent. of the boys and 88 per cent. of the girls could not write.

112. In a Report to Parliament by the four Factory Inspectors in 1839, on the effects of the educational provisions of the Factories Act, we get some interesting glimpses of the state of education generally in England. In some cases where the mill-owners took an interest in the education of the children, and maintained the school at their own expense, the education was said to be much superior to that which was to be had in the majority of the primary schools for the working classes. But, outside of these cases, the Inspectors had to acquiesce in a very imperfect fulfilment of the spirit of the law, because, they said, "No better system of schooling is within reach. Good schools must be provided before the educational clauses can be generally carried into operation with efficiency." Of the kind of school existing at this time, one may

judge by this single example: "In the last quarter I had a school voucher presented to me with a mark, and, when I called on the schoolmaster to read it before me, he could not. It had been written out by the clerk of the factory, and the schoolmaster had been called to put his mark to it. I have had to reject the school voucher of the fireman, the children having been schooled in the coal-hole (in one case I actually found them there), and having been made to say a lesson, from books nearly as black as the fuel, in the intervals between his feeding and stirring the fire of the engine boiler. It may be supposed that this could only happen at the mill of some poor ignorant man; but that, I am sorry to say, was not the case—it occurred at factories where a large capital must be embarked."

113. The Factory Act of 1844 compelled school attendance of half-timers for two and a half hours in winter and three in summer, or five hours on alternate days of the week.

114. By 1846 the State expenditure on education had risen to £58,000. It is interesting to remember that Carlyle, in 1843, in *Past and Present*, had said: "If the whole English people, during these twenty years of respite, be not educated, with at least schoolmaster's educating, a tremendous responsibility, before God and men, will rest somewhere."

115. In 1861 a Commission on Elementary Education, in its Report, declared education to be "miserably defective," only one-third of the children in elementary schools being thoroughly grounded in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and recommended a capitation grant proportionate to the number of those who passed in these three subjects. This resulted, during the following year, in Lowe's Revised Code.

116. In 1870 a comprehensive measure was passed, establishing a national system of education, and enabling school boards to be set up, with power to enforce local bye-laws for compulsory attendance at school up to a certain age or standard in education. In 1876 the powers of compelling attendance at school were conferred upon school attendance committees in areas in which there were no school boards and in 1880 compulsion was made universal. In 1891 elementary education was made gratuitous as well as compulsory.

117. Outside of the enormous effect which universal education must have in making the working man into a more efficient and versatile tool of production, what has to be considered is its effect on the ambitions and expectations of the human being. As Mr. Crooks points out, working men are not going to be content with the conditions under which their fathers lived a long time ago. Every stage of acquiring knowledge naturally makes people feel very acutely the conditions under which they are compelled to live. A man's grandfather was out of work, but he only knew the effect; the grandson is out of work, and he knows the cause—and he thinks he knows the remedy. Therefore . . . the discontent is individually greater than it ever was before, and naturally so.*

(12) The Position of Women and Juveniles.

118. It is evident from the preceding sections that the place of women, young persons, and children in factory industry has materially changed since 1834. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the outstanding feature of industry was the rapid spread of textile machinery requiring "minders," it looked as if there would be an unlimited demand for children in the factories. Melancholy stories are given of pauper children sent off by the waggon load from London parishes, and apprenticed in lonely, isolated factories set up by the side of streams, without safeguards, or reasonable regulation of hours.

119. But parish apprentices, as we have seen, ceased to be an important factor in industry when steam enabled the factories to be set up wherever labour was abundant, and, later, children became "unprofitable servants," even at low wages, when their hours were restricted by Factory, Education, and other Acts. As the century went on, the growing enlightenment and humanity of the community demanded that women, as well as juveniles, should not be exposed to the full force of competition, and so came the long series of regulations restricting or preventing their exploitation.

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* Evidence, Crooks, Vol. IX.; 91381–3.

120. These regulations have not been without their effect both on the numbers employed and on the industrial functions now allotted to them.

121. In the factory employment both of children and young persons there has been a steady reduction. A Memorandum prepared for us at the Board of Trade, on *the extent to which female and juvenile labour has displaced adult labour in the last twenty years*," * puts this beyond controversy. According to this Return, in almost every trade which has been separately examined, the decrease in the number of children employed below fifteen—thanks in great measure to the operation of the Education Acts—is considerable, and in the case of male children, the decrease is generally as great as in the case of female. The number of half-timers, for instance, under fourteen years of age, employed in textile factories, decreased from 55,625 in 1895 to 31,744 in 1904, and the number of full-timers under eighteen from 238,078 to to 208,003. And "the employment of young persons under twenty-five years of age also shows a not inconsiderable, though a less regular, decline."

122. As regards women, the tendency is not quite so marked, owing to the new openings for the sex. The excessive subdivision of labour and specialisation of machinery favours the intrusion of women into many trades hitherto occupied by men—during which "economic transformation" there is, naturally, much dislocation of male labour, tending to the sinking of the skilled male workman into the unskilled class. Even in some branches of the engineering trade women are now finding employment. In the Westinghouse and other large works round Manchester, we are told, women, both married and single, have been introduced in large numbers to tend the light drilling machines at which the Trade Unions used to find employment for men getting on in years and unable to take heavy work.†

123. Outside of the traditional "women's trades," we find women largely, sometimes exclusively, employed in the making of saddlery and harness, slippers, gloves, cocoa, confectionery, jam, pickles, mustard, aerated waters, straw plait and hats, rubber and gutta-percha goods, stationery, elastic web, corsets, cutlery and scissors, gold, silver, white metal, and pewter goods, electro-plate, pottery, chemists' preparations, explosives, in printing, and in dyeing and cleaning. A suggestive movement is presented by watch-making in Coventry, where female labour is increasing both absolutely and relatively. Boys will not serve the required apprenticeship in the trade, as they can get higher wages in the motor and cycle industries where apprenticeship is not required. Thus girls taken from school are brought into the factory at 4s. a week, rising to 16s. by the time they are twenty-four. In one watch factory the men were found to be only 12 per cent. of the total number employed. In Birmingham, the employment of female labour is a striking feature. Women form by far the larger proportion in the steel pen industry, in bolt, nut, and screw making, and in the leather goods trades; while they form a large percentage in bronze and brass working, white metal, electro-plating, the goldsmith and jewellery trades, and other general industries of the town. In Stoke-upon-Trent it appears that women and girls are very largely employed in the pottery industry. "In some branches of this trade they are being employed to an increasing extent upon work which, a few years ago, was performed almost exclusively by men: they are now actively in competition with male labour; and, as they are able to do similar work for lower wages, they are gradually driving men from certain sections of the trade."‡

124. Examples such as these, from special trades and in particular places, might be multiplied indefinitely, and we can scarcely wonder at the generalisation so often made that women are displacing men in the general labour market.§

* Vol. IX., Appendix xxi. E.

† Mr. Tom Fox, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 83921–6, 83933.

‡ *Cost of Living of the Working Classes* (Cd. 3864) *passim*, and pp. 81, 160, and 441.

§ We may note here the disastrous effects of this in the cases—happily few—where the staple occupation of a town is a "women's trade," in which very few youths or men are employed, and where there is a somewhat marked tendency for the married women to remain on in the factory, and for the men to deteriorate and become dependent on the wives. In Dundee, for instance, where, at last Census, jute employed about 40 per cent. of the total employed population over ten years of age, and where 72 per cent. of the operatives over ten were women the saying is that, among the lower grades of labour, "the wife works; the man boils the kettle." Probably there is a connection between this and the fact that, in 1904, Dundee headed the list of towns in Scotland as regards infant mortality. (Mr. Jones' Report, Dundee, pp. 95, 96.) An instructive parallel is drawn by the statement made in Appendix V. to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration (p. 125), that, in Preston, "the husbands of cotton operatives visited were chiefly employed as labourers in intermittent work," and that "the mother was in most cases the chief wage earner." (Quoted in Messrs. Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 29.)

125. But, on the whole, there seems no foundation for any such generalisation. On the contrary, the Reports of the last three Censuses indicate that "women are obtaining a smaller, not a larger, proportion of the aggregate employment," although it is right to say that the greater part of the decreased proportion of occupied females has occurred in what is by far the largest of the wage-earning occupations of women, domestic service.

126. To summarise the statistics of the Memorandum referred to: about four-fifths of the occupied male population are engaged in employments which they monopolise or in which women are a negligible factor as regards possible competition, such as agriculture, mining, fishing, building, transport, wood, gas and water, and the staple metal and machine-making trades, all of which are virtually male preserves. Only one-fifth of the males are engaged in trades where women enter to the extent of 1 per cent. of the whole number of occupied females.

127. Women are making the largest actual and relative advance in commercial, professional and public employments, and in the chemical and food industries, in each of which groups their rate of increase exceeds that of men, and, among manufactures, in the paper, bookbinding, chemical, food, metal and leather classes.

128. Among textiles, where, as a whole, in the period 1881–1901, the proportionate decline for women was about the same as that for men, it is only in the elastic, cocoa-nut fibre, and horsehair trades, and in hosiery, that signs of substitution are visible.

129. In the larger group of dressmaking trades, including tailoring, dressmaking, millinery, shirt and needlework trades, though female labour still remains the vastly preponderating element, this group is so far from showing a tendency for women to displace men that the net result of movements in recent years has been rather in the opposite direction—the main cause being the encroachment of the factory system upon domestic and small workshop industries.* (In one member of this group, however, the particular set of trades classed as "tailoring," women constitute an increasing proportion.)

130. In the boot and shoe trade—which has been distinctively a male industry—women are certainly obtaining a relatively stronger hold, owing to the division of labour which now furnishes certain lighter processes, suitable for women, that were formerly done as part of the general work of male shoemakers. Slipper-making, for instance, is now passing entirely into female hands.

131. In the grocery trade, which still remains predominantly male, women are increasing in numbers more rapidly than men, and in the drapery trade, women workers seem to be displacing young men.

132. In clerking, it seems at first sight as if the obvious increase in women typists, etc., involved displacement of men, but the fact seems to be that the number of men so employed is rapidly increasing, and that their proportionate advance, compared with population, is faster than that of women.

133. In teaching and the medical services, the proportion of women has, of course, grown a great deal more rapidly than that of men, but—particularly considering the growth in numbers of sick nurses, midwives, and invalid attendants—this cannot be regarded as displacement.

134. In domestic service, contrary, perhaps, to popular belief, the noteworthy phenomenon is the decrease in numbers between 1881 and 1901, not indeed absolutely but relatively to population. Female domestic indoor servants increased by only 8·2 per cent., while the entire population increased by 25·2 per cent.

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* The same phenomenon occurs in other fields; for instance, in Sheffield, file-cutting, an occupation which used to be largely done by female out-workers—the work requiring rather dexterity than strength—is now being done by heavy machinery requiring male attendants. (Board of Trade Inquiry on *Cost of Living of the Working Classes*, 1908, p. 409.)

135. The conclusion is that, while women and juveniles are now engaged in many industries in which the specialisation of machinery enables them to take part, they are not, in any considerable trade or process, displacing adult males in the sense that they are being more largely employed to do work identical with that formerly done by men. The great expansion of women's labour seems to have been in new fields of employment, or in fields which men never occupied. "It should also be borne in mind that, even when women are employed where men used to be employed, this is largely due to the men going into more highly paid industries. Mining, machine-making, and building have of late years attracted an abnormal number of men and boys."

(13) Boy Labour.*

136. While in factories and workshops the position of children and young persons is satisfactorily regulated by law, the problem of juvenile labour outside the great industries has become more serious. The age of beginning apprenticeship, in the case of most industries, is sixteen. When the age of leaving school was fixed at fourteen, it was, presumably, intended that this should be the minimum; for the great majority it has proved the maximum.† The almost universal experience is that, in large towns, boys, owing to carelessness or selfishness on the part of the parents, or their own want of knowledge and forethought—for the parents very often have little voice in the matter—plunge haphazard, immediately on leaving school, into occupations in which there is no future; where they earn wages sufficiently high to make them independent of parental control and disinclined for the lower wages of apprenticeship; and whence, if they remain on, they are extruded when they grow to manhood. According to the main statistical sources of information available, the very serious fact emerges that between 70 per cent. and 80 per cent. of boys leaving elementary schools enter unskilled occupations.‡ Thus, even when the boy ultimately becomes apprenticed to, or enters, a skilled trade, these intervening years, from the national point of view, are entirely wasted. Indeed, the boy, naturally reacting from the discipline to which school accustomed him, usually with abundance of spare time not sufficiently continuous to be utilised, and without educative work, is shaped during these years directly towards evil. All our investigations and evidence go to show that there is a regular drift from such boys' occupations into the low-skilled labour market.§

137. The problem owes its rise in the main to the enormous growth of cities as distributive centres—chiefly and most disastrously, London—giving innumerable openings for errand boys, milk boys, office and shop boys, bookstall boys, van, lorry, and trace boys, street sellers, etc. In nearly all these occupations the training received leads to nothing; and the occupations themselves are, in most cases, destructive to healthy development, owing to long hours, long periods of standing, walking, or mere waiting, and, morally, are wholly demoralising. Street selling, for example, says the Chief Constable of Sheffield, "makes the boys thieves": "newsboys and street sellers," says Mr. Cyril Jackson, "are practically all gamblers": "of 1,454 youths between fourteen and twenty-one, charged in Glasgow during 1906 with theft and other offences inferring dishonesty, 1,208, or 83·7 per cent. came from the class of messengers, street traders, etc.," says Mr. Tawney. The difficulty of boys, thus aimlessly trained, in finding employment about the age of eighteen, seems to be one of the main causes of enlistment, and the number of van boys and stable hands who enter the Army is very noticeable.

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* *See*, particularly, Mr. Cyril Jackson's Report on the subject, and evidence by Mr. Reginald A. Bray, Mr. E. J. Urwick, Mr. R. H. Tawney, Professor Sadler, and Mr. Sidney Webb.

† Not only so, but the cleverest children—under the "labour certificate" exception—are allowed to leave at thirteen.

‡ According to an official Return of boys leaving elementary schools in London in 1899, 40 per cent. became errand, van or boat boys; 14 per cent. shop boys; 8 per cent. office boys and junior clerks. Only 18 per cent. went definitely into trades.

§ "The theory that boys can become errand boys for a year or two and then enter skilled trades cannot be maintained. Very few boys can pick up skill after a year or two of merely errand-boy work. . . . The great mass of them fall into the low-skilled trades or wholly casual labour" (Mr. Cyril Jackson, Report on Boy Labour, p. 20).

138. These unsatisfactory phenomena are aggravated by the habit of restlessness into which the boys generally fall. Knowing that there is a ready demand for their labour, they throw up their places for the most trivial of reasons, thus destroying, most unfortunately, any motive which their employers might have to absorb them into their own adult employments.

139. This particular problem, it will be noticed, is not a problem of factory industry. But there is another and even more serious form of the problem, where boys, on leaving school, enter without apprenticeship into trades where there are no possible openings for them when grown up; loom boys, doffers, shifters in the cotton and woollen trades—where, it is said, there is little possibility of more than one in ten being ultimately absorbed—rivet boys in shipbuilding, drawers off in saw-mills, packers in soap works, etc.* In many of these trades they are tempted by high wages—a rivet boy on the Clyde, for instance, may earn 20s. a week—to remain till they are too old to enter any other regular occupation. Here "the work performed by the boy, instead of being in the nature of training, is a specialised compartment, for which his sole qualification is the fact that, as an instrument of production, he is cheaper than a man."†

140. As regards both these classes, we agree with Mr. Bray that, while it may be doubtful how much truth there is in the often repeated cry of "too old at forty," there is probably good reason to believe that, in many cases, we might say, "No use at five-and-twenty." ‡

141. The great prominence given to boy labour, not only in our evidence, but in the various reports of our Special Investigators, leads us to the opinion that this is, perhaps, the most serious of the phenomena which we have encountered in our study of unemployment. The difficulty of getting boys absorbed, through gradual and systematic training, in the skilled trades, is great enough; but when to this are added the temptations, outside the organised industries, to enter at an early age into occupations which are not themselves skilled and give no opportunity for acquiring skill, it seems clear that we are faced by a far greater problem than that of finding employment for adults who have fallen behind in the race for efficiency, namely, that the growth of large cities has brought with it an enormous increase in occupations that are making directly for unemployment in the future.§

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* "We were informed in Dublin that a difficulty was experienced by boys in finding jobs when they grew too old for boys' wages. In the Guinness brewery the boys are very carefully looked after, and to improve their physique a good mid-day meal is provided for them on the works, but the firm, who are, in every way, model employers, have found some difficulty in absorbing the boys as they grew up, and are giving the matter careful consideration at the present time." (Mr. Cyril Jackson, Report, 1908, p 9.)

† Mr. R. H. Tawney, Evidence, Vol. IX., p. 96610 (11–12). Mr. Tawney instances the biscuit-making department of a bakery—which, it may be noted, is quite distinct from the bread-making department in which the boys are apprenticed—where forty-one boys are employed as against twelve men, and where, accordingly, the boys are dismissed at manhood, or when they ask an adult's wage. Evidence Vol. IX., 96610 (11–12). In contrast with this, the practice of a large firm of manufacturing confectioners in the North of England may be quoted: "As it is difficult to absorb many boys in this trade, the firm is attempting in various ways to supplant them. Machinery, for example, is being used wherever possible in place of boy labour; and wherever it is found practicable, girls are taking the place of boys." (Report by Miss Williams and Mr. Jones).

‡ Evidence, Vol. IX., 96218 (vi. b).

§ Mr. Tawney draws attention to the existence of a still deeper evil. Of lorry-boys, engaged and paid by lorry-men, he says: "The system of employment tends to encourage a kind of casual labour among boys. The boy has to go down to the yard, and wait there till his man comes in to take the lorry out; a group of such boys (lorry-boys and trace-boys) can be seen in the neighbourhood of any large contractor, loafing and playing cards on the pavement. There is no obligation on the man to take the same boy with him from day to day; nor does the obligation on the boy to put in an appearance seem to be very strict; a firm may employ eighty lorry-boys, and not be able at any given moment to say where forty of them are. Hence these boys rarely stay with the same firm for more than a few weeks at a time, but go from one to another much as they please, till they are not fit to be taken on as van-men when they grow up. Out of 148 lorry-men employed by a firm examined, only one had been with the firm as a boy. In short, the opinion seems to be universal that this particular kind of work gets into the hands of a low class of boys and still further demoralises them. In their case irregular employment in manhood is preceded by irregular employment when they are boys. Though this work is, no doubt, exceptional in having actually harmful effects, it is only one of several occupations undertaken by boys which do nothing to promote any kind of industrial efficiency." Vol. IX., 96610 (9).

Note.—Our attention has been drawn by several witnesses to the very large increase in the number of boys employed by the Government, both absolutely and as compared with men. The number of boy messengers under fifteen years of age, *e.g.*, increased from 1,831 in 1881 to 4,412 in 1891, and to 7,684 in

142. The evils resulting from boys becoming thus early in life unsuited to regular industrial employment is very forcibly stated by Mr. Sidney Webb. We quote his opinion (Evidence, Vol. IX., 93031 (Ans. vii.) without taking responsibility for the statements he makes :—

A Proposal for Industrial Training.

I regard the growing up of hundreds of thousands of boys without obtaining any sort of industrial training, specialised or unspecialised, as a perpetual creating of future pauperism, and a grave social menace. Mr. Reginald Bray, L.C.C., and Mr. Cyril Jackson, L.C.C., will have explained to the Commission the enormous extent to which this is happening in London. Similar conditions prevail, I believe, in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, and other large towns. Without going into detail, I may be permitted to draw attention to the four-fold evil aspect of this phenomenon. There is, first of all, the evil, through the multiplication of van boys, errand boys, messenger boys, etc., of recruiting a chronically excessive army of unskilled, casually-employed, merely brute labour. There is, further, the illegitimate use, by employers, of successive relays of boys, not as persons to whom a skilled trade has to be taught, but, by ignoring that responsibility, as cheap substitutes for adult workers, who are thereby deprived of employment. There is, as the other aspect of this, the failure to provide for the healthy physical development of the town boy, whose long hours of monotonous and uneducational work leave him a "weedy," narrow-chested, stunted weakling, whom even the recruiting sergeant rejects, and who succumbs prematurely to disease. Finally, there is the creation of the "hooligan"—the undisciplined youth, precocious in evil, earning at seventeen or eighteen more wages than suffice to keep him, independent of home control, and yet unsteadied by a man's responsibilities.

I regard it as essential, if there is to be any effective grappling with what may be termed the pauperism of casual employment or of unskilled labour, that this four-fold evil should be remedied. * * * * Nothing is of any real use that does not stop the sources of pauperism. And one of these sources is our present failure in London to turn our boys into physically strong and industrially trained men.

How we at present recruit the Army of Unskilled Labour.

What stares in the face the exceptionally careful parent of the poorer class who tries to start his son well is, in London, the difficulty of discovering any situation in which his boy can become a skilled worker of any kind, or even enter the service of an employer who can offer him advancement. We have, on the one hand, a great development of employment for boys of a thoroughly bad type, yielding high wages and no training. We have, on the other hand, a positive shrinking—almost a disappearance—of places for boys in which they are trained to become competent men. London employers not only refuse to teach apprentices, even for premiums—they often refuse to have boys on those parts of their establishments in which anything can be learnt. Many employers won't have boys at all, and take adult recruits from the country. In 1899, when I was a member of the Technical Education Board, I found that London building firms, employing over 12,000 men had in their service, not 2,000 or 2,500 boys, as would have been the proportion necessary to recruit the trade, but a few score only. All the skilled grades of the building trade—that most typical London industry—are almost wholly recruited by adults from the country. Enquiries of a large number of builders' foremen show that they were nearly all

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1901. (Professor Sadler, Vol. IX. 93386 (6).) As regards those employed in the Post Office, some criticisms passed on the Department on account of the large numbers of boys dismissed at the age of sixteen have called out a Memorandum from the Department to which we gladly give the fullest publicity. *(Condition of Employment of Telegraph Messengers in the Post Office.)*

It is frankly admitted that the proportion of boys who have to leave is, "at the present time abnormally great." But this is very largely accounted for by the fact that the possible openings for boys in the service have been curtailed since 1895 by the policy then imposed on the Post Office by the Government of the day, of reserving half the vacancies as postmen and porters for ex-soldiers and ex-sailors. "The result is that a large part of the total number of boy messengers employed have to be discharged—a matter of continual regret to the Post Office." It is explained that the reason why those for whom there are not openings as adults are required to leave at sixteen is that they are better able to learn a trade or secure stable employment at that age than later.

In these circumstances—for which the Postmaster is not responsible—the Department does all it can to fit the boys either for superior Post Office appointments, or for employment of a remunerative kind outside the Civil Service, and endeavours, so far as possible, to obtain outside employment for those whose services have to be dispensed with. Great pains have been taken to discover the largest possible number of outlets within the service which may be thrown open to the messengers, and it may be said generally that the number retained at the age of sixteen always exceeds considerably the number of vacancies reserved for them. And, during the last two years, the number of messengers placed in good private employment by the assistance of the Post Office has grown steadily and rapidly. In considering the position of the boy messengers, as a whole, the Postmaster points out that, so far as the boys do obtain appointments in the Post Office, "it means very much more than it does in most other trades," as the boy who obtains adult employment there is not dismissed except for gross misconduct. But, in view of the regrettable necessity of dismissing so many, considerable pains are being taken at certain chosen centres to train telegraph messengers experimentally in the use of tools, in the hope that they may qualify for efficient service in the Engineering Department; and, it is said, that other schemes are under consideration, such as the substitution of adults and of girls for boys. There is, then, considerable ground for hope that "within a moderate period, the number of telegraph messengers who can be absorbed into Post Office employment will be found to have considerably increased."

born and brought up outside London. Corresponding with this must be put the investigations of Mr. Wilson Fox (of the Board of Trade), which show that various large employers of labour, such as breweries, railway companies, etc., employ predominantly country-born workmen, in the proportion of 40, 50, and sometimes even of 65 per cent. of the whole. The Metropolitan Police Force, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the teachers in London elementary schools, the porters in City warehouses, the junior clerks in the "entering desk" of the great wholesale firms, the subordinate officers of the Excise and Customs services, all include a quite surprisingly small percentage of Londoners. What happens to the London boy? The answer is given in the grim statistical facts, that the district having the highest percentage of born Londoners is Bethnal Green, which is practically the poorest; and that, so far as we can make out, the London industry in which there is the highest percentage of born Londoners is that of unskilled general labour. This section must now comprise something like half a million of population in the Administrative County of London alone. Its social condition may be judged from the fact that not less than half of it lives in an "overcrowded" condition (i.e., more than two persons to a room). It may be added that Poplar has a larger amount of it than any other London union, nearly one-tenth of the whole class being herded together in this one district. It is an ominous fact that this particular class, if we may rely on the statistics, seems to have doubled in numbers in London in the last forty years, *and to have increased at a greater rate than the population as a whole.* It is impossible not to feel that this may have something to do with those other grim facts ascertained by Mr. Wilson Fox, namely, that the applicants to the London Distress Committees, the inmates of the Salvation Army and Church Army shelters, and the inhabitants of some large common lodging-houses are to the extent of 86 to 93 per cent. London-born.

(14) Trade Cycles.

143. It has been observed, since at least the latter part of the eighteenth century, that the general industry of the country has described a periodic movement, from lowest activity to highest and back again, within a comparatively short term of years. The cycle is generally put at ten to eleven years. As is well known, Mill's description was this; three years of depressed trade accompanied by want of employment, fall in prices, low rate of interest, and much poverty; three years of revival and healthy trade; four years describing excited trade, speculation and collapse; and Jevons tried to prove this periodicity by examining the trade of the country from the beginning of the eighteenth century till 1878.*

144. While one might deprecate the attempt to prove that the cycles have been at all similar in duration—although the last two decades lend more support to the theory than did the periods examined by Jevons—and might object to the positing of a "crisis" as either starting-point or issue, or indeed, as a necessary phenomenon of the cycle, reference to the annexed table† will at least bear out the proposition that, within

* It will be remembered that Jevons, taking up a suggestion of Herschel, connected the cycles with the power of the sun's rays—the period of maximum appearance of sun spots being separated by an interval of about 10·45 years—and that Bagehot carrying the idea further, considered that the periodicity of trade was due to the consequent fluctuation of harvests affecting the financial market.

† CYCLICAL MOVEMENTS, 1815–1907.

1815. Reaction.
1816. Great distress.
1817. Great distress.
1818. Revival.
1819. Prosperity and reaction.
1820. Depression and revival.[1]

1821. Revival (agricultural depression).
1822. Revival (agricultural depression).
1823. Revival (agricultural depression).
1824. Prosperity.
1825. Prosperity, speculation.
1826. Crash.
1827. Distress.
1828. Distress.
1829. Distress.
1830. Culmination of distress (international).
1831. Culmination of distress.[2]

1 The chief cause of distress and want of employment during these six years is obvious, and is of little guidance to us in 1908. It was an extraordinary and, happily, exceptional period of transition from the isolating circumstances of the great war of twenty years by which England was, both directly and indirectly, affected, to a peace system in which the nation again joined the international co-operation of industry. Both agricultural and manufacturing supply had to be re-cast to meet the new conditions of demand, and, till this was effected, there was bound to be immense dislocation in both fields of activity.

2 In interpreting the tendency of these eleven years, with their well marked cyclical movement of revival (1821–3), prosperity (1824–5), crash (1826), and distress (1827–31), it is well to remember that the economic equilibrium was greatly disturbed by at least three things: (1) The continuance of Protection for agriculture, and of dear food, all

every decade since the great war, there has been a time of deep depression and a time of active trade, and that the movement between the recurrence of these points has described an almost constant ebb and flow.

145. This periodicity is so striking as to tempt to the belief that, if it were not for extra-economic occurrences, such as the potato rot, the cotton famine, or the change to Free Trade, the cyclical movement would have been much more rhythmical than it has proved to be. Be that as it may, the fact remains that, for a century at least, years of good trade have been followed, at a shorter or longer interval, by years of bad.

146. But, indeed, the more closely one studies the phenomena of modern history, the less will one be inclined to wonder at this.

147. The essential features of the present day system are that almost no one makes goods or renders services for his own consumption or support, but—it may be of his own accord or because he cannot help it—risks his fortunes or his livelihood on catering for the wants of others, taking his chance of their buying and paying at least cost price for the goods he makes; that this production is so highly organised—so much divided up and specialised—its processes extending over wide spaces and during long times—that, necessarily, the greater part of the supply is brought

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1832. Depression.
1833. Extreme distress.
1834. Revival.
1835. Prosperity (depression of agriculture).
1836. Prosperity (depression of agriculture).
1837. Reaction (depression of agriculture).
1838. Distress.
1839. Universal distress.
1840. Universal distress.
1841. Universal distress.
1842. "The lowest ebb."
1843. Revival.
1844. Prosperity.
1845. Prosperity and speculation.
1846. Potato famine.[1]

1847. Crisis, depression.
1848. Distress.
1849. Revival.
1850. Revival.
1851. Prosperity.
1852. Prosperity.
1853. Pause.
1854. Depression.
1855. Distress.
1856. Distress.
1857. Distress and commercial collapse.
1858. Revival.
1859. Prosperity.
1860. Prosperity.[2]

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the time that manufacture and commerce, while shaking themselves free, were constantly dislocated by the necessary changes; (2) the rapid spread of pauperisation under the old Poor Law; and (3) the political agitation among the unrepresented industrial classes which led to the Reform Bill. The painful transition to factory industry, and the use of machinery on a large scale, would of themselves have caused great dislocation and local distress, but the other factors greatly aggravated it.

1 In this period, 1832–46, the fifteen years of the Poor Law Commissioners' administration, the cyclical movement is again clear, but is not so regular over the whole field owing to the erratic phenomena of agriculture under Protection. Of the fifteen harvests, eight were good—some of them extremely good—and seven were bad. But, whatever the crop, the "agricultural interest" was always complaining of distress; fine harvests bringing hardship to some of the interests and bad harvests to others. The cycle is, roughly: distress (1832–3), revival (1834), growing prosperity (1835–6), reaction (1837), distress (1838–42), revival (1843), prosperity (1844–5), crash (1846). The lowest point was reached in 1833, and again in 1842. 1834–6 were years of great manufacturing prosperity—as 1823–5 had been—and so were 1844–5. (So, probably, would have been 1846 but for the "act of God.") The disturbing elements are the perpetual political agitation of Chartism and the League; the six bad harvests in succession; and the great potato famine. There is comparatively little dislocation in old industries through changes of method or appliances. The entirely new industry of railway construction, indeed, is a new demand for labour, and promises to take up any "surplus" there might conceivably be.

2 During this first period of the Poor Law Board's administration the cycle, it will be noticed, is the usual one of between nine and eleven years. There is depression (1847–8), revival (1849–50), prosperity (1851–2), pause (1853), depression (1854–7), revival (1858), prosperity (1859–60). This time there are two crises—in 1847 and 1857. Free Trade seems to justify itself by the elimination of the seasons as a potent factor even in agriculture, by the maintenance of the revenue, and by the advance in imports and exports. The depression of 1854–7 is amply accounted for by the Crimean War. The contentment of the country is, perhaps, witnessed in the absence of information as to industrial progress in several of the years.

forward in anticipation of demand.* Thus the forces of capital and of labour are organised so thoroughly and intimately that, in production, the various branches stand to each other like houses of cards—push over one and the whole range topples—and yet they all depend on a demand which is so far from being organised, that we should never guess that it was even roughly calculable if it were not for the statistical facts that show it to be so.

148. When, then, one considers that, in an old country, the millions of human beings have, on the one side, cut themselves off from the chance of making or raising consumable things for themselves, and have, on the other, risked everything on meeting a demand which is subject to all the vicissitudes of human desires, the wonder rather is that demand and supply should ever come into equilibrium. Those who look upon the cyclical dislocation as a grievance to be urged against the modern system—perhaps to condemn it—would do well to remember that, in a world where harvest comes but once a year, steady week-in week-out employment, and, what is more, steady week-in week-out wage, is the new thing and the "unnatural" thing.

149. Assuming, then, that, in an ideal type of industrial organisation, supply would just meet demand and demand just take off supply, and employment thus be kept continuous, it is easy to see that, under the modern system, mistakes are liable to occur from two sides.

150. If demand to any extent changes its usual channels and amounts—and this is all the more likely to happen the more the human demanders, as a whole, arrive at a position where their "demand" is not limited by their physical wants, but expresses the desires and caprices of a manifold pleasurable life; or if supply for the moment floods any of its channels—which any little spurt of demand always tempts it to do—there are unsold goods; sooner or later, in greater or lesser degree, there is a check to further production.

* "The organisation and specialisation of anticipation is one of the most characteristic features of the modern economic world." Professor Chapman. (Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84791 (18).)

1861. Cotton famine.
1862. Distress.
1863. Revival.
1864. Prosperity.
1865. Wild speculation.
1866. Crash (Overends, Gurney).
1867. Depression.
1868. Depression.
1869. Depression.[1]

1870. Revival.
1871. General prosperity.
1872. "By leaps and bounds."
1873. Never more prosperous.
1874. Highest point of prosperity
1875. Declining prosperity.[2]

1876. Depression.
1877. Depression.
1878. Distress.
1879. Culmination of distress.
1880. Slight improvement.
1881.
1882. "The golden year of shipbuilding
1883.
1884. Depression.
1885. Distress.
1886. Culmination of distress.[3]

1 In this period the cyclical movement is rather shorter. The crisis of 1861 was not due to economic causes. The revival and prosperity of 1863–4, followed by a year of wild speculation, and ending in a commercial crash in 1866, are normal, as are the three following years of depression.

2 These years, beginning the *régime* of the Local Government Board, have been grouped because they chronicle the last attempt to keep down Poor Law expenditure by strict and strenuous carrying out of the old principles. For once the cyclical movement seems suspended. They are simply six years of "abounding prosperity," culminating in 1874 and declining in 1875, the impulse to which may have come from the payment of great part of the huge French indemnity in purchases from England.

3 For the first four years of this period, 1876–9, it seems as if the cycle were again suspended, this time at fixed and serious depression culminating in 1879. In 1880 there is a slight improvement. But as regards 1881, 1882, and 1883, when the country was distracted by the Irish question, one is baffled by lack of information. If we put them down —as seems probable—as years of dullness, the undoubted depression of the next three years, culminating in 1886, gives little support to the theory of decennial periodicity. The steady rise in Poor Law expenditure is a marked feature, but requires much interpretation.

151. But the moment there is this dislocation to any appreciable extent, it spreads like a contagion. The retail shop, after all, is the centre where, in most cases, demand and supply ultimately meet, and it is from this centre that the contagion spreads. Some workers are thrown out of work. Having no wages, they buy less from the shops. The shops, with unsold goods on their shelves and diminished takings in their tills, cannot] give the usual orders to the merchants and manufacturers who supply them. In turn, the merchants and manufacturers, with unsold stocks and reduced sales, cannot buy as they did from the shops which supply them. This contraction of demand in course of time affects shipping and all the transit trades which bring them material and take away products, and the persons engaged in them curtail their purchases from their shops. At every step, some shop or other, as it were, is affected and spreads the contagion back to those who fill its shelves. And so the dislocation spreads; until the thoughtful observer wonders how industry is ever to get a start out of the depression and stagnation in which it is sunk.

152. But, mysterious as may be the reason of the new start, it is obvious that, so soon as the start is made, the same contagion revives the whole organised fabric. The workers in some industry or other are put on full time. Their increased wages flow necessarily to the shops; the shelves are depleted and rapidly refilled; all those who supply the shops feel the stimulus of new demand, and in turn hand it on to the shops with which they deal. In a short time, to everybody's astonishment, it is found that trade is again on the up-grade—happy if it is not overdone and hurried into speculation and premature collapse.

153. Apparently economists up till now have looked on periodical depression and unemployment as inevitable, just as one looks for break-downs in a motor car—as "the shadow side of progress itself," to use Roscher's words. The industrial world, they never weary of saying, had become a very highly organised machine, capable of producing immense quantities of wealth of all sorts, but, like all highly organised machinery, apt to get out of order now and then. Indeed, a very little thing dislocated the fine interacting arrangements. The whole fabric had become so organic that a flaw or defect in one place spread like a plague, and depression in one trade ended in almost universal depression. Some mills went on short time; others dismissed part of their workers; and, without much warning, men, often enough, found themselves walking about in a world full of wealth, and yet unable to get the day's work that would give them a claim on it.

1887. Revival.
1888. Marked revival.
1889. Prosperity.
1890. Prosperity.
1891. Decline.
1892. Depression.
1893. Depression, culminating unemployment.
1894. Settled depression (Barings' crash).
1895. Revival.
1896. Slow revival.[1]

1897. Prosperity.
1898. Prosperity.
1899. Great prosperity.
1900. Culmination of prosperity.
1901. Slow ebb.
1902. Slow ebb.
1903. Depression.
1904. Distress.
1905. Revival.
1906. Prosperity.
1907. Prosperity and decline.

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1 In these years the periodicity is well marked: revival (1887–8), prosperity (1889–1900), decline (1891), depression (1892–4), revival (1895–6). The period of depression, however, is long, and that of prosperity short. In Poor Law expenditure, there is only one long increase from eight and a half millions to ten and a half millions, or, roughly, 24 per cent.

2 In this period also the periodicity is well marked; prosperity (1897–1900), decline (1901–2), depression (1903–4), revival (1905), prosperity (1906), prosperity and decline (1907). The period of good trade, however, this time, is long; that of actual depression, short. The most notable feature of all, perhaps, is the enormous increase of Poor Law expenditure, rising to fourteen millions in 1905.

154. Business men, too, aware of this cyclical movement, never regarded the year's income as net, but counted on taking the bad with the good; and the upper working classes insured themselves, so far as they could, against occasional want of employment through their Trade Unions.

155. But during the inevitable periods of depression, those who would not insure and those who could not—and it is much to be feared that the latter suffered by confusion with the former—if they would not starve, had to live partly or wholly on other people.

156. This was the problem as it presented itself to observers probably up till the end of the century, and it was serious enough.

157. It did not fail to be pointed out that, in the best of times, there never was less than 2 per cent. of unemployment among the members of the best organised trade societies; * that, in bad years, the percentage rose to 9 or 10; if this were the case, it was argued, among the best organised workers, what must it be among the worst, or among those who had no organisation at all.† For, as the century went on, in spite of the increase of wealth—or perhaps, on account of it, for, the larger the individual's income, the more difficult to predict his demand—there did not seem to be much ground for hoping that the period and intensity of depression might diminish within the cyclical years. Of course, the more the certainty of the cycle was realised and believed in, the easier it was for the employing class to meet it and even to profit by it. If a manufacturer, for instance, believed that, in a couple of years, there would be a strong demand for goods that were at the moment unsaleable, it would at least give him courage to carry on over the intervening time. But for the worker there was no such compensation. The only possible way of providing against the miseries of unemployment was by insurance—a thing for which there were no facilities in the unskilled trades even where they were organised in Trade Unions—a thing which the low level of unskilled wages seemed unable to provide—*à fortiori*, a thing which the unorganised worker could not be expected to do for himself.

158. There was some plausibility, then, in the contention of those who claimed that the "competitive system" was a failure; that it did not and could not in its nature lead to the steady rise of the whole community to a level where everyone "willing to work" would be sure of getting work to keep him and his family in independence, and prevent his falling from the standard of comfort which he attained or might have attained when the periodic tide was at its height.

159. The contrast was continually made with some fancied golden age when people lived on the land, and, if they lived barely, could not, at any rate, blame anyone but the Creator for bad crops; and even those who were most convinced that there never had

* This 2 per cent., however, is rather misleading. As explained by Mr. Barnes (Evidence, Vol. VIII., 82895) among the 100,000 or so members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, there are always some few who are not in the right place, or are registered as unemployed, when, as a matter of fact, they are simply changing over from one employment to another. Mr. A. Wilson Fox considers the 2 per cent. probably an irreducible minimum: "There will always be men out of work between jobs, or on account of breakdown in machinery, or on account of bad weather, etc." (Evidence, Vol. IX., 98897.)

† As to the adequacy of, and the validity of inference from, the "unemployed percentage," *see* evidence of Professor Chapman, Vol. VIII., 84791 (2–3), and *passim* the two Memoranda prepared for the Commission at the Board of Trade, entitled "Method of Compilation of Board of Trade's Percentages of Unemployed and the extent to which they may be taken as a Measure of Unemployment," and "Cyclical Trade Depressions" (Vol. IX., Appendix XXI., A.–B.). *Cf.* also evidence of Mr. A. Wilson Fox, Vol. IX., 98826: "After all, we only get the figures for some 600,000 Trade Unionists, and I am somewhat sceptical about applying them to the 2,000,000 trade unionists. One reason is that I think we have got figures from some trades which are particularly susceptible to changes, in bad times, such as the shipbuilding, the building and the engineering. Then another reason is that, among the Trade Unions we leave out, there are large bodies of men who are seldom out of employment at all, such as railway servants (80,000), textile workers (13,000) and coal-miners (400,000). Therefore, I do not think it would be safe to apply our unemployed figures to the Trade Unions as a whole; and, *à fortiori*, I do not think it is safe to apply them to the 11,000,000 of working people, and I do not think that anybody would suggest that one could apply the definite information which we have got as to the 600,000 to the 11,000,000" (98850). As to the question whether there is a larger proportion of unemployment among unionists or non-unionists, Mr. Fox will not express an opinion; there are pros and cons; "I think it a very arguable point" (98862–9). Similarly with the question whether depression affects unskilled men more than skilled men: "It is very difficult to say" (98875).

been such an age historically, and that the existing population could never have been subsisted under the old agricultural system, felt some regret that there was no simple life and labour left, where a man, unable to find an employer, might retire from the stress of competition, and grow his own potatoes.

160. This feeling was intensified as wealth increased, and as the Trade Unions raised the condition of the organised workers till they were able to protect themselves by "unemployed benefit" and invested savings, while yet the wages of the lower classes of workers were seen to be insufficient either to allow them to save much or to contribute enough to their Unions to secure the out-of-work payment.

161. At every time of bad trade, then, when numbers were thrown out of work, it was felt that, however much the problem was complicated and the real issues confused by the appearance of large numbers who obviously owed much of their distress to improvidence, drink, and laziness, there were many who did not deserve to be thrown on charity or the Poor Law—who were really the victims of a system of organised production in which occasional bad times and dislocation were inevitable. Thus local bodies were compelled by public opinion to open "relief works" to "tide over" the temporarily unemployed.

162. The experience of these relief works was almost always the same. Any examination, however perfunctory, weeded out large numbers; of those who got to work, the great majority, judged by results, were not economically worth the barest subsistence. But however unsatisfactory these relief works were—however little help they gave to the skilled artisan, whose skill was there of no advantage to him, and however much was wasted on unworthy applicants whom it would have been better to drive on to the Poor Law and to make feel the beneficence of the deterrent principle—they at least took a few of the "temporarily unemployed" off the streets; kept them in the habit of work; and left them the self-respect of doing something for a living. When trade revived, the relief works were closed; the unemployed were supposed to have gone back to their own work again; and the problem did not come before the public till the inevitable cycle brought the same phenomenon over again.

163. It may well, indeed, be the case that, at some future time, the community will wonder why, during the last quarter of a century or so, when the evils of recurring depression and unemployment were fully recognised by those who watched the phenomena from outside and had nothing to gain from them, so little thought was given to the remedying of these cyclical disturbances, except on the part of those whose methods aimed at a complete overturn of the system of private employment. In defence of this general inaction, it may be urged that *laissez-faire* had worked so well in the earlier parts of the century that it was a little difficult to believe that conscious planning and regulation of industry on the part of any central body could do much to improve matters.

164. Probably those who were most honestly concerned about the failure of this halting organisation of industry to do all that might have been expected of it—where they did not rest content with the knowledge that, on the whole, things were better than they ever had been in historical times—took courage from the hope that, as wealth increased, the Unions even of unskilled workers would become strengthened and add on unemployed benefits; that, as free, compulsory, and universal education showed its results on the rising generation, fewer parents would be content to send their children into the unskilled trades; or that, as the co-operative movement kept on gathering more and more of the working classes within its fold, not only would the habit of saving grow, but more and more production would be gathered into the hands of an organisation which claimed, and seemed, to be singularly free from these cyclical fluctuations.*

165. But still it was not recognised that there was any deeper problem than how to minimise the fluctuations, and to carry over those who were unfortunate enough not to have other provision till such time as the depression passed away. The only applicant technically qualified to be set to relief work under the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905—which, indeed, only continued the policy of previous municipal and local

* It is a noteworthy fact that, during the very bad year 1886, the co-operative sales did not fall off.

efforts to meet the same emergencies—was the real unemployed workman suffering from temporary depression in his particular trade, and the object of the relief work was, as has been so often said, simply to "tide him over" till he got back to his own work. The typical case may be taken to be that of builders' labourers, where the demand for this particular service, temporarily interrupted by the cessation of the normal activity of building, was sure to recur.

166. And it cannot be too strongly emphasised that this problem of cyclical fluctuations *remains*, and seems likely to remain even if we made every man a skilled workman, and enrolled him in a Trade Union paying unemployed benefit; that it is a distinct problem calling for its own remedies or alleviations; and that it is a matter of extreme importance that it should not be confused with the other problem which seems now to have emerged, and which we must now try to enunciate.

(15) The New Problem: Chronic Under-Employment.

167. At every Relief Committee—and later, at every Distress Committee—there appeared large numbers who did not seem to "fit in" with the theory on which relief or distress funds were based. This theory, as we have seen, was that, in times of good trade, there was approximately full employment for all classes; that, in the bad years, and, of course, at all times when any special non-economic calamity had occurred, there were unemployed—people thrown out of work from no fault of their own—who must be supported till the times were better; that a Poor Law provision which, rightly or wrongly, carried some measure of stigma, was not the right kind of provision for working people who merely required to be "tided over" a period which experience had shown to be inevitable.

168. But now, before every Committee, appeared numbers in the prime of life as regards years,* to whom the idea of "tiding over" was evidently quite inapplicable. They seemed to fall into three distinct categories: the Casual workers, the Seasonal workers, and the Unemployables.

169. (1) *The Casual Workers.*—These are men engaged from hour to hour or day to day, and for whom it is a matter of chance whether employment will be forthcoming on the morrow. At the best of times, they are never taken up into regular industry, but count themselves well off if they obtain four days a week of work. In dull seasons and at exceptional times, these casuals are, of course, more unemployed than usual, and they appear in crowds wherever relief work is to be had.

170. The type of "casual" is the dock labourer. This class, and the problem it presents, must have been in evidence ever since there were great docks. In an Appendix to the 1834 Report, for instance, we find the following statement about Limehouse: "No doubt many families are relieved on the ground that their wages are insufficient to maintain their children. This is generally the case in the docks, where the wages paid are generally very small in amount to even constant labourers, and insufficient to support a large family, but when it is considered that many hundreds of persons are hanging about the walls of these establishments from day to day without being employed at all, or perhaps at most but one or two days out of the six, it must be obvious that one or two days' pay cannot keep their families for a week, and the deficiency is of course supplied from the poor rate. If the redundant labourers were taken off, the constant labourer would be able to demand a suitable return for his labour in the docks, the manufactory, and the shops, by reason of the scarcity."†

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* The average age of the unemployed is a matter on which it seems impossible as yet to give authoritative statistics. In some distress committees, statistics of age were taken, not of the total applicants, but only of those who actually obtained work. But one of the main reasons for selecting men for work was that the applicants had a number of young dependent children, *i.e.*, generally, men between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age. And there can be no doubt, not only that many of the better class unemployed, owing to pride and independence, did not apply to the distress committees at all, but that many elderly and old men were deterred from applying, owing to the rough nature of the work offered. It is quite certain, however, that very large numbers are between twenty and forty years of age. It is significant that, in all probability, the average age of the unemployed belonging to unskilled is lower than that of the unemployed belonging to skilled industries. (Mr. R. H. Tawney, Evidence, Vol. IX., 96617.)

† Appendix B. (2), p. 108.

171. The history of the growth of dock labour since that time would practically be a history of the great docks, and it would be beyond our province to enter on this, further than to suggest that it is since 1834 that the growth of our import and export trade has opened up the great tidal rivers and estuaries, and made cities on their banks and at their mouths the great centres for the labour connected with the loading and unloading of ships and the warehousing of goods. Cardiff and the other Welsh ports, for instance, owe their importance to the opening up of the coal fields; Middlesbrough—an entirely new town since 1830—to the development of the Cleveland iron industry, and so on. To this extent the problem of dock labour is a new one, though its features are unchanged since 1834—large numbers, in excess of demand even on the busiest days, hanging about hoping to get a job, and finding employment just sufficient to keep them from seeking work elsewhere.

172. The reason why there should be more or less of an industrial swamp at every shipping centre requires little explanation. The work of the ordinary docker requires nothing but muscular strength and not always even that. Consequently, the ranks are recruited, not only from the families of dockers, but from those who come by sea looking for work and, of necessity, take the first thing that offers, and from the failures of all classes. Casuality here is added to want of skill, and the combination is deplorable in all its consequences.*

173. There is, moreover, an attraction at the docks, which strongly appeals to very many. It is that there is no fixed engagement, and that yet there is a reasonable chance of getting a job or two—with overtime paid extra—each week. The "docker's romance," as it is called, is that he, alone of all tradesmen, can take days off when he likes, without suffering for it. And while the life does not lose its attractiveness, the number of dockers required has probably diminished owing to labour-saving machinery, such as cranes, elevators, etc. The docker's work being necessarily intermittent, he gets into the habit of it, and, even where it need not be irregular, makes it so; the irregular wage discourages methodical expenditure; and the docker becomes a by-word for thriftlessness.†

174. Unfortunately, casual labour is not confined to the persons who load and unload ships. The occupation of the store porters, in the great warehouses which line the docks for miles in Liverpool and other places, is even more irregular. "It is utterly impossible," says Mr. A. L. Rathbone, "as a rule, for the warehouseman himself to tell from day to day how many men he will require the following morning. He may have a heavy stock of any particular class of goods in his warehouse, the owner of which may sell it, say, late in the afternoon; the order is passed through, and the carrier applies for delivery first thing in the morning. The warehouseman thus requires a considerable number of men; but, for days on end, even although he has a heavy stock in his warehouse, he may not require more than one or two hands besides himself to attend to sampling orders, and such small matters of that kind."‡

175. In pig iron and steel smelting at Middlesbrough, again, there is much casual labour, particularly in shipping and stocking the huge amounts of iron ore and crude metal, where men are employed by the hour, ton, or job, and labour is liable to interruption by bad weather, or a lull in shipment. In Birmingham, all the large locomotive works, as well as the larger metal works, employ a number of casual labourers, taken on by the day and hanging about the gates between jobs.§ In engineering, the ship repairers' men, employed in all the dock centres in repairs to ships and ships' engines, are employed for long hours at high pressure, and are then thrown out of work till the next repairing job. The railway companies also employ casual

* It need scarcely be said that labour may be entirely unskilled and yet not casual. In Burton, for instance, very many of the occupations connected with brewing require no special skill, and a large proportion of the employés are unskilled labourers, so much so that Burton may be called a "labourers' town." (*Cost of Living of the Working-Classes*, Cd. 3864, 1908.)

† On account of its extent and special features, the present phenomena of dock labour form the subject of a separate section ((21.) p. 356).

‡ Evidence, Vol. VIII., Appendix lxiii. (9). *Cf.* also Mr. Pringle's Memorandum on *Fluctuations of Employment in a Liverpool Grain Warehouse.*

§ Final Report of Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 97.

labour—generally as temporary porters—at times of holiday pressure to a varying extent, but so far as possible prefer to get extra labour by transferring men from one grade to another. The occupation of carmen again is a very casual employment: in London, at the busiest times, 5,000 out of 42,000 are said to be idle, and two-third, only belong to permanent staffs.

176. For most men, indeed, as has been said, "employment consists of a succession of jobs," but it is bad in every respect when the jobs are discontinuous and of irregular duration. This is the characteristic of the many trades connected with buildings where the guaranteed employment seldom extends beyond the completion of the particular contract, and is at all times subject to interruption by bad weather.* There seems in fact to be good reason for thinking that the history of the building trade during the last few years is responsible for greatly adding to the number of casuals. Between 1891 and 1901 the new and striking activity of municipalities in water, gas, electricity, tramways, housing, drainage, etc., not only increased the flow of population into urban centres, but induced a disproportionate flow of capital and labour into the building trades, and the ebb of the tide has left both plant and men stranded. This was particularly unfortunate, as these industries already employed so much unskilled and casual labour. In time, no doubt, building will revive—it is usually the last to feel a depression of trade and the last to recover—but it will not be till the cycle has entered on its upward course; and, if it be true, as asserted, that, owing to recent improvements, the unskilled labour necessary has gone down to about one-half, the industrial swamp in the building trades will rival that at the docks.

177. Whether casual labour is increasing and in what proportion, may be a question. Some witnesses are of opinion that, in cities like London, there is more tendency to take on and dismiss people at short notice than there used to be, and much less employment of men for long periods.† But, in industries where much and expensive plant is used—and the range of such industries is increasing—the tendency would seem to be in the other direction. "Were 'home-work' impossible, it is probable that there would be greater regularity of employment in certain branches of the tailoring trades: were expensive machinery needed for brickmaking, it would soon be carried on all the year round."‡

178. Investigations into the circumstances of the casual unemployed seem to show that, if anything is to be done with this class, it must be done for them. They are unable to work out their own salvation. The Toynbee Trust Inquiry into the condition of the unemployed in 1895–6 reported that their most marked characteristic was their "stolidity," their "inability to accept change," "their willingness to rely on someone else—wife, children, or charity, till another similar job turned up."

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* The excessive specialisation in the building trades of itself leads to unemployment. Among even the lower grades there are scaffolders and hoisters, timbermen, mason's labourers, bricklayer's labourers, carpenter's labourers, plumber's mates, and painter's labourers, all men who have acquired skill in those particular sections, and are not always ready to take up other work. "Very seldom would a labourer think of asking for employment in any other section but that which he was accustomed to." (Report of Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, Appendix, p. 417.)

† The tendency in this direction is perhaps illustrated from the Glasgow baking trade. On all days of the week there is a great demand for early morning bread, and, on Saturdays, the average daily demand is doubled. So, instead of keeping a staff, say, of twenty men, fifteen men are permanent and ten are taken on for the first half days during the week and for the whole of Saturday. Of these workers it is said: "They gradually become confirmed in unsteady habits, and among them there are very few cases where a little help would be of much service." (Mr. James Macfarlane, Evidence, Vol. IX., Appendix cv.)

‡ For an analysis of the tendencies which make, some for greater, some for less, regularity of employment, *see* the Report of the Special Committee on Unskilled Labour of the Charity Organisation Society, 1908, pp. 4–8. "The conclusions are shortly these. Apart from large disturbing influences, there is a constant process of consolidation and organisation going on in any large group of industries, by which the total opportunities for employment tend to become more regular. Again, the increased use of capital in machinery displaces hand-labour, with the result that the demand for labour is, on the whole, regularised, and in the case of the lower grades of employment the quality of the labourer demanded is raised. On the other hand, in so far as casual labour is itself a cause tending to produce a permanent over-supply in the labour market, there are likely to arise new forms of industry, constituting a fresh demand for casual labour so long as this labour remains cheap."

179. Casual labour, besides, has this heavy additional handicap, that it does not give the material for building up an industrial "character," such as domestic servants and seamen, for instance, find indispensable. It has been suggested that, in relief or distress work, the best method of discriminating between "deserving" and "undeserving"* is to take records of past employments, and it has seemed to some that provision should be made for workers generally providing themselves with a kind of industrial *dossier*, where the duration and value of their jobs would appear to their credit. But it is practically impossible for the casual labourer who is engaged only by the hour, day, or job, and passes from employer to employer in the course of the week, to build up such a "character."

180. It is quite evident that "tiding over" is not an idea on which to base any remedy for such workers. The distress at the docks, for instance, is not due to temporary depression—although things are worse during these depressions. If relief works are opened in the vicinity, they will be flooded by this class—particularly if the work is for two or three days a week—but nothing that is done there will make the casual less a casual. Evidently the most that "tiding over" can do for such people is to tide them over perhaps from six days a week at relief work to four days a week at their own casual jobs.

181. (2) *The Seasonal Workers.*—These are workers whose work describes a cycle within a cycle; people fully employed, perhaps, for some months of the year and idle the rest. This class also comes largely into prominence at times of relief work—if it be the off-season with them.

182. In a sense nearly all workers are seasonal, their trades busy in certain months and slack in others. To quote the Memorandum prepared for us at the Board of Trade on *Statistics of Seasonal Industries and Industries carried on by Casual Labour*, "Seasonal fluctuation is found to a more or less marked degree in nearly every industry. . . . The seasons on the whole are least marked and least regular in industries connected with the manufacture and use of metals—engineering, shipbuilding, miscellaneous metal trades, iron and steel working, tinplate, and steel sheet milling. Here seasonal fluctuation is not so much absent as liable to be overridden by other movements, in particular, cyclical fluctuation."† In the best industries, indeed, employment is kept continuous only by employers taking considerable risks in preparing stocks in anticipation of demand.

183. But what is now known as the "seasonal worker" is, to a large extent, the product of modern conditions—of the excessive specialisation which tends to set whole trades apart for the provision of some commodity or service which can be produced, or is in demand, only at certain seasons of the year. And the aggregation of population into urban centres often provides large amounts of labour, chiefly of women and children, willing to take a few weeks or months of employment. The types of such work are jam-making, which can be done only in autumn and thrives on the abundant cheap labour of East and South London, and aerated water manufacture, where the active demand comes with hot weather, and where "a sudden fall of temperature means the dismissal of many hands." ‡

* Unfortunately, as we think, in many of the distress committees, investigation into character and record has been banned, and preference given, not according to deserts, but according to number of dependents. We entirely agree with our investigators that, by ignoring the fact that, in an appreciable percentage of cases, unemployment is directly due to a man's own fault, injury is done to the genuine worker. "A few instances of men of bad character obtaining relief obtain a quite fictitious importance if, by ignorance of their real numbers, the public is led to hastily regard as undeserving the unemployed as a whole." (Report of Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, p. 59.)

† It is suggestive that, while the seasonal fluctuation in engineering, shipbuilding, and the metal trades is negligible, the cyclical fluctuations of employment are more violent and the depressions in bad periods far deeper in those trades than in others—the reason probably being that, in times of depression, employers do not as a rule renew machinery or undertake extensions, nor do shipping lines add to their fleets in times of falling freights (Professor Chapman, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84791 (15).) In fact, if these trades were eliminated from the general table, the general depressions would have been expressed in far lower percentages. (Memorandum on "Cyclical Trade Fluctuations," Vol. IX App. xxi., D.)

‡ See *passim* the Reports of Mr. Thomas Jones, and of Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire. In the former industry, to the evils of seasonal employment is added that of casuality: "A certain number are employed throughout all the year, but, during the summer months, June to September, a large body of additional labour is required, and both in the factory processes of making jam and in the preparatory picking of the fruit a very great many casual workers are required. . . . The casual pickers are taken on as required during the day, and wait round the factory doors to be hired." (Report of Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 42.)

184. In the clothing trades, the demand is most active in the spring; in the printin trades, depression comes in late autumn; in building—a set of trades which seems to stand somewhat by itself in the intermittent character of the work, the hourly terms of engagement, and the great differentiation and specialisation of the workers—operations are most economically carried out in the summer and are suspended in frost and bad weather; in docking, the slack and heavy seasons depend on such things as the closing of the Baltic by ice, the arrival of cargoes bearing the crops of different countries, etc. In gas making, the demand falls away in summer—so much so that gas workers are recognised as men with two trades, most of them taking to brick-making in summer and a very large proportion being bricklayers' labourers at other times. In summer, on the other hand, the Dublin stout-makers experience a seasonal expansion requiring 150 supplementary hands, which they get by arrangement with the distillers whose heavy season is autumn and early winter.

185. The theoretical position is that, if the community demands seasonal products or services, the price they must pay for them will be sufficient to afford wages high enough to cover an insurance premium against the dead time of the year.* Unhappily this is not always the case—particularly as regards the seasonal women workers; and, even where it is so, the utterly demoralising effects of intermittent labour are very obvious. Painters, for instance, whose wages while in employment are very high, figure largely in every Distress Committee register.

186. Here, also, as the evil has nothing to do with cyclical fluctuations, the remedy must not be based on the idea of "tiding over." What the seasonal worker, if he is to continue so, requires, is a second trade. To give him public relief work is indeed to fill up the gaps between his seasons of employment; but, as the seasons of unemployment are annually recurrent, this would require annual relief works, in which case the community would be subsidising certain industries, and encouraging employers to keep down their permanent staffs and trust to getting extra labour, whenever wanted, at the relief works. As one of our witnesses says of the sewing workrooms, opened to give women temporary employment, "while the way in to the workroom will in time become easy enough, a way out of it still remains to be found."†

187. (3) *The "Unemployables."*—These are people whom no ordinary employer would willingly employ, not necessarily because they are literally incapable of doing work, but because they are not up to the standards required by the industries which they wish to enter or remain in. The word, unfortunately, has obtained a large extension

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* "Most trades are seasonal in the sense that they are busy in certain months of the year and slack in others. In the majority of the principal industries, employing mainly male labour, these fluctuations are not too severe to be discounted and weathered by reasonably prudent workmen; but in some, notably the building trades, employment diminishes very seriously in the winter months. Since, however, these fluctuations come from the nature of the work, the industries concerned have no claim on the nation in general, but only on that part of the public who uses their services. In seasonal trades wages should be, and in general are, on a higher scale than for work of similar skill in regular trades, and it is the business of the industries as a whole and of the individual workmen to make the busy months pay for the slack. To give public relief is to subsidise a particular trade at the expense of others. All that can be done by public bodies is to endeavour to equalise the demand by giving their work, when practicable, to be done in the less busy months." (Professor Bowley, Evidence, Vol. VIII. 88112 (3).)

† *Vide* Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald's Evidence, Vol. VIII., 82651. In the case of women's industries, there is, however, some tendency for the evil to right itself. Where there is much plant, and where, accordingly, the fixed charges are high, it is to the employers' interest to keep their factories fully employed, and this, it is said, is the case in most jam and biscuit and aerated water factories. Happily, too, the evil is recognised by the best employers. "The more competent and thoughtful endeavour to overcome the natural fluctuations due to the seasons by superior organisation. With the manufacture of jam and marmalade they combine the making of sweets and the potting of meats. They thus occupy the time of the majority of their employés. An artificial florist, employing over 200 girls and women in a trade which occupies six months of the year, has introduced a second trade, the preparing of quills for hat trimming, and now the workers are employed all the year round. Some make to stock in slack seasons, others work fewer hours; some employ half the workers half the week, others again dismiss the least skilled and share what work there is among the more skilled. In some factories several devices will be found combined."—(Interim Report of Miss Williams and Mr. Jones, p. 57.) In Luton, where the staple trade is straw hat-making, and where work is always slack during six months of the year, felt hat-making has been introduced; and, "it is now very usual to find the two trades carried on by the same firm, employing the same workpeople at different periods of the year." (*Cost of Living of the Working Classes*, Cd. 3864, 1908, p. 284.)

of late years. It has come to mean not only the imbecile, the drunkard, the impotent, but also the person who cannot conform to the requirements of a highly artificial and exacting system of industry, or find an employer who can give the time and pains to find him a place where his services are worth a wage.

188. It must be recognised that an enormous change has come over the character of industry since the days when England was an agricultural country. To feed our vast population, and to produce a national income large enough to defray our increasingly heavy burdens, we have had to organise the work of the community in a way of which the past had almost no experience. In the course of this organising, it has become difficult if not impossible for any man to obtain a wage unless he comes in to the organism where labour is divided and its products brought together again, and where everything raised or made is first sold. That is to say, the working man has to find an employer who will fit him in to a place in this organised system. Employers, competing among themselves to sell with a keenness unknown to any former age, are pressed, under dread of failure and disgrace as well as of loss, to adopt the most perfect machinery and the most complex processes for producing goods; with the result that machinery, for long the welcome auxiliary of labour, has become, in countless ways, its relentless rival, taking its place wherever a shilling can be saved. And so it seems to have come about that, while the total demand for labour is probably increasing—of which we shall have to speak later—it may be demand for the kind of labour that the average man is not able to supply.

189. In view of this extension of the term, we seem to have at least four classes who come under the designation of Unemployables, although it would be easy to divide these again into any number of sub-classes :—

(*a*) The most obviously "unemployable" is the person whose physical condition is such as to unfit him for the stress of manual labour, while his mental and moral equipment is not such as to fit him for anything better. This unfitness may be the result of vice, drunkenness, bad conduct generally, and one may have little hesitation in leaving such a person to be dealt with by the Poor Law. But the unfitness may also be the "act of God," and the most rigid Distress Committees do, as a rule, send such a man, when willing to work, to whatever jobs they may have to offer rather than to the workhouse. The fact is notorious: light manual work is the only thing which such a man can possibly do, and the manual labour market is already overstocked with applicants who are up to the physical standard required by private employers.

(*b*) Next to him is the man who would generally pass muster as "able-bodied," but who has some slight physical defect, natural or acquired, such as lameness, defective sight, defective hearing, want of an arm, liability to giddiness, heart trouble, etc., or the man who suffers from some slight mental "want," not enough to bring him within the category of feeble-minded. Such a man is, in many cases, "worth a wage" if the exact employment is found for him which he can do—the proof being that similar persons are employed in all kinds of situations; but the ordinary employer, as a rule, "has no use" for him, and, for want of information or want of interest taken in his case, the man unaided is very unlikely to find the place which, economically, he is perfectly well fitted to fill.

(*c*) The third class consists of the able-bodied man of middle-age, brought up to, and skilled in, a trade which, through industrial changes, has become irregular or obsolete, and without the alertness and energy to train himself in another skilled trade. "When his own trade fails him, the skilled mechanic seems unable to find employment except as a labourer," says the Toynbee Trust Inquiry of 1895–6: "in the entire list (of cases investigated) there is not a single satisfactory case of a skilled man who has had sufficient mental and physical activity to attempt a new trade."

(*d*) The fourth class is one for which everyone must have the deepest sympathy—the men "too old at fifty." Everyone has heard how workers in

shipyards dye their hair and are afraid to wear spectacles.* The strain of hard physical work begins to tell, as a rule, long before even fifty, and the men themselves become conscious that they are not so "fit for their work" as younger men. Of late years, things have gone hardly with this class. Employers are willing enough, as a rule, to pay the standard wage, but naturally they want the full return for that wage. If the Trade Unions will not allow the elderly men to take less, the employers prefer younger and stronger men, and no one can blame them. Then, of late years, have come the Employers' Liability Act and the Workmen's Compensation Acts, and dealt another blow at this unhappy class.†

190. One consideration seems to us strongly to reinforce the undoubtedly current feeling that, for the three latter classes, and even for individuals in the first, the modern workhouse is not the proper place. It is that the evolution of industry has necessitated the perfecting of all the tools of production, and that this tendency has had full play as regards machinery—and even as regards land since we opened our ports to the competition of crops grown under better conditions than naturally prevail in this northern climate—while, all the time, there are many circumstances, social and otherwise, which have prevented the human instrument of production from being brought to the same point of perfection. Consequently, in all trades that employ machinery, employers—and the whole conduct of industry has fallen into the hands of employers—almost of necessity put the human tool into competition with the machine tool, and, unless the human tool can stand the comparison, they substitute the machine. Notoriously, the man cannot compete with the machine in very many respects—in point of untiring strength, accuracy of "repeat work," and the like—and, just as the great mass of half-trained pianists have been put on one side by the pianola, so great masses of men are called on to submit to a searching comparison which they cannot stand. In every trade, then, as in every profession, there is less and less room for the ill-endowed and the ill-educated. They sink to a level where the only demand is for labour so cheap that it does not pay to invent a mechanical substitute. They are very like superannuated fishing-boats, drawn up on the shore, and only put in the water at times of exceptional takes.‡

191. If we compare, for instance, the demands made on the average worker by the complex machine industry of to-day with the demands made on him in 1834, when the great employment was agriculture, and when agriculture was at a comparatively low level, it seems easy to understand how it comes that, in every occupation, while there is room enough at the top, there is always a surplus at the bottom.

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* "I believe a great many employers would not take on a man at fifty if they knew it. . . . Many employers will not take a man on who is the least bit grey-haired." (Sir Benjamin C. Browne, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86260–86261.)

† It is questionable if a fifth class should not be added to the unemployables. The information we have from Poor Law sources, distress committees, and shelters is that discharged soldiers find great difficulty in getting employment. In 1893, the Board of Trade Report on the Unemployed pointed out that, in the previous year, something like 29,000 men, discharged from the Army, or transferred to the first class Reserve, were thrown on the labour market to compete for employment as ordinary workmen. Of these, cavalrymen and artillery, from their experience with horses, had a good chance as grooms and carters, and the Royal Engineers were qualified for posts requiring some technical skill. But no less than two-thirds had belonged to infantry regiments, and, as the large proportion of these were not mechanics, they had every chance of drifting into the ranks of unskilled labour. And, unfortunately, they seem to have some difficulty in settling down when they do get employment. "Guinness's Brewery tried to take on a regular percentage of ex-soldiers, but thought them not satisfactory, ready to leave for slight reasons, and apt to consider the work too hard." (Mr. Cyril Jackson, Report 1908, p. 9.) Striking corroborative evidence may be found in the second volume of the Viceregal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland. (Cd. 3203.) The fact that sailors have no such difficulty, and are readily absorbed, seems to point a suggestive moral. *See* Evidence *passim*.

‡ "Though there always were a certain number of men who were unemployed, and a certain number who, from misfortune, were permanently thrown out of work, there are now a very much larger class who fail to get employment even when trade is good, and whose condition seems to be of a far more hopeless character. They seem to be men for whom, in our present high-pressure industrial system, there is no place; sometimes they are able-bodied, sometimes they are comparatively young, but they do not seem to be quite suitable for any work on which one can lay one's finger even in good times. No doubt occasionally, either by their own effort or by the efforts of somebody else, some of them are restored to proper industrial conditions. Although the numbers are not in our case very large, it seems to me that the existence of the class is undeniable, new, and serious." (Sir Benjamin C. Browne, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86221 (4).)

It seems probable that these three latter classes, who practically are never regularly employed even in the best times, would, many or all of them, have been employed in simpler times when there was little industry outside of agriculture.

192. This consideration of itself seems to give us a standpoint from which to judge whether the "principles of 1834" are adequate to modern conditions or not.

193. The Commissioners who surveyed the field of employment in 1834 had to deal with a problem which was definite enough and serious enough, but still was comparatively limited, namely, the rapid descent of able-bodied men from being self-respecting labourers to being persons who accepted parish relief without feeling of shame.

194. They saw that, under the existing Poor Law system, the workers themselves —and the nation with them—were losing heavily; deteriorated morally, mentally, and physically, by dependence, they were not doing the work they might—not even producing the equivalent of the relief they got—and so were laying a burden on the rest of the community.

195. So far as one may judge, the Commissioners were sturdy believers in the old economic theory that increase of supply of wealth is increase of demand for labour, and they went to work with the sincere conviction that, if sufficiently drastic measures were taken, the great majority of the pauperised labourers could get back, and would go back, to independent wage-earning. They had no fear that there was not work enough for every able-bodied man willing to work, and thus they had no fear that, if outdoor relief were stopped, the same men would become indoor paupers.

196. The twofold character of their problem deserves to be emphasised. They had not only to forcibly deter the able-bodied worker from accepting relief; they had also to prevent the officials of the time—Guardians, Overseers, Justices—from offering it.

197. What we must not forget, in comparing their problem with ours, is that the labour with which they had for the most part to do was, naturally, agricultural labour. Rightly, but in the teeth of much of popular opinion, they held that, even in agriculture, there was room enough for all the labour in the country. But when they looked outside of agriculture, the labour with which they came most in contact was the new factory industry of Lancashire and the North, and there they were assured that there was employment for more than were likely to come forward.

198. But the very statement of the problem presented to the Commissioners of 1834 is sufficient of itself to show how widely it differs from the problem to-day.

199. We have indeed still to deter men from falling into the habit of dependence—to save them from themselves. We have still to apply some almost self-acting test to safeguard the ratepayers from imposture. Possibly we have still to deter short-sighted philanthropists from listening to the "strong cases" which "make bad laws."

200. But the very much greater problem now presented is as regards those who have never, or never willingly, accepted poor relief; who are, many of them, anxious to work six days out of the seven; and whom deterrent measures are likely to drive, not into employment, but into the very place which the Commissioners of 1834 hoped to keep them out of, the workhouse.

201. Taking into consideration, then, the existence, in somewhat large numbers, of the four classes mentioned whom no employer "will willingly employ," the question we must ask ourselves regarding them is: Is there any hope that, if our measures are sufficiently deterrent, we shall drive or raise them into the ranks of the employed? If not, the great principle of 1834 is not adequate to the new position, and we must conclude that, as regards these four classes, we cannot adopt the simple principle of the Act of 1834 that, in order to drive men into independent labour, we need only apply a test that shall be sufficiently deterrent.

(16) The Effect of Machinery.

202. If our diagnosis is correct, it seems to give an ample explanation of unemployment. Not only is there cyclical dislocation which recurrently reduces the demand for labour,

and issues either in general short time, as in collieries and the cotton trade, or in workers of all classes and grades being thrown out of employment altogether, but, going on all the time—never disappearing, and only intensified by bad times—there is this normal under-employment of casual and seasonal workers, and there is the entirely fitful employment of the "unemployables."

203. But many of our witnesses, and many others who sent in statements, seem to be under the impression, or are seriously convinced, that the fundamental cause of unemployment is that the demand for labour has actually contracted and continues to contract.

204. This we cannot believe. As all men, whether active producers or not, are consumers, and as all wealth, as a condition of its continuing in existence, is constantly seeking and actually obtaining employment, the demand for commodities must increase, not only as population increases, but as the wealth of the population increases. Indeed, the rise in the standard of life, which is a marked characteristic in all the industrial classes, is an indication that the demand for those who supply the goods and services necessary for this higher standard is increasing.

205 As Carlyle put it tersely: "Too many shirts? Well, that is a novelty in this intemperate earth, with its nine hundred millions of bare backs." This is only a striking way of saying that the immense majority of men and women have never yet been able to make that "effective demand" for commodities which a full developing life on their part would involve—to say nothing of what is almost equally obvious,—that there is no class which would not gladly take more than it has ever been able to get. Even among the best educated and most sober-minded, plain living and high thinking is an ideal which has sunk into the background in view of the fact that high thinking, particularly in science, demands more and more expensive equipment for research, travel, etc.*

206. To this, however, it may be answered—and we feel so strongly the plausibility of the contention that we wish to do every justice to it—that no one denies that, as population and wealth increase, more and more *goods* will be demanded. But this does not prevent the possibility that, of the two great groups of factors producing these goods, machinery may be doing more and man less. It is pointed out, for instance, that single machines are doing work which formerly used to be done by half a dozen men; that the output of every organised unit of production is very much, sometimes immensely, more than it was a few years ago, while the number of the workers employed within the unit is probably no greater than it was. Even then, if human consumption keeps up with this immense production, there is no reason to think that the human productive factor is not diminishing in importance relative to the machine factor.

207. This contention is of course strengthened by the very obvious and notorious fact that the progress of invention and improvement in industry of all kinds is continually displacing labour of one kind or another. We have had nothing of late years, indeed, so distressing as the displacing of the hand-loom weavers by the power looms; but such things as the change from gas to electric light, from male clerks to women typists, from horse carriages to motor cars, involve for the time a displacement of labour which, in its degree, is very grievous to the classes concerned. †

* Mill once said that it was questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made had lightened the day's task of any human being, and the passage has been quoted again and again without noticing that he wrote in 1842, and that, in the next paragraph, he looked forward to a time when these inventions would effect those "great changes in human destiny which it was in their nature and in their futurity to accomplish." But Mill's aphorism remains true in this sense, that the increase of wealth and the steady rise in the general standards of life have so enormously increased the demands for goods and services of all sorts that, unless some new moral or social tendency emerges in the direction of "plain living," the day's task is likely to be for most of us as long and as hard as ever.

† This incessant economic transformation and its painful accompaniments are necessarily more prominent in an old country, which has been improving and changing machinery and processes for over a century, than in a new one like Germany or the United States, where many of our industries are now being introduced, and where the manufacturers start with all the advantage of our experience, and put in nothing but the very newest plant. In such countries indeed, the most obvious feature in the introduction of machinery is that it is associated with new factories, provides fresh employment, and does not involve displacement or modification of labour already engaged. It is, however, only a question of time till these countries present the same phenomena.

208. Even in agriculture, where progress has been slower during the last century than in other industries, the introduction of the self-binders in the eighties displaced the casual labour from Ireland and elsewhere at harvest and other busy seasons, and it is only of late, as we have seen, that the equilibrium of supply and demand in agricultural labour has been re-established by the immense depopulation of the rural districts. In other industries, this displacement has been so obvious that we need not waste time in proving it.

209. The general answer we should give to this is to say that "displacement" is by no means the same as "contraction," and that, even where it is, contraction in certain industries does not necessarily, or even probably, involve contraction in all.

210. It seemed to us, however, that, while the weight of theory is entirely on the other side, this was a question which might properly be referred to practical men; and, with the view of eliciting the experience of those who may be supposed to have the best means of getting the information, we issued various schedules of questions bearing on the subject to a large number of representative employers in all classes of industry.

(17) Displacement of Labour: Replies of Employers.

211. Our first set of questions related to the general effect of the spread of machinery and more highly organised processes on the demand for labour.

Here we found that "displacement" takes many forms.

212. In many trades, the common, though by no means the universal, change is that, within the last twenty years or so, "a whole shopful of trained mechanics," as one puts it, each of them of more or less all-round skill, has been replaced by perhaps a hundred workers, men, women, or, it may be, children, tending specialised machinery, and guided and supervised by half a dozen intelligent foremen. Here, there may be no contraction of the total numbers employed, and yet there is a displacement accompanied by serious hardships, raising serious problems, and leading to many perhaps ill-directed efforts at retaining the old systems.

213. In many trades, again, it seems certain that middle-aged men are being displaced by younger men, where the former cannot keep pace with the speed and alertness now required—men between twenty-five and thirty-five are preferred because they are in the prime of their working powers—and the tendency, say some, is intensified by the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Acts, which make employers think twice before employing elderly men who may be presumed to be more liable to accidents.* The man above forty is not, as a rule, dismissed, but, if he is, he finds some difficulty in getting a new place, and in many trades, particularly engineering, boiler-making, and shipbuilding, men have little chance of finding a fresh situation after fifty or even forty-five. This is specially the case among the unskilled.

214. But in others—and these probably the best trades—there is no such tendency, because, among skilled workmen at least, "there is a progressive increase in skill and experience till past middle life," and the losses incurred by new hands are so great,

* This is a very general presumption on the part of our witnesses. The late Sir George Livesey, however, gave it as his experience that from twenty-five to thirty years is "the most dangerous age." During a period of eight years he found that the percentage of accidents at that age was 55 per 1,000 annually, as against 18 per 1,000 of men over sixty years. "Advancing age," he said, "does not make men more liable to accidents. They are, on the contrary, less liable" (83244). Mr. George Barnes, M.P., supplies strong confirmation of this view (Evidence, Vol. VIII. 82803, 82808). The evidence presented to us, however, as to the effect of the Acts in this way is most conflicting. Trade Union representatives, as a rule, deny that they have had any influence, asserting strongly that it is the speeding up of machinery and the consequent increase of nervous and physical strain that is giving the younger men a preference and lowering the average age of employment. (Mr. Sexton, however, says that he now thinks that the Acts are affecting the men: "The insurance companies are stipulating that the employer who insures shall pay more for a man of a certain age than he would pay for a younger one." Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84211.) Employers on the other hand, who are very much disposed to look on the Acts as another of the pains and penalties thrown on them of late years, generally take the opposite view. Sir Benjamin C. Browne, for instance, who thinks that the Act has been an enormous gain to the working classes, and agrees that the aversion to employ elderly men was very much on the increase before the Act came into force, considers it "notoriously only too true that it has made it much more difficult for men above middle age to obtain employment," and puts forward the strong opinion that it acts prejudicially to the small employer, and frightens him from employing labour at all (Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86221 (5) and 86262, 86419).

that the tendency is to have as few changes as possible—and this will be stronger, the greater the amount of capital sunk in fine machinery. Again it is pointed out that, if this were a general tendency, it would be shown by the statistics of the unemployed, and that this is certainly not the case.

215. As regards the often alleged displacement of men by women, it is pointed out that the appearance of women and young persons in many trades hitherto regarded as a "preserve" of the adult man, is not a displacement so much as an addition—the natural effect of the division of labour and specialisation of process which make new openings for those who can perform the lighter and easier jobs, while the adult men get as much to do as formerly, in the heavier work appropriate to them—and that the lesser powers of women and the lack of continuity due to marriage are a deterrent against the undue extension of such displacement. On the other hand, in some industries, such as laundry work and lace manufacture, the manual labour of women and young persons is being replaced by male-tended machinery.

216. As to the displacement of regular by casual labour, there are, happily, few cases in the more important industries where casual workers are fit for the work of such industries. But, where the output is large and the demand intermittent, there is "less permanent labour." There is no casual labour in collieries and quarries.*

217. One obvious displacement is that a great deal of work that used to employ both skilled and unskilled labour is now done by machinery. Cranes, elevators, steam diggers, etc., replace manual carriers and navvies; the carpenter or joiner, who took the crude timber and converted it into doors and the like from start to finish, has now only to "knock together" work prepared for him by machinery; joiners, masons, and bricklayers alike are displaced by steel frames and concrete, and so on.

218. In the course of displacement of this sort, whether it be due to the larger employment of machinery or to a change in the character of the machinery, there is a good deal of change in the *personnel* and in the character of the labour that is left, and this is discussed later. But when the naïve statement is made that, if there had not been this machinery, human labour would be employed doing its work, there need be no hesitation as to the reply. Independently of the fact that much machinery—perhaps the bulk of it—is doing what man never did and never could do, and that, in many directions, such as puddling, recent inventions have dispensed with severe manual toil and also with the physical strain which attended many processes, the sufficient answer surely is that, if it had not been for the machinery and the possibilities of existence it brought, there would not have been anything like the present population to employ.

219. Another set of questions related to the effect of these various displacements on the demand for labour. Here the answers showed a remarkable consensus of opinion on three things; that the introduction of or improvements in, machinery do temporarily reduce the demand for labour within the department where such changes occur; that the displacement does not, as a rule, reduce the labour employed in each producing unit, the workers dispensed with being readily absorbed within the same business—particularly in shipbuilding, where changes are slowly introduced and affect only a few men at a time; and that the final result is that more labour is required instead of less.†

220. The argument is that machinery and new processes are not introduced unless they reduce cost per unit of product;‡ that reduced cost, thanks to competition, brings

* It is worth noticing that miners scarcely figure at all among the unemployed. Of the 10,473 who applied at the Salvation Army Bureau in 1892, only 28 were miners: of the 803 at the Church Army Labour Homes, only 3. (Board of Trade Report on *Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed*, 1893, pp. 163, 176).

† "You, generally speaking, find if you spend £5,000 on labour-saving appliances, that you pay more money on wages afterwards than you ever paid before" (Sir Benjamin C. Browne, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86327).

‡ In gas-making, however, machinery was introduced into the retort houses confessedly with the object of "recovering and retaining control of the business" by reducing the need for large numbers of men. The money saving was not nearly in the same proportion as the percentage of men dispensed with. As the late Sir George Livesey boldly put it: "The saving by machinery is so small that gas managers would not have thought it worth while to introduce it, but for the paramount reason just mentioned." Vol. VIII., 83136. (50 I.)

down price of the commodity produced, and increases the demand for it; that the new demand for commodities leads to new demand for labour; and that the equilibrium is thus again restored. Of course this will depend on the extensibility of demand for the commodity—no amount of cheapening price would much increase the demand for wooden legs—and, in the case of monopolies, it does not follow that reduced cost will involve reduced prices. But, generally speaking, the demand for most goods does increase with the lowering of price; whether this will be in greater or less ratio will vary from commodity to commodity.* But it is certainly striking to hear from great employers in how many cases such changes do not diminish the labour they employ even temporarily, and how general is the experience that they increase it permanently.

221. But if there is any doubt among employers as to the proximate, there is almost none as to the ultimate effect. It is broadly and strongly asserted that, if a displacement of labour does occur in the trade in which the changes are made, it is fully compensated and more—most say much more—by the demand for labour in other directions. The most obvious consideration is that, if any commodity costs less than before, the consumer who purchases it has more in his pocket to spend on other things, and thus every such displacement is countered by an increase of demand for labour over the field of purchased commodities. It very often escapes notice too that, with increasing population come increasing *wants*, as well as increased need for employment, and that the increasing numbers, each of them bringing his own quota of wants, are increasing yet more rapidly in wealth and so in purchasing power. Less obvious, perhaps, is the consideration that the new demand for the commodities supplied by the industry in which the displacement takes place, will create new demand for the machinery which displaces, and that, with the running of this machinery, goes a new demand for coal, oil, water, light, etc.—all the accessories of machine driving. Still less obvious—indeed seldom noticed at all—is the consideration that all this multiplication of commodities and machinery involves a great deal of subsidiary labour, chiefly carriage, and brings a new demand for commercial and distributing servants of many kinds.

222. The answer of economic science at least is simple; it is that the supply and demand of commodities are the same thing looked at from two sides; this being so, every increase of goods is an increase of demand for goods, and, consequently, for the labour which makes them.†

223. But though displacement such as we have indicated may in many cases be another term for improvement of production, and the improved method which displaces the old will, in time and sometimes within a short time, give more employment by increasing consumption, yet we must take account of the human being who by the change is put upon the scrap heap. He may or he may not get fresh employment, but even in the first eventuality he is not likely to get it at once. Thus displacement does, temporarily and locally, add to the number of those out of employment; as Professor Chapman tersely put it there is a "social time-lag,"‡ and in visiting Leicester and Northampton where the boot trade had been regenerated we had visible evidence of how serious this time-lag may be.

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* No doubt, as a matter of theory, it is possible that the introduction of machinery, or the equivalent industrial change, might result in the production, not of more commodities, but of the same amount of commodities for much less labour; but, as a matter of fact, in almost all cases, it has been found that there has been a larger volume of trade by reducing the cost of production. *See* the Evidence of Mr. Sidney Webb, Vol. IX., 93325-93328, 93251 *seq.*

† This perhaps somewhat difficult proposition may be put popularly thus. Imagine an ideal co-operative store, in a remote isolated district where there was no metallic money, and where the members were at once the sole purchasers and the sole producers. Then, during the week, the store would be filled with goods made and grown by the men, who would receive credit-notes for what they brought in. On the Saturday night, the wives would bring the credit-notes to the store, make their purchases to the amount of their credit-notes, and empty the store. In this case it would be clear that the goods brought in (supplied) were the goods purchased (demanded); that the more supply there was, the greater would be the amount of the credit-notes and the greater the purchases. In other words, the wives would make more demand for goods, the more their men increased the supply of goods—the same sum of goods being at once supply and demand. All this is obscured only by the intermediation of the "third commodity," money. Under a system of barter, everyone would see that the more goods he and others contributed to the common store as supply, the more he and others would have in pocket with which to express their demand.

‡ Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84791 (25).

224. But as the goodness and stability of any industria lsystem must be measured, not only by the output of material wealth in which it issues, and by rise of wages, but by its effect on the happiness and character of the worker, we felt it desirable to put the further question, whether the general effect of modern industrial developments was to increase the demand, on the part of employers, for higher skill and intelligence on the part of the workers.

225. Here the replies were so conflicting as to show that no such wide generalisation can be made as regards industry generally. Some said that it was certainly so ; others, that the very reverse was the case ; others, again, that it was so in some departments and grades of their business but not in others.

226. In building, for instance, it is said that changes in construction, in the using of wood, stone, and steel, have entailed higher intelligence on the part of the small portion —the machinists—and have made lesser demands on the intelligence of the other workers. In the steel and iron trades, again, it would seem that a higher level of intelligence over the whole is required.

227. But the general trend of our answers was that the "skill" of modern industry is scarcely comparable with the skill of labour in the past. One might say that, within fwenty years, with the universal employment of machinery and the excessive subdivision and specialisation of its use, the character of the production process has quite changed. There is a growing demand for higher intelligence on the part of the few ; a large and probably growing demand for specialised machine minders ; and, unhappily, a relegation of those who cannot adapt themselves to either demand to a quite inferior, it not worse paid, position. If, then, our conception of the "skill" which we might have looked for and desired is what might be called "craftsmanship," we must conclude that the demand for skill is, on the whole, declining. The all-round ability, which used honourably to mark out the mechanic, is no longer in demand, so much as the work of the highly specialised machine minder.

228. In many platform descriptions of machine industry, the artisan is pictured as a person who merely stands by and watches, while automatic machinery does the work ; and, to those who believe that this is typical, it seems clear that, instead of great numbers of workmen working with interest and intelligence at tasks which employ all their powers as human beings, modern developments demand a great mass of unintelligent, if not unskilled, machine minders, supervised and guided by a few foremen.

229. It must be admitted that such a picture is true enough of many of the textile industries where women and young persons mostly are employed. And outside of these, in trades where manufacturing involves "repeat work" in large quantities, the natural tendency is for the clever manipulator to take the place of the intelligent craftsman, and the all-round man, who had to do and could do many things, disappears—the best instance being found in the boot-making and in the printing trades.

230. But, as a fact, in the greater industries employing adult male labour, "machinery" does not in the least resemble the long lines of revolving spindles one sees in a cotton mill. In the machine tools of an engineering shop there is comparatively little of such automatism, and, even where the machines are automatic, single men are put in charge of a number of machines, and the setting and supervising of these is work probably demanding a higher level of intelligence than ever before.* "I should say the skilled men require even more skill than they did," says Mr. Barnes, "because of the finer work and more intricate machinery . . .

* The essential truth on this matter seems to us very felicitously put by Professor Chapman : "Generally speaking, I should say that invention in its first stages, while calling for some labour of greater intelligence than that which had been previously employed, frequently imposes a number of tasks for the performance of which very low-grade labour is required. Through later improvements however, these tasks tend to be assumed by machinery. The tendency of machinery is always to cause a substitution of "intelligence" for dexterity, the person who was in effect a machine by reason of his dexterity giving place to one who could understand and direct a mechanical process. Incidentally a number of monotonous operations are created, but these, as it has been observed, afterwards tend to be reduced, and it is not certain that they are always more monotonous than the hand operations abolished, though they may require less dexterity." (Evidence Vol. VIII., 84791 (52).)

Side by side with automatic machinery there has come about more intricate and highly complicated machinery."* "The semi-skilled of to-day," says Sir Benjamin C. Browne, "is in many cases as good as the skilled was a quarter of a century ago."†

231. But the disappearance of the all-round man is by no means universal. In collieries, for instance, he still holds his place; and, *ceteris paribus*, in smaller trades and in special industries, such as the making of fine small machinery or scientific apparatus, the all-round man is preferred, if for no other reason than that it is necessary to provide "considerable flexibility among the workers to meet such day-to-day contingencies as sickness, accidents, leave, promotion, etc.," where the temporarily vacant places can be filled immediately.‡

232. This, at least, can be said, that, as regards the higher classes of artisans, foremen, supervisors, and the like, in such trades as iron and steel, ship-building, engineering, building, there is a growing demand for a higher level of intelligence. It must be remembered, too, that, in these industries, owing to the same specialisation, there has been growing up an increased demand for purely head workers—those who design, draw, make plans, and generally prepare the work which the machinery, thus tended, carries out. The drawing office, for instance, is a post much sought after.§

233. It is very generally said that every form of machine minding, even the lowest grade, requires a certain amount of skill, and excites more intelligent interest. But as regards the rank and file in the textile industries, a very moderate level of intelligence seems demanded. Attendance on the machinery, and careful attention to it, are really more wanted than any great degree of skill. As one of the employers puts it: "The less the human element enters the better."

234. As we have suggested, in all such discussions there are two things the distinction of which at least should be clearly recognised. One may inquire with some anxiety as to whether modern developments are tending towards a higher level of labour, and so of life—more interesting occupation, more intelligent exertion, more human powers put forth. Or one may inquire whether they tend to higher wages. Questions about "skill" easily confuse these two. "The idea which is usually latent in the mind of those who put this question," says Professor Cannan aptly, "is not really one involving the measurement of skill, but some belief as to the relative proportion of different grades of labour, the grading being arranged by standards nominally of skill but really of pay. The questioner wants to know whether the low-paid grades are increasing more rapidly than the upper or *vice versa*. This is a matter on which statistical history as yet appears to afford no guidance."‖

235. It is to be noted, however, that it is not necessarily the most highly skilled and intelligent occupations which are the most highly paid. The riveters in ship yards, for instance, whose level of wage is very high, "can hardly be called highly skilled men, nor do they require an exceedingly high grade of intelligence."

(18) Mobility of Labour.

236. With the view of finding out what employers considered to be the line of reform indicated, we took advantage of our schedule of questions to ask if, in these circumstances of displacement and change, greater mobility of labour was not called for both between different trades and different branches of the same trade; and, if so, how this mobility was being provided for, or how it should be provided for.

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* Evidence, Vol. VIII., 82943.

† *Ibid.*, 86333.

‡ Professor Archibald Barr. Evidence, Vol. XI., Ans. II. (*d*).

§ "The men are a different thing to what they were. A skilled mechanic now is a far higher class of man than he was twenty years ago. If you only speak to any Admiralty inspector, you will find how much their demands have increased; for example, how much more exacting they are than they were a few years ago." (Sir Benjamin C. Browne, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86244.)

‖ Evidence, Vol. XI., Ans. II. (*c*).

237. To those employers who have not found it necessary, owing to changes in methods and process, to dispense with labour in their own businesses, the need for this mobility does not present itself as a pressing one. But, unless where this is the case, there is no hesitation in answering that it is most desirable.* But some are very doubtful if this is possible in view of the strong tendency towards specialisation—"a good fitter is seldom a good turner, although a skilful cabinet maker may be quite a good joiner."

238. There is, however, pretty general agreement that at present Trade Union ideas and regulations are very inimical, if not hostile, to trade mobility†—the many bitter and prolonged disputes about "demarcation" questions being cited in proof. So long, for instance, as a bricklayer is prevented by his Union from doing stone mason work, or a pattern maker from being a joiner, it is hopeless to speak of mobility. It is pointed out that one obvious remedy for this is the amalgamation of the many separate Unions in related trades.

239. As to how this mobility may be secured, it is agreed that it depends chiefly on education. If, at school, young people were taught, first of all, to be intelligent—to "think," in fact—and if technical training were general—non-specialised, and teaching principles rather than practice—mobility would have a better chance. There would be no difficulty in providing for trained machine labour at least.

(19) Apprenticeship and Technical Training.

240. In the early days of industry there was no entrance to the great trades except through the one door of apprenticeship; from the age of Elizabeth onward, it was considered the duty of the State to enforce apprenticeship—even as regards pauper children. It might have been expected, then, that the progress of industry would have seen a universalisation of the system. But, at an early period in the nineteenth century, the Trade Unions began very generally to set themselves against the unlimited apprenticeship of youths; partly on the ground that apprentices were often used as a form of "cheap labour"—the boy being set to the performance of routine tasks where his work soon became as good as that of an adult—partly from the fear that the skilled trades would become "over stocked" and wages brought down. Thus many Unions passed regulations that only a limited number of apprentices should be allowed—generally in some definite proportion to the number of adults. This tendency was, of course, strongly protested against by those who considered that the economic safety of the young generation depended on the entrance to skilled trades being open to everyone.

241. The actual development of industry, however, has, to a certain extent, put this particular problem on one side. On the one hand, employers were not always willing to take the trouble of educating apprentices;‡ while, at the same time, it

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* As to "place mobility"—the ability and readiness to move from one centre of industry to another, according to the state of the labour market—all our evidence goes to show that its importance is recognised by the skilled workers generally, and that, among them, there is a very considerable amount of such mobility. But, as regards the unskilled, the very reverse seems the case; they seem to object equally to migration and to emigration. As in many cases, where, for instance, local changes have taken away the employment of great numbers, the only remedy is to break up the stagnant pools which remain, and drain away the surplus labour, the problem is one of peculiar difficulty. In such cases "relief work" of the ordinary kind is the very thing which should be sternly discountenanced.

† Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., gives the reason quite frankly: "The organisation of labour is absolutely essential in view of the organisation of capital, and it is practically impossible to organise labour if there is much fluidity of labour between trade and trade." (Evidence, Vol. XI., Ans. V.)

‡ "London employers not only refuse to teach apprentices, even for premiums—they often refuse to have boys on those parts of their establishments in which anything can be learnt. . . . The evil is apparently increasing, because it has relation to the substitution of large firms and large works for individual employers. The village blacksmith can take an apprentice, but a large engineering firm does not take anything like a proportionate number of apprentices. . . . The trade union rules are old-fashioned survivals which have mostly been given up. Where they still exist, they exist in an almost entirely nominal state, and they certainly are not responsible for the restriction of apprentices, as a rule, because the limit imposed by the rules is far in excess of the actual number of apprentices. For instance, in London no employer in the building trade has anything like as many apprentices as the trade union would be quite glad that he should have. It is only in certain trades, usually a few small old-fashioned trades, that the restriction of apprentices is at all effective. There is one exception to that, perhaps, the compositors, where they have a restriction which seems to me an unwise one, but it is not a universal one." (Mr. Sidney Webb. Evidence, Vol. IX., 93031 and 93035, 93181.)

became evident that apprenticeship was not necessarily any security for the ranks of the skilled trades being kept restricted—the ranks of journeymen being constantly recruited from those who received an irregular training. On the other hand, many who had least sympathy with any restrictions on the openings to skilled trades, became convinced that, under the rapidly changing conditions of industry, it was a mistake to devote years to the acquirement of a particular skill for which the occasion might have disappeared by the time it was acquired. "It is fortunate," says Professor Chapman," that the apprenticeship system is falling into disuse. Under modern conditions it renders our industrialism too crystallised. The technical school must take its place." *

242. It must be said that, in the statements and evidence which we have got from employers, there is little recognition of this latter view. On the contrary, a strong feeling is expressed very generally that apprenticeship is the only way in which skilled workmen, as a body, can get their training, and that the maintenance or revival of the system is necessary.†

243. One modification which seems pretty generally approved is that the term should be shortened; at any rate, if the school age were extended and some amount of manual and technical training introduced, it seems agreed that three or at most four years in the shops should turn out a qualified journeyman. Another suggestion, advanced by two representative employers, is that, in order to meet the difficulties of working-men parents—who are generally quite unable to apprentice more than one of their sons—and to guard against undue hurry to be earning money on the part of the boys themselves, the wages of apprentices should be revised so as to reach the level, say, of 18s. in such industries as building, engineering, and shipbuilding, in the last year of the apprenticeship.

244. Over technical schools there seems much difference of opinion; and, although their desirableness, even necessity, for the future overlookers, foremen, managers, employers, or indeed for any lad who aims at rising from the ranks is recognised, it would appear that the character of the training at present given does not meet the requirements either of short-sighted or of broad-minded employers. "A very small percentage of those in technical schools derive a life benefit from it," says one: "We often say that a technical school spoils a good workman, without making a scientific man of him," says another.

245. On the one hand there is the view that, if the school age is to continue as at present, some training should be given in primary schools in such things as drawing, the nature of materials and natural forces, and the general use of tools; on the other, the view that, if the age is extended, the education must include a considerable amount of training bearing directly on the future occupation of the scholar. And the general principle seems to be accepted that, unless technical education means a good deal more than could be learned in the factory or shop,‡ it is of little real value. It must aim at giving the lad an appreciation of the *end* of the industry, and of the relation of the whole organisation to the product, as well as a knowledge of the technical processes.

246. We append three statements on the subject, which seem to us of peculiar value.

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* Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84791 (56).

† Sir Benjamin C. Browne, of Messrs. Hawthorn, Leslie & Co., Newcastle, says that his firm has no mechanics except those who have served a legally indentured apprenticeship. "We train a lot of young people to be engineers and shipbuilders; we take the greatest pains with them. For example, we pay for any of our apprentices to attend any classes they choose, of any kind, absolutely free; besides that we give them prizes and inducements. Any boy who attains a certain not very high standard of efficiency in his class in bookwork, we give him an extra shilling a week for that year, and if he passes the examination next year, the shilling a week goes on again. Then we take some of the best boys into the drawing office every year, and then they are made men for life under ordinary circumstances. When I say 'we' do that, I mean not merely Hawthorn's; most other employers do something of the kind." (Evidence, Vol. VIII., 86295.) Mr. G. N. Barnes again, the Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, says that apprenticeship, which had been on the decrease till about five years ago, has been on the increase since then, and ascribes the change to "a more enlightened public opinion." (Evidence, Vol. VIII., 82945–6.)

‡ "At the present moment, technical education means far too much trade education." (Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., Evidence, Vol. XI., Ans. VI'.)

"The general effect of modern industrial development being to increase the demand for really skilled and intelligent workers, the training of apprentices is becoming increasingly important. The problem is complicated by the tendency which undoubtedly exists, and must exist, to take the greatest advantage of the labour of apprentices during their training. I think that it is possible to arrange a suitable system of apprenticeship combined with attendance at continuation classes in the evenings, in appropriate subjects, provided that some temporary sacrifice be made by the employer.

247. "It is essential to a suitable training that the boy be not kept too long at one operation or in one department. If his training is sacrificed to the demand for a very limited and highly specialised skill in the management of one kind of machine or in one operation, the factory may benefit at the moment, but will suffer later on in having too few thoroughly trained men to draw upon when conditions change, as they must do in any progressive industry. The superintendence of such a training, involving a carefully graded series of changes of work combined with courses of instruction in the science and technology pertaining to the industry, should not be left to chance, but should be looked after by someone in sufficient authority to say whether the immediate interests of the factory as a producing organisation must be set aside to some slight extent in order to secure a better ultimate result. Such superintendence of the interests of apprentices requires to be in the hands of a man of broad views and sympathies, and such will be the more easily found as scientific and technical education advance.

248. "Now, many managers, and even foremen, as well as employers themselves, have had training in universities and technical colleges, and the broader views such men should be able to take, and I believe as a rule do take, will lead them to look further ahead, and not to sacrifice the future of their own business, or of the industry in general to any narrow and immediate interests. In many cases the teachers in technical evening classes are themselves engaged during the day as managers, foremen, or draughtsmen, and so come into contact with apprentices not only in the school, but in the factory or workshop.

249. "I do not think that any systems of training which can be devised outside the daily factory routine, as by trade schools or by establishing a separate department within the factory for the purpose, are likely to be satisfactory, except, perhaps, in the case of very large establishments. It is an advantage not to be overlooked for apprentices from one factory or workshop to meet with those from another. This broadens their views and prevents the teacher from devoting the class hours to very specialised questions affecting only one branch of a trade; and, besides, it will no doubt have the effect of letting the conditions of employment in various factories or workshops be more generally known, and so secure for the best-organised factories a supply of the most promising material of which to make men of wide skill and intelligence.

250. "I think that the existing arrangements in most centres of industry are amply sufficient for the requirements of the ordinary apprentice. What is required is a more enlightened view on the part of employers, managers, and foremen, so that boys may be able to take full advantage of the facilities offered by evening science and art classes. I think there is ample evidence that more enlightened views are being taken as time goes on, and, as I have said, the greater advantage that is being taken of the facilities now offered in all large centres of high scientific and technical training by youths who will become employers and managers, will lead to a rapid increase in the required enlightenment among leaders of industry."*

251. "The training of skilled mechanicians must be on broad lines. The pupil must be provided with a thorough technical and practical acquaintance with the whole principles of his craft, and not merely with the application of certain of those principles to some particular trade. Hence the need for technical training under Government supervision. A man cannot learn his business as a mechanical engineer, for instance, by merely working in, say, a marine engine building shop.

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* Mr. Archibald Barr (of Messrs. Barr & Stroud), Professor of Engineering in the University of Glasgow. Evidence, Vol. XI., Ans. VII.).

252. "We do not to-day want men who are 'all-round' at building marine engines—we do need men who are 'all-round' mechanical engineers—men who can apply the principles of their craft to any form of machinery that may be called for. That is a class of training which cannot be achieved by any system of apprenticeship and is essentially a matter which the governing authority must handle if this country is to maintain its position in the industrial world. That is a matter in which we lag behind our neighbours."*

253. "The present system of technical school training, following on the general education in elementary and higher elementary schools, in which manual work (as a means of education) and instruction in elementary science should be important features—with a diminished number of subjects of a less important character for working men—should prepare boys to enter upon a system of apprenticeship which might be adopted by all enlightened employers in preference to the old system, which begins too early, and with boys ill-prepared for the training now necessary to form intelligent and capable working men. For those engineering apprentices who can give the time, and have the means, to train for foremen and managers and positions in which they would have to control others, the training in technical schools should be continued for a longer period before apprenticeship to practical work is commenced. The education for working men's sons should always be partly through manual work in the elementary schools, not to acquire mere dexterity, but to develop their faculties of thinking and reasoning, and habits of accuracy and thoroughness; and this work should be accompanied by instruction in freehand and geometrical drawing. With such a training continued in a higher elementary school or elementary technical school, a boy should be equipped at sixteen years old to learn a trade in the workshop in four or five years, far more thoroughly than under the old system of apprenticeship and untrained faculties; and throughout his apprenticeship he would render more efficient service to his employer. During his apprenticeship, attendance at evening classes of technical schools should be one of the conditions which the boy must comply with, for two or three nights a week, the neglect of which would render him liable to be discharged. If a boy showed qualities for a superior position than that of ordinary workman, employers should give facilities for his attendance at day classes in the technical schools to take a specified course, by allowing him off certain hours in the week for that purpose."†

(20) Country-Bred Men in Large Towns.

254. The large amount of evidence brought before previous enquiries,‡ and presented to us by various witnesses, to the effect that the building trades, and, indeed, most of the skilled trades in London are recruited in the main from outside London, and that in many trades the Londoner is at a discount§, makes it of interest to ascertain how, in the large centres, country-bred men stand relatively to town-bred as regards unemployment. At our request the Board of Trade has made some investigations, and prepared a Memorandum on the subject.‖

255. The conclusions of the Memorandum are:—

(1) That the greater part of the poverty and distress prevalent in London and the large provincial towns is among the town-bred part of the population, and not among the country-bred.

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* Sir Christopher Furness (Evidence, Vol. XI., Ans. VII. (12–13)).

† Sir William Mather (of Messrs. Mather & Platt). Vol. XI., Ans. VII.

‡ Such as those made by the Committee of the London County Council on Apprenticeships, and by the London Council Technical Education Board on the Building Trades, quoted in Vol. IX., 96218.

§ "With carpenters and joiners, bricklayers, carriage-builders, engineers, smiths and saddlers, the percentage of heads of families born out of London range from 51 to 59 (Mr. Charles Booth quoted, *ibid.*). "The investigations of Mr. Wilson Fox (of the Board of Trade) show that various large employers of labour, such as breweries, railway companies, etc., employ predominantly country-born workmen in the proportion of 40, 50, and sometimes even of 65 per cent. of the whole. The Metropolitan Police Force, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the teachers in London elementary schools, the porters in city warehouses, the junior clerks in the 'entering desk' of the great wholesale firms, the subordinate officers of the Excise and Customs services, all include a quite surprisingly small percentage of Londoners." (Mr. Sidney Webb, Evidence, Vol. IX., 93031.)

‖ *See* Vol. IX. Appendix XXI., J.

(2) The countrymen who migrate to large towns are, in the main, physically strong and of good character, and frequently move to the towns to fill definite positions which have been secured beforehand.

(3) Such men generally obtain good employment, especially in outdoor trades, which resemble somewhat those to which they have been accustomed in the country, and in situations requiring special steadiness and trustworthiness.

(4) Country immigrants do not, to any considerable extent, directly swell the ranks of those who are more or less in a chronic state of unemployment in the large towns. The unemployed of this class are, in the main town-bred, and recruited from those who have sunk to the bottom of the social scale."

256. In view of the opinion sometimes expressed that rural depopulation accounts greatly for urban distress, in the sense that agricultural labourers, finding no place on the land, migrate to the cities, and, finding no regular occupation open to them, sink into casual labour, these conclusions are so far satisfactory. They show that *prima facie* the country immigrants do not worsen, but better their position in the cities, and they show besides that the veins of the city population are kept filled by fresh blood from the country.

257. On the other hand they tend to prove that the anæmic, worn-out town worker is continually put in competition with new comers of better physique, and consequently is relegated to the less regular and worse paid occupations. In short, the Londoner is easily out-distanced by his country-bred rival in trades where strength and endurance tell, while, in the skilled trades, owing to the temptations of boy labour and the lack of industrial training, he is not taking the place which his natural quickness of wit might be expected to secure.

(21) Dock Labour.

258. This typical form of casual labour, or rather of "under-employment"—for dockers may, at any given time, with almost equal appropriateness be counted employed or unemployed, and are at all times both casual and seasonal workers—seemed to us to present so many painful features as to warrant some amount of special investigation, personally and by schedule of questions, as well as by taking evidence.

259. The commonsense of the nation has seen for some time that the best ordinary life for the ordinary kind of man is that he should not have too much leisure or have it whenever he likes; that his work should be so regular as to become a habit; that he should be able to count on taking home a regular sum weekly to his wife as wage; and that he should have some reserve to fall back upon in bad times.

260. All these things are conspicuously absent in the docker's life, and it is this that makes dock labour almost a problem by itself.

261. The employing agency in the loading and unloading of ships varies from dock to dock over the kingdom. At some, the work is done by shipping companies having stevedoring staffs of their own; at others, by merchants, dock and railway companies, crews of ships, master stevedores and porters; only in a few cases is it done by a harbour trust. At the Manchester docks almost all the work is done by the canal company. At Dundee there is a "registered benefit society" composed of eighty men, who are recognised and licensed by the Harbour Trustees, and have special privileges; they manage their own affairs co-operatively, engaging casual labour when their own numbers are not sufficient.

262. Shipping companies, dock companies, railway companies, and employing stevedores have usually a small staff of permanent hands paid by the week. Cranesmen, checkers, engine-men are often permanent, as are coal trimmers. At most docks again there are, in each employment, numbers of recognised or actual preference men who have the first call on a job. But all except men on the staff are taken on by foremen by the day, half-day, quarter-day, hour, or job—employment by the hour being not uncommon. In many docks, however, the labour is altogether casual; there are neither staffs nor preference men.

263. Wages seem to vary very widely from port to port, and, of course, from one class of work to another. In some places they are as low as 3s. 6d. or even 2s. 6d. per day—4s. 6d. to 7s. being common; in others they are as high as 10s., or from 5d. and 6d. per hour—with a common average of 7d.—to 8d. In Liverpool they are 5s. per day of nine hours for stevedores and 4s. 6d. for porters. Weekly wages vary from 26s. to 28s. Overtime wages again vary widely—from time-and-half to double; and the hours counted as overtime vary as widely—beginning as early as 5.30 p.m., and as late as 8 p.m. Payments are sometimes made weekly, often daily, and in the latter case "sub" is usually given at any time. But payment is often counted by the piece or by tonnage rates.

264. It will not escape notice that, as a rule, the nominal wages, or rather the nominal rates are high, and this is found to constitute a dangerous element. In Liverpool it is freely said that the nominally high wages attract men from the country and from Ireland under the impression that they can get regular work at these rates. As fresh country-bred men, they are apt to get a preference from foremen, and thus to crowd out the older and weaker.

265. In almost all cases overtime is considered inevitable—"ports could not be worked without it"—"the exigencies of the shipping trade demand it." These exigencies are: Departure of boats at fixed times of sailing, sailing at midnight or to suit mails, perishable cargoes such as fish, fruit, butter, necessity of catching tides at other ports, tidal docks, to get turn of the coal spouts, pressure in berthing room, to save the accruing of demurrage, or, more usually, for despatch. In some ports regular nightshifts are worked, counted as overtime, but generally the trade is too irregular to permit of this. Only in very few ports is overtime the exception.

266. In many ports and for many cargoes the trade is seasonal. Owing to ice, timber from the Baltic arrives only from May to the opening of winter, and timber dockers work only five months in the year: owing to the harvests, the import of cotton at Manchester is from October to March, and of fruit and potatoes from the end of July to the end of September; the manure traffic is heavier between January and April; sulphate of copper comes only in winter; from June to November, maize comes from the River Plate, but, happily, it comes from North America and the Black Sea during other months of the year. In Dundee, the busy season is from September to April—the jute arriving only during the winter. In Liverpool summer is the slack time, winter the busy. But, in this great port at least, the fluctuation due to the seasons is much less than might be expected. "The average number employed daily during the three slackest months of the year is between four-fifths and five-sixths of the average number during the three busiest months"—a seasonal fluctuation which is small as compared with a good many other trades.

267. It must not be supposed, then, that the intermittent character of dock labour is by any means all due to the seasons. The fluctuation from day to day in Liverpool is much greater. The small numbers taken on Saturdays one can understand. Saturday is a short day, and employers for economical reasons take on as few hands as they can; and, from the other side, the men like to take their half-holiday on the same day as their fellows in other trades take it—to attend football matches and the like. But the small numbers engaged on Mondays has another explanation: the men are not to be had—will not turn out if they can help it; the dissipation of the week-end leaving them with little energy on Monday. Thus the busiest days of the week are Wednesday and Thursday, and the conclusion is that "the number employed on the least busy day of the week is frequently only three-fourths, occasionally, two-thirds of the number employed on the busiest day." It deserves emphasis, then, that a good deal of the irregularity of dock labour is of the docker's own making, and blame should not be attributed to the nature of the employment.

268. The majority of our statements say bluntly that there is no or very little alternative employment open to men when not engaged at the docks, some adding that the men do not care to look for any. At the timber ports the men as a rule go to shipyards and building for the seven months when no timber comes in. The other alternatives mentioned at various docks are;—public works or wharves in the neighbourhood, quarries, harvesting, "boating and fishing in the harbour," and, at

Grimsby, steam fishing. At Swansea the only alternative is that of a man "getting a chance of a hobble with various gangs who may have a bit of a rush of work." But such a chance is very remote, because "there is always a surplus of men following their particular gang in loading and discharging." It may be added that, as the men generally must hold themselves ready for any job that turns up, alternative employments do not get much encouragement.

269. In all the large docks, it would seem that there is always a surplus of labour seeking employment. "I have not had to go to look for men these forty years," says one. In Liverpool where there is estimated to be considerably over 20,000 dockers, employers have no difficulty—except at holiday times perhaps—in getting all the men they want. In Swansea, it is said, there might be about 300 men in the docks who cannot get a living. In the smaller docks, however, this is by no means universally the case, and in busy times there is sometimes a deficiency.

270. In a few of the smaller docks, no labour-saving appliances have been introduced. But, in the larger ones, cranes—steam, hydraulic, and electric—have displaced much manual labour, and do many things which manual labour could not do. The largest appliances are in the grain ports, where grain is discharged, conveyed and stored by elevators, and in the timber ports, where the cargo is taken out of the ship, and conveyed direct by the same cranes to the piles, or to railway waggons. In Bristol and Manchester, fruit also in discharged by elevators. In coal, there are coal tips worked by hydraulic power, grab buckets, shoots, etc.

271. As to the amount of displacement of labour by such appliances, a timber transporter is estimated to do away with ten casual labourers. "As regards the grain elevator, when the circumstances are such as to preclude its use, about eight men are requisitioned for the work." In the discharging of grain, a Swansea correspondent says that 75 per cent. of the labour formerly employed has been displaced, a calculation confirmed by another statement that, in grain, only eight men are employed as against fifty to seventy formerly. But the actual amount of displacement is difficult to estimate, as, generally speaking, the trade at every port has gone on increasing. "So far as my experience goes," says the General Secretary to the Coal Trimmers' Union in Cardiff, "the improvements in appliances have gone in the direction of increasing the amount of tons shipped or discharged in a given time, rather than in reducing the number of men in a gang." One good result is that the labour attending such machinery gets more regular employment.

272. Thus, of all the docks of the kingdom, it may be said that the labour employed is casual and intermittent, although there are degrees even here—Swansea, for instance, priding itself on being "not so casual as Hull." This by no means prevents a good many of the men from being regularly employed and earning good wages. The master stevedore of the Booth Line, Liverpool, says that, of the maximum number employed at the ships at any time, about one-half may be considered regular men who very rarely get less than four days a week and often get more. These men "follow the firm," and do not care to work for others.

273. In the larger centres it seems undoubted that the dock labourers prefer casual labour to steady employment, and stop after they have earned a few days' wages. At Swansea, for instance, the Secretary of the Dock and General Workers' Union says that "men very much prefer to work on tonnage or piece system with occasional days off." The best class of labourers, indeed, often avow their preference for constant employment. "At Fife ports, regular work is desired"; and in Grimsby, exceptionally, "experience shows that casual men who have been transferred to the permanent staff would not willingly go back to their old conditions of service." But, on the other hand, at Southampton Docks, several cases have come under notice where permanent hands have asked to be given casual employment, and, in West Hartlepool, "a firm of timber merchants have had the greatest difficulty in getting men to stay over the busy season when they were promised full wages (27s. per week) all the year round." The determining fact seems to be that, at a busy time, the permanent hands see that they have a wage much lower than they could make by a few days' casual work, and they are too short-sighted to think of the coming dull season.

274. In most docks perhaps there is little specialisation calling for what might be called skilled labour. But checkers, coal-tippers, coal-trimmers—who are very highly paid — capstan men, ropers, chainers, sheeters, are skilled men, not subject to broken time to the same extent as ordinary labourers; timber carrying requires men possessed of physical strength, and is a highly-paid branch; the discharging and warehousing of grain is usually done by a more or less regular staff; the storing of coal, coke, patent fuel, and iron and steel cargoes requires some special training; the shipping of fuel, fuel bricks, and tin-plate, and the unloading of different kinds of ore require special skill and capacity. It is the case, however—whatever be the reason—that, as a rule, men keep to one particular kind of work, and that the handling of different cargoes is usually undertaken by different sets of men.

275. In view of the general impression about dock labourers that they are nearly at the bottom of the social scale, it is interesting to see how much evidence there is to the contrary. Generally, indeed, the permanent and the more regularly employed men are said to be careful, respectable, steady and trustworthy men. Among the Cardiff coal-trimmers, who may earn about £4 a week, and have regular employment, "the steady, sober, thrifty men by far outnumber the careless and indifferent." But the general character of the others is by no means so bad as is usually conceived. In Belfast, it is said, the majority are respectable and well-conducted men; in Swansea, the dockers "will compare favourably with any other class of workmen." The Grimsby dockers, it may be noted, on the testimony of ship captains visiting the port, are "superior to those at any other port in the world." Drink, of course, is the ruling weakness, and the system of "subbing" day by day fostered by irregularity of work and coupled with betting and unthrift, tends to deterioration, physical and moral

276. There is, unhappily, almost no difference of opinion among our witnesses as to the possibility of making dock labour more regular. The answer is an almost unanimous negative. The fluctuating and intermittent nature of the business seems, to most employers, an insuperable obstacle—"the matter of shipment and discharging is beyond the control of any dock company"—although one witness gives as reason for the impossibility that there is "a large surplus of men more than what is required to carry out the amount of labour to be done." "You cannot decasualise dock labour at all," says Mr. Sexton. "You may relieve it, but you cannot absolutely decasualise it."* In some of the docks the necessity of making work more regular, however, is not so evident as in others: in Swansea, for instance (which, however, seems exceptional in many ways), the secretary of the Trade Union says that "although the work is intermittent, 90 per cent. of the total might be said to be in regular employment."

277. Against these strong assertions must be put the notable example of the London and India Docks Company. In their docks, which comprise Tilbury, the Royal Albert and Victoria, the East and West India, the South-West Indian, and the London and St. Katharine's Dock, it was given in evidence that, in 1906, 72 per cent. of the labour employed was done by men on regular weekly wages.† The rest was done by preference men and casual labour, taken on from day to day, at an hourly rate of 6d. with 8d. for overtime, engagements being for a minimum of four hours or payment of 2s. And, it is said, "the men on regular weekly wages value their employment and vacancies are readily filled."

278. The system dates from the great London Dock strike of 1888, when the directors, impressed by the evils of ordinary dock labour, adopted the policy of distributing the work with a view to as much as possible of the labour being carried on by the weekly wage men, involving, as a consequence, the curtailment of the number of preference men and the elimination altogether of casual workers. At first it was extremely difficult to get the men out of their irregular habits—particularly as regards absenting themselves on Saturdays and Mondays—but now the permanent and registered staff has become nearly regular. The organisation is very complete, and the men are transferred from one dock to another as wanted. The method is as follows.

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* Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84402.

† Mr. H. H. Watts, Evidence, Vol. IX., 96011, Ans. II.—96014–6.

279. The labourers are graded as permanent, registered, and preference.

280. The "permanent" are weekly workers who have served previously as "registered," for twelve months at least, having got their name on the registered list between twenty-three and thirty years of age. They must be physically sound and strong, of good character, and ready to undertake any work which they may reasonably be called on to perform. Their wages are 24s. a week of six days of eight working hours between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., overtime being counted from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Engagements are terminable at seven days' notice on either side, and regular employment is guaranteed "only during good behaviour." These men get a pension at the age of sixty-five, or after fifteen years' service if incapacitated for work by circumstances beyond their own control.

281. The "registered," or "Letter A." men—selected from the best of the preference men—differ from the permanent in having 24s. per week of forty-eight hours in summer and 21s. per week of forty-two hours in winter, and in having no pensions If promoted, however, to being "permanent" men, half the time passed while on this list counts towards the pension.

282. With overtime, and bonus on piecework averaging 1½d. an hour, the average wage of the two classes ranges from 29s. to 32s. per week all the year round. No man is allowed to work more than sixteen hours at a time, and he must not come on again till twelve hours afterwards.

283. The "preference" or "Letter B." men have tickets issued to them every quarter, giving them a preferential number. There are forty-five departments in the whole establishment, and each department has a proportion of preference men allocated to it, on the basis of 40 to 45 per cent. of the number generally at work. Each afternoon the requirements of the following day are posted up, and at certain fixed stations —usually at six, seven, or eight in the morning—the preference men are taken on strictly in the order in which their names appear on the list. Thus, if work is slack, the men at the bottom of the list do not show up; they know that there is no work for them. If, again, say fifty men are required to-day, the first fifty at the top of the list are taken on; if, to-morrow, fifty are wanted, the same men are engaged, thus keeping the work among the smallest number, and giving them regular occupation. Every quarter the preference lists are revised and the order of numbers raised or lowered, according to good or bad record of attendance, etc. In 1904 there were 2,100 names on the preference list, and the average number employed was 600, giving a floating reserve, so far as the company was concerned, of 1,500.

284. The actual results of this system are that the preference men get on average about three days a week of work over the year, the men at the top, however, getting much more. When not employed, they can go anywhere else they please, and the preference ticket is, so far, a guarantee of character—"a number of them obtain a fair turn of work with other employers of dock labour." The employers, on the other hand, claim that they gain by getting better men and better work.

285. Under such arrangements the ordinary casual labourers, who are taken on only when the preference lists are exhausted, have not much prospect of employment except at an unexpected rush of work, and are not kept hanging around on the off-chance.

286. Boys enter the service as messengers, and then are set an examination enabling them to become assistant and junior foremen, from which positions they ultimately pass to be foremen and outdoor clerks. Those who do not pass the examination become "labouring boys," beginning at 10s. per week, and are drafted direct into the permanent staff at twenty-three years of age. By this system all the lads who enter the service "are provided for for life."

287. The London and India Docks Company has control over all the docks except the Surrey and Commercial, the Millwall, and the small Regent's Canal Dock. But it must be understood that its business is almost altogether unloading; that outside of the company's service there is a great mass of similar labour employed by stevedores, wharfingers, warehousemen, and others; and that the employés of the London

and India Dock Company are a small proportion of the 12,000 or 13,000 employed at or about the docks.* Among this outside labour, the same conditions prevail as did before 1896; that is to say, the work is mostly casual.

288. It should be added that, during the last ten years, the numbers of the weekly men employed by the company have fallen from about 5,000 in 1894 to about 3,000 in 1904, owing to shipowners taking on their own men within the docks.

289. This successful experiment of decasualising dock labour in London has not gone without notice, and strenuous endeavours have been made by individuals in Liverpool—notably Mr. Charles Booth—to introduce there a modification of the system.†

290. The existing system in Liverpool is briefly this. The hours are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. with an hour off from 12 to 1—a nine hours' day. Night work begins at 6 p.m. and ends at 4 a.m., with an hour off from 10.30 to 11.30 p.m.—a nine hours' night. Half-a-day is the minimum term of engagement. The men prefer to take a night and a day in succession, and this suits the employers. The wages are:—Stevedores, 7s.; shipmen, 5s.; porters, 4s. 6d. Overtime and night work are paid at 13s. for stevedores and shipmen, and 8s. for porters. These wages—thanks, apparently, to strong customary force—have remained unchanged since 1871. Each employer holds his separate stand precisely at the same hour (6.45 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.) so that there is no time for men not wanted at one place to go to another.‡

291. The surplus of labour is very great, although it is impossible to estimate it, owing to the numbers who come intermittently to the docks in the hope of getting an odd job. Mr. A. L. Rathbone puts it at some 4,000;§ Mr. Sexton at not less than 10,000.‖ At any rate there is always an excess, and the average employment is not more than three days a week. Thus the amount of work which, if well organised, might keep a smaller number of men fully employed at high wages over the whole week, is spread over a great many thousands more; hardly anyone gets a full week's work; and casual labour becomes a pernicious and a favourite habit.

292. Mr. Booth's scheme involved combination of employers, for labour purposes only. "The South End employers who employ only Union men might form one ring; the North End employers, who ignore the 'button,' might form another, and the central firms in the coasting trade a third." The dockers registered in each combination, and given preference rank as in London, would become the workers, as it were, of one great dock company, and be sent to any of the docks within the ring as wanted.

293. It looked at one time as if some such scheme might be seriously tried, and at four successive meetings of a Conference called by the City Council, the proposal got the length of being fully discussed and finally rejected—"the representatives of both employers and employed having felt that the scheme would be difficult to work owing to mutual lack of confidence."

294. The objections, voiced by Mr. Sexton, are these:—

(*a*) It would keep the A. B. C. classes continually hanging around (as it does now in London) dependent upon the small amount of work doled out to them, in the hope of being shifted up into a higher class.

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* Evidence, Vol. IX., 96014–15.

† *Cf.* "The Problem of Dock Labour (Liverpool)." in Appendix to Messrs. Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 339.

‡ Miss Rathbone, Evidence, Vol. VIII., 83251. (10).

§ Evidence, Vol. VIII., lxiii. (6).

‖ Vol. VIII., 84190–2. *Cf.* A Census was taken in December, 1905, by the City Council Distress Committee, on a given morning when there was a fair—even a large—amount of work at the docks. It was found that thirty-six firms among them engaged 7,709 men, leaving 2,013 on the stands—about 26 per cent. Grisewood, Vol. IV., 37105, (5).

(*b*) The men crushed out by the classification system would simply drift to other trades than the docks, and compete with the labourers in those trades, such as building, etc.

(*c*) The preference class or permanent gangs, as with the London dock companies, which are shifted about to follow the work, would be of no use to a stevedore with an all-round cargo or to different employers loading to different ports.*

295. Mr. Sexton, it may be noted, appeared to attach much weight to the second of these, the necessary crushing out of the 25 per cent. or so, "who are getting something per week." †

296. In estimating the difficulties of decasualisation, in addition to the obvious one of getting employers to combine for labour purposes alone, the attitude of the trade unions must be taken into account.

297. There are several Trade Unions which cover dock labourers, such as the Dock, Wharf, and Riverside Labourers', the Gasworkers' and General Labourers', and the National Union of Dock Labourers in Great Britain and Ireland. The control of the Union is dominant and aggressive in Swansea, strong or weak in other centres, and is non-existent in a good many of the smaller ports. In Southampton the Union was succeeded in 1890 by the Free Labour Association. In Liverpool Trade Unionism is not strong, and is not recognised at the North Docks where the biggest ships berth.

298. As to how these Unions would look on any attempt at "decasualisation," there is a difference of opinion. "We much prefer the present system," says the secretary of the Dock and General Workers' Union in Swansea. In Bristol, one witness thinks they would oppose, because "no casual labour is allowed by the Union to work at any work in connection with the docks at less than 6½d. an hour," and because decasualisation would necessarily mean a considerable reduction in the rate of pay. On the other hand, some think that the Unions would be favourable to it. But, says another correspondent, in any case the men would not agree to it.

299. The latter sentence probably is not far from the truth. "The difficulty we meet," says Mr. Sexton, speaking for the National Union of Dock Labourers in Great Britain and Ireland, "is that there is a comradeship existing among the dock labourers; the labourer feels that it is not fair to crush out the man who is getting three or four days a week, and he objects to it. The men themselves object to the creation of a permanent class." ‡

300. There is another anomaly resulting from dock casual labour. The less chance a man has of being employed, the more necessary is it for him to be constantly near the place where the off-chance of employment may crop up. Dwellings in the immediate neighbourhood of docks thus get a fictitious value, and however insanitary or unwholesome may be the lodging they afford, there is always a demand for them. A premium is thus offered to the owners of slum property in the streets adjacent to docks.

302. Granted, as we think it must be, that, in the interests alike of the dockers and of the community, decasualisation is desirable, the situation which was faced on a small scale at the reorganisation of the system of employment at the London and India Docks in 1892 will require to be faced on a great scale if attempted now. After as many as possible had been taken up into the permanent staff, and others made "preference men" according to efficiency and steadiness, there remained a large residuum for whom evidently no employment could be hoped, and the work of the Committee of the Mansion House Conference of 1892–3 remains as an evidence of the difficulty encountered in dealing with it.§ Temporary digging work on waste ground was provided for those displaced, and afterwards some few were

* Evidence, Vol. VIII., 84125. (1).

† *Ibid.*, 84239.

‡ *Ibid.*, 84147.

§ *Vide* the account given in the Board of Trade Report on *Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed*, 1893, p. 238

emigrated. But it was found that a large number proved "unhelpable," even among those whose conduct and work at the temporary digging was good: they "were of the class who are always in chronic poverty—they were taken up, relieved, and dropped again—most of them much in the same position as at the beginning."

303. If we be correct in our analysis of casual dock labour, and if such a system does economically and morally infuse and spread evils of a most serious character into the social life of the community where it prevails, then the system cannot be considered solely from the standpoint of the employer and of the employés. It is detrimental to the moral and material well-being of the community, and should, in consequence, be reduced, and if necessary by legislative regulation, to the smallest limits possible. We shall say more on this point later on.

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(22) Conclusions.

304. This review of historical developments since the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act, and of the more prominent existing industrial conditions, demonstrates that the problem with which we have now to deal is far more complicated than that of 1834. Whilst the moral causes contributing to pauperism and unemployment remain much the same as before, the material influences regulating employment and industry have changed both in their character and scope. Forces have come into operation affecting employment, its regularity, its cessation and expansion, which are quite beyond local control. Cyclical fluctuations now are world-wide in their effect upon industry and its employés. Changes in methods of production follow one another more rapidly than heretofore, and, as specialisation becomes more marked and definite, those habituated and trained to the processes that are superseded find it more and more difficult to obtain occupation elsewhere. Trade Unions, and employers' organisations have, in response, as it were, to one another, succeeded, the one in raising the standard of wages, the other the standard of industrial efficiency. Those who are not in the prime of life, nor in positions of adequate physical strength or competency, are apt to fall out of an industrial system which is above their level. There is also a large amount of work which partakes more of the character of personal service than of industrial production, such as that of errand boys, newspaper boys, telegraph boys, street sellers—occupations which, though remunerative for the time being to those engaged in them, have a tendency to cease at adolescence. A considerable proportion of those so occupied early in life become subsequently either unemployed or under-employed and swell the ranks of casuality. Casual and other occupations giving intermittent employment engage a large proportion of the wage-earning class—possibly a larger proportion than heretofore—and the ranks of those seeking this form of maintenance are periodically swollen by those who have lost, or prove their unfitness for, a regular or skilled occupation. These are modifications and developments in our industrial system which cannot be ignored, and their products and wreckage, when either out of employment or in distress, require a treatment more elastic and varied than the simple method which, eighty years ago, was sufficient to cope with able-bodied pauperism in agricultural districts.

Chapter 2.

THE NEW PROBLEMS.

Improvement in condition of working classes and its effect on able-bodied pauperism.

305. The foregoing review of the principal social and industrial developments and changes since 1834 in this country permits of certain generalisations. It may safely be asserted that, so far as the great mass of the wage-earning classes are concerned, their condition now as compared with that of 1834 shows a marked improvement. This improvement embraces a rise in wages, a reduction in working hours, and a fall in the prices of the necessaries of life. Town and country have benefited alike in these respects. The improvement is evidenced also by the returns of the Savings Banks, the benefit societies, and other agencies and organisations dependent upon weekly or periodical contributions from the working classes.

306. It might be expected that, as a result of this improvement, able-bodied pauperism would have largely diminished, and this is actually the case. During the last eighty years able-bodied pauperism has been steadily falling, and the great evil upon which the Royal Commission of 1834 concentrated their attention has, in rural districts, almost ceased to exist.[1]

307. In urban districts, the ratio of total pauperism to population is somewhat lower than in rural districts, but the urban ratio has not decreased to the same extent as the rural ratio during the last thirty or forty years. Indeed, notwithstanding a rapid growth of population in London the ratio increased between 1895–6 and 1905–6 by no less than 2·6 per 1,000.[2] This is a fact calling for serious attention, and, when we examine into the causes, we find that the great increase in general wealth of the community during the last thirty years is associated with some untoward and unsatisfactory developments which are specially noticeable in the great industrial centres and above all in London.

308. In 1834, there being no public agency for the relief of the able-bodied other than the Poor Law, all able-bodied persons applying for relief went to the Poor Law, and as relief was then generally given on very easy terms, the number of able-bodied so relieved was a criterion of the number of those who publicly asserted their inability to maintain themselves. This state of things no longer prevails; the number of able-bodied applying for assistance to agencies outside the Poor Law is far greater than those applying to the Poor Law itself.

309. On 31st March, 1906, when pauperism was at a high level, there were approximately 13,000 to 14,000 healthy able-bodied men in receipt of Poor Law relief.[3] In the winter of 1905–6 there were 111,000 applicants to Distress Committees, of whom only 1,434 were women.[4] The number includes at least 3,000 who had received poor relief, and it also includes all those who made application at any time during the winter. It is certain that the whole 111,000 were not unemployed at the same time, and that a large proportion of them obtained work at some time during the winter. At any given moment, therefore, the number would be much less. In addition to the numbers in receipt of poor relief and the applicants to Distress Committees, a very large number of persons received relief from charitable associations, though in many cases those so treated were the same persons as applied to the Distress Committees. It may, therefore, safely be said that the number of able-bodied men in urban districts applying for assistance outside the Poor Law is much greater than the number of those who apply to the Guardians.*

* The number of ordinarily able-bodied men in health relieved indoors on March 31st, 1906, was 10,060. Of healthy able-bodied men in receipt of out-relief, a large proportion receive relief on account of the sickness or infirmity of some member of their families, or on account of "sudden and urgent necessity." Such men would not fall to be dealt with as unemployed persons, and omitting them, there were on March 31st, 1906, 3,283 able-bodied men in receipt of outdoor relief. Taking indoor and outdoor paupers together the total number relieved was thus 13,343 (Statistical Appendix, Part II, Table 1.) The year's count (1891–2) for men aged sixteen and under sixty-five was 3·26 times greater than the mean of the day counts of that year (Statistical Appendix. Part IV, Section 2, par. 34.) There are no statistics as to the numbers relieved in the winter only, but applying the ratio of 3·26 to the number of unemployed given above, it would still appear that the number of unemployed able-bodied men relieved by the Poor Law is much less than the number relieved by other agencies.

1 *Cf.* Annual Reports of Poor Law Commission, 1839 (p. 8), 1843 (p. 254), 1847 (p. 4), with Appendix to Vol. I. of Evidence, Appendix No. II B., Table 10. See also Statistical Appendix, Part I., Table XV
2 Statistical Appendix, Part I., pars. 85 and 101. 3 Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 1. 4 Return—"Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905 (Proceedings of Distress Committee, 1905–6)." H.C. 392, 1906, pp. i and ii.

Comparative condition of various grades of labour.

310. In the examination of witnesses who gave evidence upon the working and results of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, we found a general agreement as to the condition of the wage-earning classes and the lines on which they are divided. The witnesses accept a division into skilled and unskilled[1]; with a further sub-division of the unskilled, viz. (1) the upper grade; and (2) the lower grade.[2]

311. This classification is in no sense scientific as there are many classes of workmen on the border line between skilled and unskilled who can equally well be put in one or the other class, but generally speaking the rate of wage would be the distinction, the skilled having a higher and the unskilled a lower wage, though this difference does not always prevail.

312. The great majority of witnesses were of opinion that the general material condition of the skilled workman had improved during the last few decades.[3] As regards the higher grade of unskilled the same opinion was expressed, though not so confidently or uniformly.[4] As regards the lower grades of unskilled labourers, many witnesses, especially some from London and the crowded industrial centres, were of opinion that the position of such labourers was worse than formerly.[5]

313. Here again the continuity and regularity of the wage rather than its amount determined in the main whether a man belonged to the higher or lower grade of unskilled labour. A docker's pay per hour is higher than that of the ordinary railway employee, yet no one would on that account place him in a higher category of labour than the railway man. In this sense the lower grade of unskilled labour almost exclusively embraces the casual and intermittent worker. Casual or intermittent work, however, can be and is of great variety; sometimes it comes within the category of seasonal work, oftener it is outside it. An outdoor painter is a seasonal worker, but his employment is skilled, and frequently continuous while he can work; a fruit or hop picker's work is seasonal, but it is also casual and unskilled. We may therefore lay down this further generalisation—that, the more regular an occupation is, the less likely are those in it, when able-bodied, to apply for public relief.

Relation of casual labour to pauperism and unemployment.

314. Reviewing this generalisation, our Investigators, Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, assign to casual labour the chief place among industrial conditions that contribute to pauperism[6], and this view is confirmed by a number of witnesses.[7] The summary of previous inquiries into distress due to unemployment in Messrs. Jackson and Pringle's Report[8] discloses a most striking unanimity in the view that the great bulk of applications for relief from unemployment come from casual labour. Another of our Investigators, Mr. Jones, also says: "Among the most effective pauperising agencies must be placed casual labour."[9]

315. This striking unanimity among our Special Investigators is absolutely confirmed by our own inquiry. Mr. Hamilton tells us: "As far as can be gathered, quite 90 per cent." of the men coming to the Church Army labour depôts are general labourers, about half of whom "have not been in continuous employment for several years."[10] In London the bulk of the applicants to Distress Committees are said to belong to this class.[11] In West Ham 50 per cent. of the applicants to the Distress Committee in 1906–7 had had, during the twelve months preceding their applications, practically under two days' work a week. That is the normal condition, or very nearly so, of the casual class which is so large a part of the population of West Ham.[12] In West Hartlepool, out of 626 applicants to the Distress Committee, 32 per cent. were dock labourers.[13] In Swansea, out of 703 applicants who registered at the labour bureau from November, 1905, to May, 1906, 67 per cent. were either dock or general labourers.[14] And for the whole of England and Wales, 53 per cent. of the applicants qualified for assistance from Distress Committees during the year 1907–8 belonged to the general or casual labour class.[15]

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1 Jackson and Pringle's Report, App. F. Jenkin Jones, Vol. VIII., App. xliv. (4–5). Kelley, Vol. VIII. App. xlv. (i.) John Davies, Vol. VIII., App. xix. (3). Moorhouse, Vol. VIII., App. liv. (2). Melhuish, Vol. VIII., App. li. (4). Lea, Vol. VIII., App. xlvi. (i.), Downey, Vol. VIII., App. xxii. (10). Wright, 87323 (8). 2 Humphreys, 79416 *et seq.* 3 Wood, 85764. Jones, 49742. Stableforth, 51225–7. Hurworth, 52969. Browne, 86236, 86336. Marshall, 87772. Beveridge, 87059–62. 4 Donaldson, 46315. Brown, 50011. Stableforth, 51226. Hurworth, 52970. Marshall, 87773. 5 Marshall, 87774. Bowley, 88130–2. Donaldson, 46316. Browne, 50012. Stableforth, 51227. Hurworth, 52972. 6 Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire's Final Report on Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, Part II. (1). 7 Rusbridge, 20555–8. Wood, 85700 (23). Ward, 83589. T. B. Davies, Vol. V., App. lxxv. (6). 8 Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 22. 9 Final Report by Mr. Jones of Inquiry into Effect of Outdoor relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment—Part II., p. 29. 10 Hamilton, 93611 (14). 11 Beveridge, 77832 (8). 12 Humphreys, 79408 (9), 79416–23. 13 Simpson, Vol. VIII., App. lxxi. (2). 14 Snelling, Vol. VIII., App. lxxiii. (c). 15 H.C., 173–1908, p. 5.

Relation of casual labour to pauperism and unemployment.

316. What proportion this form of labour now bears to employment generally we cannot say. Casual labour was in evidence before the Royal Commission of 1832, but the references to it are very few,[1] and it is difficult to believe that more grave and pointed reference would not have been made to it, if it then formed so large a contributing element to pauperism as by universal admission it now does.

317. We may therefore reasonably infer that this cause of distress and pauperism has now assumed, both absolutely and relatively, larger proportions than in 1834. Indeed it is the almost unanimous opinion of witnesses residing in industrial centres, and especially of London witnesses, that it is yearly developing.[2] Mr. Sidney Webb, whose evidence we have referred to elsewhere, described in serious language the rapidity of its increase.[3] The growth of casual labour to its present dimensions is, however, a modern evil.

318. Our Special Investigators report that though there is no evidence that any considerable proportion of the men applying to Distress Committees owe their unemployment to sickness, yet "from the evidence of borough engineers and foremen of relief works there seems little doubt that the men are of low physical capacity."[4] And in summing up the characteristics of the unemployed class they say: "We do not find that there is a very large proportion of men of bad character, but there are certainly a considerable number of men who are not very competent and not very industrious."[5]

319. Without infringing upon other parts of our Report we must here present, so far as applications of able-bodied for relief are concerned, what are the almost invariable products of this casuality. They may be summed up in one word—inefficiency and inability for anything but unskilled and non-continuous work of the most elementary kind.

320. Once a casual labourer always a casual labourer, unless there is within the individual some special grit and force of character to emancipate him from his vicious and retentive environment. Thus, while those who become casual labourers remain so, there is from various sources a constant recruiting of their ranks. Those who have failed in higher branches of work, either from bad habits, bad fortune, breakdown in health, or incapacity to give a remunerative return for the wage they get, all naturally gravitate into the ranks of those seeking casual work. So it comes to pass that at every great port the numbers seeking employment are largely in excess of the demand, and that there is at the large ports and at certain of our populous centres a stagnant mass of low-grade labour, ready to clutch at any form of assistance which will add to their precarious livelihood.[6]

The relation of skilled labour to unemployment.

321. But if, as regards unskilled labour, there are factors to be dealt with in our large towns which were almost unknown to those who reorganised the Poor Law in 1834, some phenomena affecting the capacity of workmen of a higher type have also developed themselves which were equally unknown or unforeseen by our forefathers. Cyclical fluctuations due to the enlarged area of operations of our trade are apt to become less amenable to local or even national control. Changes in fashion, greatly affecting demand, follow one another more rapidly than heretofore, and the wider competition to which production is subject forces upon the manufacturer new processes and new mechanical appliances. All these causes tend to put out of employment temporarily and even permanently men of respectable character, who are willing to work but whose work is not of the type or standard required. The standard of machine work is constantly rising, and the efficiency of the worker is expected to correspond. If from age, failing health, or ineptitude a worker fails, his employment may cease, and he has difficulty in again obtaining work in his old grade or level.

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832, App. A, Part I., pp. 916–7, and Vol. II., App. 32, p. 108[b]
[2] Toynbee, 30703; Bailward, 78704 (14), 78850–3; Quelch, 26051–2. Chapman, 84791 (24), 84812, 84892–6 &c., &c. [3] Sidney Webb, 93031, Ans. VII. [4] Jackson and Pringle's Report on Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed since 1886, Part II., 2[b], i. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 146. [6] See previous chapter, Sec. 21.

322. Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, while pointing out the difficulty of exactly defining what is meant by the skilled or artisan classes, estimate that, of the applicants to Distress Committees, 20 per cent. are skilled.[1] This proportion of skilled to unskilled varied much according to the local state of trade. In Northampton, Leicester and Woolwich, it was higher owing to changes in the boot trade at the first two places, and to a reduction of Government establishments in the last one.[2] Relation of skilled labour to unemployment.

323. The Workmen's Compensation Acts[3] and the Trade Union standard[4] also tend to render it more difficult for able-bodied men above a certain age or below a certain standard of physique or efficiency to retain or re-obtain work to which they are accustomed. These again drift into casual or under employment. This, though not a new phenomenon, has greatly increased since 1834.

324. Summing up the new factors and developments we find—

(1) That we have an increasing aggregation of unskilled labour at our great ports and in certain populous districts.

(2) That this aggregation of low-grade labour is so much in excess of the normal local wants as to promote and perpetuate under-employment.

(3) That this normal condition of under-employment, when aggravated by periodic contraction of trade or by inevitable changes in methods of production, assumes such dimensions as to require special machinery and organisation for its relief and treatment.

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[1] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 69. [2] Appendix to Jackson and Pringle's Report on Unemployment, pp. 50–60 and 171. See also Gribble, Vol. VIII., App. xxxiii. (13–14); Court, Vol. I., App xiii., A. (xi). [3] Marshall, 87721 (9), 13–14; Livesey, 83136 Ans. I. (c), 83211–5; Rouse, Vol. VIII., App. lxviii. (18–22); Dr. Innes-Smith, 43177–8; Baines, 39600; Solomon, 50438 (13), Raeburn, 89722 (5), &c., &c. [4] Leech, 83769 (3–4), 83774–5; Abbott, 87157 (8), 87170; Hogg, Vol. VIII., App. xxxviii. (13); E. Richardson, Vol. VIII., App. lxiv. (xi); Mordey, Vol. VIII., App. lv. (3–7), &c., &c.

Chapter 3.

CRITICISM OF EXISTING METHODS OF RELIEF TO THE ABLE-BODIED.

(1).—The Poor Law.

325. We now turn to the existing methods of relief, with the view of testing how far they are adapted to and capable of dealing with the new conditions that have arisen. We have described at length in a previous chapter the methods of dealing with the able-bodied under the Poor Law. We have seen that the normal methods intended to be established by the Central Authority under the Act of 1834 were indoor relief and emigration, and that the abnormal methods were outdoor relief, with or without a labour test. We have, therefore, to examine *seriatim* the suitability of the workhouse, emigration, the labour yard, and out-relief, as methods for dealing with the able-bodied in distress from unemployment.

326. The first point to note is that at least one of the abnormal methods, viz.,* the labour-yard, has tended by the force of events to become normal, and that at the present day the Unions having power to give outdoor relief accompanied by a labour test, are much more numerous than those in which relief to the able-bodied must be given in the workhouse.† Experience, therefore, raises *a priori* a presumption against the adequacy of the normal methods. This presumption is increased when we examine more closely the working of those methods.

The workhouse.

327. We have spoken elsewhere of the evils which to our mind are inseparably connected with the present general workhouse, and of the need for classification by institutions. Our position is greatly strengthened by the evidence which we have received as to the effect of residence in the workhouse on the able-bodied.[1] Whatever may be said of the reasons for deterrence in the case of those among the aged who come there by their own fault, the only principle which can be defended in the case of the able-bodied is that they should leave the workhouse better fitted to earn their living than when they entered it. Whether we rely on discipline, on industrial training, or moral suasion, the end should be in all cases the same, viz. to restore efficiency, physical, mental, and moral. But the evidence of workhouse Chaplains, a high authority on such a point, is emphatic that, so far from this end being reached, the effect of a sojourn in the workhouse is wholly bad.[2]

> "Even men above the ordinary working class appear to lose their manhood when they come into the house."[3] The able-bodied "easily become enervated and lose all desire to rise again to true citizenship and individual responsibility."[4] "It is pitiable to see the mental torture which decent people suffer when circumstances compel them to enter the workouse—there comes a loss of self-respect and a moral deterioration."[5]

328. We are, of course, aware that in individual Unions the deterrent conditions are waived or modified by more prescient Boards of Guardians in favour of a man searching for work—as, for instance, when a man is permitted to leave the workhouse in search of work unencumbered by his wife and children. But these concessions are often abused by the workhouse loafer, with the inevitable result that the Guardians are compelled to withdraw them. In the main, we believe that we have not exaggerated those features in the present workhouse system which make it not only repellent (as is perhaps necessary), but also (as is unnecessary) degrading to the honest man who is anxious to reinstate himself in independence.[6] The workhouse does not afford any abiding help to the class of distressed unemployed who are willing and anxious to work.

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* For shortness' sake we here include all forms of outdoor relief accompanied by a test of labour.

† See list of Unions where the Regulation and Labour Test Orders are in force.[7]

[1] James, 23707; Bushell, 23945 (5) Alford, 31842; Smith, 37402; Williams, 45464 (13); Blossom, 42781 (8), 42910; Carryer, 46516 (8); Brown, 50009 (3); Buckingham, 68579; Ayles, 45786 (7); Vulliamy, 73387–90; Verity, 42048 (8), 42066; Turner, 43566 (4); Morris, 69996, 70046–8; Clarke, 95410–1; Bonar, 29820–4. As regards able-bodied women, *see* Thorburn, 35693 (38); Edwards, 23832; Report by Workhouse Chaplains, App. Vol. XI. p. 5 (11). [2] Summary of Reports of Workhouse Chaplains as to effect of life on inmates, p. 6 (1). [3] Gasking, p. 21. [4] Harrison, p. 18. [5] Hodgson, p. 19. [6] Fleming, 9127, Ford, 39776 (20) (8); Peters, 19929; Blackshaw, 41349 (10); Macdonald, Vol. IV., App. xlv. (10). [7] Report on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907; Mrs. Sidney Webb: App., Vol. XII.

329. The second normal resource of the Poor Law for dealing with the able-bodied is emigration; but, as we have already shown,[1] it is in practice so little used that it cannot be regarded as having had much effect in dealing with this problem. The Royal Commission of 1832 hesitated to recommend its general adoption. Emigration.

330. Having dealt with the normal Poor Law methods of relieving the able-bodied, we have next to consider the methods available abnormally, viz., the labour-yard and unconditional outdoor relief. The inherent difficulty of the labour-yard is that, if it is in any way a permanent institution, it tends to become the habitual resort of the incapables who are content with the barest subsistence, and are willing to put up with all the inconveniences of the yard so long as they are assured of living at home with enough to keep themselves and their families from starving.[2] After the manner of the parish labourers of 1832, they prefer to do a little work for a certain subsistence out of the rates, rather than to take any trouble to obtain an independence by their own exertions.[3] The labour-yard, unless well administered, encourages the incapables without reforming them. It provides no incentive to industry;[4] the relief is not earned in proportion to effort, but it is given in proportion to needs, subject to the qualification of performing a prescribed task of work.[5] A loafer with many children may do the minimum of work required and obtain four times as much as the industrious single man, even though the latter should do four times the work of the loafer. The labour-yard, in fact, is the home of the "ca' canny,"[6] and so infectious is its atmosphere and its principle of "do little," that a stay there will demoralise even the best workman.[7] Hence, by the industrious and respectable persons out of work, the labour-yard has become, and under existing conditions rightly, almost as much tabooed as the workhouse.[8] The labour yard.

331. Whatever the inherent evils of the permanent labour-yard, they are intensified when it is resorted to as a remedy in times of emergency.[9] The conditions under which the abuses of the system can be abated are the existence of a large and efficient staff to supervise the labour, the existence of large and suitable premises in which the work can be properly done and properly supervised, and, lastly, the existence outside the labour-yard of a sufficient staff of skilled relieving or enquiry officers to check imposture.[10] But these three conditions are not to be improvised in a moment.

332. Upon unconditional outdoor relief, *i.e.*, out-relief without a labour test, the last Poor Law method of dealing with the able-bodied, we need not dwell. Nothing can be said in favour of setting aside in times of panic or stress the principles underlying the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and the Report of the Royal Commission of that date. At present the workhouse-test, the labour-test, the giving of relief in kind, and strict investigation, are the safeguards attached to the grant of relief to the able-bodied. But all these safeguards can be and occasionally are systematically dispensed with on the plea of "sudden and urgent necessity"[11] and under certain dispensatory provisions of the Prohibitory or Regulation Orders.[12] In such cases, out-relief to the able-bodied is given with practically all the freedom which existed before 1832; and in our opinion it is open to all the evils disclosed by the Royal Commission of 1832. Unconditional out-relief to the able-bodied tends to aggravate rather than diminish those accumulations of surplus labour, which as we have seen, are among the disquieting features of modern industrial conditions. Unconditional outdoor relief.

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[1] See Part IV., Chap. 9 (25–27), also Rudd, Vol. VIII., App. lxix. (7); Fairchild, Vol. VIII., App. xxiv. (21); Dalton, 31450–1. [2] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv. (A), (171); Walsh, 8647, 8682–4, App. xviii. (C); Carryer, 46516 (18), 46648, 46692 *et seq.*; Islip, 46915 (3*a*); Millward, 18749; Ford, 39776 (29); [3] Millward, 18749; Lockwood, 4086, 13236*a*, 13328–9; Bagenal, 7662; Millward, 18916; Lockwood, 4089; Court, 6470–7 Alford, 31803–6. [4] Solomon, 50624–8; Dyson, 20383–7. [5] Lockwood, 13280–1, 13388; Davy, 2443; Lowry, 12094–5. [6] Ford, 39835–42; [7] Court, Vol. I., App. xiii. (A), 6309–10; Wethered, 5521–2; Peters, 20028–33; Rusbridge, 20418 (11), 20466–71, 20918; W. Fawkes, 43889 (13–18). [8] Smart, 84501 (8); Solomon, 50435 (5), 50626–7; Crowder, 17666. [9] James, 48419–21; Alford, 31775, 31988. Lockwood, 13330–40. [10] Rusbridge, 20623, 20979; Crowder, 17387 (23); 17442, 17670. [11] Rusbridge 20571, 20623. Adrian, 191, 1221–2; Lockwood, 13953, 13402–13, 13971. Dyson, 20117 (4*a*). Wallace, 77041–8; Simey, 51643. [12] Lockwood, 13349. Visits: Urban, 18.

General effect of the Poor Law on unemployment.

334. Indeed, generally speaking, the whole influence of the present Poor Law upon pauperism is centripetal rather than centrifugal.[1] Except to the extent to which the Guardians can emigrate and can remove under the law of settlement, they can only deal with the poor by relieving them where they are. And in proportion as they relieve them where they are, it follows that there is less inducement for the poor to move to other districts. The one method the present Poor Law possesses for directly assisting the mobility of labour within the kingdom is the casual ward; and the whole Report of the Vagrancy Committee shows how repellent and useless the administration of the casual ward is to the genuine work-searcher.[2]

335. The present Poor Law, therefore, in effect does nothing to decrease the immobility of labour or to grapple with the new tendencies which go to make up the modern problem of relief to the distressed able-bodied.[3] In times of emergency there has always been a desire to secure the help of voluntary and other agencies. Indeed, in the whole of the evidence we took, we are not aware of a single witness who urged that the present Poor Law, as it now stands and is generally administered, is adequate to deal with the problems of distress due to unemployment.

336. As the Royal Commission of 1832 themselves remarked:—

> "A person who attributes pauperism to the inability to procure employment will doubt the efficiency of the means by which we propose to remove it."[4]

337. The administrators of the present Poor Law are in fact endeavouring to apply the rigid system of 1834 to a condition of affairs which it was never intended to meet. What is wanted is not to abolish the Poor Law, but to widen, strengthen and humanise the Poor Law, so as to make it respond to a demand for a more considerate, elastic, and, so far as possible, curative treatment of the able-bodied.

(2).—Charity.

Nature of early attempts of Charity to relieve the able-bodied.

338. It is noteworthy that, in the generation succeeding the Poor Law reformers of 1832, the first attempts of charity to supplement the Poor Law in dealing with the able-bodied related to particular periods of exceptional local distress. Such efforts were spasmodic rather than permanent. The problems connected with unemployment did not at that time assume such a shape as to necessitate the permanent organisation of charity as a standing accessory to public relief.

339. At any rate, whatever be the cause, at that time voluntary efforts, as shown by the operations of charity, seem chiefly, if not solely, to have been directed towards supplementing the organisations of the Poor Law in times of special distress. It is only in quite recent years that charitable organisations, such as the Church Army and the Salvation Army, have established permanent machinery for dealing on a large scale with great numbers of those out of work, as part of the chronic and permanent problems of charity.

Charity and Metropolitan Distress, in 1860–1.

340. On the other hand, as far back as 1860 we find interesting evidence of the tendency of the general public, in times of special distress, to believe that the Poor Law was unequal to the emergency, and to accumulate large temporary funds and machinery for supplementing by charity the functions of the Guardians in regard to the relief of the able-bodied. In the Report of the Select Committee on Poor Relief of 1864, we are told that in consequence of a five weeks' uninterrupted frost in the winter of 1860–61, nearly the whole of the labourers in and about the London docks and along the banks of the river were thrown out of work; and the numbers were largely increased by the necessary cessation of work in other directions. For the relief of the persons thus deprived of their ordinary means of support, large sums of money, voluntarily contributed, were placed at the disposal

[1] Mackay, 29843 (22). [2] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906. [Cd. 2852.] [3] Dalton, 31617-9; 31679-80. Alden, 20859–70; Turner, 43590–4; Brown, 25253–4; Mackay, 29843 (23), 29922–4, 30043–4; Stepney, 796, 19 (17 iv.). [4] Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1834 [Cd. 2728, 1905], p. 277.

of the police magistrates, clergymen, and others in the several localities in which the distress existed.[1]

Charity and Metropolitan Distress, in 1860–1.

341. These subscriptions were raised on the assumption that the machinery of the Poor Law was inadequate to meet the prevailing distress, and that not only did the Rules and Regulations under which relief was administered require to be modified, but that the funds at the disposal of the Guardians were insufficient for such an emergency.[2]

342. Several public writers and speakers alleged that the Poor Law had "broken down," and this impression was widespread.[3] The Select Committee do not themselves express a definite opinion as to the quality and extent of the distress which prevailed, but they expressly state "that there can be no doubt that the machinery of the Poor Law administration was adequate to the occasion, and that the Guardians possessed the requisite powers necessary for the relief of distress." They set out, however, at some length the conflicting views conveyed to them by witnesses on the subject ofthe distress.[4] These views we here epitomise, because they are in themselves an epitome of the usual situation which precedes the interposition of charity in the work of relieving the unemployed.

343. On the one hand, Mr. Farnall, the Poor Law Inspector for the Metropolitan District, was of the opinion that the state of affairs "scarcely ought to bear the name of a crisis," and he pointed out that, out of 15,000 odd men who applied for, and were offered, relief subject to the workhouse or labour test, only 5,000 accepted the relief; the rest refused the test and were never heard of again.[5] This view that the Poor Law, if left to itself, could easily and satisfactorily have coped with the situation, was also stoutly maintained by a number of Clerks and Chairmen of the several Unions concerned.[6]

344. On the other hand, the Committee quote a number of Chairmen of Boards of Guardians, clergymen, and police magistrates who took the view that there prevailed "terrible distress," "most extreme and awful misery," and that "but for charitable subscriptions there would have been a fearful loss of life through starvation." The Committee noted the refusal of large numbers to accept the workhouse and the labour test, and point out that a considerable amount of evidence went to prove that it arose from the great facility with which the relief voluntarily contributed could be obtained.[7] But, without any exception, the evidence of the London police magistrates, who distributed the voluntary relief to the poor, was emphatic and unanimous that there was a large number of cases which the Poor Law did not and could not reach.[8]

345. Such was the state of affairs which, in the opinion of these witnesses, justified the interposition of charity, and the collection and distribution of subscriptions for the unemployed. But their own evidence goes on to show what great scandals this interposition of charity entailed. We hear how applicants often obtained relief from one police court in the morning and from another in the afternoon;[9] that there was no co-operation between the Guardians and the police magistrates,[10] so that, in many cases, duplicate and even triplicate relief may have been given without the possibility of detection. One inexperienced district visitor sent in without investigation the names of the occupiers of a whole street and square as being clearly entitled to assistance.[11] Sums as large as £50, £80, and £100 were often distributed in handfuls of silver to crowds of applicants, the sole qualification being a display of dirty hands.[12] Bread, which was given in relief, was taken to public-houses and exchanged for beer, and then sold by the publicans at a reduced rate.[13] There was no doubt, in fact, that imposture was rampant on account of the want of organisation and investigation which accompanied the distribution of the money so promptly and generously subscribed.

346. The ultimate finding of the Committee with regard to the measures taken during this time of distress was as follows:—

"That they received strong evidence that such distress could have been relieved by the Poor Law authorities, inasmuch as the legal machinery of administration was sufficient, and

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[1] Report of Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1864 (255). p. 3. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 3. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 3. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 4. [5] *Ibid.* [6] *Ibid.*; Thirteenth Annual Report Poor Law Board 1860–1, 2870; *Cf.* App. 3. Doyle, p. 37. [7] Report of Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1864 (255), pp. 4, 5, 6. [8] *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 8, 9. [9] *Ibid.*, p. 8. [10] *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7. [11] *Ibid.*, p. 8. [12] *Ibid.*, p. 7. [13] *Ibid.*

the guardians possessed the requisite powers for raising the necessary funds for the purpose; but the legal charge would have pressed very heavily on some parishes within the Metropolis. The regular action, however, of the Poor Law was, to a considerable extent, rendered unnecessary by voluntary contributions; and however desirable it is that in great emergencies destitution should be relieved by spontaneous charity, Your Committee find that on the occasion in question evils resulted from the want of a sufficient organisation for the investigation of the cases of the persons relieved."[1]*

347. We have quoted and referred at some length to this Report, now more than forty years old, because we believe it to contain a true picture of the situation which almost invariably arises when money is subscribed in a hurry by the charitable public for the relief of distress from unemployment and is distributed without adequate investigation by means of hastily improvised or inexperienced organisations.

348. From this Report we gather :—

(1) The motive of the interposition of charity was the assumption that the Poor Law was inadequate to meet the situation.

(2) Both the Central and local Poor Law Authorities concurred in maintaining that the Poor Law was adequate, and their view was upheld by the Select Committee of the House of Commons.

(3) But, notwithstanding, the Select Committee admitted that it may possibly be "desirable" "that in great emergencies destitution should be relieved by charity," and in the body of their Report they themselves indicate a form of organisation which might enable charity to intervene more successfully in future.

349. The secret of this inconsistent attitude of the Committee in regard to the necessity of the intervention of charity may be explained by the fact that, between the date of the Metropolitan distress into which they were inquiring and the date of their Report, there had occurred the Lancashire Cotton Famine. An enormous sum had been collected and distributed by voluntary agencies towards the relief of half a million destitute persons, and both the people who gave and the people who distributed the charity had been publicly thanked in the Speech from the Throne.

350. It would appear, therefore, to have been necessary for the Select Committee of 1864 to combine, with a disapproval of the administrative scandals of charity in 1861–2, a concurrence in the principle of the intervention of charity which had been approved by the Government, Parliament, and the nation at large.

Charity and the Lancashire Cotton Famine.

351. The Lancashire Cotton Famine was the occasion of the greatest effort which charity has ever made in England towards the alleviation of distress due to want of employment. The distress began to be acute in December, 1861, and by the end of June, 1863, charity had accumulated £1,974,203 for the relief of the unemployed operatives and their families.[2] It is probable that under the circumstances this vast sum was distributed with the maximum of good and the minimum of demoralisation. When perfected, the charitable organisation consisted of a Central Executive Committee and a General Relief Committee at Manchester, and a Mansion House Committee in London. The function of the General Relief Committee was merely to collect subscriptions; the function of the Central Executive Committee was to distribute the subscriptions through the medium of 170 local Committees, and generally, as far

* Two things should be added. There was then no central organisation for the administration of voluntary relief. The parishes could not rally for the purpose, and the necessity for treating problems of want as matters of social knowledge and education was hardly present in the public mind. The Magistrates were admittedly an unsatisfactory tribunal in an emergency of this kind; and there were no local agencies who were able to support them systematically by concerted action. On this and other occasions the difficulties of organisation were immensely increased by the over-haste of the donors themselves, who were impatient of all pre-consideration, and in their excitement pressed for the immediate and wholesale distribution of large funds. This element has always to be reckoned with in a crisis in the Metropolis, and it is obviously most difficult to restrain or to guide it.

[1] Report of Select Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1864 [255] p. 10. [2] Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 493.

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as possible, to influence, control, and co-ordinate on a common plan the activities of these local Committees.[1] The functions of the Mansion House Committee were to collect and forward subscriptions to the distressed districts, but this it apparently did to a considerable extent in co-operation with the Central Executive Committee.[2]

352. On the Central Executive Committee sat the special representative of the Central Poor Law Authority, Mr. Farnall, whose evidence as to the adequacy of the Poor Law to deal with the London distress in 1861 we have already quoted.[3] There was also some co-operation and communication between the local Poor Law Authorities and the charitable organisations. The Central Executive Committee used its influence, and successfully, to raise the average weekly rate of poor relief per head from 1s. 2¾d. to 2s.,[4] and there was a mutual inspection of each others' relief books by the local Charitable Relief Committee and the Board of Guardians.[5] The local Relief Committees were enjoined to refer chronic cases of indigence to the Guardians, and to use voluntary or paid visitors for the purpose of investigating cases. There was, in fact, at the end of the period of distress, a complete paraphernalia of regulations and inquiry, a central controlling Committee distributing to local Committees funds, partly raised locally, partly centrally—in a word a replica of the official and statutory Poor Law system, acting parallel to and in co-operation with it.

353. It might have been expected that charity distributed by such a complete organisation and with so many safeguards would have been free (if ever relief of any kind whatever on a large scale could be free) from serious abuses. But it is clear from the "Manual" issued by the Central Executive Committee in the autumn of 1863[6], when the worst distress was over, and also from Arnold's "History of the Famine," which is throughout written in a laudatory spirit, that, at any rate in the times of worst pressure, serious abuses did arise. At the outset there were separate funds administered by separate Committees in many towns,[7] and there were at least four central funds also administered by four Central Committees.[8] It was not till August, 1862, that is in the eighth month of the period of distress, that the Central Executive Committee came on the scene to co-ordinate the various funds and to prevent overlapping. In Manchester, where the Guardians and Relief Committee relieved the same cases, it was alleged that 25 per cent. of the recipients were not proper objects of charity,[9] and when special visitors were employed it was discovered, according to a report of the assistant clerk of the Manchester Union, that :—

> "Almost every conceivable variety of fraud, it would appear, has been practised upon the officers of the Board, as the reports of the special visitors now employed prove every week. Children, recently dead, have been booked as living; children that never existed have been booked; children have been borrowed to make up families; concealment or misrepresentation of wages seems almost to have been the rule in some districts of the city; men, whose regular work was at night have obtained relief for want of work in the day time; sick men have been found drunk in bed; men discharged by employers for drunkenness have obtained relief as decent, respectable artisans; persons have left employment avowedly because they could get a living easier by charity and parish relief than by work; men have been found who, having work at home, were attending the school or the farm; men have been found who were working, but not at their homes; and the short hours required of those sent to the school or to the farm, have enabled many to secure wages of which they gave no account whatever; and to finish this most unpleasant recital the reports referred to have made the Guardians acquainted with the existence, in one district at least, of an amount of immorality which they had not before heard of, a large number of persons living in adultery having obtained relief as married people.'[10]

354. It is probable that such wholesale abuses were not found elsewhere than in the largest towns, and that even there, as in the case cited, they were ultimately detected

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[1] Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 271–2. Letter from Mr. Farnall to Mr. Villiers. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 120, pp. 232–233. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 179–80. [4] *Ibid.*, pp. 234 and 353. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 273. [6] *Ibid.*, App., pp. 546 *et seq.* [7] Lancashire's Lesson, etc. McCullagh Torrens, p. 137. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 100, pp. 347, 181. [9] Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 362. [10] *Ibid.*, Report of clerk to Manchester Board of Guardians, p. 363. *See also* Footnote †.

† "Rascaldom was in clover during the early period of the distress, and the revision of the school lists, in the spring of 1863, turned out domestic servants from the sewing schools, sent hand-loom weavers to their normal dependence upon the poor rates and even committed to prison swindlers, who whilst in regular work and in receipt of good wages, were also getting assistance from the relief committees. But these cases of imposition occurred only amongst large populations, and certainly did not at any time comprise 5 per cent. of the recipients of relief."—("Lancashire and the Cotton Famine," Watts, p. 212.)

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and diminished by the system of visitors recommended by the Central Executive Committee. But the point we wish to emphasise is that it was only the long duration of the distress that enabled the provisional administration of charity to acquire the experience and skill in investigation and revision of cases which, in the words of the Executive Committee's Manual, "will alone prevent abuses."[1] For it is only when sufficient time has elapsed to introduce, train partially, and control a newly organised association of workers that the skill, experience and co-operation necessary to charitable work can be attained.

355. Another abuse, to which the Executive Committee refer, was the tendency to supplement the wages of workmen on full time by means of money allowances.* As in 1834, some employers took advantage of this system to pay inadequate wages. "It is better," say the Committee, "that operatives should be entirely withdrawn from work than that they should labour sixty hours weekly for little more, or even less, than the scale of relief."[2] In one case an operative is said to have worked fifty hours a week in a factory for 9½d.[3] In other cases work for fifty-five hours a week would be exacted for a wage of 3s. or 4s. exclusive of deduction for rent, the miserable pittance then left being made up by "relief" to the standard of 2s. a head a week.[4] We have, therefore, here in miniature an indication of what would probably be the general effect on wages of re-introducing an indiscriminate system of giving money allowances to the able-bodied, whether from charitable or from public funds.

356. Yet another evil was the protracted pensioning of a large number of able-bodied men and boys without providing them with any occupation. The "Relief Committees" had been from the time of their establishment utterly unable to provide manual labour for all the able-bodied men whom their funds supported, "and the Guardians (not unnaturally) neglected a requirement which the Committees did not make.[5]" The labour test, therefore, seems almost of necessity to have been largely abandoned. Although the Poor Law Board did not repeal the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, they had pointed out to the Guardians that its provisions could be dispensed with in cases of urgent necessity, and that the existence of masses of starving operatives constituted such necessity.[6] Thus in March, 1863, although there were between 60,000 and 70,000 girls employed in sewing schools and 20,000 † men and boys being taught in other schools—all of whom were accounted as "working"—there were yet "upwards of 25,000 able-bodied men and boys who were then receiving the means of subsistence without labouring in any way in return for it.[7]"

357. This protracted idleness led to demoralisation and riots,[8] and no doubt was the cause of the Government's adopting a new method of alleviation, viz., the provision of works of public utility undertaken by the Local Authorities and paid for by them out of loans advanced from the Exchequer. To this part of the lesson of the Cotton Famine we shall refer subsequently. We are here only concerned with the moral that, even with the most effective organisation, a general system of money allowances to able-bodied in distress can never be safely resorted to.

358. There was yet another early mistake on the evils of which the Executive Committee commented in their Manual. The original bent of the Local Committees was to supplement the relief of the Guardians, instead of confining their sole attention to cases with which the Guardians did not deal.[9]‡ This system of divided responsibility for

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* "During the last two years, however, the allowance system has been set up anew and sanctioned in every form and to every conceivable extent in Lancashire."—("Lancashire's Lesson, etc.," McCullagh Torrens, p. 120.) "Some Committees had also suplemented full time wages in cases where the materia to be worked up was so wretched that weavers who used, in ordinary times, to earn from 10s. to 12s per week, could not earn the amount as wages."—("Lancashire and the Cotton Famine," Watts, p. 210.)

† In the winter of 1862–3, when the famine was at its worst, 48,000 men and boys were being taught in schools.—("Lancashire and the Cotton Famine," Watts, p. 210.)

‡ The Report of the Honorary Secretary for May, 1865, shows that, a month before the Executive Committee adjourned *sine die*, "the relief of 3,872 persons from the Guardians was being supplemented by the local Committees at a cost of £901 per month, when the total expenditure of the Relief Committees was only £5,090 per month."—("Lancashire and the Cotton Famine," Watts, p. 210.)

1 Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," App., p. 550. 2 *Ibid.*, App. p. 553. 3 *Ibid.*, p. 362 4 *Ibid.*, p. 413. 5 *Ibid.*, p. 387. 6 Instructional letter accompanying issue of order to Lancashire, se Arnold, pp. 73, 106. 7 Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 387. *Cf.* also Report on Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed [C. 7182] 1893, p. 392. 8 Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 387.

9 "Lancashire and the Cotton Famine," Watts, p. 206. "Lancashire's Lesson, etc." Torrens, pp. 92–3.

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particular cases was found to "invite a struggle between the Guardians and the Relief Committee as to the proportion of the relief to be given by each, and so lighten the responsibility for the relief of each case as to leave no appreciable burden of such responsibility either on the Guardians or Committee."[1] In fact, the system then, as now, led to the unwarranted assumption by the Guardians and the Charity Committee that each would supply the other's deficiencies as regards the relief or the investigation of a case. This unsatisfactory arrangement was gradually replaced by one in which there was a clear demarcation of charity and Poor Law cases, with the consequence that the responsibility for the relief of each case was distinct; charity dealt with the better class of cases and left cases of misconduct and chronic indigence to the Guardians.[2]

359. The history of the famine and of the measures for the relief of the sufferers by it brought to light some grave defects in the machinery, no less than in the system, by which that relief was administered. And we can hardly be surprised if it illustrates the truth that "knowledge comes but wisdom lingers." It was the first experience of the kind in England. Never before had the country attempted to cope with suffering on so large a scale. The tradition of voluntary effort in such cases was well-nigh lost; certainly, co-operation between Poor Law and charity in dealing with such an emergency had not been contemplated. It was only as experience grew longer and wider that bad methods were discarded and sound administration took their place. The almoners, official and other, had everything to learn, and the scale and the duration of the distress had this, at least, of good, that its lesson was learnt thoroughly.

360. The Guardians, not unnaturally, considered that they were the proper persons to deal with the crisis; they were confident of their ability to do so; and they were supported in that confidence by the Poor Law Board. In November, 1861, the Poor Law Board informed the Guardians that: "The Board are also confident that the machinery of the law itself will, with judicious management, be found, as heretofore, equal to any emergency."[3] And, as late as May, 1862, the President of the Board advised an anxious deputation of Lancashire Members of Parliament to "leave the matter at present in the hands of the Guardians, who were performing their duties very efficiently."[4]

361. It was, in fact, only the extraordinary and protracted nature of the distress that brought about the close co-operation of the Poor Law Authorities with the efforts of the Central Executive Committee to supplement the Poor Law by charity—and it was that co-operation alone which enabled the Committee to work so efficiently.

362. In considering, therefore, the teaching of the Lancashire Cotton Famine as to the operations of charity in relieving the unemployed, we must not fail to remember that both the successes and the failures of charitable effort on this occasion were largely due to the character and duration of the distress.

363. The distress was not in any way sudden. It was foreseen in the autumn of 1861,[5] developed gradually in the winter of that year, and did not reach its acutest stage until the winter of 1862. There was thus ample time given to the Central Poor Law Authority to concert measures of relief. A special representative of the Poor Law Board was sent down to the district, and stayed there permanently, explaining and smoothing down the asperities of the Poor Law, assisting and co-operating in the organisation of charity.[6] That organisation in its perfection was only possible owing to the long duration of the distress. The working-classes affected were not casual labourers, but highly skilled, respectable, and thrifty operatives *—but, none the less, the protracted and idle dependence on charity in the end demoralised them.[7] We have thus in the history of the Lancashire Cotton Famine a most instructive commentary on the limits of right charitable action in connection with the relief of the unemployed.

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* "Some of the operatives are men of superior intellect . . . many of them attain great proficiency in scientific, artistic and other pursuits."—("A Visit to Lancashire," Ellen Barlee, p. 5.)

[1] App. p. 549. [2] Appendix 549. [3] Fourteenth Annual Report, Poor Law Board, 1861–2, 3037–App. vii, p. 28. [4] Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 127. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 47. [6] *Ibid.*, pp. 128–9. [7] Arnold's "History of the Cotton Famine," p. 477.

Mansion House Funds,

364. In 1886 there was much distress in London, and in the winter a Mansion House Fund was opened. "Nearly £80,000 was rapidly subscribed and almost as rapidly distributed without in most cases any adequate precautions being taken to ensure a proper administration; as a consequence much of the money was wasted and had a most demoralising effect."[1] This experience led to an inquiry into the conditions of dealing with exceptional distress by a special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society, of which Mr. Albert Pell was Chairman, and this Committee arrived at two conclusions, viz., a recognition of the inadvisability of starting central relief funds for London except under certain express conditions, and, next, a recognition of the view, which largely influenced public opinion at the time, that relief employment was a method of assistance of very limited utility.[2]

365. The latter question was very closely investigated in connection with plans carried out in that and subsequent years, and also after reviewing the schemes of past years including those of the Cotton Famine. The conclusions of Mr. Pell's Committee were:—

> "That in the event of employment being provided, the wage should not be a 'charity' wage; that the best methods of payment appeared to be either by contract or by 'measured work,' or by scale; that the men should be worked, not by shifts of four or five hours, but for an eight hours' day with days off to look for work; and that on work other than that done on contract there should be sufficient inquiry or a trustworthy recommendation. The supervision should be strict, the gangs small, and the manager empowered to dismiss summarily if necessary."

The Mansion House Fund was used only to a comparatively small extent in providing employment. The next year there was much less distress; and the Lord Mayor appealed for £20,000 to provide assistance in some way that "might lead up to permanent remedies."[3] From the excitement and lavish giving of the past year there was a natural reaction, and only £5,000 was received. A small number of men (394) were employed under proper supervision and their cases considered individually. It was found possible to assist only 17 per cent. in such a way as to prevent their falling back into the ranks of the unemployed, even if so much as that could be guaranteed. Subsequent experiments in 1892–3 and later gave similar results. The best conditions of employment relief were fairly ascertained; and the after-results of such relief did not appear to justify it, unless great pressure required the use of this expedient. The Mansion House Committee of 1887–8 summarised the question thus:—

> "The Committee are of opinion that works started for the relief of the unemployed, even though they be in some degree useful and beneficial, are in the long run an injury instead of a benefit to the community, by discouraging the real spirit of work, and thereby diminishing self-reliance and enterprise; also, that such works under the management of amateurs, however well-intentioned, will usually result in increasing the number of those dependent on almsgiving, and by slackening foresight during the months when wages are earned, intensify the evil instead of remedying it. Moreover, such works tend to attract labour to London and further glut the market."

366. In regard to the other main conclusion of Mr. Pell's Committee, to which reference has been made above—the recognition of the inadvisability of starting central relief funds for London except under certain express conditions, a definite scheme for the establishment of a central voluntary administration with the aid of local committees and skilled help was proposed; and suggestions for dealing with distress in times of emergency which have been found of great service in subsequent years were submitted in detail. In 1892–3 and in 1894 employment relief was provided in connection with Committees at the Mansion House with results similar to those of 1887–8. In 1903–4, there was another Mansion House Fund for employment relief; 467 men were dealt with, and it was claimed by the Committee:—

> "That in spite of the limitations caused by the smallness of the fund a large number of genuine unemployed families were thoroughly helped, the men were maintained in health, efficiency, and self-respect, their homes kept together, and their wives and children enabled to preserve a fair standard of comfort through the winter. This was done without attracting to the fund the habitually dependent, and at a cost which must be regarded as small in proportion to the thoroughness of the relief afforded."[4]

367. Subsequent inquiries, however, showed that only 26 per cent. of the men helped had obtained more or less regular employment, the remaining 74 per cent. having lapsed into casual labour or obtained no employment at all.[5] But it is noteworthy that even

[1] Toynbee, 30622 (19).
[2] Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Exceptional Distress, pp. xiv., xvi.
[3] First Report of the Mansion House Conference on the Condition of the Unemployed, 1887–8.
[4] Toynbee, 30622 (27).
[5] Beveridge, 77831 (28). Maynard, 78371 (11).

this result of painstaking efforts in selecting the men was only achieved by sending the men to farm colonies under the management of permanent charitable organisations, which we shall hereafter shortly describe.

368. In brief then in London the experience of the period between the Mansion House Fund of 1886 and the introduction of Mr. Long's scheme, has been that in meeting distress employment relief is of very partial utility, and that, so far as general relief is concerned, it is almost inevitable that a considerable part of all temporary funds for the unemployed shall be wasted on unworthy objects, or, at best, spent with no permanent benefit to the recipients, unless the management of the fund has the assistance of—

(1) Persons skilled generally in the administration of charity; and

(2) Some permanent organisation to which the cases can be referred for treatment.

Press Funds.

369. This view is emphasised by the experience of funds raised and administered by the Press for the benefit of the unemployed. At Tottenham, we are told, money and goods to the extent of £10,000 were collected by a newspaper and distributed, being greatly in excess of the needs of the district. Fifty sheep were "contributed," and with difficulty got rid of;[1] thus illustrating an inducement to lax administration, innate in all such funds. For unless the whole of the fund is actually distributed, the subscribers are inclined to believe that their contributions have been extracted from them under false pretences. Hence there is an incentive to spend as much as possible on as many as possible; for as a rule, the public estimation of a charitable fund is increased or decreased in fairly accurate proportion to the number of pounds subscribed and the number of persons upon whom they have been spent.

370. At West Ham in 1903–4 some £20,000 was raised by newspapers and distributed to the unemployed, but :—

> "Unfortunately there were a lot of impostors, and I think it was pretty well circulated that the money went to other than those who needed it."[2]

It is alleged that the knowledge that this money was mis-spent operated subsequently to the detriment of the Distress Committee in collecting voluntary subscriptions.[3] Another newspaper in London collected some thousands of pounds, which were distributed among a few thousands of the unemployed as wages for doles of from one to three days' work; thus affording another instance of the mistaken endeavour to cure casual labour homœopathically.[4] Casual labour was also the chief form of assistance given by another Press fund, as to which we had evidence which convinced us that a genuine attempt was made to administer the fund on sound lines.[5] The organiser of yet another great Press fund gave it in evidence before us that, except as regards emigration, the methods of help employed by the fund had been unsatisfactory.[6] And though those responsible for each of the last two mentioned funds were of the opinion that a number of respectable workmen had been genuinely assisted, it was admitted that there was no co-operation between the two funds, which were being applied to the same district at the same time.[7] In the end, we were informed by two competent witnesses, there was indiscriminate giving of relief to such a degree that it tended rather to the aggravation of the trouble than to any reduction of it.[8]

If these are the acknowledged results of Press funds, it may well be asked how it is that they are again and again repeated. We feel convinced that the answer is, that, rightly or wrongly, there is a wide-spread impression that the Poor Law in its methods and tests is so deterrent that there are very large numbers who would prefer to undergo suffering rather than accept poor-relief. Hence the necessity for charity, especially in times of distress. We cannot better illustrate the prevalence of this view than by quoting the answers of certain clergymen, almoners of one of the West Ham Press funds, to the following question which was addressed to them :—

> *Question.*—Do you consider that the relief of distress is best left in the hands of the Poor Law officials?

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[1] Court, 6197. [2] Rusbridge, 20478. *See also* Maynard, 78371 (3), 88038. Humphreys, 79463–70. [3] Rusbridge, 20418 (13). [4] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 108. [5] Gardiner, 78640 *et seq.* [6] Richardson, 85623 (10). [7] Gardiner, 78678–9; Richardson, 85684–6. [8] Maynard, 78371 (3), 88038. Humphreys, 79463–70.

Answer.—"I should be sorry to see all relief left entirely to the Poor Law officials, as the most deserving would be omitted, on account of their not applying through fear of being bullied.

N.B.—Poor Law officials should remember every one has a right to make application even if not qualified to receive relief, and should treat applicants all alike as to behaviour and courtesy. The best do not apply because of this."

Answer.—"It would be impossible for any voluntary system to take in hand Poor Law administration. But I do not think that in times of *exceptional* distress Poor Law officials are such fair and considerate almoners as the clergy and their district visitors."

Answer.—"No, the relieving officers are often harsh, and even cruel, and not always honest."

Answer.—"The consideration of relief is greatly influenced by the class of people to be dealt with. Two divisions :—

(1) Those whose character for work is still unimpaired.

(2) Professional parasites of Society.

"The classes of people best dealt with by charity are those of the first class. For a satisfactory distribution of alms of any kind, personal knowledge of cases is essential. This the Poor Law officials are not in position to acquire. Furthermore, the genuine cases of distress are not, as a general rule, willing to apply for relief, and in consequence the Poor Law officials do not always have the best material to work on."

Answer.—"No."

Answer.—"I think that the relief of distress should be left in the hands of the Poor Law officials in the case of those people who *like* being relieved by charitable people."[1]

371. It seems clear that, so long as this view of the harshness and inadequacy of the Poor Law methods prevails in certain sections of the community, it will be difficult or impossible to prevent the outpouring of charity, even in the most indiscriminate and demoralising manner, in times when distress is widespread. The evidence as to Press funds, therefore, seems to point to the conclusion that distress from unemployment cannot helpfully be dealt with by sporadic and unorganised charity, but that under existing conditions it is difficult to prevent the interposition of this form of charity in times of special distress.

372. We now turn to consider the operations of permanent charitable organisations affording assistance to the able-bodied. These may be divided into two classes, viz., first, those which deal chiefly, if not exclusively, with the better class of workman, and second, those which deal chiefly with the worst classes—the unemployables or the "incapables."

Charity Organisation Societies.

373. To the first of these classes belong the Charity Organisation and other kindred societies in the country. Of these societies we may take two as illustrating their work generally, the Charity Organisation Society in London and the Liverpool Central Relief Society. The Secretary of the latter society thus describes its work, and the statement may be taken as of general application :—

"Ordinarily, the work of the Society consists in relieving distress of a temporary kind in whatever way is likely to restore the distressed to self-support. Persons in distress are brought under the Society's notice by ministers of religion, missionaries, nurses, school attendance officers, or private persons, or personal application is made. Careful investigation is made as to the antecedents and character of the applicants and the prospects of self-support being resumed, and appropriate action is taken."[2]

In addition at Liverpool the Society has workshops where men in want of employment are put to firewood making. The London Society has started no such institution. Its rule is that the cases of able bodied persons temporarily out of work should be considered, like other cases, on their merits. Where the want of work is due to seasonal or other recurrent causes, conditional relief of various kinds is given, the efficacy of which is practically limited by the amount of individual influence and personal supervision that is forthcoming. If the distress is due to some exceptional temporary cause, those who suffer are dealt with in accordance with a rough classification as :—

(1) Thrifty and careful men ;

(2) Men of different grades of respectability, but non-provident and of very limited capacity ; and

(3) The idle, loafing class, and those brought low by vice or drink.

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[1] Richardson, Vol. VIII., App. cii. [2] Grisewood, 37105 (22).

The first class and those in Class (2) who have a decent home are temporarily supported by charity, or assisted, *e.g.*, by the payment of arrears of rent, by redeeming tools, and in other ways, and by emigration. Others are left to be dealt with by the Poor Law Guardians. This method has been frequently put in force in exceptional years. Thus "a man may be out of work whose occupation is such that relief work offered by the Guardians or under the Unemployed Workmen Act would be wholly unsuitable for him. In such cases allowances have been given, after inquiry, for weeks, or, it may be, even for months."[1] And in this way, for instance, the Kensington District Committee, who "had no faith in the remedy of employment relief," adopted the plan of making careful inquiry and granting assistance according to the requirements and needs of the particular case. In the result the men, assisted for varying periods from one or two weeks to five or six weeks, "found work for themselves in most instances, and showed real appreciation for the help afforded them."[2] Charity Organisation Societies generally believe in the utility of emigration as one remedy for distress, especially when the distress is due to permanent causes, as for instance, when a trade is failing or dying out or removing, and when shortness of work tends to become chronic, and the applicant cannot turn his hand to some other occupation. The Liverpool Society has set a helpful example of how to mitigate local accumulations of surplus labour, by transferring a number of families of widows with children to factory districts, where they become quite self supporting and independent of parish relief.[3]

374. There are more than 100 Charity Organisation "Corresponding" Societies in Great Britain; and in many of the larger towns there are District Committees as well as a Central Organisation, and visitors either attached to them in part, or working in the district and co-operating with them These Societies no doubt, like other locally organised bodies, official or non official, differ in different places in their utility, energy, and means and influence.[4] Sometimes a division of opinion in a town may lead to the formation of what is, or appears to be, a rival society. These are conditions which in the changes of public and philanthropic opinion are almost inevitable; no less is it likely that where with a view to ultimate self help a definite and discriminating method of inquiry and assistance is adopted—whether it be in the Poor Law or in voluntary administration some unpopularity will be incurred. And no doubt there may be other causes for it differing according to the character of the local management.[5] But, however this may be, it is evident that in many places the operations of these societies have often been very helpful to the men assisted and most educative to those engaged in the work of assistance. In fact, it is not too much to say that, since the more general introduction of the methods of Charity Organisation, the standard of the administration of voluntary relief has been definitely raised among a large number of persons whose duty it is to deal with this branch of work. The value of societies such as that at Nottingham,[6] as centres from which an organisation on right lines can be extended to meet the demands of special distress, is very great indeed.

375. We feel, therefore, that, while what we may call permanent charity organisation committees are well adapted for dealing with some classes of the unemployed, they will only achieve success if they are multiplied and reorganised as part of a larger and completer organisation, under a new name and upon a wider basis than at present. This point will be found more fully developed in Part VII. of our Report.

376. Chief among the larger permanent charitable agencies which purport to provide assistance for the incapables or the lower class of the unemployed, are the Salvation Army and the Church Army. The Salvation Army have furnished us with a valuable paper of proposals for the future by General Booth;[7] but, although they kindly allowed one of our Committees to visit their colony at Hadleigh, they did not supply us with any oral or written evidence as to the general working of their scheme for helping the unemployed. The Salvation Army also preferred not to give direct information to our Special Investigators, Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, when requested to do so,[8] and they declined to answer a schedule of questions which we sent them as to the work and cost of their colony at Hadleigh, on the ground that:— Salvation Army.

"The Hadleigh Colony was not, in the ordinary sense of the words, established for dealing with the unemployed, but rather on behalf of those who have, through loss of character, illness,

[1] Toynbee, 30621 (14*b*). [2] Jackson, Vol. VIII., App. xl., 1–11. [3] Grisewood, 37105 (29), 37112. [4] Visits: Urban, 19, 20, 21, 22. [5] Toynbee, 30761; Dalton, 31588; Herbert, 8549; Thompson, 22823–6; Grey, 15584–5; Kerwin, 18160–1, 18223; Simey, 51686–7; Rogers, 45297; Blackshaw, 41428. [6] Herbert, Vol. I., App. xvii. (*b*). [7] Booth, Vol. IX., App. lviii. [8] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 99.

the effects of excessive drinking, and kindred evils, become for the time being unemployable, and with a view to restoring them and enabling them once more to undertake employment in this or some other country.

Men have also been received at Hadleigh who could not be regarded as unemployed or distressed persons in the usually accepted sense of those terms.

It should also be borne in mind that the moral restoration of the man is the leading purpose of the colony, and that everything there is made subservient to that end." [1]

377. Although the impression made upon those of our members who visited Hadleigh was favourable we do not feel in a position to express any decided opinion as to the value of the assistance given generally by the Salvation Army to the unemployed. The indirect evidence quoted by Messrs. Jackson and Pringle in their Report raises a presumption that, in certain respects, there are defects in the Salvation Army system, when considered as a means of restoring to a life of independent industry those whom they endeavour to help.[2]

Church Army.

378. The Church Army submitted detailed evidence to us which convinced us that on the whole it is performing a valuable and useful work of reclamation among a class of the unemployed with whom it would perhaps be difficult or impossible to deal except by means of a semi-religious agency. Although from the figures supplied to us it appeared that, for the twelve months ending September, 1907, 66 per cent. of the men dealt with in the Church Army labour homes had previously been in workhouses, casual wards or prisons, yet we were informed that, of those who passed "the three day" work test and ultimately left the homes, 40 per cent. went to situations or were restored to their friends or emigrated. Another 42 per cent. whose conduct and industry in the homes are stated to have been satisfactory, left of their own accord to seek work, but their subsequent careers could not be traced.[3] Altogether the Church Army sent out to Canada 3,000 persons in 1906, and 1,595 in 1907—and these people are stated to have succeeded well on the whole.[4] For a complete account of the work of the Church Army we must refer to the evidence of Messrs Hamilton and Jones,[5] and to our Investigators' Report.[6]

379. We are disposed to agree with our Special Investigators that "the devotion and enthusiasm of the Army officers is beyond all praise."[7]

Conclusions as to the sphere of charity in the relief of the able-bodied.

380. This last quotation gives us the clue to what is probably the true utility of this class of charitable institutions. They afford a means of helping otherwise hopeless cases by individual attention, directed and applied with religious enthusiasm. It would appear essential, however, that the numbers dealt with at any one place and time should not be so great as to render individual attention impossible. We think it also inexpedient that such organisations should enter to any large extent into competition with independent industries, and it is obvious that they can deal only with persons willing to submit to voluntary discipline.

381. Subject to these qualifications, we believe that these permanent charitable organisations have a special aptitude for dealing with the lower grades of the unemployed; and we think that such organisations might well be used by public relief authorities for dealing with such cases.

382. We may now sum up the conclusions at which we have been able to arrive, from our retrospect of the operations of charity in connection with the relief of the able-bodied. We have found that the intervention of sporadic and unorganised charity in times of special distress from want of employment has done little good and much harm, unless there has been available for the right distribution of the money such experience in the administration of charity as is usually to be found only in a permanent organisation. Sympathy must be linked with discrimination, if charity is not to demoralise, and discrimination is a plant of slow growth We have also found that much of what may be called the excesses of charity are due to public distrust of the Poor Law, and we may infer that, if the excesses of charity are to be curbed, Poor Law methods must be broadened and reformed so as to regain the general confidence of the public Beginning

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[1] Letter from Salvation Army, February 17th, 1908. [2] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 99–102.
[3] Hamilton and Jones, 93611. [4] Hamilton and Jones, 93611 (56). [5] Hamilton and Jones, 93611–94038.
[6] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 102 *et seq.* [7] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

at the top of the scale, we have seen that the better class unemployed workmen can be afforded effective temporary help by means of permanent charity committees, but that these committees need to be authoritatively recognised if they are to form a definite part of the system for dealing with distress from unemployment. Descending to the bottom of the scale, we have seen that the unemployables in special classes can be successfully dealt with in small numbers by charitable institutions. It would, therefore, appear that the proper field for voluntary effort is that form of distress which is due to temporary unemployment, whilst at the same time it can reclaim some of those whose unemployment is due to moral causes. The spheres of work of organised charity are wide and manifold; but the relief of permanent destitution or of chronic unemployment seems to be more properly the duty of a public authority supported by public funds.

(3) Municipal Relief Works.

383. We have seen how in times of special distress charity intervened to supplement the supposed inadequacy of the Poor Law as an agency for relieving the unemployed. It has also been pointed out how the Poor Law Board at first publicly and gratefully recognised these charitable funds as "diminishing the number of applications" to the Poor Law,[1] and subsequently, while criticising "indiscriminate" charity, themselves proposed a scheme which would "enable Boards of Guardians and charitable agencies to work with effect and rapidity, if any emergency should arise."[2] The Poor Law Board in fact recognised charity as the proper agency for supplementing the Poor Law in times of distress. We now propose to describe briefly how in later times the Local Government Board came to recognise and encourage the Municipal Authorities, as an additional agency for supplementing the Poor Law in times of unemployment.

Mr. Chamberlain's Circular.

384. In 1886, Mr. Chamberlain, then President of the Local Government Board, issued the now famous Circular in which Municipal Authorities were encouraged to undertake relief works for the unemployed.[3] The Circular is printed in full in the Appendix, and we need only here refer to such points in it as are essential to an understanding of the new policy which it embodied. It assumes that there exists "exceptional distress amongst the working classes"; that there is "evidence of much and increasing privation in the ranks of those who do not ordinarily seek Poor Law relief"; that "it is the duty and interest of the community to maintain" the spirit of independence[4]; that the usual Poor Law labour tests of stone-breaking and oakum picking are not suited or are even prejudicial to skilled artisans; and that "*it is not desirable that the working classes should be familiarised with poor law relief.*"[5] In districts in which exceptional distress prevails the Board, therefore, recommends that the Guardians should confer with the Local Authorities and endeavour to arrange with the latter for the execution of works on which unskilled labour may be immediately employed. The work is to be:—

(1) Such as will not involve the stigma of pauperism.

(2) Such as all can perform, whatever may have been their previous avocation.

(3) Such as will not compete with that of other labourers at present in employment.

(4) Such as is not likely to interfere with the resumption of regular employment in their own trades by those who seek it.

385. As indications of suitable kinds of work, the making and cleansing of streets and roads, the making of recreation grounds, cemeteries, sewage farms, and waterworks are instanced.

"In all cases . . . the men employed should be engaged on the recommendation of the guardians as persons whom . . it is undesirable to send to the workhouse, or to treat as subjects for pauper relief, . . . the wages paid should be something less than the wages ordinarily paid for similar work."[6]

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[1] Smart's Memorandum on the Poor Law Board, p. 6, par. 2. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 13, par. 6. [3] Sixteenth Annual Report of Local Government Board, C. 5131, 1886–7, App. A, No. 4. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 5. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 6. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Contrast between "relief" works in 1886 and "commercial" works in 1863.

386. It is important to bear in mind that the work which the Municipal Authorities were thus recommended to undertake was, from an economic point of view, in an entirely different category to the famous works undertaken towards the close of the Lancashire cotton famine in 1863. The works in 1886 were intended to prevent men from becoming paupers: the works in 1863 were intended to restore to an "independent livelihood" those who through exceptional distress had become paupers. When the Lancashire works were started, the distress had already been in existence for nearly two years and was rapidly diminishing. The number of persons receiving relief, which at one time reached a maximum of over half a million, had now fallen considerably, and trade and employment were improving, as is clear from the report of Mr. Farnall to the Poor Law Board. The Lancashire works were therefore intended to provide "a livelihood" for a residuum of unemployed who had not then been re-absorbed even by the remarkable revival of industry which began in 1863, grew in 1864 and culminated in 1865. In other words, the Lancashire works were a remedy for what was a long protracted condition of unemployment, and, accordingly, the works themselves were more or less protracted. They lasted for at least five years. By contrast, the works recommended by the Circular of 1886 were intended to be temporary, and for the temporary relief of a certain number of workmen temporarily out of employment.

387. Again, the work in 1863 was to a very large extent on a commercial basis.[1] It was work at ordinary wages, partly piece-work, partly time-work. It was to some extent let out to contractors in the ordinary way. And both skilled and unskilled men were employed upon the ordinary commercial conditions. The Local Authorities were expressly informed that it was the intention of the Act of Parliament "to provide remunerative employment for the labouring classes."[2] By contrast, at the works proposed in 1886 the men were not to obtain the market-wage for their labour; the work was in no sense to be commercial work on commercial lines; it was not to be carried out by contractors: it was to be designed specially for the unemployed, and the men selected were to be sent to the Municipal Authorities by the Guardians.[3] In brief, the 1863 work was commercial employment, the 1886 work was to be relief employment. Except that the Local Authorities were given the advantage of national over local credit in obtaining their loans, there was nothing in 1863 to differentiate the work from ordinary work undertaken in times of prosperity.[4] Except that the money paid to the workmen was called wages, and not relief, there was little or nothing economically to differentiate the work in 1886 from the work provided by Guardians as a condition of relief.

388. It is clear, therefore, that there was a very vital difference between the experiments initiated by the Central Authority in 1863 and 1886, and it appears from the Memorandum attached to the Circular of 1886 as presented to Parliament, that the Local Government Board were at any rate to some extent aware of that difference.

Municipal relief works 1886.

389. The Local Government Board were in fact officially recognising the Municipal Authorities as suitable agencies for assisting the Guardians in relieving distress from unemployment. It is true that there is evidence that, in some districts, the Municipal Authorities were already in the habit of providing additional work in times of unemployment. But what the Central Authority now did was to insist on the "relief" nature of such work by recommending that the "wages" should be below the normal, and that the men should be taken on by recommendations from the Guardians. Men were to apply for relief to the Guardians and were then to be transferred to the Municipal Authorities.[5] In other words, the workers were employed in their character as applicants for relief and not in their character as independent workmen. The Municipal Authorities were being urged to become a second "relief authority"; and it is interesting to note that, at any rate in some districts, as for example at Poplar, there was at the outset considerable reluctance on the part of the Municipal Authorities to take upon themselves this new responsibility.[6]

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[1] Sixteenth Annual Report Poor Law Board, 1863–4, p. 15. [2] *Ibid*, p. 28. [3] Sixteenth Annual Report Local Government Board, C. 5131, 1886–7, App. A (4), pp. 6–7. *Cf.* Jackson and Pringle's Report, App. A., p. 11, and Return of Pauperism and Distress [H.C. 69, 1886], pp. 9–10. [4] 26 & 27 Vict., c. 70. [5] Sixteenth Annual Report Local Government Board, C. 5131, 1886-7; App. A., No. 4, pp. 5–7. [6] Pringle's App. II. to Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 61, 62.

390. The Circular of 1886 was re-issued by the Local Government Board in subsequent years,[1] and it ultimately came to be generally considered a moral obligation of the Municipal Authorities to open special relief works for the unemployed in all times of special or even seasonal distress. We have unfortunately no figures to show definitely to what extent the Municipal Authorities provided relief for the unemployed, but it is clear from the particulars given in Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith's Report of 1893, and in our own Investigators' Report, that the amount of relief thus given outside the Poor Law must have been very considerable indeed.[2] For instance in Bradford, between October 1904 and January 1906, the corporation provided relief works for 1,973 men to whom they paid nearly £12,000 in wages.[3] In the same way during a period of six months the Municipal Authorities in London relieved, at a cost of over £100,000 in wages alone, an indefinite number of workmen who in a single month amounted to over 13,000.[4] Extent of Municipal Relief Work.

391. Assuming, therefore, the existence during the last twenty years of this ancillary system of relief by the Municipal Authorities we now propose to examine briefly its effects.

Defects of Municipal Relief Works.

392. In considering the provision by municipalities of relief works for the better class of the unemployed, the first difficulty which arises is that the Municipal Authorities have no staff or machinery for ensuring that the men relieved by them really are of that class. We have seen that the mass of unemployment is among the casual and unskilled labourers and the "incapables" chronically in distress, whom, even in 1886, it was the intention of the Local Government Board to leave to the Poor Law. It was, therefore, a fair assumption, that, unless strict discrimination were used, there would be a tendency for the new relief works (ex-hypothesi more attractive than the Poor Law) to be utilised by the incapables to the exclusion of the capables. The Local Government Board apparently hoped to guard against this difficulty by suggesting that the Municipal Authorities should only employ men on the recommendation of the Guardians, who would presumably use the Poor Law machinery of inquiry to ascertain whether the cases were really suitable for such recommendation. While, however, there is evidence that in a few cases the municipalities did take on the men sent to them by the Guardians, we cannot find that as a rule there was anything in the nature of strict co-operation between the municipalities and the Guardians in the matter. The list of instances of such co-operation given by Messrs. Jackson and Pringle[5] is very short, when we consider the vast extent to which it is admitted that this form of employment-relief was used. We infer, therefore, that, as suggested by Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, in most cases it was left to the municipal surveyor to select the "unemployed" whom the municipality were to relieve. "The usual system has been to vote a sum from the rates for certain work . . . and to open a register for the unemployed at the borough surveyor's or engineer's office or depot; little or no inquiry was made usually in these cases":[6] and again:— Indiscriminate acceptance of men for relief-works.

> "These bodies have no investigating staff. Discrimination has sometimes been exercised by the surveyor's superintendent. . . . The men were generally taken from the unemployed registry, and it has always been the practice to give preference to the neediest applicants with large families."[7]

393. Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith, in his report on these municipal relief works in 1893, says:—

> "It appears, for example, to be conclusively shown . . . that the offer of work without discrimination to all applicants is likely to attract large numbers of a class for whom it is unlikely to be of permanent benefit. Many (though not all) of the local authorities who carried out relief works during the past winter were sufficiently alive to this fact to attempt some kind of sifting process, though the tests applied were not always of a very searching character. It would appear, moreover, that the inquiry was usually merely directed to ascertain fitness for employment on the relief works, and did not extend to the question of the possibility of permanent assistance."[8]

394. It seems clear, therefore, that no effective measures were taken by the municipalities, as a whole, to ensure that they should confine their relief of the unemployed to the particular class of workmen suggested by the Local Government Board.

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[1] Lockwood, 13372. [2] App. to Jackson and Pringle's Report, Part III. [3] Dawson, Vol. IX., App. xc. (2).
[4] Mr. Whitmore's Return, H.C., 193–1905. [5] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 45–7. [6] *Ibid*, p. 89.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 43. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Relief works attractive to casual labourers.

395. But further than this, the method of apportioning the work was in most cases such as to make it especially attractive to the lower class of unskilled labourers, which, as has been indicated, the Local Government Board never intended should be relieved by the municipalities. As a rule the relief work was divided up among as many men as possible into daily doles of work, with effects which have been well described by Mr. Walter Long, M.P. :—

> "The municipalities, since they could not possibly find work for all the unemployed, . . . adopted a most unfortunate shift. They gave the men so much work apiece—*i.e.*, if they had 1,000 men and only enough work for 200, instead of carefully sifting the 1,000 and selecting the 200 most likely to be helped by relief work, they gave all the 1,000 one day's work each, so that you had 200 employed on the Monday, 200 others on the Tuesday, and so on. Thus the good men suffered and the loafers benefited, getting their one or two days' work a week and loafing the rest of the time."[1]

396. Mr. Long's evidence as to the prevalence of the system of "dole-work" is corroborated by a number of other witnesses[2] and also by a reference to the very interesting table contained in Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith's report of 1893. From the conclusions of that report, we may also quote the following passage :—

> "Loafers and tramps are not unwilling to do a couple of days' work—even hard work ; and many who will work for weeks together three days in each week, would be weeded out if they were compelled to work every day. This being so, schemes which merely provide a few days' work for a large number of men in successive relays are of all others the most likely to be abused. They offer work in the form which exactly suits those who are unwilling to submit to continuous exertion, while doing very little for those really in distress. The plan of employing men in two shifts—three days a week each—is recommended on the ground that it gives them a chance to look out for work during the rest of the week, but against this very real advantage must be set the encouragement offered to loafers by an arrangement which falls in with their habits."[3]

Such a system is, in fact, nothing but municipal casual labour, offering additional points in favour of that gamble for a weekly existence which is the vice and the attraction of the casual's life.

397. We may, therefore, take it that, in the municipal relief system which followed the Circular of 1886, the municipalities not only failed to take adequate steps to exclude the casual labourers, but even took positive steps to attract them. It is a natural inference that the municipal relief works "relieved" chiefly the loafer and the casual labourer, and this is, in fact, the burden of most of the evidence on the subject which we have been able to collect. Here and there, as in Birmingham, we have been told that the better class of workman has been assisted by the municipality,[4] but elsewhere, and especially in London, the evidence is conclusive that the relief works were frequented by the under-employed casual, the "professional unemployed,"[5] and the loafer. At Newcastle, for instance, as early as 1895 the city engineer reported :—

> "Decent men willing and wishful for work . . . are even intimidated and prevented from doing their best by those with whom they must work. Several cases came to our knowledge last year where men were threatened for doing more than the 'professional' unemployed thought was sufficient."[6]

But even more striking is the evidence of the surveyor of Chelsea before the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1888 :—

> "The surveyor has seen a number of the unemployed to whom he gave work walking about the streets since, and is afraid they were not men who would be considered first-class workmen. They were either men who had never had regular work or did not have it now. The police told him he had a great number of thieves. Some men were discharged because they struck for higher wages : they stood round the works for a good length of time and then gradually drifted off into their old haunts, walking about the streets and so forth. He did not know that they found employment elsewhere, and does not know how they live at any time. Fifty per cent. of the tales they told of their distress was imposture, he was sure, but there was undoubtedly a dismal background of fact which was very painful to listen to. . . . When snowstorms occur he would put on first the unemployed and then afterwards the more industrious labourers who were thrown out by the storm; men of a superior class to the former, being out of work temporarily, while these are out of work generally."[7]

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[1] Long, 78465. [2] Angel, Vol. IX., App. lxxxviii. (2) ; Jameson, Vol. IX., App. xci. (2) ; Maynard, 78371 (14) ; Stepney, 79644–5 ; Connolly, 99146 (5) ; Bailward, 78703 (2), 78708–9, 78871–78931–2 ; Morris, 79033 (10), 79049–51 ; Heckford, 80573–9, 80691–703, 80592, 80619–21 ; Balfour, 77744 ; Somers, 82377 (4) ; Gageby, 99299; Wood, Vol. VIII., App. lxxxv. (15). [3] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 37 ; Humphreys, 79407 (16–20) ; Manfield, Vol. VIII., App. xlix. (3) ; Fairchild, Vol. VIII., App. xxiv. (10). [4] Fothergill, 43827. [5] Crooks, 91316–8 ; Heckford, 8730–1 ; Humphreys, 79407 (20). [6] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 131. [7] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 45.

398. It is open to doubt whether the municipal relief works, in addition to attracting the casual labourers, did not even add to their numbers. One experienced witness informed us that :— Demoralising effect of relief-works.

> "The natural result was that before long 'a day from the vestry' came to be looked upon as a matter of right and its refusal as an injustice. Crowds gathered round the vestry every winter waiting for work and gradually losing their hold upon the open labour market. At a meeting of the vestry in 1895 a young man complained that 'he had been up every day for ten weeks, but had not been taken on once,' and he was one of many. Almost every man capable of work who applied to the Charity Organisation Society or the guardians had had one or more days from the vestry, and a generation has grown up which has learned to look upon it as a right."[1]

A similar criticism is also made by the Bishop of Stepney, who says :—

> "This is a plan which obviously rather creates a class of unemployed. . . . In several boroughs there is, or until recently was, a real danger of a class of permanently unemployed expecting winter by winter to subsist on doles of municipal work."[2]

399. Another defect of relief works to which frequent reference has been made in the evidence submitted to us, is its demoralising effect on the industrial capacity of the men employed. We have seen how demoralising in this sense is the test-work supplied in workhouses and labour-yards as a condition of relief, and we think it may generally be said of municipal relief work that, in proportion as emphasis is laid on its relief character and not on its commercial character, so the work degenerates from helpful, manly exertion for wages into the inefficient and lazy performance of the necessary prelude to a meal.[3]

400. If the men are taken on in relief work because they are destitute and not because they are workmen, it follows that their capacity as workmen has no bearing on the question of their employment or discharge. As we have seen, among the unemployed, are always a number and sometimes a majority, of inefficients, who have become so from want of food, of training, or of brains. These inefficients set the pace at relief-works, just as the least efficient vessel in a fleet sets the pace of the fleet. The pace and standard of the inefficients on relief-works spread by contagion and example to the few efficient men employed, with the result that there is a general deterioration in the industrial efficiency on relief-work. Hence the extravagant cost of relief-work, as compared with commercial work, which has been so generally admitted.[4] Excessive cost of relief-work.

401. The whole subject has been dealt with at length in Messrs. Jackson and Pringle's Report,[5] from which we may quote the following instances in support of our remarks :—

> "Some forty or fifty select outdoor labourers from the register of the unemployed at Blackburn were put on to sewer excavation. It is said that the few permanent men who were put with them and the better of the Unemployed themselves, got demoralised on relief works. The Borough Surveyor says that he would not again mix men, and he estimated that where an ordinary man would do 5s. worth of work, an 'Unemployed' would only do 1s. worth."[6]

> "From St. Pancras we were informed that the cost of painting the arc lamp columns by the unemployed amounted to about 8s. 6d. as against 6s. by contract in the open market. 'It certainly was not so well done, in spite of rigid supervision.'"[7]

> "In Stepney the borough engineer worked out the cost carefully a year or two back and there was an increase of 33 per cent. over ordinary labour."[8]

> "At Gateshead the Church Army Captain thought the Distress Register men worse than his ordinary clients. The estimated value of their wood-chopping work was £35 0s. 11d., for which they were paid £99 8s. 6d. Various other work was given at Gateshead, excavating, painting and stonebreaking at a total cost in wages of £654 4s., of which the estimated value was £447 5s. 2d."[9]

> "At Liverpool work which cost £2,000 was only estimated as worth £350 to £400. (Returns of the Local Government Board).[10]

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[1] Bailward, 78703 (2). [2] Stepney, 79619 (8). *See also* Angel, Vol. IX., App. lxxxviii. (5). [3] Eighteenth Annual Report Poor Law Board, 1865–6 ; *Cf.* Rawlinson, pp. 44–45. [4] Long, 78460 (4) ; Somers, 82376 (4); Heckford, 80722–7 ; Fair, 81545 ; Wood, 80221 (10–13) ; Tagg, Vol. VIII., App. lxxvii. (8) ; Fairchild, Vol. VIII., App. xxiv. (12) ; Sutton, Vol. VIII., App. lxxvi. (5). [5] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 125–132. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 127. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 125. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 125. [9] *Ibid.*, p. 128. [10] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Excessive cost of relief-work.

"At York about 9½ acres at Naburn Asylum were dug over by the unemployed. They were paid £498 16s., but the value of the work, as estimated after consultation with various farmers, was £57."[1]

402. But we would especially draw attention to the following instances in support of the view that, the more the conditions of the undertaking approach the commercial and recede from the eleemosynary, the better the industrial results of the work.

"In 1905–6 the borough surveyor (Woolwich) reported that:—'As a rule the men showed a willingness to earn their wages. There was little fault to find with them when fairly started, and a larger proportion were as capable as the regular men.' The men chosen by the surveyor in 1905–6 were employed by the borough under the usual conditions, *i.e.*, likely men only were chosen and told they must earn their wages. Practically all the men recommended by the distress committee to the surveyor were employed by him. The business of recommending and employing were kept clearly separate, and this was thought to explain the success achieved."[2]

"An interesting case is that of Barking, where twenty men were employed for four months. They were at first paid at a rate which led to an expenditure of 1s. 5d. for painting a single bay of iron railings. The council thought this excessive and offered 10d. for the same work, paying by the work done. The men accepted the offer and are said to have 'earned good money.'"[3]

403. In some cases the cost of relief works has been still further heightened by the payment to the unemployed of "full Trade Union rate of wages even when the men were obviously not of the Trade Union class or standard of efficiency."[4] This device, while it purports to assimilate the relief-works to ordinary commercial works, is, economically considered, only a method of increasing the eleemosynary nature of the undertaking; the difference between the actual and the market cost of the work is thereby increased, and that difference is a measure of the increased free gift of money from the pockets of the ratepayers to the pockets of the unemployed.

404. There is no doubt, therefore, that municipal relief-works, whether at or below Trade Union rates of wages, have been found by general experience to be a most costly device for concealing the fact that a certain number of workmen are reduced to dependence upon the rates. Of the cost in itself there would perhaps be little reason to complain, if the device had proved of real help to the workmen: but unfortunately the relief works have been useless as a remedy and demoralising as a method. In fact in many places, as for example at West Ham[5] and Leicester,[6] the municipal relief works, which were intended to be exceptional and remedial, became seasonal and casual in their nature, and as prejudicial to the workmen as any other form of seasonal or casual employment.

Effect of relief-work on municipal authorities.

405. Nor is a system of municipal relief-works entirely free from a demoralising effect on the authorities who provide them. Town councillors may find themselves open to pressure from their constituents which it is difficult to resist,[7] especially if, as in some localities, 35, 38, or even 47 per cent. of those applying for work have the right to vote at the election of the local authority which is expected to supply the work.[8] But it is obvious that no considerations should be allowed to enter into the question of providing relief-works other than the dispassionate decision as to whether, firstly, the situation justifies the taking of special measures, and, secondly, whether relief-works can be opened in the particular locality such as will benefit the unemployed without prejudicing the employed.

406. This local pressure from within a Borough, combined with the Central Authority's pressure from without, has, we have no doubt, in many cases caused Local Authorities to forestall, by relief-works, work which they would in the ordinary course of events have shortly put in hand, and upon which they would have largely or exclusively employed their regular staff of workmen. The ordinary work to be done by Local Authorities is provided for in their estimates, and so far as possible it is, or should be, arranged so that the work is performed by men employed throughout the year. If, therefore, ordinary work is anticipated and made into relief-work for the unemployed, it either displaces these permanent hands, or lessens the amount of work they would otherwise have performed and been paid for. According to our Special Investigators, the forestalling of the work of the more regular labourers by postponing a Borough Council's works to the winter for the relief

[1] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 130. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 126. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 127. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 131. [5] Humphreys, 79407 (20). [6] Pringle's App. ii. to Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 153 *et seq.* [7] Wheatley, Vol. VIII., App. lxxxii. (2); Manfield, Vol. VIII., App. xlix. (3); Green, Vol. VIII. App. xxxii. (13); Bailward, 78703 (2); [8] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 74–5.

of the unemployed has been fairly common, especially in the provinces.[1] The hardship generally falls on the class of men who are regularly taken on when an expansion of municipal work occurs—the Municipal Authorities' second list men. But occasionally the regular municipal employees are also affected. The Bethnal Green Distress Committee point out:— The forestalling of ordinary work.

> "Carrying out . . . ordinary work at an earlier period than is necessary is directly calculated to have the effect of causing at a future date a reduction in the number of men regularly employed. . . . This means that the better class of workmen . . . become unemployed for the sole reason that the work . . . has been done at an earlier period by the unemployed at a much greater cost and with far less efficiency."[2]

407. Instances in illustration of this tendency are cited by Messrs. Jackson and Pringle, and given elsewhere in our evidence, and though we have no reason to believe that there has as yet been any considerable displacement of regular municipal employees by reason of relief-works, it is obvious that the tendency to such displacement must increase in proportion as, year by year, the number of extraordinary and financially feasible undertakings available as relief-works diminishes,[3] leaving in effect no scope for relief-works except the ordinary work of the Local Authorities.

408. We have now shown that municipal relief-works have not assisted but rather prejudiced the better class of workmen they were intended to help. On the other hand they have encouraged the casual labourers, by giving them a further supply of that casual work which is so dear to their hearts and so demoralising to their character. They have encouraged and not helped the incapables; they have discouraged and not helped the capables. Moreover, the provision of artificial work for unskilled labourers in particular localities can only tend to fix in such localities these agglomerations of unskilled labour, to disperse which is one of the solutions of local unemployment. We regret, therefore, that we must pronounce the system of relief-works suggested by the Local Government Board Circular of 1886 a failure, and we support our condemnation of them by the following extract from the Report of our Special Investigators:— Conclusions as to municipal relief-works.

> "The Municipal Relief Works, encouraged by Mr. Chamberlain's circular in 1886, have been in operation for twenty years, and must, we think, be pronounced a complete failure—a failure accentuated by the attempt to organise them by the Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1905. The evidence we have collected seems conclusive that relief works are economically useless. Either ordinary work is undertaken, in which case it is merely forestalled, and, later, throws out of employment the men who are in the more or less regular employ of the councils, or else it is sham work which we believe to be even more deteriorating than direct relief. If the 'right to work' is to be construed as the right to easy work, we are directly encouraging the lazy and incompetent and discouraging the trade unionist and the thrifty. The evidence seems very strong that most men on relief works do not do their best, and to pay them less than ordinary wages only encourages the belief that they are not expected to do so. Competence to do the work required should be the basis for selection of men for work, not destitution and a large family. There are very good reasons for giving relief, but not for giving work."[4]

(4).—The Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905.

409. It was with a view to remedying some of the defects in those methods of relieving the able-bodied, which we have reviewed in the previous sections, that in the winter of 1903–4 Mr. Walter Long, then President of the Local Government Board, started his scheme of Joint Committees for dealing with the unemployed in London,* which has since been developed and legalised in the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905.[5]

410. To make intelligible the criticisms which we shall find ourselves obliged to pass on the Act, it is necessary that we should devote a short space to a description of the

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* For details of this scheme *see* Jackson's Report on Unemployment, pp. 68, etc. *See also* that Report, p. 133 for references to the recommendations and conclusions of various Commissions and authorities on Unemployment Distress.

[1] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 117–9. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 117. [3] Richardson, 91141 (14). [4] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 148. [5] 5 Edw. VII., c 18.

authorities it set up; of the classes of workmen with whom it was intended to deal; of the methods contemplated for assisting such workmen; and finally, of the methods by which the Act is financed.

Authorities set up under the Act.

411. We have seen how the problem of relief to the able-bodied is largely, if not exclusively, an urban problem, and it is significant of this incidence of unemployment that the Unemployed Workmen Act, following the precedent of Mr. Long's precursory scheme of 1903–4, first sets up machinery for London,[1] subsequently applies that machinery to the large urban centres outside London,[2] and lastly enables smaller urban centres and the rural districts to apply for permission to set up machinery if necessary. In London every Borough Council was to appoint a Distress Committee consisting of members of the Borough Council, of the Boards of Guardians, and of persons experienced in the relief of distress. Exercising authority over the whole of London, there was to be appointed a Central Body consisting partly of members of the Distress Committees, partly of members of the London County Council, partly of co-opted persons, and partly of persons nominated by the Local Government Board.[3]

412. In every Borough and urban district outside London, with a population of 50,000 and over, there was to be compulsorily established a Distress Committee on the London pattern, and combining the powers both of a Distress Committee, and of a Central Body.[4] A Distress Committee on similar lines might also be established by the Local Government Board in any Borough or urban district with a population of less than 50,000, but not less than 10,000 on the application of the Council of the Borough or district.

Moreover the Board might, on the application of a County or Borough or District Council or Board of Guardians, or on their own initiative, establish in any county or part of a county, a Central Body and Distress Committees with similar constitutions and similar powers and duties to those of the Central Body and Distress Committees in London.[5]

413. In Counties, Boroughs, and districts, where no Distress Committee was set up, it was provided that the County Council or County Borough Council should appoint a Special Committee to collect and supply information as to the conditions of labour in their district by means of Labour Exchanges, etc.[6] We have no evidence to show that effect was given to this valuable provision by the Local Authorities, or that any pressure was put upon them to do so.

414. In all, 29 Distress Committees and a Central Body have been established in London, and 89 Distress Committees in the Provinces.[7*] It will be observed that the establishment of Distress Committees only applied compulsorily to the large urban centres. We understand that Distress Committees have been formed in 14 urban districts with a population of less than 50,000 in 1901, and that no Central Body or Distress Committees on the London plan have been established in provincial counties.

Duties of the Local Authorities.

415. The main duties of the Distress Committees in London are to acquaint themselves with the conditions of labour within their area, and, *when so required by the Central Body*, to receive, inquire into, and discriminate between any applications made to them from persons unemployed.[8] Outside London, as already explained, the Distress Committees have all the powers possessed in London by the Distress Committees and the Central Body. This distinction must be borne in mind in what follows.

416. A Distress Committee may endeavour to obtain work for a suitable applicant, but have no power to provide work for him. They must refer to the Central Body all cases for whom they are unable to obtain work, but for whom they think work should, if possible, be provided.[9] The Distress Committees are also to keep a register of the Unemployed and a record or case-paper with regard to each applicant who comes before them: and before "entertaining" a case they are bound to inquire into it.[10]

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* One of these Committees, that of Northfleet, was dissolved in August, 1907.

1 5. Edw. vii. c. 18, Sec. 1. 2 *Ibid.*, Sec 2. 3 *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (1). 4 *Ibid.*, Sec. 2 (1). 5 *Ibid.*, Sec. 2 (2). 6 *Ibid.*, Sec. 2 (3). 7 Return as to the Proceedings of Distress Committees, etc., for year ending March 31st, 1908. p. 2. 8 5 Edw. VII., c. 18, Sec. 1 (2). 9 *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (3). 10 *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (2); St. R. and O., 1905, No. 1071, Art. VI. (1).

417. The main functions of the Central Body are :

(1). To decide when the Distress Committees can begin to receive applications from unemployed persons ; [1]

(2.) To superintend and as far as possible co-ordinate the action of the Distress Committees ; [2]

(3.) To establish, take over or assist labour exchanges or employment registers and collect information.[3]

(4.) To assist an unemployed person referred to them by a Distress Committee, by aiding his emigration or migration or by providing, or contributing towards the provision of, temporary work in such manner as they think best calculated to put him in a position to obtain regular work or other means of supporting himself.[4]

Classes of persons who can be assisted under the Act.

418. The qualifications for assistance under the Act are of a two-fold nature: firstly, those prescribed by the Act, and secondly, those prescribed by Regulations of the Local Government Board.

419. The qualifications prescribed by the Act are :—

(1.) That the applicant must have resided for not less than 12 months immediately before the application in the district ; [5]

(2.) That the applicant is honestly desirous of obtaining work ;

(3.) That he is temporarily unable to do so from causes over which he has no control ;

(4.) That his case is capable of more suitable treatment under the Act than under the Poor Law.[6]

420. The qualifications prescribed by the Local Government Board now in force are :—

(1.) That the applicant is of good character ;

(2.) That he has not from any source sufficient means to maintain himself and his dependants ; [7]

421. In addition the Distress Committees have been instructed by the Local Government Board to give special preference to a person complying with the following conditions :—

(1.) That he has in the past been regularly employed, and has been well-conducted and thrifty ; and

(2.) That at the time of his application he has a wife, child, or other dependant.

(3.) That in respect of his age and physical condition, he is qualified for such work as the Distress Committee may be able to obtain. [8]

Methods of assisting the Unemployed under the Act.

422. It will be seen that the methods of assistance are roughly three, viz. :—

(1.) Emigration and migration ;

(2.) The provision or arranging for the provision of temporary work ;[9] and

(3.) Labour bureaux.[10]

The first two methods of assistance can be offered only to persons with the qualifications prescribed in the preceding paragraphs, but the last method of assistance—labour bureaux—is available for all unemployed workmen irrespective of any other qualification.

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[1] 5 Edw. VII. c. 18. Sec. 1 (2). [2] 5 Edw. VII., c. 18, Sec. 1 (4). [3] *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (4). [4] *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (5). [5] *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (2). [6] Sec. 1 (3). [7] St. R. and O., 1905, No. 1071., Art. II. (iv.). [8] *Ibid.*, Art. II. (2 ; a, b, c). [9] 5 Edw. VII., c. 18, Sec. 1 (5). [10] *Ibid.*, Sec. 1 (4).

423. With regard to the provision of temporary work, it is laid down by the Act or the Regulations :—

(1.) That any such work must be of actual and substantial utility ;[1]

Provision of work.

(2.) That it must afford continuous occupation for the person employed with such absence only as may be needed to facilitate his search for regular work ;[2] and

(3.) That the total remuneration for any given period must be less than that which would, under ordinary circumstances, be earned by an unskilled labourer for continuous work during the same period.[2]

424. Temporary work may not be provided for any person for a longer period than 16 weeks,[3] except with the consent of the Local Government Board, and contributions by a Distress Committee or Central Body are allowed towards the provision of temporary work only in those cases in which the work is provided by a local authority or Public Body.[4]

For the purpose of the Act it is open to the Central Body to rent or purchase land, etc.[5]

Finance of the Local Authorities.

425. The Act contemplated that the expenditure of the local authorities should be defrayed from two different sources. Firstly, it authorised the payment, from a limited contribution to be made out of the rates, of establishment charges, and expenses incurred in relation to labour exchanges, migration and emigration and the acquisition of land. Secondly, it was contemplated that all other expenses should be defrayed[6] out of voluntary contributions. Since the first year after the passing of the Act, however, Parliament has granted an annual sum of money, amounting to £200,000, out of which contributions are made by the Local Government Boards of England, Scotland and Ireland respectively towards defraying the cost of work provided under the Act. This year the amount is to be increased to £300,000.

General objects of Unemployed Workmen Act.

426. From this brief summary of the provisions of the Act, it will be seen that it aimed at combining members of municipal, Poor Law, and charitable bodies into a new and special local authority, whose normal duty was to watch, so to speak, for the approach of unemployment in their district, and whose abnormal duty was to provide help for the better class of unemployed workmen under conditions which, it was hoped, would avoid some of the evils which had arisen through the unregulated provision of work by the municipalities and charitable agencies.

427. In so far as the Act provided for the diagnosis of the problem of unemployment and for the classification and dispersal of the unemployed, it would seem, *a priori*, to have met a need which has been indicated by our examination of the modern problem of unemployment in previous sections. In so far, however, as the Act perpetuated the system of relief-works, in so far as it assumed that the chief problem of unemployment was furnished by the capable workmen as distinct from the incapable, and in so far as it added yet another authority to the medley of organisations already dealing with the unemployed, the Act seems to have been doomed from the outset to failure administratively, and to failure as a remedy for the evils against which it was designed.

Class of men for whom the Act was intended.

428. We propose to deal briefly with what we conceive to have been the three main objects of the Unemployed Workmen Act, and to show from our evidence how these objects have been frustrated.

429. In his evidence Mr. Gerald Balfour informed us :—

> "We distinctly proposed to deal with the *elite* of the unemployed. . . . The unemployed for whom the Bill was intended were respectable workmen settled in a locality, hitherto accustomed to regular work, but temporarily out of employment through circumstances beyond their control, capable workmen with hope of return to regular work after tiding over a period of temporary distress." [7]

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[1] St. R. and O., 1905, No. 1071, Art V., (*ia*). [2] St. R. and O., 1905, No. 1071, Art. V. (i.). [3] Art V. (iv.). [4] Art. V. (v.). [5] Art. X. [6] 5 Edw. VII., c. 18, Sec. 1 (6). [7] Balfour, 77738.

430. It seems therefore clear that it was the intention that the Act should benefit *regular* workmen of good character temporarily out of work. Hence it is remarkable that the Act itself lays down no qualifications to give effect to this intention. Regular employment does not entitle to the benefits of the Act. Irregular employment does not debar from the benefits of the Act. Putting aside the residential qualification, the only statutory definition of a beneficiary under the Act is, "*any applicant (who) is honestly desirous of obtaining work, but is temporarily unable to do so from exceptional causes over which he has no control*," and whose case the Distress Committee consider "*is capable of more suitable treatment under this Act than under the Poor Law.*" [1]

431. In considering the meaning of "*exceptional causes*" in the above definition, it must be remembered that the whole machinery of the Act, so far as the provision of work is concerned, was intended to apply only in exceptional emergencies. Distress Committees are to be always in readiness, but are not to receive or entertain applications for work until so directed by the Central Body. It is therefore clear that it would be quite possible for either a casual or a seasonal labourer out of employment to urge that, though he was often out of employment, on the present occasion he was out of employment owing to exceptional distress. It would, in fact, be very difficult to say that, under the terms of the Act, casual or even seasonal labourers could be excluded. This view was apparently taken by the Local Government Board,[2] inasmuch as, under their Regulations, regular and thrifty workers are to be given, not the exclusive right, but only the preference to the benefits of the Act. There was thus implied at any rate a secondary right of the irregular and unthrifty worker to receive assistance. It would appear, therefore, that neither the terms of the Act nor the Regulations of the Local Government Board exclude irregular or casual workers from the benefits of the Act.

Class of applicants under the Act.

432. As a matter of fact, as we have already indicated in previous paragraphs, the general statistics show conclusively that the greater proportion of applicants to Distress Committees were either casual labourers or persons belonging to those trades in which casuality prevails. This testimony of the general statistics is amply corroborated by the evidence we have been able to obtain from individual Distress Committees. In a few places, such as Woolwich,[3] Newcastle,[4] and Cardiff,[5] the majority of the applicants may have been drawn from a higher social stratum than those who ordinarily applied to the Poor Law, and possibly were decent hard-working men anxious to get employment. But these cases are the exceptions, and, as a rule, it seems clear that the bulk of those seeking benefit from the Unemployed Workmen Act have been irregular labourers more or less in a chronic state of destitution.[6]

433. Dealing first with London, we are told that the bulk of the applicants to Distress Committees are "men normally in or on the verge of distress, men earning perhaps fair daily wages, but getting on an average only two or three days' work in a week, or two or three weeks in a month."[7] At Bethnal Green the great majority of the applicants were casuals—the same people, generally speaking, who applied to the Poor Law or Borough Council in former years.[8] In West Ham, out of 4,825 cases registered in 1906–7, 48·7 per cent. were casual labourers.[9]

434. Out of 675 applications considered by the Marylebone Distress Committee in 1905–6, 236, or rather more than one-third, were ineligible from want of good character or capacity. In 1906–7, the Committee considered 361 applications, of which 173 were found to be ineligible, a considerable number of these having refused to consider colony work.[10] Generally, there was a very small proportion belonging to any kind of organisation or making any kind of provision for want of work or sickness.[11] Of the 2,085 applicants registered by the Camberwell Distress Committee in 1905–6, 716 were "not

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[1] 5 Edw. VII., c. 18, Sec. 1 (3). [2] Balfour, 77825, 77828; *see also* Maynard, 78383. [3] Larner, 79226, 79237. [4] Wood, 85722–3. [5] Melhuish, Vol. VIII., App. li. (11). [6] Balfour, 77825–7; Maynard, 78371 (47); Wood, 80244–6; Marshall, 82146 (19, 20, 23). Gardner, 92112 (11, 12, 14), 92125, 92130–2, 92367–70; Somers, 82378–88. [7] Beveridge, 77831 (8). [8] Bailward, 78720, 78793. [9] Humphreys, 79408 (6), 79418. [10] Morris, 79034 (4). [11] Morris, 79034 (5).

Class of applicants under the Act.

recommended for work;" that is, they "were physically unfit, of bad character, or of the ordinary loafing class, never had any particular trade, and were more or less in regular receipt of Poor Law relief."[1]

435. In the Provinces, we find almost equally ominous instances. At Salford, in 1906, 64 per cent. of those registered were disqualified on account of bad conduct, receipt of Poor Law relief, etc., etc.[2] The Clerk to the Walsall Distress Committee thinks that about 75 per cent. of the applicants were "perfectly useless as workmen, they never have worked, they never want to work, what they want to get is the daily wage which is paid to them."[3] At Preston, in 1905–6, 45 per cent., and in 1906–7, 51 per cent. of the applicants were unsuitable.[4] At Liverpool more than two-thirds of the applicants were chronically unemployed or casuals.[5]

436. The evidence, therefore, seems overwhelming that the bulk of the applicants to Distress Committees have been persons of the class to which the casual labourer belongs.

Class of persons assisted under the Act.

437. Such being the character of the bulk of the applicants for assistance under the Act, we turn to the evidence in order to ascertain what class of persons actually received assistance under the Act or under the precursory scheme of Mr. Long. Under Mr. Long's scheme, it appears that, though there was better discrimination than before of the skilled regular workmen, it was not sufficiently effective.[6] For out of 46,000 applicants 3,496 were selected, and of these 55 per cent. were returned as general labourers, and 20 per cent. as in the building trade. Of the remainder a very large proportion were low-skilled and irregular workmen. The experience of several Joint Committees was that the men on the whole did not come within either the spirit or the letter of the scheme.[7]

438. Under the Unemployed Workmen Act, according to the latest Return of the Local Government Board, out of a total of 54,600 applicants pronounced qualified by Distress Committees, 29,100, or 53 per cent., were "casual or general labourers," and 10,500, or 19 per cent., belonged to the building trades, and these two categories of cases thus formed 72 per cent. of the number of cases entertained as qualified for assistance under the Act.[8]

439. In quoting these figures, we do not intend to imply that every casual or seasonal workman is necessarily a case of chronic unemployment to which the Act should not apply. Even among the dock labourers, there is a considerable class of respectable men who obtain regular and sufficient employment at what is a typically irregular industry,[9] and a trade depression might well throw some of these out of work owing to exceptional circumstances over which they have no control. When cases of this kind do occur, it may be surmised that these men would have some chance of recovering their normal and sufficient amount of employment, provided they were "tided over" the time of depression. They are cases which may rightly be assisted by voluntary agencies,[10] and among the applicants classed as "casual or general labourers," there may be men normally obtaining such a sufficiency of irregular employment that they have as good a chance as a "regular" workman of being "tided over" into independence again by means of the Unemployed Workmen Act. Such men, however, must be but a comparatively small number. The opinion is overwhelming that among the casual labourers under-employment is very rife. Hence, in order to discover those who, though casual labourers, are normally sufficiently employed, the most careful discrimination would be necessary.

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[1] Tagg, Vol. VIII., App. lxxvii. (1). [2] Desquesnes, Vol. VIII., App. xx. (2). [3] Cooper, 91082. [4] Moss, Vol. VIII., App. lvii. (A.). [5] Rathbone, 83497–500. *See also* Barrow, Vol. VIII., App. vi. (5); Brown, Vol. VIII., App. ix. (1). [6] Balfour, 77797. [7] Beveridge, 77832 (30). Maynard, 78371 (19), 78390. [8] H.C., 1908, No. 173, pp. 3, 5. *See also* Local Government Board Memorandum on Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, pars. 61–2. [9] Nelson, Vol. VIII., App. lix. (4), *See also* Balfour, 77828–9. [10] Larner, 79352–8. Toynbee, 30622 (15).

The inquiry would have to be not whether the man is destitute—for a large proportion of casual workers are always verging upon destitution—but whether the man in normal years is a respectable workman earning sufficient to keep himself respectably the year through. Such an inquiry would be very difficult in the case of a successful "casual," getting employment from one, two, or perhaps even half a dozen employers in the year. But unless such an inquiry were made, it may be assumed that the very large majority of casual labourers assisted would belong to the class of the chronically under-employed or unemployed for whom the Unemployed Workmen Act was not intended. Class of persons assisted under the Act.

441. The question of the method of inquiry and selection adopted becomes, then, crucial in deciding whether the 30,000 casual and general labourers, found qualified by the Distress Committees, may be assumed to have been really suitable for treatment under the Unemployed Workmen Act. On this point Mr. Crooks has told us that the Distress Committees selected the most distressful cases, which they ought not to have done, the object of the Act being to save men from falling into the ranks of the permanently unemployed. Neither the Act nor the Regulations made destitution the test.[1] The same opinion was expressed by Mr. Maynard, late Secretary of the Central Unemployed Body in London, who thought the classification was seldom carried out thoroughly by the Distress Committees, chiefly because they objected to leaving unassisted any class which they considered worthy of assistance.[2] Mr. Scotland, Works Superintendent of the Central Body, has informed us that the men selected by the Distress Committees in London and assisted by the Central Body were mainly builders and dock labourers, factory and warehousemen and general casual labourers.[3] Mr. Hammond, Late Superintendent of the Fambridge Labour Colony, informed us that "a very large number of the men assisted at the Labour Colonies under the Central Unemployed Body are chronically unemployed."[4]

442. As to the Provinces, Messrs. Jackson and Pringle have reported to us :—

> "There have been in some boroughs small Executive or Classification Committees, and they have sometimes interviewed applicants, and very carefully considered their relative claims. In a very large number of towns, however, the selection of men for work has been left practically in the hands of the clerk to the Distress Committee. In some places there were no rejections. Preference was given in most boroughs to married men with families, and it would be true generally to say that the ground of selection for work has not been that a man has been thrifty, or had a good industrial record, and had been thrown out of work through general depression of trade, but that he is destitute, has a large family, and can show no chance of employment in the ordinary market."[5]

443. With a view to testing the evidence which we have thus received, we issued questions to the Distress Committees in London and the Provinces, asking them *inter alia* to inform us to what extent they had been able to give special preference to the classes of men indicated in the Local Government Board Regulations, which classes it will be remembered were roughly the following three :—

(1) Regular thrifty workers ;

(2) Men with families ;

(3) Men physically suitable for the work which could be provided.

444. About half of the London Distress Committees (15) reported to us that they had endeavoured to give preference as required by the Regulations. Eleven others had only done so to a limited extent, and three Committees reported that they had given no preference under the Regulations.[6]

445. Turning to the areas outside London, of 79 active Committees, 9 reported that they had given no preference under the Regulations ; 40 that they had given preference to needy men with families ; and only from the replies of 26 is it possible

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[1] Crooks, 91542-55. [2] Maynard, 78458. [3] Scotland, 79862 (2), 79870. [4] Hammond, 80773.
[5] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 90. [6] Replies by Distress Committees to Questions on the Unemployed Workmen Act, pp. 22-3.

Class of persons assisted under the Act.

to gather that preference may have been given to regular workers.[1] The conclusions which we draw from these replies, which are printed in full in the Appendix, are that the number of cases "entertained" outside the class of irregular or under-employed workers was, on the whole small, and that the necessities of the particular applicants have far outweighed any other consideration, such as the regularity of their normal employment or the prospect of the help given being of permanent benefit.

446. The result has been, according to the evidence of one witness, that the work has not been provided for the persons contemplated (viz., the exceptionally distressed), nor has it achieved the purpose contemplated (viz., restoration to regular employment).[2] For those assisted were mostly irregular workmen before applying, and they simply returned to the same industrial condition when the relief work was over. In July, 1906, only 31 per cent. of those assisted by the Stepney Distress Committee in 1905–6 were found to be in "fairly permanent work," and, of 278 men who had been given work by the same Committee in 1905–6, 45 per cent. applied again in 1906–7.[3] And even in Woolwich, where the unemployed were admittedly of an exceptionally superior class, not more than half of the men provided with work subsequently obtained employment in the open market.[4]

447. Even in the labour colonies, the encouraging features of which we shall describe elsewhere, the presence of the casual labourer seems to have spread failure. The general opinion of the chief witnesses as to the result of colony work under the Act is that the men, although recuperated and sometimes made into competent workmen, afterwards relapsed into their old conditions, with little more chance of finding work for themselves than they had had before.[5]

448. A further indication of the extent to which persons assisted under the Act are of the class not exceptionally but chronically requiring assistance is afforded by the number of recurrent applications for relief to Distress Committees. Messrs. Jackson and Pringle have given some particulars of the number of recurrent cases in their Report.[6] Although the results they give are by no means exhaustive, the figures seem to indicate that in some places in London, roughly speaking 30 per cent. of those registered in 1906 were persons who had applied either to Mr. Long's Joint Committees in 1904–5, to the Mansion House Committee in 1893,[7] or even to the Mansion House Fund in 1886,[8] while at West Ham, 2,088, or over 40 per cent., re-registered in the winter of 1906–1907.[9] As to the Provinces, at Bolton it was thought that 75 per cent. of the applications had applied in previous years,[10] at Newcastle 36 per cent.,[11] and at Devonport 64 per cent.[12]

449. This evidence is substantiated by that which we have ourselves taken. At Bethnal Green we were told that more than one half of those who registered in 1906–7 had been on the register in previous years, and 22 per cent. of those who registered in 1905–6 re-applied in 1906–7.[13] Of 245 applicants to the Nottingham Distress Committee in 1906, 102 had applied in the previous year.[14] At Bradford, 521 persons re-registered the second year,[15] and at Norwich 41 per cent.[16]

450. In practice, therefore, we find that the irregular and under-employed labourer, who was intended by the promoters of the Act to be excluded, has in fact very largely, though not exclusively, benefited under the Act; while on the othe hand, there is a considerable body of evidence to show that, partly on account of this extensive use of the Act by the casual labourers, the better class of workmen, for whom it was intended, have in some districts refused to apply for its benefits.[17]

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[1] Replies by Distress Committees to Questions on the Unemployed Workmen Act, pp. 57–62. [2] Beveridge, 77832 (33). [3] Beveridge, 77832 (35). [4] Larner, 79234–5. [5] Smart, 84562–4, 84739, 84755–9; Somers, 82376 (c); Long, 78547; Maynard, 78416; Smith, 80113 (4–7), 80129–30; Scotland, 79862 (10); Anderson, 92423–5; Humphreys, 79407 (39 (x.)), 79442, 79511, 79615; Larner, 79211 (12), 79240–1. [6] Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 50–7. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 51. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 52. [9] *Ibid.*, App., p. 417. [10] *Ibid.*, App., p. 283. [11] *Ibid.*, p. 55. [12] *Ibid.*, p. 55. [13] Bailward, 78704 (7), 78760, 78793. [14] Green, Vol. VIII., App. xxxii. (7). [15] Watson and Crowther, 90804. [16] Miller, Vol. VIII., App. liii. (1). [17] Downey, Vol. VIII., App. xxii. (2 and 9); Holmshaw, Vol. VIII., App. xxxviii. (8); Mercer, Vol. VIII. App. lii. (16).

451. A second object of the Unemployed Workmen Act was, apparently, to correct some of the abuses of the municipal relief-works system inaugurated by Mr. Chamberlain in 1886. Mr. Gerald Balfour informed us that :— Effect of the Act on Municipal Relief works.

> "The situation was quite accurately summed up in a Report issued by the Charity Organisation Society in 1904, in which it was said : 'There are at present two public relief agencies in the field—the Poor Law Guardians under the Local Government Board, and the Borough Council, who have a free hand.' That was the situation which the Government had to deal with, and the question was, what was the best way to deal with it." [1]

Mr. Long also told us that his aim was to "regularise" and "secure more beneficial results" from the then existing system of municipal relief-works, the evils of which were admitted.[2]

452. It was apparently thought that the establishment of a Special Authority for dealing preferentially with the better class of men who since 1886 had been referred to the Municipal Authorities, would to some extent deprive those Authorities of the excuse for continuing a separate system of relief with separate methods and separate standards.

453. The new "Unemployed" authority, the Distress Committee, was, in fact, closely associated with the Municipal Council, and, in law, a Committee of it. It was therefore, perhaps, a fair inference that, even if the municipalities were to continue their separate system of relief, they would tend to incorporate in that system any improvements suggested by the experience of the Distress Committees. And there was even a more direct inducement for them to do so. The Distress Committees were empowered to contribute towards the cost of relief-works provided by the Municipalities where such works complied with the conditions laid down in the Regulations of the Local Government Board.

454. Hence the Act provided inducements, both moral and monetary, for the municipalities either to fall into line with the new system and to abandon their separate relief works, or else, if they retained them, to reform them. But the successful operation of these inducements was conditional on the Act realising the objects of its promoters. If the new authorities provided, as we have seen they did provide, for the same class as the Poor Law, and if they failed to provide, as we have seen they did fail to provide, for the better class of workmen, then the argument in favour of the municipalities themselves providing for the better class unemployed remained practically as forcible as before the new Act was passed. If the authorities under the Unemployed Workmen Act, instead of reforming, merely perpetuated the methods of municipal relief works, there was clearly no moral inducement to the municipalities to reform their methods. If the new authorities failed, as we shall see they did fail, to collect contributions towards properly conducted municipal works, the monetary inducement to the municipalities was equally inefficacious.

455. We will first consider the moral inducement to reform afforded to the municipalities by the Distress Committees. The chief evils of the municipal relief-works were, as we have seen, doles-of-work, insufficient discrimination, extravagant cost, and the forestalling of work We regret to be obliged to report that, notwithstanding the terms and safeguards of the new Act, we have received evidence that every one of these evils has, to a greater or less extent, been perpetuated by the new authorities. Demoralising effect of work under the Act

456. As regards the forestalling of ordinary work, it was admitted by Mr. Balfour that the Unemployed Workmen Act provided no particular safeguard against this evil,[3] and several witnesses have asserted that ordinary labour has been displaced by work provided for the unemployed under the Act.[4] In so far as work was Forestalling of work under the Act.

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[1] Balfour, 77745. [2] Long, 78464–5. [3] Balfour, 77814–5. [4] Bailward, 78703 (7, 8), 78941; Rogers, 45406–13; Mercer, Vol. VIII., App. lii. (17); Martley, 81760 (24b); Wright, 87323 (33); Smith, 86783–4.

directly provided by the Unemployed Body or Distress Committees the danger of reducing the employment of regular municipal employees was to some extent minimised. But as a matter of fact, except in London, more than half the work "provided" under the Act has been work provided through the agency of the Municipal Authorities. For the three years for which figures are available, work was provided under the Act for 47,400 persons by the Distress Committees or Unemployed Body directly, and for 55,100 through the agency of the ordinary Local Authorities, and these numbers are exclusive of "unemployed" given work directly by the municipalities apart from the agency of Distress Committees.[1]

Doles of work.

457. It is clear, therefore, that considerably more work has been provided by the municipalities than has been provided by the new authorities set up under the Act. The Act has, in fact, systematised municipal relief work, without materially altering its unimproving and demoralising character. Except in London the system of dole-work continues to be resorted to.[2] At Manchester,[3] Birmingham,[4] Walsall[5] and elsewhere, the unemployed have been given "spells" of three days' work, at Bradford[6] four days, at Newcastle[7] six days a fortnight; and where, as at Norwich,[8] the work has been for five days a week, this has apparently been found possible only by making the day a five-hour day—in a word, by making the dole a daily dole instead of a weekly dole. As instancing generally the discontinuous nature of the work provided, we may mention that, in the most recent Return of the Local Government Board, 27 cases are noted in which the average duration of the work was a fortnight or less, as against 23 cases where the average duration of the work was over a fortnight.[9]

Cost of Relief Works.

458. Similarly, the Act has apparently failed to reduce the cost of relief works. We have had numerous complaints as to the cost of the works under the Act.[10] At West Ham the expenditure on local works in 1906–7 was £10,250; the contract price for the same work would have been nearly £7,500.[11] The Secretary of the London Central Unemployed Body thinks the work done by the unemployed was on the average from 25 to 50 per cent. more costly than it would have been if done by ordinary contract labour.[12] The cost of reclaiming a small portion of Chat Moss (Manchester) with unemployed men was nearly three times as much as it would have been with ordinary country labour.[13] In the matter of excessive and useless cost, the Unemployed Workmen Act has therefore also failed to reform the system of municipal relief-works.

Failure of Act as a measure of relief.

459. Finally, the general failure of the Act as a measure of relief has falsified the hope that the municipalities would be encouraged to discontinue their relief works on the establishment of a special authority for dealing with distress from unemployment. There is a great consensus of opinion that, chiefly from lack of funds or the failure to find suitable work, the actual number of persons relieved has been extremely small in proportion to the number in distress. The Act has been described to us as "useless,"[14] "entirely inadequate,"[15] "incapable of dealing with the question of unemployment in a thorough manner,"[16] "very little use except to the employer desiring cheap labour,"[17] and we have been informed that "the position of the unemployed workmen was better before the passing of the Act than after."[18] This opinion as to the general failure of the Act as a system of relief for workmen in distress from unemployment has been repeated to us by a very large number of witnesses of all shades of opinion and from all parts of the country.[19]

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[1] H.C., 392–1907; H.C., 326–1907; H.C., 173–1908. [2] Barrow, Vol. VIII. App. vi. (5). [3] Leech, 83830–41. [4] Owen, 85999. [5] Cooper, 91050. [6] Watson, 90739–41. [7] Adams, Vol. VIII., App. i. (18). [8] Miller, Vol. VIII., App. liii. (11). [9] H.C., 1908, 173, pp. 26–33. [10] Bailward, 78703 (8), 78723–4, 78944–51; Mercer, Vol. VIII., App. lii. (17); Stubbs, Vol. VIII., App. lxxv. (8); Morris, 79172; Hammond, 80753–4, 80808–18, 80912. [11] Humphreys, 79443. [12] Maynard, 78433; *See also* Green, Vol. VIII., App. xxxii. (7–14); Beveridge 77830 (45), 77869. [13] Leech, 83770 (23) 83804. [14] Gribble, Vol. VIII., App. xxxiii. (25). [15] Richardson, Vol. VIII., App. lxiv. (17). [16] Crossman, Vol. VIII., App. xvi. (6). [17] Twomey, Vol. VIII., App. lxxx. (20). [18] Fairchild, Vol. VIII., App. xxiv. (13). [19] Crooks, 91307 (2, 3), 91542–55, 91311–5; Roberts, Vol. VIII., App. lxvi. (5); Shaw, Vol. VIII., App. lxxii. (7); Gee, Vol. VIII., App. xxviii. (4); Holmshaw, Vol. VIII., App. xxxviii. (8); Drummond, Vol. VIII., App. xxiii., (7); Downey, Vol. VIII., App. xxii. (8); Cuthbertson, Vol. VIII., App. xviii. (7); Curley, Vol. VIII., App. xvii. (8); Abbott, 87157 (17); Coates, Vol. VIII., App. xiv. (9); Chaplin, Vol. VIII., App. xiii. (7); Carey, Vol. VIII., App. xi. (7, 8); Cadogan, Vol. VIII., App. x. (4); Barrow, Vol. VIII., App. vi. (5, 6); Bailey, Vol. VIII., App. v. (5); Nelson, Vol. VIII., App. lix. (9); Sexton, 84124 (6), 84297, 84313; Fox, 83910 (20–1); Desquesnes, Vol. VIII., App. xx. (9–13); Livesey, 83134 (Ans. VIII.); Gageby, 99260 (9), 99291, 99230; Marshall, 82146 (17, 24, 30–2); Gardner, 92112 (10); Rathbone, 83251 (24), 83273, 83494–6; Beveridge, 77831 (33, 46).

460. We have no means of ascertaining how many "unemployed" the municipalities continue to employ otherwise than through the Distress Committees: but we may note that, in 1907–8, in one half of the provincial towns where the Distress Committees sent unemployed men to municipal relief works, the Distress Committees made no contribution to the cost of such works.[1] It is only the fact of such contribution which gives the Distress Committees any effective power of bringing the municipal works under the Regulations of the Act as to continuity of work, rate of pay, etc. It may therefore be assumed that, in one-half of the cases in which the municipalities provided relief-works to which the Distress Committees sent men, these relief-works were, to all intents and purposes, as little under any regulations and control as were the relief-works before the passing of the Act in 1905. Moreover, in the most recent return as to the working of the Act, frequent cases are noted in which, in the same district, work has been provided simultaneously by the municipality and the Distress Committee.[2] The co-existence of what are in a sense competitive relief-works, cannot, we think, be beneficial. Our Investigators have described how, in such cases in London, the municipal works would employ men rejected by the Distress Committees, and how men would refuse the Distress Committee relief-work for the easier relief work of the municipality.[3] The reverse of this situation is illustrated at Bournemouth[4] where the Distress Committee complain of the straits to which they have been reduced owing to the municipality retaining for their own relief-works all the men whose labour was remunerative, and referring to the Distress Committee relief-works all the inefficients. We cannot but think that the simultaneous establishment of independent relief-works by two separate authorities in the same district must be productive of harm, and tend to destroy any possibility of usefulness in either set of relief-works.

Co-existence of Municipal and Distress Committee Relief Works.

461. We find, therefore, that the Unemployed Workmen Act has largely failed in its second main object, viz.: the regulation and improvement of municipal relief-works.

462. A third object of the Act was the prevention of the demoralisation of the "unemployed" by indiscriminate charity, the evils of which we have explained in a previous section. Mr. Long referred to the evils of "Unemployed Funds" as one of the abuses he hoped to check by his scheme. The Act, in fact, assumed the collection of voluntary subscriptions by the new authorities, and contemplated, as we have seen, that a great part of their expenditure, and particularly that incurred in providing work, would be defrayed out of such voluntary subscriptions.[5] To a certain extent, no doubt the Act has discountenanced the raising of hasty "unemployed funds," to be spent in an indiscriminate manner on ill-considered schemes, by bodies whose activities often overlapped. It has, we think, been beneficial that money, which the charitable public were inclined to give for the relief of the unemployed, should be given to a responsible authority conducting experiments on lines subject more or less to central control. In so far as the new bodies collected the money and focussed the efforts of charity, their action has undoubtedly been beneficial. But unfortunately the success of the new bodies in attracting the help of charity has become less and less. Under Mr. Long's scheme, and largely through his instrumentality, £52,000 was collected.[6] In the following year, the first of the new Act, the subscriptions amounted to £105,000.[7]* For the next year, in order to meet the plea that voluntary subscriptions were insufficient, the Government allowed the provision of work to be paid for out of Imperial, instead of voluntary funds, and obtained a Parliamentary Grant of £200,000 for this purpose; and in this year the voluntary subscriptions sank to £36,000.[8]† In the third, the last year of which we have particulars, a similar grant was voted and the voluntary subscriptions amounted to only £7,800,[9] *i.e.*, less than one-fourteenth of the amount raised in the first year. Charitable contributions have practically ceased, and a further object-lesson has been afforded of the truth that the charitable public will not easily or largely contribute towards purposes for which money is compulsorily taken from them by means of rates or taxes.

Influence of the Act on Charity.

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* Including £86,418 from Her Majesty the Queen's Unemployed Fund.

† Including £24,669 from Her Majesty the Queen's Unemployed Fund.

[1] H.C., 1908, 173, pp. 24–5, col. 6. [2] H. of C., 1908, 173; Bournemouth, Brighton, p. 26; Devonport, Hastings, Leeds, p. 27; Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Northampton, p. 28; Plymouth, Reading, p. 29; Sunderland, West Ham, p. 30; Smethwick, p. 31; Erith, Kettering, Leyton, Walthamstow, p. 32. [3] Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 88. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 26. [5] 5 Edw. VII. c. 18. Sec. 1 (6). [6] London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5. Report of Central Executive Committee, p. 142. [7] H.C., 392–1907. [8] H.C., 326–1907. [9] H.C., 173–1908.

463. In most respects therefore the Unemployed Workmen Act has failed. Its primary object was to assist the better class of workman: the vast majority of those whom it has relieved did not belong to that class. It was hoped that it would supersede the existing bad system of municipal relief works: it has, on the contrary, encouraged them. Under its operations the sources of charity might have been enlarged and its agencies further developed in dealing with the able-bodied: both have in many directions been curtailed and discouraged. The aim of the Act was to deal with a section of the unemployed by means other than the Poor Law. The Poor Law administration was in a manner put in abeyance. This led to misunderstanding and some injustice. The people had before them an alternative, and in many instances they applied to the Distress Committees when they should have applied to the Poor Law Authorities.

Points in favour of the Act.

464. We readily admit that in some directions the Act has been of service. A number of decent, sober, honest workmen who would have felt naturally reluctant to go to the Poor Law, were assisted during a period of serious unemployment. It was a good thing to bring together in one body members of diverse agencies, hitherto working spasmodically and disconnectedly towards the same object—the relief of the able-bodied. The association of Guardians, Town Councillors, and voluntary workers on the Distress Committees has been of great benefit educationally. The new bodies, and the public from whom they are recruited, are beginning to diagnose the problem of unemployment, and to recognise its diversity and difficulty, as they have never done before. Since 1905 the nation as a whole has learnt much about the possibilities and the limitations of help for the unemployed. But if it is true that valuable educational experience is due to the Act, it is also true that it is the failures rather than the successes of the Act which have provided the education.

Reasons of discontinuing the Act.

465. The Act was started under impossible conditions, and if it has failed the failure is largely due to the hopeless task imposed upon the Local Authorities which it set up. In various directions they have accomplished experimental work of great value, with regard to emigration, labour colonies, and labour exchanges. What, however, we do emphatically assert is that neither Distress Committees nor Unemployed Bodies are necessary for carrying out these methods of assisting the distressed able-bodied.

466. As regards emigration, this is probably the one method of relief which the Poor Laws specifically authorise to be afforded to the poor, as distinct from the destitute. There is no question here of entering a workhouse, nor of submitting a man and his family to unduly repellent conditions. Disfranchisement in England, even if it continued to apply, would hardly affect an emigrant. There is no reason, therefore, why a reformed and enlightened Public Assistance Authority should not undertake all the emigration relief which it is wise for the State to give.

467. As regards labour colonies, we hold most strongly that, except for purposes, for which a prolonged stay on them is necessary, labour colonies are almost if not entirely useless. But it would appear irrational and senseless to place in the hands of an authority intended to meet temporary distress, institutions which are useless except as a method of more or less prolonged and permanent help. Such institutions should surely be placed in the hands of the authority dealing with prolonged or permanent distress—that is the Public Assistance Authority.

468. In the matter of labour exchanges, we shall show in the next section why it is in our opinion essential that these institutions should not be managed by, or associated with, an authority whose primary object is to give relief.

Conclusions.

469. We feel, therefore, that the methods successfully used by the Distress Committees would be exercised more appropriately by other authorities. On the other hand, the unsuccessful methods of the Distress Committees are in our opinion so harmful, that we feel it to be in the interests of the State that they should be discontinued. Except as regards the operations referred to above, we believe that the Act has mainly resulted in the wholesale and periodic relief of casual or chronically under-employed labourers under non-deterrent conditions. This class of men is tending to rely more and more on the regular provision of municipal relief-work which has been sanctioned and encouraged under the Act. In effect the result is, that we are in some danger of repeating in an indirect manner the disastrous experiment of relief to able-bodied wage-earners, which occasioned

the scandals and reforms of 1834. The gravamen of the Report of 1832 is that the community was subsidising wages which ought properly to be paid by the employers. But if casual labourers are supported year after year at certain seasons at the cost of the rates, their yearly wage is just as effectively subsidised by the community in 1905 as their weekly wage was subsidised by the community in 1832. To give regularly to a casual labourer 13s. a week employment-relief for 4 weeks in each year is arithmetically equivalent to subsidising his weekly wages by a shilling throughout the year. And the subsidy is in some ways more dangerous, because it is indirect and disguised, instead of direct and open as in 1832. Any general increase of this dangerous practice of indirectly subsidising wages from the rates, would, we are convinced, lead to a recrudescence of the evils so ably described by the Royal Commission of 1832. The evils would be equally certain, but the remedy would be less easily applied, because the cause of the evil would be less apparent. Even now there are signs that among the casual labourers, encouraged and subsidised by the Unemployed Workmen Act, there is arising precisely that spirit of dependence and demoralisation which was so rampant in 1832.

470. We feel, therefore, that if the working classes are to retain their independence and their industrial efficiency, it is essential that all encouragement of casual labour or the subsidisation of the wages of casual labour, out of public funds should cease as soon as possible.

471. For this and for the other reasons we have detailed, we recommend that the Unemployed Workmen Act should not be continued, and that the functions of Distress Committees, so far as they are useful, should in future be discharged in the manner hereafter described.

Chapter 4.

PROPOSALS AS TO DISTRESS FROM UNEMPLOYMENT.

472. We propose to classify our recommendations for dealing with distress from unemployment under three headings according as they relate to :—

(1) Permanent Preventive Measures of a Social or Industrial Character ;

(2) The Permanent System of Public Assistance for the Able-Bodied.

(3) Transitional Measures.

(1)—Permanent Preventive Measures of a Social or Industrial Character.

(a) Labour Exchanges.

Dearth of statistics as to unemployment.

473. Any investigation into the facts and problems relating to unemployment-distress and its relief, discloses, as one of the chief defects of our present system, an extraordinary lack of accurate information as to the extent and character of unemployment. It is at best a happy chance to find a remedy for a disease as to which there is no possibility of accurate diagnosis. But this is the position which we, as a great industrial country, occupy as regards the unemployment of our people. There are no data which give any accurate idea of who and how many the unemployed are, and what is the duration of their unemployment. Yet the ascertainment of these particulars is essential to the successful treatment of distress from unemployment.

Poor Law statistics.

474. There are Returns periodically published of able-bodied paupers, under which term may be included the halt, the maimed, and the blind—all persons in fact who are not sick or physically or mentally disabled. Statistics of able-bodied paupers compiled on such a basis are clearly illusory, even as an indication of mere numbers. As to the character, industrial and moral, of able-bodied paupers, there is no other periodically available information than the opinion of a few individuals and the meagre information afforded by the decennial census.

Board of Trade statistics.

475. When we turn to the figures furnished by the Board of Trade as to the percentage of unemployment in certain Trade Unions, the information is hardly more satisfactory. These figures to-day are founded on returns from about 600,000 Trade Unionists,[1] many of them belonging to trades subject to special fluctuations ; and in the past this basis has been even narrower. They show the tendency of trade, but little more. Any attempt to apply the percentages to the whole ten million of adult workers would give wholly untrustworthy results.

476. Even in regard to the Trade Unions, to which the figures relate, the statistics afford no help to those whose business it is to provide for distress arising from unemployment. The figures are some indication of the fluctuations of unemployment. But they do not show how many men in a given period are unemployed even in the limited number of Trade Unions to which they relate. They give no trustworthy measure of the numbers unemployed or the duration of their unemployment. Thus, for instance, in a year in which the Board of Trade percentages show a mean annual average of unemployment of 4 per cent. on 600,000 men, the figures may mean either :—

(*a*) That the same 24,000 men have been unemployed throughout all the months of the year ; or

(*b*) That a different 24,000 men have been unemployed in each month throughout the year.

477. On hypothesis (*b*) the statistics would indicate that some 288,000 men had each been unemployed for one month in the year. This from a social point of view

[1] Wilson-Fox, 9885o.

is an insignificant amount of unemployment, not likely to cause serious distress, nor to require remedial action. On hypothesis (*a*) the statistics would indicate that, throughout the year, the same 24,000 men were without any employment. This would be an amount of unemployment of considerable intensity, and would indicate the probability that relief measures of some kind would be necessary in some localities. But as to which of these two interpretations, (the one pointing to relief measures, the other not), is the right one, the figures themselves give us no guide. It is clear, therefore, that, even in regard to the Trade Unions to which they relate, the Board of Trade figures afford no safe criterion of the intensity of unemployment, nor of the likelihood of distress arising from it. Far less do the figures afford any accurate measure of unemployment among the labouring classes as a whole.

478. In view of the limitations thus attaching to the use of the Board of Trade unemployment percentages, we requested that Department to make further inquiries into the extent of unemployment in certain selected Trade Unions. The inquiry extended to some 30,000 members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, the Compositors', Operative Plumbers', and Wood-cutting Machinists' Trade Unions, and shows that the large majority of Trade Unionists are not out of work for more than three days in the year; that is to say, the large majority are in continuous employment. In a bad year a percentage varying from 11 to 27 in the different Unions were unemployed for an aggregate period of three days but less than eight weeks, whilst from 11 to 16 per cent. were out of work for eight weeks or over, and 7 to 11 per cent. for twelve weeks or over. The percentages vary, of course, between good and bad years, and in the good year selected for the inquiry (*i.e.*, 1898 or 1899), the percentage unemployed for twelve weeks or over, varied from less than 1 per cent. with the Carpenters to nearly 5 per cent. with the Compositors. It would seem, therefore, that, whilst in good times the amount of distress from unemployment amongst Trade Unionists must be small, in bad years the number reduced to straitened circumstances through unemployment must be considerable.*

479. Turning to the data collected by the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, we have seen how the Committees' registers have been avoided by the capable workmen. The registers and records of these Committees are, therefore, only an index of the extent of unemployment amongst a certain inferior class of workmen in those few districts in which the Committees have been set up. Statistics under the Unemployed Workmen Act.

480. In this dearth of trustworthy information it is hardly to be wondered at that mistakes should have been constantly made in attempting to deal with distress from unemployment. The mass of hasty and inconsiderate donors assume that a large number of decent and capable workmen are in distress from unemployment, and pour out funds in a manner which could be justified only on the assumption that the men assisted really were of the class supposed to be out of work. Experience has shown that these funds, raised in excitement and distributed without thought, are invariably, to a very large extent, absorbed by incapable and undeserving workmen to their own detriment. The failure of such gifts is obvious. They have no relation to conditions, causes, or remedies—none whatever to the evil or its diagnosis. The Unemployed Workmen Act assumed that there was a special class of workmen out of work who would avail themselves of it. That class, if it existed, has not made use of the Act, and all its potentialities for good have been destroyed by the clogging of its machinery with a mass of under-employed labourers.

481. This points to the need in future of obtaining more accurate statistics as to the numbers, classes, and character of the men reduced to unemployment, and as to the length of the period during which they are unemployed. It is only by obtaining such accurate particulars that it will be possible to make the remedies effective by adjusting them to the needs of the time and to the wants of the particular class of men affected.

482. A second defect which permeates our modern system is the failure to do anything positive and effective to increase the mobility of labour. Although, as we have seen, there is a lamentable tendency for unskilled labour to stagnate in certain localities, and although there is on all sides an increasing difficulty for individuals Lack of machinery fo assisting the mobility of labour.

* Statistical Appendix, No. xvii., A.

Lack of machinery for assisting the mobility of labour.

by their own efforts to recover regular employment[1] when once it has been lost, yet the community has provided no public machinery for helping the unemployed workman to find work which may be waiting for him. This failure to assist mobility may be noticed in each of the systems we have reviewed. The Guardians, except here and there in an individual instance where a particular Guardian takes an interest in a particular man, take no steps and incur no expenditure with a view to finding a workman a situation while he is in or when he is leaving their institutions. There is some doubt whether they may even pay a man's fare to a place where he knows that work is awaiting him.[2] On the other hand, as we have seen, the general tendency of the workhouse life is to reduce a man's efficiency, and so to render him less mobile, considered as an atom in the economic organism. Charity, we have seen, makes occasional efforts to send the workers where work is awaiting them, but the operations of charity in this direction are limited by its funds, and it has no permanent or suitable machinery to help it in finding work for cases outside its own particular district.

483. Under the Unemployed Workmen Act, it is true that the Distress Committees have powers of migration, but these have not been used to an appreciable extent. Labour exchanges were also established under the Act, but these have achieved only a partial success; they have suffered by their association with a relief authority; and they have not been able, except to a small extent, to increase mobility generally. On the other hand, the system of municipal works encouraged by the Distress Committees has tended to encourage directly the immobility of unskilled labour by providing periodically artificial work in districts where there was already an excess of unskilled labour. Clearly, then, the Unemployed Workmen Act has done little or nothing to assist the mobility of labour.

484. If we turn to the Trade Unions we find that each union provides for mobility of labour as regards its own particular members, but the rules of Trade Unions impose a serious fine on any member of the union finding or endeavouring to find work for a man not belonging to the union. To some extent, therefore, the Trade Unionists may be said to have increased their own mobility at the expense of the mobility of workmen who do not belong to the Unions.

485. We have hitherto been referring principally to the lack of facilities for removing workmen from place to place, *i.e.*, to what is technically known as place-mobility. But there is not only a similar lack of facilities for moving workmen from trade to trade, and so ensuring what is known as trade mobility, but the Trade Union organisation discourages such inter-trade mobility. If a man abandons his own trade and Trade Union he is penalised by the immediate loss of unemployed and other benefits, and he is not for some time qualified for the Trade Union benefits of the trade into which he transfers his labour. We have received some evidence that the ranks of the unemployed and of the casual labourer are recruited from workmen who, from one cause or another, no longer find employment in their original trades, and who degenerate into unskilled labourers, thus helping to overstock still further the already overcrowded unskilled labour market. It is not within the province of the Poor Law to provide technical training for the able-bodied; nor are there, so far as we are aware, technical schools where adults can learn a new trade. To the extent to which this is an educational question, it is perhaps beyond our scope to prescribe remedies. But the difficulty is not merely educational. Even if the necessary technical training were available either in schools or ordinary workshops, there is at present no available information to indicate to a workman desirous of changing his trade in what other trade or trades there is most demand for the kind of qualities which he possesses. To this extent the question of trade mobility is one of obtaining more accurate information on the state of employment in various trades; and to this extent we believe we can propose some remedial measures for the difficulty.

486. To sum up, it is clear that there is at present great lack of machinery for assisting the mobility of labour, and this at a time when such machinery is particularly needed, and when, through the increase of travelling, postal, telephonic, and telegraphic facilities, physical mobility should not be a difficult matter. We lay it down, therefore, as one of the leading objects of our future proposals that they should tend towards an increased mobility of labour. After what has been said, it is equally clear that any successful treatment of distress from unemployment on the basis of the existing statistics is impossible. We therefore lay it down as a second object that statistics

[1] *See e.g.*, Pringle's App. ii. to Jackson and Pringle's Report, p. 35. [2] Adrian, 293–8; Sidney Webb, 93091.

relating to the enumeration and classification of the unemployed should be collected on a trustworthy and scientific basis.

487. Both these objects can we think be achieved by the establishment of a national system of Labour Exchanges. As instancing the way in which labour exchanges can assist mobility, we may cite the evidence given us by Mr. Fair, the Chairman of the Association of Employment Exchange Superintendents.[1] We shall refer later on to the London labour exchanges and their working. As pioneer institutions they were not free from defects. But, in spite of these defects, we believe that the scheme of exchanges in London under the Unemployed Workmen Act has dealt with the problem of the unemployed on a limited but a scientific basis. The linking together of all the different parts of London, by means of a central exchange acting as a clearing house, brought the supply and demand for labour into touch with each other. Mr. Fair declares that the Metropolitan exchanges have already done good work, employers have promptly found men they could not have obtained so quickly by any other means,[2] and men have obtained work which they could never have got by their own unaided efforts.

488. We have also been informed that the German labour exchanges have operated towards abolishing the vague search for work in the streets and at the factory gates, and have increased the industrial efficiency of the community by adding to the mobility of the labour supply.[3]

489. With regard to the way in which labour exchanges would facilitate the collection of data for the classification of the unemployed, we may again refer to the evidence of Mr. Fair. He there points out that, if the exchanges are to aid the unemployed, it is necessary to get trustworthy figures as to the number and capability of workers employable and of the capacity of various industries to absorb labour. The Metropolitan exchanges have done much in this direction. Their books, at the end of the first year's working, showed at least 100,000 men and women in London who are only partially employed, exclusive of the trade unionists. The exchanges can show the various trades affected, and further can prove special stagnation in particular industries.[4]

490. Similarly, we have been informed that it was one of the objects of the German labour exchanges to "get a perfect test for unemployment as a means of knowing if a man is really unemployed against his will. You can only do this if you can see the whole labour market and all the jobs that offer."[5]

491. Before further developing our proposal for the establishment of a national system of labour exchanges, it may be asked how we reconcile such a proposal with the admitted failure of labour exchanges in England to attain the objects expected of them. We will, therefore, briefly recapitulate the gist of the evidence given before us as to these institutions, and the reasons why they have failed.

Municipal labour bureaux before 1905.

492. Prior to 1905, a good many municipalities had made experiments * in the way of labour exchanges, but apparently these institutions were seldom carried on with any full understanding or foresight.[6] According to the view of our witnesses, the weakness of the old municipal exchanges was due to certain easily ascertained causes. There was no knowledge of what they were intended to do; they were not properly staffed; they were hampered by many bad rules; they were nearly all started in times of depression—"exactly the wrong time to start a labour exchange; the time to start it is when trade is going up, because then the people whom you decasualise have the best chance of finding other places for themselves."[7] Employers mostly held aloof from these exchanges; they knew nothing about them. No effort was made to advertise them, "though everything depends on that."[8] They worked independently of one another, until an attempt was made by the London Unemployed Fund to provide a central unemployed exchange.[9]

493. The London Act of 1902, we are told, was a failure because it merely permitted, and did not compel, Borough Councils to establish bureaux, and consequently only a

* *e.g.*, in London under the Labour Bureaux London Act, 1902, and in other places under local Acts.

[1] Evidence, 81464–81666, *passim*. [2] Fair, St. 3 and 4, 81598. [3] Beveridge, 77890. [4] Fair, St. 7 and 8. [5] Beveridge, 77890, 78218. [6] Beveridge, 78334, 77930. Tagg, Vol. VIII., App. lxxvii. (11). Lea, Vol. VIII., App. xlvi. (4). Fordham, 81300. [7] Beveridge, 78337. [8] Beveridge, 78339. [9] Beveridge, 78340. *Cf.* Fordham, 81304–8.

very small part of the Metropolis was covered. Further, amongst those established, there was no interchange of ideas, men were placed in charge of the bureaux who were, perhaps, the protégés of some influential councillors, regardless of their fitness for the work. The bureaux "were the shuttlecock of party politics, and, to a large extent, became mere registers whence a borough surveyor could get his staff of scavengers, etc."[1]

494. In fact, the evidence seems to show that the failure of these pioneer labour bureaux was not owing to any innate defect in the idea which they embodied, but rather to their inchoate and disconnected character and to their overclose association with the faults and failings of particular Local Authorities. Indeed, it is chiefly owing to the inability of the Local Authorities to institute and maintain what should be a national service that we feel bound to recommend a national organisation to carry on these important industrial institutions.

Labour exchanges under Unemployed Workmen Act.

495. The local labour exchanges established under the Unemployed Workmen Act have been to some extent, but not very much, more effective than their predecessors.[2] In the Metropolis we are told that these exchanges are not very satisfactory, and "there has probably not been a single labour exchange in England which has yet been an important or indispensable industrial institution."[3]

496. A new institution, to be successful, generally requires something more than a cold support from the authority establishing it. The Local Authorities, especially in the country, do not seem to have supported the labour exchanges either with energy or determination. In addition to this lukewarm support there were obstacles in the way of their development; such as the unfavourable attitude of the Trade Unions, the poor support given by employers, the fact that the best types of men have not registered, largely because they have not been encouraged, and lastly the financial difficulty.[4]

497. As to this last point, most of the districts, as one of the witnesses observes, can probably meet from the ½d. rate the comparatively small expenses necessary for the efficient working of an exchange in conjunction with a linked-up system. But the districts where unemployment is worst find the limit too low for efficient working, and in one or two areas little or nothing can be done in this way for that reason. "Yet any increase of the rate contribution would tend to aggravate in such rate-burdened districts the very trouble it is intended to relieve."[5]

498. The opinion again has been strongly expressed that the association of the labour exchanges with what is really a relief authority has largely contributed to the comparative failure of the exchanges under the Unemployed Workmen Act.[6] There has been a tendency to confuse the exchanges with the Distress Committees, which repels many employers who object to aid a system of "State-created work."[7] On the other hand their association with an authority administering assistance to the lower types of unskilled and casual labourers has led to their being looked upon with suspicion by the Trade Unions, who have in some cases unhappily regarded them as "blacklegging" organisations.[8] For instance, in Liverpool, we were informed that no distinction was made between applicants to the labour exchange and applicants for the Distress Committee register; they had all to answer the same questions and fill up the same form.[9]

500. It is obvious that any neglect to draw a distinction between persons applying for assistance and persons merely desirous of obtaining facilities for being put into communication with employers, will be likely to affect prejudicially the attitude of the better class workmen to the labour exchanges. Where, as in Edinburgh, the labour exchange has been dissociated from the relief work of the Distress Committee,

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[1] Fordham, 1258, St. 2, 81262. [2] Tom Fox, 83974. Leech, 83769 (22). Wm. Wood, 85750–3, 85851–4 85860–3. Coates, Vol. VIII., App. xiv. (10). Crowther, 90823–8, 90647 *et seq*; Wright, 87323 (17); Gageby 99291–4; Stubbs, Vol. VIII., App. lxxv. (8). [3] Beveridge, 78006, 77872. Somers 82439 Green, Vol. VIII., App. xxxii. (4–22); Livesey, 83134 (viii.); Chapman, 84856; Fair, 81466 (29); Stepney, 79791; Larner, 79211 (11); Somers, 82407; Fordham, 81280, 81381. T. Smith, 85726 (3, 18, 19). [5] Humphreys, 79408 (26–27) [6] Beveridge, 77940, 78174. [7] Fair, 81464; 1–33, 81522 [8] Fair, 81464 2981506, 81619. [9] Rathbone, 83491.

the evidence shows that the labour exchange has been more successful, and has enlisted considerably more sympathy from the Trade Unions.[1]

501. Other witnesses have told us that the administration, staff, equipment, etc., of the exchanges have been starved under the Act, and that this accounts for their failure.[2] The superintendents of the exchanges have in many places had to struggle against great difficulties. They have had but one clerk to help them (often an inexperienced youth), hardly any advertisement, offices of poor appearance and in bad positions. In many cases little or nothing has been done to make the labour exchanges either a popular or attractive institution.[3]

502. But the greatest objection to be urged against the existing system is that under it labour exchanges are only set up sporadically.* Isolated exchanges, especially if successful in their detachment, tend to decrease rather than increase the general mobility of labour. If, for instance, labour exchanges are established in London and not at Norwich, the fact that these facilities for quickly obtaining work are available in London is all the more likely to attract to London or to retain in London, unemployed people who think that they have thereby a better chance of getting work.

Labour exchanges in Germany.

503. That the failure of exchanges in England is due to local and special causes and not to any innate defect in the institutions, seems clear from the interesting account of their success abroad which has been furnished to us in evidence.[4]

504. In Germany, with its diversity of kingdoms, laws, and customs, there is no imperial system of labour exchanges. The lack of homogeneity among the constituent peoples would tend to prevent it. But there is a network of labour exchanges of various types. The most important and the most akin to what we should propose for England are the public and municipal exchanges. "There are over 200 such, among the 700 odd exchanges, filling now 150,000 places a month, which report regularly to the Imperial Statistical Officer. Practically there is a public general exchange in every town of over 50,000 inhabitants, and in a very large proportion of the smaller towns." Most of the public labour exchanges date from 1894–6 or received a fresh impulse then. They have been extraordinarily successful. Thus according to the evidence supplied to us by Mr. Beveridge :—

> "The Munich Exchange, for instance, filled over 25,000 situations in the first complete year of its working. The Düsseldorf Exchange, after remaining unimportant for some time, filling less than 2,000 situations two or three years ago, rose suddenly to filling 28,000 in 1906–7, and will hardly fall short of 50,000 in 1907–8. In Berlin, Stuttgart and Strassburg, the activity has nearly doubled in the last two years."[5]

505. The public labour exchanges in Germany are not confined to unskilled or low-skilled labour. "Most show a percentage of forty to sixty in definite trades, and the larger exchanges, at least, have separate sections for unskilled and skilled men of various types."[6]

506. The causes of the success of the German system of labour exchanges have apparently been as follows :—

(1) The high standing given to the movement by the advocacy and practical assistance of all public authorities, town councils, State Governments, Imperial Government, etc.;

(2) The association through combined Committees of employers and employees in the management of the exchanges;

(3) The unequivocal character of the exchanges as industrial and not relief institutions;

(4) The excellent arrangements for the use of telephonic, telegraphic, and postal facilities by the exchanges;

(5) The preferential railway fares for men sent to a situation.[7]

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* See par. 413.

Campbell, 97172, 97200. [2] Ewart Richardson, Vol. VIII., App. lxiv. (2). Humphreys, 79408 (27); Fordham, 81258 (7). [3] Fair, 81464 (10). [4] See Beveridge—evidence *passim*. Tawney, 96674–96725 (22–32). [5] Beveridge, 77833 (5) and (6), 77875, 77880. Wilson Fox, 99129-30. [6] Beveridge, 77833 (9). [7] Beveridge, 77833 (20); *cf.* Tawney, 96750, 96847.

A National system of Labour Exchanges essential.

507. We see no reason why these features which have been so successful in Germany, should not be reproduced to a large extent in England. In view, however, of the importance in England of obtaining all statistics through these labour exchanges on a uniform basis, and in view of the desirability of keeping them absolutely impartial, untinged, so to speak, by association with the Poor Law, or by local controversies,[1] we think it essential that the system should be worked centrally by the Board of Trade, and that the organising officer or secretary in charge of the exchange should be an officer of that Department. It would, however, be essential, if the exchanges are to be a success, that the Board of Trade officer should be assisted by an advisory Committee consisting of employers, workmen, and representatives of the Municipal or Local Authorities. There is a large consensus of opinion that the actual managing body of each exchange should be a Committee constituted on some such lines.[2]

Employers' attitude to Labour Exchanges.

508. We think that a managing authority of this nature would attract the support both of the employers and of the Trade Unions. As regards the employers there is, as we have said, evidence that they have hitherto been chiefly discouraged, as at Leicester, by the fact that the labour exchanges have been concerned chiefly with the less skilled and less efficient workmen,[3] or, as in London, by the confusion of the exchanges with the Distress Committees, which are objected to by the employers as inaugurating a system of "State-created" work.[4]

509. On the other hand, there are indications that, even under the present system, the employers can be induced to use these institutions. The Chairman of the Association of Labour Exchange Superintendents considers that the number of employers who have obtained through the Metropolitan exchange satisfactory workmen is highly creditable to the superintendents, considering the paucity of means at their disposal.[5] At Newcastle we were told that the employers were using the exchanges to some extent, and that this state of affairs could be improved, if it became possible to establish a system by which employers and the representatives of labour were brought more closely together upon the management.[6]

510. The experience in Germany has been that employers have increasingly supported the labour exchanges, and the general opinion in England is that the employers are gradually becoming more favourable to the institutions by finding out that it is to their interest to use them.[7]

511. It is also obvious that, the more the Trade Unionists and the better class of workmen can be induced to use the labour exchanges, the more will the employers resort to them.

Trade Unions' attitude to Labour Exchanges.

512. As regards the attitude of the Trade Unions, although the difficulties are serious there is no reason why they should not be surmounted. The Trade Unions' hostility, such as it is, is based on several grounds;—that labour exchanges might be used for the supply of "blacklegs" in trade disputes, that no preference is given to unionists, and that they might provide labour below the standard rate of wages or conditions of employment. It is also demanded that Trade Unions using the exchange should be entitled to provide their own "vacant books" and continue their present methods except as to the place of registration. Many are jealous of any scheme which would supplant their own systems.[8]

513. It has, however, been represented to us that much, if not all, of the hostility of the Trade Unions would be removed if they could be induced to take their proper share of representation on the managing bodies of the exchange.[9]

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[1] Beveridge, 77832 (48), 77887. Campbell, 97205. Martley, 81960–1. Morris, 79110–1. Wright, 85039. Stepney, 79656–79781. Marshall, 82180. [2] Beveridge, 77924–6. Wright, 85043, 85052. Wilson Fox, 98928. Wood, 80222 (30). Casey, 86525–6. Abbott, 87194. T. Smith, 86779. Chapman, 84849. Ward, 83516. Wood, 85753. Fox, 83976. Crowther, 90833. Fordham, 81286. Dunn Gardner, 92162–3. [3] Smith, 86726 (3, 19), etc., [4] Fair, 81466 (32). [5] Fair, 81466 (9). [6] Wood, 85750, 85851. Beveridge, 77833 (S.18), 78088, 78158. Watts, 96078. Wright, 87323 (21). Fordham, 81322, 81344, 81362. Watson, 90664. [8] Beveridge, 78163. Bell, 86084 (8), 86118, 86176. Ward, 83744, 83767. Crooks, 91423. Stepney 79619 (13). Fair, 81621. Smith, 86777. Crowther, 90661. Wood, 85855. [9] Ward, 83581, 83622, 83764–8. Wm. Wood, 85753–5. F. Hughes, 85487–90.

514. We think that when the working and results of a successful system of labour exchange is explained and thoroughly understood, the Trade Unionists will be more ready to accept them, as they have done in the cases already cited. For though, as one witness has pointed out to us, there might be in theory a loss to Trade Unions when public labour exchanges are set up, since they would take away one of the reasons for joining a Union, yet the objection in many cases is quite theoretical. In most trades the action of the Union in regard to finding work is very rough and ready, and in few does it go much beyond the way of mutual information and assistance by men in the same trade who are constantly in touch with one another, and recommend one another to the foreman.[1] Trade Unions' attitude to Labour Exchanges.

515. The practical gain to Trade Unions through labour exchanges would, we are convinced, outweigh any possible loss. It is directly to the interest of the Trade Union to have the labour exchange as efficient as possible, because it is paying unemployed benefit to its members, and it wants to get them off its "vacant books" as soon as possible. Moreover, in proportion as the exchanges are efficient there should be a corresponding reduction in the cost of "travelling benefit" to the Unions.[2] In future a man will not have to travel about indefinitely in search of work: it should only be necessary for him to make one journey, direct to where the work is waiting him.

516. In Lewisham, for instance, by addresses to the Trade Unions branches and discussion of the whole question, a friendly feeling has already been induced. Three of the Trade Unions keep their books in the employment exchange, and their members usually come and sign there, instead of at a public-house as formerly.[3] Similarly at Newcastle, we are told, there has been no trouble with the Trade Unions; the superintendent has always had the absolute confidence of all the working classes in the city.[4]

517. Indeed, in Germany, though the attitude of Trade Unions has hitherto been hostile towards public labour exchanges, there are some signs that it is becoming increasingly favourable. At the present time it is common for workmen to ask for the establishment and exclusive use of a joint labour exchange, as one of the terms of an agreement terminating a dispute.[5] In one or two towns, the Trade Unions have even made over to the exchange the payment of their unemployed benefits.[6]

518. Moreover, we think that if, as will be proposed subsequently, the State contributes to the unemployed benefit paid to each Trade Unionist, the State might well make it a condition of such payment that the Trade Unionist, when out of work, should register his name and report himself to the local labour exchange, in addition (if it is so desired) to his entering his name in the vacant book of his Union. If the State supports and encourages the Trade Unions, it seems only reasonable that the Trade Unions should assist the State by supporting the national and nationally needed labour exchanges.

519. Finally, both skilled and unskilled labourers might be induced to use the exchanges to a considerable extent if Local Authorities and Government Departments engage their men only through the agency of these exchanges. As has been already shown, the support of the exchanges by public authorities has been one of the reasons for the success of the system in Germany.

520. Questions may be raised as to the cost of establishing labour exchanges. We have not taken much evidence on this subject, but such as it is, it appears to show that the cost would not be extravagant considering the benefit which they would bring. In London, we are told, the cost at present is about £9,000 a year for the hire of offices, staff, wages, postage, telephones, etc.[7] This cost could, we think, be much reduced if some arrangement could be made whereby the exchanges had the free use of telephones and postal services; a result which would naturally follow from their being branches of a Government Department. In Germany the estimated cost of filling a situation is from 4d. to 10d.[8] Mr. Webb estimated roughly that the very elaborate system of labour exchanges under his scheme (which were to be universal) would cost about £1,000,000 a year.[9] On the other hand the Association Cost of Labour Exchanges.

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[1] Beveridge, 78168. [2] Beveridge, 78169–71. Fair, 81491. [4] Wood, 85753, 85863. Beveridge, 77964. [6] Beveridge, 77833 (16). *Cf.* Tawney, 96610 (25). [7] Beveridge, 77936. [8] Beveridge, 77833 (10). [9] Sidney Webb, 93339.

of Superintendents of Metropolitan Exchanges estimated that a complete system of exchanges for the whole of Greater London would cost only about £30,000 a year.[1] If this estimate is applied to the whole of England on the basis of population, we get a much more reasonable sum. At the same time we feel bound to say that, as the principal officer in charge of each exchange must be a person able, *inter alia*, to meet employers and employing bodies on an equal footing, he must be given a recognised *status* in the community and must accordingly be somewhat highly-paid. In our opinion to attempt to keep down the cost by the appointment of any but specially qualified persons would be fatal to the scheme.

521. If, as in Wurtemburg, the rural post offices were used as branches of the exchange, the cost of establishing a complete system of exchanges would no doubt be reduced.

Labour Exchanges and Trade disputes.

522. Another question of some difficulty is the attitude which should be adopted in the case of trade disputes. The practice in Germany in regard to strikes and lock-outs is various. Sometimes the exchanges take no notice of a dispute in considering the filling up of vacancies. Sometimes they register the vacancies due to disputes and notify them to applicants, but at the same time give formal notice of the dispute to the individual applicants; in other places they suspend operations within the range of the dispute while it lasts; and in yet others the action of the labour exchanges is dependent on the verdict of a special tribunal. The second course, viz., to notify applicants when vacancies are due to trade disputes, has most approved itself in practice. As a result, such vacancies are seldom accepted by any of the men in the exchange.[2] We do not think, therefore, that this difficulty need prove insuperable in England.

National Labour Exchanges and their advantages.

523. If a national system of labour exchanges, working automatically all over the country, could be established, it should tend to ensure that the supply of labour available in all parts of the country would be, in a measure, gauged and recorded. It might be hoped that demand and supply would be brought generally and locally in touch with each other, and that the overstocking of certain trades and the difficulty of getting labour in other industries would be diminished. The present system of engaging workpeople, whether through advertisement or by taking them on at the gate, is often wasteful and ineffective. By using the exchange as a centre, the employer would obtain the men he wanted, and the men would know where they were wanted,[3] instead of having to endure, as at present, the misery of tramping after problematical work.* To this extent the exchanges would replace haphazard methods by a comprehensive system based on industrial supply and demand.

524. The need for labour in country districts could possibly be met by placing out men from the towns who had an aptitude for agricultural work.. And, in another way, the labour exchange might help to check rural depopulation by diffusing accurate information as to the actual conditions of life in large towns.[4]

525. It is hoped that labour exchanges would also

(1) Make it easier for men permanently displaced by industrial changes to pass to a new occupation.

(2) Facilitate the use of subsidiary trades by seasonal workers.

(3) Substitute for artificial tests, and inquiries the beneficial and natural test of a situation through the exchange.[5]

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* Labour Exchanges would incidentally help the tramp problem generally.

[1] Fair, Vol. VIII., App. xci. (A). [2] Beveridge, 77833 (13 and 14), 77884. [3] Fair, 81464 (21, 36), 81527. Fordham, 81332–5. Shann, 83857 (22). Wright, 85068. Ward, 83583. Owen, 86001. Hamilton and Jones, 94020. [4] Fordham, 81372. Allen, Vol. VIII., App. ii., (8.). Fair, 81464 (25). G. H. Wright, 85096–7. [5] Beveridge, 77832, (64), 78142, 78090, 78354. Tawney, 96790.

526. Of course, we recognise, as Professor Chapman has pointed out, that there is some danger that labour exchanges might lead "the operative classes to feel that responsibility to find work was shifted from their shoulders."[1] But we do not think the risk is great. It should be made incumbent on each applicant to attend each day at the exchange; and when a likely employer was found, the workman would still have to travel to the employer and satisfy him of his suitability. The responsibility for securing a place would still be the worker's; but he would be spared the aimless and often hopeless tramp after work.

527. But in two other respects the labour exchange would be of the greatest benefit. First, it would give practically accurate data and records of the amount, character, and intensity of industrial depression or unemployment.[2] It would afford the Central as well as the local authority a vantage ground from which to watch over and deal with the results of distress from want of work. For the first time facts and figures capable of proof would be in the hands of the administration, in place of the empirical returns now current. Second, the information obtained by the exchange would be of great use if widely circulated in an intelligible form to the elementary schools of the country. An intelligence bureau should be formed, acting in concert with the managers of schools, through which both parents and teachers would obtain guidance and information as to what branches of employment give the best future opening for children and what the worst. Thus warned and guided, the parent would doubtless respond and take some trouble in securing a good start for his children.[3]

528. We recommend, then, that there should be established under the Board of Trade a general system of Labour Exchanges throughout the United Kingdom; that these exchanges should be managed by officers of the Board of Trade, with the help of an advisory Committee of employers, workmen, and members of Local Authorities; that there be no compulsion to make use of these institutions, but that it should be the object of the Board of Trade and the advisory Committee by propaganda and otherwise to popularise them in every way. The exchanges should be granted free postal and telephone facilities by the State, and arrangements should be made whereby they might grant passes entitling workmen travelling to a situation to specially cheap fares from the railway companies. In suitable cases, the cost of such passes might be defrayed by the Labour Exchange and afterwards recovered from the workmen.[4] (See also paragraph 666).

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[1] Chapman, 84791 (40), Ans. viii.; *Cf.* Leech, 13770 (24); Bailward, 78704 (10), 78956; Martley, 81955–6. [2] Fair, 81464 (3–8). [3] Bray, 96383 *et seq.*; Beveridge, 78041; Urwick, 96962–97041; Gardner, 92234; Marshall, 82254–5; Gordon, evidence (*passim*). [4] *Cf.* Sidney Webb, 93030, Part ii.; Wilkinson, 81714–5; Fordham, 81258 (8); Marshall, 82182; Fox, 83975; Owen, 85981 (35–6), 85988–90; Stepney, 79658–60, 79783; Hamilton & Jones, 93611(69 *et seq.*); Hughes, 85485; G. H. Wright 85021 (9), 85038; Dunn-Gardner, 92113 (31); Campbell, 97187; Mercer, Vol. VIII., App. lii. (22); Casey, 86522; Desquesnes, Vol. VIII., App. xx. (5); Wood, Vol. VIII., App. lxxxv. (14); Hogg, Vol. VIII., App. xxxvii. (16); Chapman, 84791, Ans. viii.; Ward, 83743; Wright, 87348, &c., &c.

(b) Intermittent or Irregular Employment, and some Suggested Remedies.

529. We have referred in previous chapters to the extent to which "casual intermittent and seasonal labour" prevails in certain trades, and contributes both to pauperism and unemployment. We have also indicated that a sufficiency of normal employment may be, and in some cases undoubtedly is, obtained from what are casual trades. Instances are the "preference men" at the London docks, and the better class of dock labourers referred to by Mr. Nelson;[1] while, in connection with women, the point is well illustrated by our Special Investigator Mr. Jones, who says :—

> "Where the employer fails to organise his factory so as to give regular work, the task of dovetailing employments is thrown on the dismissed worker. The more energetic women do this with astonishing success, and fill in the year, with few gaps, between the jam and ginger beer factories, laundries and rag stores, with the addition of indefinite charing and mending. The baby will be out at a subsidised crèche or in charge of a subsidised grandmother. The same person at different times may be found at matchbox-making, hopping, step-cleaning and hawking. We found a tailoress working at book-folding, a jam girl at screws, and a machinist giving pianoforte lessons at 1s. an hour."*[2]

530. In a different category of intermittent occupations, viz., the seasonal trades, cases have also been cited where a sufficiency of employment is obtained by persons who are, *e.g.*, gas-workers in the winter and bricklayers in the summer.[3] Moreover, in many parts of Ireland, as is well known, the inhabitants are able to gain a livelihood only by the possibility of combining several kinds of seasonal employment. The Memorandum furnished us by the Board of Trade as to seasonal and casual labour also shows that, in point of fact, it would be theoretically easy in many cases to combine or "dovetail in" one or two kinds of seasonal labour so as to afford ample occupation throughout the year.[4]

531. We have drawn special attention to these instances because we do not wish it to be assumed that, by our previous or future comments on casual or intermittent labour, we intend to imply that all casual or intermittent trades can or should be abolished. It is obvious that, however much industry and trades are regularised, there must always be a certain amount of periodicity in the demand for certain kinds of work. All, therefore, that can be hoped for is to endeavour so to reduce the number of persons dependent on intermittent trades that, in normal years, the totality of work which these trades in the aggregate provide shall supply the workers in them with a sufficiency of maintenance throughout the year. Our object must be, not so much to abolish the casual trades as to diminish the surplus of labour in them.

532. We have more than once before in the Report referred to the cumulative evils of intermittent employment, but these evils are so grave that we make no apology for referring to them again.

533. As Mr. Sidney Webb has pointed out to us, the mass of casual labourers "intensifies the evil of unemployment and renders nugatory all kinds of relief-works."[5] It intensifies the evil, because reliance by individual employers on casual labour creates little crowds of surplus labour at each dock gate or round each builder's foreman. Moreover, so long as there exists this huge army of labourers who are never regularly employed, every attempt to provide for the comparatively few skilled workmen displaced by machinery or other causes is doomed to failure. The practically inexhaustible flood of casual labourers flows in and swamps the register and the relief-works; and apparently these stagnant pools of casual labour are getting larger and still more casual.[6]

534. The remedies for intermittent employment may be divided into two classes :—

First, those which aim at diminishing the sources from which the intermittent labourer is recruited;

Second, those which aim at decreasing and contracting the existing practice of intermittent employment.

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* Other instances of combinations of casual trades (though to an insufficient extent to ensure maintenance), are given in Pringle's second Appendix to Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 35–37.

[1] Nelson, Vol. VIII., App. lix. [2] Final Report, Part II., p. 30 [3] Livesey, 83222. [4] Board of Trade Memo.: Vol. IX., App. xxi. D. [5] Sidney Webb, 93030, Vol. IX., Part II. of statement [6] Sidney Webb, *ibid.*

535. Apart from special local causes, there is a consensus of opinion that the intermittent labour market is recruited from the following classes :—

(1) Those who like intermittent employment, or follow it because their forefathers did.

(2) The "failures and breakages" who have fallen out of better and more regular employment into the ranks of casual labour. Some of these have failed from their own faults, others by possibly a hard combination of mischances.

(3) The agricultural labourer attracted by the high wage per hour.[1]

536. These classes in themselves constitute a large numerical aggregation ; but in late years the casual market has been largely and increasingly recruited by boys barely adolescent, who have been cast off by the "blind alley" occupations which they entered upon leaving school, Boy-labour.

537. A great many boys when they leave school drift into occupations which are not very strict in their regulations, and though relatively well paid, not likely to lead to permanent work. Many parents do not look sufficiently far forward to take into account what will happen to their children when they are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. They look at the occupation mainly from the point of view of the wage immediately obtainable.[2] In this way a great number of lads are allowed to start as errand boys with grocers and small tradespeople, or as street-traders, newspaper boys, and van boys, or as telegraph boys, numbers of whom are thrown out by the Post Office* every year at the age of sixteen.[3]

538. The parents are generally ignorant as to the best ultimate occupations in which to place their boys, but this ignorance is, on the whole, the not unnatural consequence of the industrial complexities and changes by which they are faced. The desire of the boys to earn a high wage quickly is a contributory cause.[4]

539. On this point, Professor Sadler observes that the fact that it is easy for boys in big towns, on leaving school, to get uneducative temporary employment, results in their having during adolescence a relatively large amount of pocket-money. This makes them largely independent of home control, and also accustoms them to a certain standard of personal expenditure which it is difficult to maintain later. Many of these boys, too, lose the habit of learning ; they become very quick, but they lose the habit of steady application.[5]

540. But, in addition to all this "blind-alley" labour of boys in the streets as messengers and errand boys and van boys, there are factories[6] in which lads are taken on largely as "process workers," "put to machinery, and, while becoming expert in one operation, learn nothing of the fundamental principles of the trades in which they are engaged.[7]"

541. The results of this large employment of boys in occupations, which offer no opportunity of promotion to employment as men, are disastrous. The boy, thrown out at sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, or twenty years of age, drifts naturally, as the witnesses testify, into the low-skilled labour market, or the army of unemployables.[8] There is, the Bishop of Stepney says, a continual influx of unskilled boys ready to do casual work at almost any wage,[9] boys often demoralised and physically enfeebled by their two or three years in the streets, or on vans, and so forth.[10]

542. Still more disastrous, another witness holds, are the factory occupations in their effect on the boys' after-careers, for the boys stay in them till they are eighteen or twenty, and then find that they are too old to get any permanent occupation elsewhere.[11]

543. Our Special Investigator, Mr. Jackson, informs us that :—

> "The evidence seems conclusive that in the 'woollen' centres the bulk of the boys have to leave the mills between sixteen and twenty for some other work, and though the regular hours and work of a mill have probably been a better training than the casual work of an errand boy, it is still the case that they are thrown on to the unskilled labour market without any special aptitudes."[12]

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[1] Casey, 86466 (25) ; Rouse, Vol. VIII., App. lxviii. (13–17) ; Rathbone, 83288–90, 83377–80, 83475–6 Humphreys, 89424 ; Stepney, 79699–703 ; T. Fox, 83954–6 ; Heale, 69089–95, 69105 ; Sexton, 84137–9, 84189 ; Booth, Vol. VIII., App. viii [3] ; Manton, 43626 (6) ; Rogers, 43502 ; Nelson, Vol. VIII., App. lix. (1) ; Jones, 49743 ; T. Smith, 86771 ; Bell, 86112–5, &c., &c. [2] Casey, 86466 (2) ; 86481–6. Campbell, 97153 (13) ; Gordon, 97300 (15). [3] Wilkinson, 81668 (4). [4] Urwick, 96921 (4). [5] Sadler, 93386 (3) ; 93458–9. [6] Russell, Vol. VIII., App. lxx. (3) ; Urwick, 97070 ; Bray, 96397. [7] T. Smith, 86725 (12) ; 86739–41. [8] R. H. Tawney, 96610 (2–7) ; Sidney Webb, 93030, Ans. vii. ; Barrow, Vol. VIII., App. vi. (2) ; Twomey, Vol. VIII., App. lxxx (16) ; T. Smith, 86725 (12). [9] Stepney, 79637–40. [10] Tawney, 96631, 96647, 96843, (19.) [11] R. H. Tawney, 96628. [12] Jackson's Report on Boy Labour, p. 30.

* See however the Memorandum by the Post-master General on this subject attached to Mr. Jackson's Report on Boy Labour.

Boy Labour.

544. Professor Sadler mentions, as an illustration of the "economic results of uneducative boy-labour," that nearly one out of every three qualified applicants for assistance from the Distress Committees in 1905–6 and 1906–7 were reported to be under thirty years of age.[1]

545. The whole question of boy labour has been ably and exhaustively examined by Mr. Jackson, to whose Report on the subject we may refer for further details. From amongst his conclusions we may, however, quote the following:—

> "The evidence as to the difficulty boys find in getting into permanent work of a satisfactory kind seems overwhelming. Every enquirer gives the same impression. In his latest book Professor Sadler writes: 'It has never been so easy for a boy of thirteen or fourteen to find some kind of virtually unskilled work involving long hours of deteriorating routine. . . . The work lasts for a few years and then leaves the lad at the very time when he begins to want a man's subsistence out of line for skilled employment. . . . Certain forms of industry which make large use of boys and girls who have recently left the elementary schools are parasitic in character and get more than they ought of the physical and moral capital of the rising generation. . . . In this matter great Government Departments are to blame.'"[2]

546. It is in connection with these boys that a School Committee working in connection with the labour exchange would be so beneficial. In place of the haphazard and thoughtless manner in which boys plunge into any occupation which takes their fancy, they would have put before them, in a way they would not misunderstand, the consequences of such thoughtless acts. They would have, at perhaps the most critical period of their existence, a trained adviser to whom they could go for advice,[3]: the direction of their wishes would be changed and the one false step early in life, which has been the subsequent ruin of so many of the rising generation, would be averted.

547. We may be optimistic, but we attach great importance to the establishment of such an organisation which would combine parent, child, teacher, and industrial expert for the ultimate good of the child's career.

548. Such being the recruiting ground of casuality, we have now to consider how we can diminish its area. As regards the casuals by inclination, Class (1) (Par. 535), everything reasonably possible must be done to increase the inducements to regular work and we can only hope that in course of time the attraction of casuality will be neutralised as its evil becomes more self-evident. As regards Class (2), the decadents from better trades, so far as the loss of regular employment is due to faults in the workman, it is, perhaps, inevitable that he should continue to pay the penalty of his defects. But as regards men who have lost regular work through no fault of their own, we are confident that the institution of labour exchanges will give such men a better chance than heretofore of regaining regular employment. As to Class (3)—the countryman attracted by deceptive ideas of the wages obtainable in towns—we are hopeful that the labour exchanges will act as centres for disseminating information which will at least warn him that the larger wage will be associated with inconvenience and charges unknown in the country.

549. The question of instituting some control over boys, beyond the now recognised school age, so as to check their entrance into occupations which are deleterious, is very difficult. The rights of parents, the interests of employers and of the juvenile employees are all affected by any such restriction. We regard, however, with favour the following suggestions of Mr. Jackson:—

(1) That boys should be kept at school until the age of fifteen instead of fourteen;*

(2) That exemption below this age should only be granted for boys leaving to learn a skilled trade; and

(3) That there should be school supervision till sixteen and replacement in school of boys not properly employed.[4]

550. A large number of witnesses have also suggested as remedies compulsory continuation schools, an extension of the half-time system to all persons below the age

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* Note that the raising the age to fifteen was one of the remedies proposed for unemployment at the Trade Union Congress.

[1] Sadler, 93386, St. 7–10, 93459–61. *Cf.* Jackson and Pringle's Report on Unemployment, pp. 49–50 and App., p. 45. [2] Jackson's Report on Boy Labour, p. 27. [3] Gordon, 97300 (20 *et sq.*). [4] Jackson's Report on Boy Labour, p. 30.

of eighteen, etc., etc.[1] We understand that a special inquiry has been undertaken into these subjects by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education, and that they are of the opinion that proposals of this character would meet with general public approval.[2] We ourselves believe that there is an urgent need of improved, facilities for technical education during the period between the present age for leaving school and the age of eighteen or twenty.

Defects in public elementary education.

551. But there is little use in keeping boys at school if the education which they receive there is not suitable, and a considerable amount of evidence has been submitted to us to the effect that the present system of elementary education is not adapted to the wants of an industrial community. As long ago as 1887, the Mansion House Committee of that date reported :—

> "It is remarkable that out of the 394 men (111 were between the ages of 20 and 30), scarcely one of whom could hope to improve his social position if opportunity offered owing to the persistent neglect of education by parent or child or both. So far, the administration of the Education Acts has not, it is clear, given the people what they require as members of a great industrial community."

552. Similarly, Mr. Jackson reports to us :—

> "It must not, however, be supposed that the present education given in the schools is all that can be desired. There is a wide-spread feeling that it is too academic and must be made more practical. In any case it must aim at developing character and intelligence rather than merely imparting book knowledge."[3]

553. This opinion has been corroborated by many witnesses who have appeared before us. There is a consensus of feeling, in which we ourselves concur, that the present education is too literary and diffuse in its character,[4] and should be more practical.[5] It should be more combined than at present with manual training.[6] It is not in the interests of the country to produce by our system of education a dislike of manual work and a taste for clerical and for intermittent work, when the vast majority of those so educated must maintain themselves by manual labour. If school training is to be an adaptation of the child to its future life and occupation, some revision of the present curriculum of public elementary schools seems necessary, and to this necessity we will revert in a subsequent chapter of our Report.

Decline of home influence.

554. But the mere extension of the school age, or of the period during which the boy is under control, will of itself be insufficient unless, during that period, the training and influence brought to bear upon the boy is a good preparation for facing and overcoming his future difficulties. We have been told in evidence, and the statements are confirmed by our own individual experience, that there is a lack of self-discipline, both moral and physical, amongst the rising generation which in no small degree contributes to its subsequent decline.[7] Since the establishment of universal compulsory education, home influences, especially during the latter years of school life, are no longer what they were.[8] In some cases this may be beneficial, but, when the school life and its influences are over, the weakened home influence is often ineffective and insufficient to restrain the boy from bad habits, undesirable companions, and occupations which lead to nothing.

Need of physical training.

555. An investigation into the causes of pauperism and unemployment makes it manifest how largely moral defects contribute to these evils. They produce such a softness of fibre and physique as to make the burden and continuity of prolonged labour unsupportable, especially if the work be of a strenuous kind. Some form of continuous physical training is an excellent antidote for such weakness, and we consider it very necessary that a continuous system of physical drill should be instituted, which might commence during school life, as now, and be continued afterwards.

556. There are some of us who believe that the simplest and most effective method of improving the physique and morale of adolescent youth would be to establish universal military training for all at a certain age. Many of the problems which now confront us are due, in a measure, to a lack of early training. The labouring community requires for its elevation intelligence, a combination of discipline and of knowledge of how best to husband and utilise its muscular strength. All these qualities are developed by a course of regularised and intelligent physical exercises, performed in co-operation and unison and under authority, with a knowledge that the experience and improvement thus gained will, in normal times, be beneficial to the performer and, in abnormal times, be of use to the country. Moreover, the physique of all those in training would be improved

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[1] T. Richardson, 91276–84. Sidney Webb, 93051, 93188, 93348. Sadler, 93386 (11). J. Richardson, 94039, (vii), 94063–9. Bray, 96218 (9). Tawney, 96653–5, 96610 (16). Urwick, 96947–9. Park, 89615 (18). Anderson, 89923, Matheson, Vol VIII., App. I. (6). Leech, 83770 (10). [2] *See* Acland, 93358 *et seq.*
[3] Report on Boy Labour, p. 30. [4] Hobson, 88367 (8). Humphreys, 79429. [5] Stepney, 79680. Barnes, 82778 [6] Sadler, 93468–9. Urwick, 96956. Acland 93364–5. Humphreys, 79571.
[7] Tawney, 96647. [8] Bray, 96431.

at a critical period of life by good and regular meals. Those of us who support this idea do so not for the purpose of improving our military organisation—a question which is quite outside our reference—but because we believe that such a proposal would be both physically and industrially beneficial to the whole population.

Proposals for discouraging intermittent employment

557. But, to curtail the future sources of supply of the intermittent labour market by more careful guidance of the young, will not be sufficient. We have to deal with the mass of intermittent labourers which already exists. What their numbers are we cannot tell, and shall not be able to do so until our labour exchanges are formed, but that they exist in very large numbers there is no doubt. We must, therefore, do all that we can to make intermittent labour less the resort of both workmen and employers.

558. As regards the workmen, this can probably be best done by increasing in every possible way the advantages of regular as against irregular employment.

559. As regards the employers, two proposals for the regularisation of work have been made to us which assume somewhat opposite and antagonistic forms. On the one hand, it is urged that employers should regularise their work by spreading it more evenly over the year, and in this way employ more men regularly and fewer men casually.[1] On the other hand, it is urged that public authorities and the State should, in their capacity as employers, deliberately reserve a certain volume of their work, and throw it upon the labour market at such times as the ordinary demand is slack.[2] Such action, it is urged, would tend to regularise the total demand for labour. Thus, the first proposition is that employers should spread their work evenly over the year, and the second that a certain section of employers should deliberately not spread it evenly over the year.

560. We are of the opinion that both of these principles may, to a certain extent and with certain limitations, be adopted.

Regularisation of employment.

561. Dealing first with the proposal to spread work more evenly over the year, it is obviously desirable that, in so far as it can be foreseen that a certain amount of work will regularly need to be performed each year, that work should, in the interests of the men and of the employers, be done by regular and not by casual employees. From the evidence which has been accumulated by our Special Investigators, Messrs. Jackson and Pringle[3] it is clear that the Local Authorities, and also some of the Government Departments, have not always given due weight to this principle. We believe, however, that both the Local Authorities and the Government Departments are now alive to the evil of employing a needless amount of intermittent labour and are endeavouring to employ as many regular hands as possible. We think this tendency should be strengthened by means of special communications addressed both to Government Departments and Local Authorities.

562. With regard to private employers, it may doubtless be urged that a large reserve of labour is really essential to them; that if they have not such large reserve available it will be impossible for them in the face of competition to accept new contracts suddenly advertised; that such contracts will go elsewhere—possibly abroad—and will carry with them, as is too often the case, other orders. The result would be that the general volume of trade undertaken and employment offered by them would decrease.

563. We recognise, further, to the full, the difficulty there may be in certain occupations, such particularly as the docks, both on the part of the men and on the part of the employers, in inducing them to regularise industry. We think, therefore, that the Board of Trade should send officers to visit localities where intermittent employment prevails, and should endeavour, through conference with employers and employed, to arrange for some schemes by which the industry may be to a greater extent regularised. A provision in this sense has, we understand, been inserted in the Port of London Act for establishing a London Port Authority.[4]

564. One method of discouraging casual labour would be the imposition of what we might call an "employment termination due." That is to say that, to the termination of an engagement either by the master or by the man should be attached a small payment, both by the master and the man, in the nature of a fine or stamp duty to the State. The tax or "employment termination due" could be very easily levied by means of stamps placed upon a "termination of employment" form which it might be made incumbent upon every workman to produce to the labour exchange upon registration. It is urged that the advantages of this system, if it could be adopted, would be threefold. In the first place, it would discourage the so-to-speak wanton termination of employment either by the employer or the employee. In the second place, it would discourage also the em-

[1] Barnes, 82764 (3 (a) (b)). [2] Maynard, 8372–(54, (i.)). [3] Jackson and Pringle's Report on Unemployment, p. 116 *et seq.* [4] 8. Edw. VII. c. 68, sec. 28.

ployment of casual labour, inasmuch as, the more casual the labour employed in a concern the greater would be the amount of "employment termination due" which would have to be paid. And, thirdly, to the extent to which it did not deter either of these practices, it would afford a source of revenue which might be devoted to defraying the cost of one or other of the proposals which we shall make.

565. Another method of compulsion which has been proposed is that the employers should be bound to employ all their casual labour through the labour exchanges.[1] We doubt the wisdom or practicability of such a proposal. If casual employment could be obtained only through what would in effect be a Government office, the tendency would be to shift on to the office the responsibility of providing casual work for all who applied. On the whole, we do not think that the time has yet come for any compulsory measures.

566. Turning now to the second proposal for the regularisation of work, viz., the reservation by local authorities and public bodies of certain work which it is proposed should be put upon the open market in slack times, this proposal must be scrutinised with some care. To the extent to which it suggests that public authorities should not regularise their work, but should deliberately casualise it for the benefit of the intermittent labourer, we think that the proposal is pernicious. It is probable, however, that it may not always be possible for public authorities to perform their work entirely and regularly throughout the year by means of their ordinary workmen. In addition to the normal work of such authorities there will generally be some special work, in some years more, in some years less in amount, the undertaking of which is imposed upon them by their necessities. So far as it may be inevitable to employ occasionally other than their own regular workers, or to place contracts, we think that it may be desirable for public authorities to arrange such irregular work so that, if possible, it comes upon the labour market at a time when ordinary regular work is slack. This point has been well put by Professor Chapman, who suggests that, so far as the public authorities' demand for labour fluctuates, it is desirable to liberate such demand from the influences of good and bad trade and seasonality, and then deliberately to attempt to make it vary inversely with the demand in the open market.*[2]

567. A policy of this kind might help to some extent to steady the fluctuations in the demand for intermittent labour. Such demand cannot, as we have seen, be abolished. The object must therefore be so to spread out the total demand for intermittent labour that it shall, as far as possible, provide a regular sufficiency of employment for the residuum of workers engaged in it.

Remedies and suggestions.

568. To sum up, the following are the measures which we propose with a view of diminishing intermittent employment :—

I. Measures tending to decrease the future supply of intermittent labourers.

(1) Labour Exchanges. (Par. 548).

(2) Diversion of boys from occupations certain to result in casuality.

(3) Increased facilities for the compulsory technical education and physical training of the young.

(4) Our general scheme of assistance for distress due to unemployment.

II. Measures tending to discourage resort to intermittent labour by workmen and employers.

(1) The Board of Trade to endeavour by local inquiry to arrange schemes for progressive decasualisation of trades in localities specially affected by intermittent labour ;

(2) Public authorities to be enjoined—

(*a*) To regularise their work as much as possible ;

(*b*) To endeavour, as far as possible, to undertake their irregular work when the general demand for labour is slack.

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* In this connection we asked the War Office whether it would be feasible to carry out the annual training of the Militia during the winter instead of during the summer months. The Army Council were decidedly unfavourable to such a proposal, on military, administrative and general grounds. They pointed out, however, that the Militia Service was on the eve of re-organisation, and that, among other changes, the period of annual training would be shortened. They also indicated that in future "It is probable that all recruits will be trained on enlistment for six months, and they will be able to do this during the winter." (Vol. IX., Minutes of Evidence, App. No. lxxxvii).

These changes have now been given effect to, and we are glad to observe that the winter training of the Special Reservists on enlistment is claimed by your Majesty's Government as forming "a very substantial addition to the provision made for the unemployed." (Speech by Prime Minister on the measures proposed by the Government for alleviating the distress due to unemployment in the winter of 1908–9.—Hansard, Vol. CXCIV., 1908, page 1169.)

[1] Sidney Webb, 93074-5 ; Tawney, 96726-8 ; Watts, 96120 ; Beveridge, 78210-2, 78248. [2] Chapman, 84791 (36).

(c) Insurance against Unemployment.

569. A study of modern industrial conditions proves that unemployment is often due to influences for which the workmen is not responsible. Whether it be from general cyclical depressions of trade, or from fluctuations of the demand in particular trades, or from the effect of machinery, or from special inclemencies of weather, it has long been recognised that every workman, however regularly employed, incurs a risk, uncertain in imminence and indefinite in extent, of being thrown out of employment through causes beyond his control. It is this recognition of unemployment as a normal risk of industrial life which has led to the various attempts of so-called insurance against unemployment. The Board of Trade, in their Memorandum on the subject, have pointed out that insurance in a technical and commercial sense is not feasible, or at any rate has never been attempted, in the case of unemployment.[1]

Trade Union Unemployed Benefit.

570. Practically the only form in which insurance against unemployment has been attempted in England is by means of Trade Union unemployed benefit.[2] It is true that the Friendly Societies give a considerable amount of travelling benefit, and also charitable grants to their members which occasionally are used for the relief of unemployment not due to sickness. Such grants are, however, incidental and uncertain, and are not claimed as a matter of right.[3] We believe that the Trade Unions afford the only English instance of a body of men co-operatively insuring themselves against the risks of unemployment by means of paying in contributions ensuring the receipt of specific allowances for a limited period of unemployment. The extent to which the Trade Unions have expended their funds in mitigating or preventing distress due to this cause is no doubt very great.[4]

571. The Board of Trade have pointed out that the hundred principal Trade Unions alone paid in unemployed benefits in a single year, when distress was very great, a sum of over £650,000, which was :—

> "Sufficient to pay 36,000 workpeople or nearly 4 per cent. of the total membership of the unions paying the benefit, a weekly sum of 7s. each during the entire year. The number relieved was, of course, very much greater than 36,000, as few, if any, of the workpeople would be out of employment for a year, and fewer still would receive the benefit for that period. The number of dependants on those assisted must also be taken into account when any estimate is made of the importance of this benefit with reference to the relief of distress."[5]

572. This scheme of insurance, however, benefits only a comparatively small proportion of the total number of workmen. There are, roughly, 1,500,000 Trade Unionists entitled to unemployed benefit.[5] But if we consider that there are in England and Wales some 8,000,000 adult males between the ages of twenty and sixty, it is clear that the Trade Unionist insurance scheme covers only a very limited portion of the ground. Moreover, it is chiefly the highly-skilled and therefore most highly-paid workmen who are thus insured, for in most cases the Trade Unions of unskilled workmen give no unemployed benefit.[6]

Foreign methods of insurance against unemployment.

573. When we look abroad, we find that a considerable number of experiments have been made in insurance or *quasi*-insurance against unemployment. A full account of the various systems adopted and of their results will be found in the Board of Trade Memorandum to which we have before referred.[7]

But, in order to render our subsequent remarks on this difficult subject more clear, we here reproduce the following outlines of some of the typical foreign systems of so-called insurance against unemployment :—

(a) *Cologne : Direct Voluntary Insurance.*

> "The 'City of Cologne Unemployed Insurance Fund' was founded in 1896 in pursuance of a resolution of the town council in 1894. Ultimate control rests with the general meeting of patrons, subscribers and representatives of the insured, held annually between April 1st and July 1st. The Executive Committee consists of twelve representatives of the insured and twelve honorary members (subscribers) elected at the general meeting. In addition, the *Oberburgermeister* or his representative and the President of the labour exchange are *ex officio* members of the Executive and of the general meeting. There is also a committee of the insured to deal with details of administration, *e.g.*, the decision of doubtful claims. Insurance is voluntary, against winter unemployment only, and confined to males of eighteen and over, resident in Cologne

[1] Board of Trade Memo., Vol. IX., App. xxi. (k). [2] Abbott, 42353. [3] Abbott, 42352 ; Blossom, 43094–5 ; Marlow, 77256 (2 *et seq.*) 77262 ; Stead, 77468 (19) ; Bunn, 77642 (7), 77653–5 ; Hudson, 47458–63 [4] Brabrook, 35147 (14), 35273–5 ; Conolly, 99146 (7). [5] Memorandum by Board of Trade on Growth of Trade Unions, Vol. IX., App. xxi (c). [6] Bell, (1), 86143, Barnes, 82868–70 ; Wallis, 77141–8 ; Kelly, Vol. VIII., App. lxv. (4) ; Harris, Vol. VIII., App. xxxv. (3). [7] Memorandum by Board of Trade, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (k).

for at least a year. Persons without a recognised occupation and casual labourers (*Gelegensheitarbeiter*) are excluded. Insurance is for each winter separately, the business year running from April 1st, and contribution extending over thirty-four weeks.

"The contributions (premiums) to be paid by the insured are, in the case of unskilled men, 4¼d. weekly for thirty-four weeks, making a total of 12s. 0½d.; in the case of skilled men 5½d. a week for thirty four weeks, making a total of 15s. 7d. Proposals for insurance have to be made by the first Sunday of June in each year, with payment of contributions reckoning always from April 1st. A workman four weeks in arrears with his contributions forfeits all claim upon the fund.

"The contributions were originally fixed at 3d. a week for all classes, and have been successively raised in 1901, 1903, and 1905, to their present point.

"The benefits offered by the fund are 2s. a day for the first twenty days, and 1s. a day for a further twenty-eight days of unemployment not due to personal fault between December 1st and March 1st, making a maximum of £3 8s. No allowance is paid for the first three days (including Sundays) after the insured person first notifies himself as unemployed (the 'waiting time'). Men claiming or receiving an allowance must report themselves twice daily at the office of the fund (which is also the office or next to the office of the municipal labour exchange) and are bound, under penalty of forfeiting all claim on the fund to accept any employment offered them there, provided it corresponds fairly with their occupation and their usual earnings, and provided that it is not employment vacated through a trade dispute. No payments are made in respect of Sundays and holidays. Persons who during each of two successive winters have drawn three-quarters or more of the maximum may, in the third winter, draw only £2 14s., viz., 2s. a day for the first twenty days, and 1s. a day for a furthed fourteen days. This rule is (apparently) a new one introduced in 1905, since it is not mentioned in the annual reports before then. Thirty-six persons fell under it in 1905–6, and twenty-two in 1906–7.

"The annual income of the fund is derived from the following sources:—

"(1) Weekly contributions of insured amounting in 1906–7 to £860, or 37 per cent. of total income.

"(2) Grant from municipality (since 1902–3) amounting in 1906–7 to £1,000, or 43 per cent. of the total income.

"(3) Voluntary subscriptions amounting in 1906–7 to £128, or 5½ per cent. of the total income. This item has shown a steady decrease since the first year of the fund, both actually and in relation to other items.

"(4) Interest of £318, or 14 per cent. of the total income, on capital accumulated mainly at the start, and now amounting to over £6,900.

"The solvency of the fund is guaranteed by a rule forbidding the entering into any new insurance contracts so soon as the maximum possible claims on those already made amount to two-thirds of the whole fund. This rule had to be put in operation in the years of depression 1901–2 and 1902–3."[1]

(b) *St. Gall.—Direct Compulsory Insurance.*

"On May 19th, 1894, the Great Council of the Canton St. Gall passed a law empowering local authorities either singly or in combination to introduce compulsory insurance against unemployment. The main provisions of this law are as follows:—

"Membership of the Insurance Fund established in any district was to be obligatory upon all men working for wages in the district, unless either their average daily earnings exceeded 4s. a day or they were already members of an association affording unemployed benefits at least equal to those of the Fund. Men with earnings above 4s. might join voluntarily. Either the obligation or the right of membership might be extended to women by the local authority, which might make further regulations as to the Fund subject to the following conditions:—(1) The Fund to be managed by a committee of not less than five containing adequate representation of the insured members.

"(2) The weekly contributions payable by the members not to exceed 3d.

"(3) Unemployed allowances to be paid only to able-bodied persons who had lost work otherwise than through their own fault; to whom employment in their own trade, suited to their capacities and at the current rate of wages could not be offered; and who had paid contributions continuously for at least six months or (in the case of a foreigner) such period not less than six months, as might befixed by the local authority.

"(4) The unemployed allowance not to be less than 9½d. a day, nor to last for more than sixty working days in a year, nor to be payable in respect of the first unemployment within three months unless this lasted at least five days.

"(5) Every Insurance Fund to be connected with at least one Labour Exchange.

"The expenditure of the Fund to be met out of:—

"(*a*) the regular contributions of the insured members.

"(*b*) donations, legacies, etc.

"(*c*) grants by local authorities up to 1s. 7d. per member per year in addition to costs of administration.

"(*d*) grants by the Cantonal Government.

"(*e*) grants, if made, by the Federal Government.

"Workmen under obligation to be insured but failing to pay their contributions might on proof of their ability to pay be fined up to £1 or imprisoned in default up to five days. The Cantonal Government was also empowered to make grants in aid of voluntary associations providing unemployed benefit to their members.

"After proposals for joint action between the three neighbouring districts of St. Gall, Tablat and Straubenzell had fallen through, the law was put in force by the municipality of St. Gall alone. A Fund for compulsory insurance was established there and commenced operations on July 1st, 1895. The following regulations were adopted :—

"The committee of the fund consisted of nine persons, two being members of the municipal council and seven insured members of the fund, of whom four were appointed by the Labour Federation from amongst trade unionists, and three were non-union, one being appointed by Labour Federation and two by the municipal council, with special regard to otherwise unrepresented occupations. The detailed administration, *e.g.*, registration of the insured, collection of contributions, calculation and payment of allowances was undertaken free of cost by the municipality, and was in fact carried out by the chief of the Poor Law department.

"Apprentices and minors earning less than 1s. 7d. daily were excluded from the insurance fund. For the purposes of weekly contributions and allowances the members of the fund were divided into three classes, according to their own statements of their wages, as follows :—

Average Daily Earnings.	Contribution. Weekly	Unemployed Allowances per day.
2s. 4¾d. or less - - - - - - -	1½d.	1s. 5½d.
Over 2s. 4¾d. up to 3s. 2½d. - - - - - -	2d.	1s. 8½d.
Over 3s. 2½d. up to 4s. - - - - - -	3d.	1s. 11d.

"No member could claim allowance for more than sixty days in a year, nor till he had been a member for six months (in the case of foreigners, twelve months). Contributions were to be paid by the purchase and insertion of special stamps in books provided for the purpose, and were to be excused during the time when an unemployed allowance was actually being received, as well as during sickness or incapacity due to an accident for which no compensation was payable. The claim to an allowance was to be forfeited if the member had become unemployed exclusively through his own gross fault, had ceased work through a strike or refused, without sufficient ground, employment offered him. At times of depression the committee were empowered to reduce the payments to single men, and if, notwithstanding this and the receipt of full subventions from the Municipality and Canton, the Fund proved insufficient, they might reduce the allowances in the higher classes and at need in all classes. The fund was to come to an end after two years unless renewed by resolution of the Municipal Council.

(c) *Strassburg : Municipal Subvention to Trade Unions.*

"In Strassburg the 'Ghent system' of municipal subventions in aid of allowances paid to their unemployed members by industrial organisations has been in force since the beginning of 1907. The main features of the scheme as set out in the resolution starting it are as follows :—

"(1) The municipal subvention is paid only to persons in receipt of an unemployed allowance from a trade organisation of employees to which they belong, is to be 50 per cent. of the amount of such allowance at any time and is not to exceed 1s. per day. It paid in respect of unemployment resulting or continuing as a consequence of strikes, lock-outs, sickness, accident, etc., or to persons who have been less than a year resident in Strassburg.

"(2) The subvention is paid through the organisation (trade union), *i.e.*, the union pays in advance to the unemployed workman and recovers from the municipality.

"(3) The subvention is conditional upon daily appearance at the Municipal Labour Exchange, and ceases so soon as suitable work can be offered to the applicant in his trade.

"(4) Disputes are referred to a committee chosen from the Labour Exchange Committee.

"(5) Trade organisations desiring the benefits of the subvention have to submit a copy of their statutes and the rules governing their unemployed benefit funds, and have to keep these distinct from funds for other purposes.

"No provision is made for men not belonging to any trade union. From the report of the Reference Committee, upon whose recommendation the scheme was adopted, it appears to have been generally admitted that the scheme would not touch either the great mass of unskilled men or the building operatives—for whom, therefore, annual relief works are contemplated."

Members of Trade Unions insured under the scheme are obliged, when unemployed, to have their cards stamped at the labour exchange, once, twice, and in some cases, three times a day, in order to prevent fraud. They are not expected to take relief work, but they must accept a

situation at their own trade when offered by the labour exchange. It is evident that such a scheme of supplementing Trades Unions' unemployed benefit would be unworkable without the labour exchange. As to whether the subvention is the best possible device for the prevention of skilled workmen becoming otherwise more dependent upon public assistance is a matter of serious consideration.

(d) *France: State Subvention to Trade Unions and other Associations.*

In April, 1905, the French Government set aside in their Budget for the ensuing financial year £4,400 to subsidise the funds of societies assisting their members during unemployment. The conditions of participation in this subsidy were subsequently announced by Presidential Decree (September 9, 1905).

"The classes of funds eligible for participation are:—

"(1) Those whose membership amounts to at least 100 engaged in the same or kindred occupations.

"(2) Local funds with a membership of at least fifty engaged in the same or kindred occupations, provided these are already subsidised by the communal authority concerned. *Amended Dec. 31st, 1906. (See below.)*

"(3) In communes of less than 20,000 inhabitants (*amended Dec. 31st, 1906. See below*) funds with a membership of at least fifty, whether engaged in kindred occupations or not, provided that these are already subsidised by the communal authority.

"(4) Funds organised by a federation of societies for the purpose of paying travelling benefit and supported by lump sum contributions of the federated societies provided the resources of those societies are themselves derived from the contributions of individual members.

"The conditions of participation are:—

"(1) The fund must have been in operation at least six months, must have an organised system of gratuitously assisting its members to find employment, and must furnish a copy of its bye-laws and rules to the Ministry of Commerce.

"(2) These bye-laws and rules must include the following (amongst other) provisions: that a member may belong to one fund only for each kind of benefit; that no member shall have the right to benefit till he has belonged to the fund for at least six months; that every unemployed member shall sign a register at the office of the fund at least three times a week during working hours, and shall accept such work in his own trade as may be found for him by the fund.

"The extent of participation is not to exceed 16 per cent. of the total benefit paid by the fund in accordance with its rules during the half-year; but in the case of funds operating in at least three different departments and having a paying membership of at least 1,000 this maximum may be increased by one-half, *i.e.*, to 24 per cent."

574. For the purposes of criticism we may divide the foreign methods of insurance into two classes:—

(1) Methods which involve separate schemes of insurance with separate funds and separate organisations for separate trade-groups*;

(2) Methods for the insurance in one fund of all classes of workmen as workmen and not as members of particular trade-groups.

The first of these methods we shall refer to as "Trade-Group Insurance" and the second as "General Insurance."

General Insurance.

575. The great difficulty in regard to any scheme of General Insurance against unemployment is the tendency of any such scheme to result in the accumulation of "bad risks."[1] In commercial insurance against death or sickness, the "bad risks" are eliminated by medical examination—or, if not eliminated, are forced to pay a higher premium. But in insurance against unemployment, it is precisely the "bad risks," *i.e.*, those most subject to unemployment, who most need and press for insurance. As a rule, in "general" schemes the premiums are based on wages, and the bad risks, being less well paid, pay less, not greater, premiums than the regular highly-paid workman. The good workmen, who obtain regular employment at good wages and are rarely out of work, do not care to pay premiums which are practically all absorbed by the irregular or bad workmen who are constantly out of work. The consequence is that, where such schemes are compulsory, as at St. Gall, there is practically a revolt amongst the better class of workmen, and where they are voluntary, the better class workmen either do not join, or else, as at Basle, abandon the fund, which then becomes merely a species of savings bank for less competent workmen largely subsidised by charity.[2]

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* *Note.*—By "trade-group" is meant any association of persons engaged in the same occupation or in kindred occupations, liable approximately to the same risk of unemployment.

[1] Chapman, 84872–4. [2] Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance. Vol. IX., App. xxi. (k.)

General Insurance.

576. Moreover, as Sir Edward Brabrook has pointed out, in regard to a system of general insurance covering various trades, there are no sufficient materials upon which any actuary could compute the proper contribution which different trades should make, while the possibility of a levy applying to all trades would very likely give rise to many disputes and much dissatisfaction.[1] The lack of statistics upon which to found reliable premiums for unemployed insurance, either for particular trades or for workmen in general, has also been referred to in the special reports by skilled actuaries which we have caused to be prepared on the subject.[2] In the present state of our knowledge, it would seem that the only alternatives available for a General Insurance scheme would be, either to fix the premiums on a basis of wages, with the disadvantages we have already pointed out, or else to fix what would be practically arbitrary premiums for different trades, or one arbitrary premium for all workmen. Such arbitrary premiums would not be acquiesced in by the various trades unless they had a voice in fixing such premiums, and it is difficult to see how, if each trade had such a power, any common agreement could be arrived at.

Trade-group Insurance

577. On the other hand, the advantages of Trade-Group insurance are that the risks within each trade are, even if inaccurately, yet voluntarily estimated and borne by that trade, and the premium can be adjusted according to each trade's estimate of the risk. There is a sense of solidarity amongst the men within a trade, which permits them to be content to pay for the support of the less fortunate members of that trade. And though all insurance rests on the principle of the fortunate paying for the unfortunate, yet, as the Board of Trade has pointed out, "the principle of solidarity clearly cannot be carried successfully beyond the point up to which it is supported by the sentiment of solidarity."[3]

578. Another advantage of trade-group insurance is that all the men in the trade-group are more or less known to one another, and the chance of fraudulent unemployment or malingering is reduced to a minimum. It is in the interest of each workman to see that a fellow workman does not draw unemployed benefit when work is available for him. The available work is, as a rule, well-known within a Trade Union by means of its organisation, with the consequence that a supervision can thus be ensured, which, in the case of a General Insurance fund, would be almost impossible, or, if not impossible, would involve an expenditure on the supervising staff which would largely add to the cost of the scheme. We are, therefore, clearly of the opinion that *a priori* considerations tend to show the superiority of Trade-Group Insurance over General Insurance against unemployment, and this is amply borne out by experience abroad, where the only form of insurance which has obtained any modicum of success is that based on trade organisations.

Disadvantages of a compulsory universal scheme.

579. But, in addition to this general division of insurance schemes into "Trade-Group" and "General," there is another important classification of them which we must notice. They may, in their application, either be voluntary and partial, or compulsory and universal. The disadvantage of a compulsory scheme is that, in the existing unorganised state of a large part of the labour market, such a compulsory scheme must either work on a "General" rather than a "Trade-Group" basis, or else must, as a condition precedent to its success, force all the labourers into trade-group organisations.[4] At the present time it is estimated, even by the Trade Unionists themselves, that not more than a quarter of the working classes in England are organised in Trade Unions; while Sir Edward Brabrook estimates that the Trade Unionists are only one-sixth of the total number of workmen.[5] It therefore follows that a compulsory universal scheme, if founded on a Trade-Group basis, would require compulsion to be applied to at least three-quarters of the working classes to form or join trade organisations; and if not founded on a trade-group basis, it would lack solidarity in its premiums, risks, and payments.

580. A compulsory universal scheme not on a trade-group basis would, therefore involve the State in the difficulties of fixing, enforcing, and collecting the premiums, and in the invidious and costly task of detecting malingering. These features would add enormously to the difficulty and expense of administering a compulsory as compared with a voluntary scheme.

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[1] Brabrook, 35232, 35242. [2] Statistical Appendix, Part xvi. Nelson, Stat. 6; Ackland, Stat. 23–25.
[3] Board of Trade Memo. on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (k). [4] Board of Trade Memo. on Trade Union Unemployed and Travelling Benefit, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (k). [5] Brabrook, 35147 (S. 14).

581. Further, a universal compulsory scheme would necessarily be opposed by the existing trades and benefit organisations, especially if it were enforced by means of deductions from the workmen's wages.[1] It would interfere and compete with such voluntary organisations, and upon the basis of compulsion such competition would probably be successful. For this and other reasons it has been found that, in most instances, the working classes either oppose such a compulsory general scheme, or where, as at St. Gall, they have first proposed it, on ascertaining its results they have been the first to insist on its abolition.

Arguments for voluntary trade-group insurance.

582. This investigation seems to show that a scheme of insurance against unemployment based upon the voluntary system, and resting on trade groups, is the most likely to attract general support. If, then, the leading idea be the encouragement of voluntary organisations, it would follow that insurance against unemployment should be developed and encouraged by assisting existing organisations in much the same way as one might develop a system of invalidity pensions through friendly and other kindred societies. This view is supported by Trade Unionists, by economists, representatives of Friendly Societies, and other eminent witnesses.[2] The Trade Unionists consider that—by reason of their machinery by which workmen are sent to places where work can be got; of their assistance to men travelling in search of work; of their recognised agencies in every part of the kingdom; of their large unemployed benefits; of their knowledge of the character, suitability, and industry of their members—they should be the recognised agency to deal with that class of workers described by Mr. Long as respectable men temporarily in distress owing to their inability to obtain employment.[3]

583. Professor Chapman thinks that Trade Unions can undertake insurance against unemployment because—

(1) They determine the wages which may be taken.

(2) They exercise compulsion on their members and find them places which they are expected to show reasonable ability to keep.

(3) They are organised by trades. A trade organisation can detect any disposition on the part of a member to slacken his efforts to find work, and the general feeling among the other members about a man who was too often out of work, or who stayed out for what was considered an unreasonably long time, would be a sufficiently strong deterrent against imposition.[4]

The Ghent system and its advantages.

584. Amongst the foreign methods described to us there is one in operation at Ghent and elsewhere which seems to us to be much in accord with what we are suggesting. The essence of this system is that either the State or the Municipality add a fixed amount to the benefit actually paid to an unemployed workman by a Trade Union or other organisation. Thus at Ghent, Antwerp, and other Belgian towns and provinces that have adopted the system, the proportion which the municipal allowance bears to the Trade Union allowance may be as much as 50 per cent., while in France the subvention by the State ranges from about 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. of the allowance given by Trade Union or other organisations.[5]

585. The advantages of this system are various:—In the first place, we may refer to the economy of the system as compared with other forms of assisting unemployed workmen. Mr. Beveridge has summarised the cost of relieving men under the Unemployed Workmen Act at about 30s. a week per man, and the cost of relieving them by Trade Union benefit at about 15s. per week per man.[6] Now, the State on the Ghent system would pay a maximum of only one-half of this 15s., whereas under the Unemployed Workmen Act, the whole 30s. is provided at the public cost.* It would, therefore, follow that the Ghent system would cost the general public per man relieved only one-quarter of the cost of the existing system of maintaining an unemployed man at the public expense. In addition, the public would be saved the always high and sometimes prohibitive cost of investigation under the present system.

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* NOTE.—*i.e.* by subscriptions, taxes, or rates, provided by the general public

[1] Barnes, 83098–83118. [2] Twomey, Vol. VIII., App. lxxx. (21); Wilson Fox, 99054; Gageby, 99260 (11); Stead, 77468 (19), 77470; Sidney Webb, 98978–84; Tawney, 96782–3; Martley, 81756 (27), 81949–53; Beveridge, 77832 (70). [3] Ward, 83503 (105). [4] Chapman, 84791 (43), 84875–6. Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (K). [6] Beveridge, 77832 (71).

The Ghent system and its advantages.

586. The second advantage of the Ghent system is that the State obtains gratis all the benefit of the trade organisation in detecting imposture.

587. Lastly, the association of insurance with membership of a trade organisation would, we think, give an impulse to unskilled workmen to form such organisations, and would, we hope, in this way help on the movement towards that regularisation of unskilled unemployment which we have seen is so desirable.

588. Unless some such combinations are formed amongst the unskilled workers, we do not believe it to be possible to improve the condition of these low grade workers.

Effect of introducing principle of Ghent system in England.

589. With regard to the actual effect which the introduction of a system like that of Ghent would have upon workmen in England in inducing them to join trade group organisations, we can speak with no confidence. It is true that abroad the subsidy system has not had any marked effect in increasing the number joining trade organisations, but it is thought that the subvention will "probably have an effect in preventing those who had once joined from leaving the unions."[1] It must be remembered, however, that abroad the experiments have been purely local and on a somewhat diminutive scale. For instance, at Strassburg, where the Ghent system has been in force since the beginning of 1907, the total municipal subvention in 1907 was only £250: and it would appear that the whole system of municipal relief is not very well-known.[2] On the other hand, while the working classes generally were hardly aware of the benefits of the new insurance system, it was well-known to Trade Union management. Thus at Ghent the introduction of a municipal subvention had a considerable effect in developing the practice amongst Trade Unions in providing unemployed benefit.[3] The advantages which we hope, therefore, from the system in England would be three: first, it should encourage trade organisations not now paying unemployed benefit to pay that benefit; second, it should encourage trade organisations paying only partial or incomplete benefit, to extend that benefit; third, it should in many cases encourage workmen having no trade organisation to become members of such an organisation (by joining one of the existing societies) for the sole purpose of gaining the benefit of insurance.

590. When we examine the figures furnished by the Board of Trade in regard to the extent to which Trade Union unemployed benefit is provided, it seems possible that there is a considerable margin of workmen who might be covered by this form of providence, if only some extra inducement could be supplied. Thus, among existing Trade Unionists, there are roughly some 650,000 men whose unions do not provide any form of unemployed benefit, although such benefit is in fact provided by other Unions of the very trades to which these 650,000 men belong. If, for instance, nine Unions of the transport trades find it feasible and necessary to provide unemployed benefit, it does not seem unreasonable to hope that a little extra inducement would be sufficient to cause the remaining forty-nine transport unions also to provide such benefit, and thus cover an additional 73,000 men whom they include among their members.[4]

591. Again, although there are nearly 1,500,000 men entitled to unemployed benefit in some form, this benefit, in many cases, is only travelling benefit, and, in others, is not a continuous allowance for a fixed period, but merely an intermittent and arbitrary grant on special occasions.[5] We have no figures to show what proportion of these 1,500,000 men receive unemployment benefit in an incomplete or partial form; but it would appear that, taking only the 100 chief Trade Unions, there are over 145,000 members entitled to partial benefit only, and 990,000 to complete benefit. It may be assumed, therefore, that, out of the 1,500,000 men entitled to some form of unemployment benefit, there are probably 200,000 men who receive that benefit only in a partial form from their Unions.[6] It is, we think, not unreasonable to hope that a little financial assistance would enable the Unions in question to transform this partial into complete unemployed benefit.

592. Furthermore, it would appear, from an estimate which the Board of Trade have furnished to us, that probably 6,000,000 or 7,000,000 men over twenty years of age belong to

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[1] Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi., K. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibi*
[4] Memorandum by Board of Trade as to Growth of Trade Unions, etc., Vol. IX., App. xxi., (C).
[5] *Ibid.* [6] Letter from the Board of Trade, September 16th, 1908, App. Vol. XI.

the classes from which Trade Unionists are drawn, but have not yet joined a trade organisation. There is therefore *a priori* some chance of enabling a very large proportion of the working population who at present enjoy no or only partial unemployed benefit, to obtain the right to such benefit in a complete and regular manner. If we consider the number of dependants of these men, it seems clear that any inducement which could bring them into the privileged class of those enjoying unemployed benefit would be, from a national point of view, extremely advantageous.

Application of principle of Ghent system in England.

593. We are not able with our present limited knowledge to indicate precisely the form which such inducement should assume. In Denmark and France, it is a national contribution. In Ghent, Strassburg and elsewhere, it is a municipal contribution. There are objections to the latter form of assistance, as it confines those so helped to the locality helping them. On the other hand, whilst these schemes are in the experimental phase, it might be premature to assist them by national contribution.

594. Several witnesses have expressed the opinion that a State subsidy would have the effect both of inducing many of the poorer Trade Unions who do not now provide unemployed benefit to provide such benefit; and, also, of inducing men who do not now belong to Trade Unions to join them.[2] We have little doubt ourselves that, if the Central Government, the Public Assistance Committees, the Voluntary Aid Committees, and the Trade Unions would combine to support and encourage the establishment of the scheme of insurance by propaganda and persuasion, they would enable the present field covered by Trade Unions' unemployed benefit to be very largely extended. If necessary, an additional inducement might be given by offering, as is done in many places on the Continent, preferential treatment at the national labour exchanges for those persons who have insured.

595. We have seen that, as the Friendly Societies do not insure against unemployment further than by giving, in some cases, travelling benefit and charitable grants, practically the only form in which such insurance has been attempted in England is by means of Trade Union unemployed benefit. Seeing, however, that not more than one sixth to one-fourth of the working classes in England are members of Trade Unions, it would not be just to give them a subsidy without extending a similar advantage to those not thus organised. We should, then, of course, recommend that a similar subsidy be granted to any Friendly Society providing unemployed benefit as part of its normal functions. But, having regard to the great difficulties already adverted to attending any attempt at "general insurance," it does not seem likely that Friendly Societies of the ordinary type, whose members are drawn from all classes and all occupations, and who have little or no trade solidarity, will be induced to undertake this branch of insurance even on the inducement of a subsidy.

596. If, however, the subsidy were to be offered to any provident organisation which would make unemployment insurance a leading feature of its business, we should look for the advent of a new type of Friendly Society, composed of men of similar or allied trades, who would have the necessary trade solidarity and knowledge of each others' circumstances, and whose interests would be sufficiently similar to prevent the "bad risks" crowding out the good. It would, in fact, be a Trade Union organised for provident benefits alone. If such societies came into existence under the encouragement of a subsidy, we might hope for insurance against unemployment becoming general over the field of labour. Such a result, we venture to say, would far more than counterbalance the expense of the subsidy.

597. One criticism which may be applied to this scheme is that it would not deal effectively with the intermittent and casual labourers. Abroad it has been found impossible to include the worst form of casuals (*Gelegenheitsarbeiter*) in the insurance scheme,[3] and many of our witnesses have expressed the opinion that it would be impossible to include them in England.[4]

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[1] Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (K). [2] Beveridge, 77832 (70); Tawney, 96610 (31–2); Wilson-Fox, 99054; Webb, 98978–84; Gageby, 99261 (11); Tawney, 96782–3.
[3] Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (K). [4] Wilson-Fox, 99053–6; Hamilton, 94018–9; Dawson, 99066–9; Ward, 83670–1.

Possibility of including the unskilled and casuals in Ghent system.

598. But here again we must be careful to discriminate between intermittent labourers and labourers merely belonging to what are known as unskilled or casual trades. Some witnesses imply that the unorganised labourer, seasonal and casual workpeople, could not, *unaided*, provide against unemployment out of their own earnings even if they would.[1] One or two witnesses differentiate, however, between the seasonal trades and the casual labourers,[2] and it is interesting to observe that many of the foreign schemes, though they exclude the worst forms of casuals, do include both seasonal labourers and the lower class of unskilled labourers. Indeed, another important witness thinks that effective organisation would enable even the unskilled labourer in many more cases than at present to meet the difficulties which now have to be dealt with by the Poor Law. The difficulty which prevents the unskilled labour class from forming associations is the lack of a definite standard of skill and the nature of their work. The hope for them, this witness thinks, lies in amalgamation with the other groups of the trade, unskilled labourers being pulled up, as it were, by the skilled members of that group. "It may be possible, but I cannot easily conceive a union of unskilled labourers except as members of a trade."[3] Whether, therefore, along these lines or along others, we see no reason why a very large number of unskilled labourers, induced by the advantages held out by insurance and the labour exchanges, should not form themselves into organisations capable of participating in the system of insurance assisted by public funds.

599. An alternative scheme would be, in addition to the subsidy of trade organisation benefit, to form a general insurance fund through the labour exchanges to which all classes of workmen could belong.[4] But to do this at the outset would reduce the inducement to enter the system we have been describing. At first we should prefer to establish a scheme of insurance only operating through trade organisations. If it is shown that the Trade Unionists do not take up or support the trade-group scheme sufficiently, it may become necessary to superimpose a supplementary scheme. We do not, however, feel hopeless as regards the financial possibility of including in trade-group insurance a large number of unskilled workmen and labourers.

600. For instance, at Cologne, where a general fund was established, which in many ways was a failure, a large majority of so-called skilled beneficiaries of the fund were seasonal workmen, *e.g.*, bricklayers, whitewashers, carpenters and painters, and some 30 per cent. were generally unskilled labourers and navvies. Even with such unpromising material, which produced a percentage of unemployed members as high as 84·8, the proportion of premiums paid to allowances received by the insured has been as high on an average of years as 50 per cent.[5] We see, therefore, no *a priori* reason why regular unskilled labourers should not be brought into a trade-group scheme. It might even be made incumbent on the labour exchanges, by furnishing information and advice and by other methods, to more or less actively co-operate in the formation among unskilled labourers of organisations for insurance on a trade-group basis.

Difficulties of Ghent system.

601. We are well aware that there are several objections to the Ghent system. It may be argued that it implies public control of trade organisations and their proceedings. On the question of the solvency of a Trade Union benefit fund, it may be pointed out that, under the system, the public insurance fund would not suffer but rather gain from any failure of the Trade Union fund, because payments are only made from that fund after the Trade Union has actually made a payment to the unemployed man. Of course, some arrangement satisfactory to the public contributing authority must be made for the separation of unemployed benefit from strike benefit; for the public contribution could not apply in cases of trade dispute unemployment. What the public allowance does is to add to the weekly allowance paid by the Trade Union to members of that union out of employ. No public contribution is made to the general funds of the union, and, if the unemployment is due to a trade dispute, no payment would be made to any one out of employ-

[1] Sexton, 84196–9; Ward, 83670–5; Stepney, 79669–71; Watson and Crowther, 90875, 90943; Marshall, 82266; Browne, 86447–8; Beveridge, 78311–3. [2] Stepney, 79668, 80432–5. [3] Bonar, 29521–30; [4] Beveridge, 78014; Wilson-Fox, 99057. [5] Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (K).

ment in consequence of that dispute. To this end no payment ought to be made in respect of any man's unemployed benefit unless upon the certificate of the local labour exchange. But for the rest we think the position would be summed up by saying that the trade organisations, which would suffer most by any failure of their insurance fund, would under the new system have the benefit of public advice as to the means for preventing such failure. It is true that, if the fund fails, the local rates may have to support some of the workmen, but in that case the men will be more affected than the State, and are more likely therefore to avoid the contingency. Difficulties of Ghent system.

602. There is another subject which we must allude to, and that is the attitude which employers generally might assume in connection with proposals to subsidise trade organisations with public money. Although the subsidy would be only for purposes of insurance against unemployment not arising from labour disputes, such a system would probably increase the number and improve the financial position of the trade organisations. Against any apprehension on the part of employers which an augmentation of trade organisations might create, we may urge the following considerations :—

Distress caused by unemployment or under-employment prejudicially affects employers in two respects :—

First, it increases the burden of the rates, and the increase of the local rate is a direct tax upon the enterprise of the employer whose business is within the locality where the rate is raised.

Second, it deteriorates the workman and consequently the character and quality of his work.

603. If employers desire to have at their disposal that reserve of labour which they sometimes profess to require, they should in their own interest acquiesce in measures which would avert deterioration amongst those whom they may want to employ.

604. This review of unemployment insurance enables us to arrive at the following conclusions :— Conclusions.

First, that the establishment and promotion of Unemployment Insurance, especially amongst unskilled and unorganised labour, is of paramount importance in averting the distress arising from unemployment.

Second, that the attainment of this object is of such national importance as to justify, under specified conditions, contributions from public funds towards its furtherance.

Third, that this form of insurance can best be promoted by utilising the agency of existing trade organisations or of organisations of a similar character which may be brought into existence.

Fourth, that no scheme either foreign or British which has been brought before us is so free from objections as to justify us in specifically recommending it for general adoption.

605. Owing partly to want of time, and partly to the absence within the Commission of expert and actuarial experience upon insurance, we have not ourselves attempted to formulate a scheme. It will require much close general investigation and knowledge of local conditions before the foundation of a general or a national system of insurance can be safely laid. But the question is urgent. We, therefore, recommend that a small Commission or Departmental Committee of experts and representatives of existing trade benefit organisations be at once appointed with an instruction to frame as quickly as possible a scheme or schemes for consideration.

606. We further suggest that, after that Committee has reported, a special Advisory Board be set up to help and to promote schemes adapted to the varying conditions of different industrial communities.

(2) The Permanent System of Public Assistance for the Able-bodied.

607. Though the suggestions we have made in our last section may, we hope, do much to prevent capable and deserving men from being reduced to destitution through lack of employment, yet these preventive measures will require some time for their complete development. Side by side with these preventive measures must be established a permanent organisation to which those, whom our preventive measures fail to reach, can have recourse if necessary in times of distress. We propose that in future there shall be in every district four separate but co-operating organisations, viz. :—

Organisations for assisting unemployed workmen.

(1) An Organisation for Insurance against Unemployment.

(2) A Labour Exchange managed by the Board of Trade with the help of a local committee.

(3) A Voluntary Aid Committee, representing local organisations subject to the conditions we elsewhere state.†

(4) The Public Assistance Authority representing the County and County Borough Councils and acting locally through Public Assistance Committees.

608. Two of these organisations, the Insurance Scheme and the Voluntary Aid Committee, will be representative of self-help and voluntary effort, and will be worked through voluntary organisations. The other two, viz., the Labour Exchange and the Public Assistance Authority, will be public organisations, financed by public money, and staffed by public officials. The object of all four will be broadly the same, viz., the maintenance or restoration of the workman's independence. Each will, however, have a distinct sphere marked out for itself. The function of the Insurance Organisation will be to develop and secure the greatest possible benefits to the workmen from co-operative insurance against unemployment. The function of the Labour Exchange will be to provide efficient machinery for putting those requiring work and those requiring workers into prompt communication, but the Labour Exchange will not provide work or give relief. The function of the Voluntary Aid Committee will be to give advice and aid out of voluntary funds, especially to the better class of workmen who may be reduced to want before the Labour Exchange can find them employment, and we have pointed out in Part VII. of our Report what resources both of money and of personal service will, we hope, be at the disposal of the Voluntary Aid Committee.

The functions of the Public Assistance Committee will be :—

First, To assist, with a view to their ultimate self-support and independence, those who are able to work and who can show that they have taken active measures to obtain work, but without success, and cannot in consequence support themselves or their families.

Second, To assist, under curative and reformatory conditions calculated to restore self-respect :—

(*a*) Those who, though willing to work, cannot offer a return in work adequate to the wage demanded or received, and are in consequence without employment and unable to support themselves or their families.

(*b*) Those who, though able to work, cannot show that they have taken active measures to obtain work, and are in consequence unable to support themselves or their families.

One authority only to administer public relief to necessitous persons.

609. We have dealt elsewhere* with the method by which we propose to establish these various organisations and we need not here amplify the subject. There is, however, one principle in connection with the policy to be pursued in regard to Public Assistance, which is of such importance in connection with the treatment of the able-bodied, that we propose to re-state it. It should, we think, be a fundamental condition of the assistance system of the future that the responsibility for due and effective relief of all necessitous persons at the public expense should be in the hands of one and only one authority in each County and County Borough. It is difficult to conceive any system, in which different public

† *See* Part VII.

* Viz. :—As to Insurance and Labour Exchanges, previously in this chapter; as to Voluntary Aid Committee in Part VII.: and as to Public Assistance Authority in Part IX.

authorities have power simultaneously to administer relief to much the same class of applicant in the same locality, which will not result in overlapping, confusion, and divergence of treatment and practice. We have shown how all these inconveniences have arisen and are still at work under the machinery set up by the Unemployed Workmen Act, and we have accordingly recommended that this Act be not continued. Under the system which we propose, one authority, and one authority only the Public Assistance Authority, will for the future be responsible for the public relief of the able-bodied suffering from distress due to want of employment. The Public Assistance Authority will, as before stated, act locally through the Public Assistance Committees.

The principle of co-operation.

610. The principles which should guide the various organisations in their treatment of the able-bodied may be briefly summed up in three words: Co-operation, Discrimination, and, so far as possible, Restoration.

611. The Public Assistance Committee should co-operate in every way with all other agencies possessing information about, or having special methods of treating, the cases which come before it. Thus, the Voluntary Aid Committee, the Labour Exchange and the Public Assistance Committee should freely exchange information. The Voluntary Aid Committee should refer to the Public Assistance Committee all cases which are more suitable for treatment by that Committee, or which, though suitable for voluntary treatment, are unable to obtain from this source the assistance which they require.

612. On the other hand, the Public Assistance Committee should in its turn recognise and develop the usefulness of the Voluntary Aid Committee by referring to it any cases, which it is thought might more properly be met through agencies outside the sphere of Public Assistance. Generally speaking, a first application for assistance will naturally be made to the Voluntary Aid Committee. Temporary need due to non-recurrent causes will belong primarily to the sphere of voluntary aid; chronic distress or destitution to the Public Assistance Committee. In rural districts there may be delay or difficulty in forming Voluntary Aid Committees, but as there are few able-bodied men out of employment in such districts, the want of such Committees will not greatly affect the treatment of able-bodied unemployed.

613. General rules should be laid down and accepted by each authority as to what class of cases should be dealt with by the Voluntary Aid Committee and the Public Assistance Committee respectively. When, therefore, the case of an able-bodied man came up before either Committee, it would at once be recognised whether his case was or was not one which, according to the rules agreed upon, should be dealt with by that Committee. Moreover, in course of time, the practice of the Committees would be so well-known in the district that the applicants for assistance themselves would know to which of the two Committees they ought to apply. In this way, we do not think it would happen that an applicant would apply for assistance to the wrong Committee. We have suggested in the arrangements for the constitution of the two Committees that representatives of each should sit on the other, and we contemplate that the offices of the two Committees should be in telephonic communication. In a word, it is of the essence of the proposed co-operation between Voluntary Aid and Public Assistance in the treatment of the able-bodied that such co-operation should result in more prompt and more efficacious treatment than heretofore.

614. As with the Voluntary Aid Committee, so with the Labour Exchange. The Public Assistance Committee should be in close communication with the Labour Exchange, and should (except in cases of urgent necessity) refuse to maintain an able-bodied applicant until he has registered himself at the Labour Exchange, and until the Labour Exchange has informed the man and the Public Assistance Committee that there is no suitable work available. Again, in considering the best form of treatment or training to be given to an unemployed man, the Public Assistance Committee and the Voluntary Aid Committee should not neglect to seek the advice of the Labour Exchange as to what trade or calling would be most likely to offer the best chance of independent livelihood. The Labour Exchange on its part would refer to the Public Assistance Committee or the Voluntary Aid Committee applicants for whom it deemed Public Assistance or Voluntary Aid to be required. Thus the co-operation between these three organisations would be constant, close, and effective.

The principle of discrimination.

615. The second principle which should guide the Public Assistance Committee and its co-operating organisations in the work of relieving or preventing distress is

Discrimination. The Public Assistance Committee should as far as possible endeavour to select treatment which will restore the individual to independence, but it should at the same time endeavour in its treatment of individual cases so to shape its policy as to make it one of general encouragement to the thrifty and independent. Discrimination and individual treatment will be facilitated through classification by and in institutions, and the general tendency of classification will be to operate to the advantage of the well-conducted, and the encouragement of those who previous to their period of distress have made real efforts towards self-maintenance and insurance.

The principle of restoration.

616. The third principle is partially covered by what we have said in the preceding paragraph, viz., that restoration to independent habits of life should be an ever-present consideration in the minds of the various organisations in prescribing treatment. In some cases in which such restoration may seem to be impossible, curative treatment may be effective if undertaken by voluntary organisations having within their ranks persons of experience whose whole lives are given to this work. On the other hand, if past misconduct seems to mark out the applicant for assistance as irreclaimable, care must be taken that he is sent to a place of detention under another authority, where his evil influence and example cannot contaminate associates less hardened than himself.

617. We lay some stress upon the necessity of restorative treatment, where practicable, for the able-bodied, as such treatment hardly figures in our Poor Law processes; nor is it difficult to give the reason. The Royal Commission of 1832 were confronted by a national danger of urgent importance. Indiscriminate relief to the able-bodied was demoralising the whole community. They very properly concentrated their attention on stamping out what was a dangerous and spreading epidemic. They intended their system to produce "negative rather than positive effects," and an examination of the conditions under which they reported explains this attitude. They had to deal with the Poor Law as it was, and they did not look to it "for the general diffusion of right principles and habits."[1] Their policy was successful in restoring and maintaining the independence of the main body of the working class, but it did not aim at a restorative treatment of individuals who had fallen out of the ranks.

618. Hitherto relief, either outdoor or indoor, as at present administered, has generally resulted in the deterioration of the able-bodied. We hope that in the future our suggestions will make it possible for the action of the Public Assistance Authority, even when applied to the relief of the able-bodied, to be restorative.

619. It will have been observed that in previous sections of our Report various terms have been used in attempting to classify the necessitous unemployed. For our present purposes it is enough to divide them into three classes:—

Class I.—Those who require temporary maintenance with work.;

Class II.—Those who require for a longer period maintenance with work and training;

Class III.—Those who require detention and discipline.

(a) Class I.—Those who require Temporary Maintenance with Work.

Assistance to Class I.

620. This class will consist of those in need of temporary help, who, to judge by their industrial record, will shortly be again able to maintain themselves at their own trades. We hope that our scheme of Labour Exchanges, Insurance, and Voluntary Aid Committees will greatly reduce the numbers in this class resorting to the Public Assistance Committee; still the possibility of such resort, especially in times of prolonged distress, must be met. Moreover, the class will contain, as a rule, the best characters and the most hopeful cases. It is therefore useful to consider at some length how the new system may provide restorative treatment for this class.

621. A man will be placed in this class chiefly as a result of an examination of his industrial record in the possession of the Labour Exchange, together with the opinion of that institution that the man has a good chance of obtaining employment in the occupation which he has hitherto followed. Broadly speaking, the men in this class will

[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832. [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 362.

be the men for whom the Unemployed Workmen Act was intended by its promoters, and the possibility of recognising such cases will, for the first time, be made easy by the particulars which the Labour Exchanges will possess of the man's qualifications and record, and by the test which in the ordinary course of its operations the Labour Exchange will be in a position to offer as to the man's willingness to work.

622. The distinguishing feature of men in this class is that the treatment required for them, so as to restore them to permanent independence, is temporary maintenance in health until they are able to resume their ordinary occupations. The methods of Assistance available for them would be: First, Outdoor Relief, or as we shall call it, Home Assistance; second, relief given on the principle of the Modified Workhouse Test, or as we shall call it, Partial Home Assistance; and, third, Indoor Relief, or we shall call it Institutional Assistance. The general conditions under which these various forms of Assistance will be administered will be defined later on. (*Vide* pars. 630, etc.)

(*a*) Home assistance.

623. An essential principle to be observed in connection with Home Assistance to the able-bodied is that it shall be in some way less agreeable than assistance given by the Voluntary Aid Committee. Unless the superiority of the assistance afforded by the Voluntary Aid Committee is in some way secured, it is doubtful whether that Committee will be able to collect voluntary subscriptions for the purpose of helping deserving cases of unemployment. Experience has again and again shown that the charitable public will not contribute to any extent towards a purpose for which they are also taxed or rated. It therefore follows that if, as is our desire, cases in the class we are considering should be chiefly dealt with by the Voluntary Aid Committee, it is necessary that the aid given by that committee should confer greater benefits, or have less onerous conditions attached to it than the Home Assistance given by the Public Assistance Committee. It is also important that the Home Assistance given in these cases should in some way or other be less agreeable than the receipt of Unemployed Benefit through insurance, otherwise the mere fact that out-relief can be given in such cases will in itself prevent a large number of men from insuring against unemployment. We think, therefore, that Home Assistance should be given only in cases where the man satisfies the conditions named in paragraph 630 (1).

(*b*) Partial home assistance.

624. The second method of Assistance available for the class we are considering will be Partial Home Assistance granted on the principle of what is known as the "Modified Workhouse Test" system. The essence of this system is that a man is taken into an institution as a test, but his family remain and are assisted in the home. The class for which this form of assistance would be desirable might include even men who, though good workmen, are occasionally unsteady in their habits. For such men Home Assistance might be demoralising, and might leave them less fit to resume their work when the expected opportunity arose. On the other hand, the men are ex-hypothesi efficient workmen at their trades and are not in need of technical training as a condition precedent to their obtaining work. If they receive Home Assistance at all, it should be for their families and they should receive indoor relief for themselves in suitable institutions where proper employment can be given them. The uninterrupted stay in such institutions may be either for the inside of each week or for a longer period, according as the character of the men permitted of a greater or lesser degree of liberty being accorded to them.

(*c*) Institutional Assistance.

625. If a man in this class was not suitable for Home Assistance or for Partial Home Assistance on account of the condition of his home or some other failure on his part to comply with the conditions specified in Par. 630 (1), the proper method of Assistance would be indoor relief for himself and his family in an Industrial Institution,* where he would be provided with an occupation as far as possible akin to his ordinary trade. The object of the Assistance would be the return of the man to his normal occupation, in good physical health and with no diminution of his former skill as a workman.

626. Where Institutional Assistance is given it should be associated with conditions which would enable the recipient to keep his name on the Labour Exchange, and to keep in touch with the Exchange. But the class of applicants whom we are discussing under this definition are not such as in our judgment would require or should be given long periods of institutional treatment. If such treatment became necessary because the applicant required it, he would be transferred to another class.

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* *See* par. 634.

(b) Class II.—Those who require for a longer period Maintenance with Work and Training.

627. The second class, whose needs the Public Assistance Committee will have to meet, are those who require prolonged treatment for the purpose of training or of restoration to physical efficiency. It is difficult for us to do more than sketch out a general idea for the restoration of this class to industrial efficiency, for it includes individuals whose failure and collapse are due to such different causes that it is impossible to prescribe any general scheme likely to ensure success. But they all have this much in common: they require something more than maintenance to enable them to regain their place in the industrial world. For this class as a rule, therefore, institutional treatment and training would be required, and these would be available in the industrial or agricultural institutions or labour colonies which we propose to establish. Here the capacity of the individual could be properly tried and his physique improved. Young men might in some cases, if they showed promise, be sent to technical schools for training, the fee being paid by the Public Assistance Authority.

(c) Class III.—Those who require Detention and Discipline.

628. The last, and the most difficult, class with which the Public Assistance Committee will have to deal, are those who, before they have any chance of being restored to independence, require detention, discipline, and training for a prolonged period. We may sub-divide this class into two divisions:—

(1) Those unwilling to work.

(2) Those whose character and behaviour are such that no employer will engage them.

629. For both divisions of this class we would advocate a different kind of treatment from that which we laid down for the two preceding classes. It does not seem to us that the maintenance and detention of persons who will not work or whose recent character and conduct are an insuperable bar to their re-entering industrial life, are within the legitimate functions of a Public Assistance Authority. Detention under disciplinary treatment affords the best hope of their reformation or of preventing them by their example or conduct from contaminating those with whom they come in contact. They should be handed over to that authority whose special duty it is to detain those whose presence at large is a danger or a mischief to the community. Detention colonies under the control of the Home Office should, in our judgment, be established for the reception of this class. We believe that no system of labour or industrial colonies can be properly worked, unless there is in reserve a semi-penal institution to which those who refuse to comply with the rules and regulations of the colony can be sent upon proof of repeated or continuous misconduct.

(d) The Methods of Assistance.

630. We will now enumerate and further describe the methods of assistance, which, as we have already indicated, will be in future available for the treatment of the able-bodied by the Public Assistance Authority.

(1) Home Assistance on condition of daily work in an Industrial or Agricultural Institution or Colony or otherwise as the Public Assistance Authority may decide within regulations laid down by the Local Government Board. By Home Assistance we mean assistance at the home whether in money or kind, and given without requiring the recipient to live entirely in an institution. The conditions under which Home Assistance should be granted would be as follows :—

(*a*) That the requisite assistance is not forthcoming from any other source.

(*b*) That the assistance be given on condition of daily work.

(*c*) That the assistance should be only given to an applicant with a decent home and a good industrial record.

(*d*) That the order for assistance should only be for a strictly limited period and subject to revision.

(*e*) That the applicant should be registered at the Labour Exchange, and that the relief should cease as soon as suitable occupation has been offered through the Labour Exchange.

(2) Partial Home Assistance, *i.e.*, Home Assistance for the family of an applicant, the applicant himself being maintained in an institution and given work.

(3) Institutional Assistance, *i.e.*, continuous maintenance in an Industrial or Agricultural Institution or Colony without detention, except in so far as the applicant binds himself by a written agreement to stay for a definite period.

(4) Continuous maintenance under compulsory detention in a colony established and managed under the Home Office.

631. In recommending the above methods, it is not intended to suggest the establishment of separate institutions for each of the first three. One institution would usually suffice. In most of the County Boroughs the institution might be on the outskirts of the town built in an inexpensive manner and with sufficient land to employ a large number. For industrial occupations, inexpensive workshops would be erected. In many cases a disused workhouse might be adapted for the purpose. If the institution be properly planned, and there be sufficient area for the purpose, such classification as may be required would be possible.

632. In county areas there would be little difficulty in setting up conveniently situated institutions of the kind suggested, to which Public Assistance Authorities of other areas might send men on payment.

633. It may be necessary to provide other institutions in the shape of Labour Colonies for those persons who are willing to work and who would bind themselves for a stipulated period, and who would be benefited by prolonged treatment and training in industrial or agricultural pursuits. Such men, it is hoped, might be permanently reinstated as industrious workmen either in this country or abroad. It is not proposed that an institution of this kind should be established in every area by the Public Assistance Authority nor indeed in any area if voluntary or charitable effort can be induced to make the necessary provision. One such training colony may be sufficient for a number of County Boroughs or for several Counties.

(e) Industrial or Agricultural Institutions.

634. The Industrial and Agricultural Institutions to which we have referred will to a large extent supersede the existing general workhouse as a method of dealing with the able-bodied. For the future, the different treatment and classification of the able-

bodied should commence from the time that the application for assistance is entertained and every effort* should be made, at an early stage, to dissociate the respectable unemployed from the habitual "in and out." On entrance into the institution the applicant should as far as possible be placed on work adapted to his previous occupation and his capability and willingness to work will thus be ascertained. The Industrial and Agricultural Institutions will be in direct communication with the Labour Exchange, and one of the primary objects of their officials should be the restoration to industrial efficiency and independence of the inmates under their care.

635. These Industrial and Agricultural Institutions will include housing accommodation for those receiving Institutional Assistance or Partial Home Assistance, and also workshops or land where work can be done. It will probably be found necessary to establish separate Industrial Institutions for women.

(f) Labour Colonies.

636. We obtained a considerable amount of evidence upon the subject of Labour Colonies. We visited personally certain of the colonies which have been established in this country by charitable and religious bodies. We also saw the colony of the London Central (Unemployed) Body at Hollesley Bay [1] and a deputation of our colleagues visited various institutions of the colony type in Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland The experience gained during this tour is recorded in a Report contained in the Appendix.

637. The advantages claimed for the colony, as contrasted with the workhouse system of dealing with able-bodied, can be stated in a few sentences. The advocates of the colony system assert that by the workhouse methods now applied to able-bodied, the home is destroyed and the man demoralised, both morally and economically, and that the cost to the ratepayers is great. In contra-distinction they maintain that, under the colony system the home is preserved, the man improved, and this at a much less cost per head for a given time than is possible under the other system. Indirect advantages are also claimed for the colony system in the inducement or facilities it may give to townsmen to settle subsequently upon the land.[2]

638. The practical experience of labour colonies in this country is small. Until quite recently the only labour colonies in existence in England were connected with religious and charitable organisations. At Lingfield[3] and Hadleigh[4] and the German Colony at Ware good results in a certain number of cases have been obtained, and high praise is due to the spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice animating the officers and staffs of these establishments. Temporary improvement has doubtless been achieved in some cases, but we cannot, on the evidence and figures given, speak positively as to the actual percentage of those thus benefited, nor as to the period during which the improvement lasted. Hollesley Bay is an institution belonging to the Central Unemployed Body for London. It has been too short a time in existence to afford trustworthy data for analysis and criticism. Its promoters assert, and we believe correctly, that through its operations a number of persons have been enabled to emigrate and are doing well.[5]

639. The English experiments, though few in number, and limited in duration, show that with proper grading and a good influence operating within the colony itself, much better results can be obtained from the colony system than from that of the workhouse The colony has been in some, if not many, cases, a suitable refuge for the necessitous, and it has, but to what extent we cannot accurately estimate, led individuals back to a life of independence and of self-support. But the work of these colonies has been limited by two conditions. They are all voluntary and have behind them no powers of detention. They thus serve as temporary refuges only. Nor they do they attempt, as a rule, to combine industrial training of different kinds with field work, as is the practice of labour colonies on the Continent.

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* It may, however, be necessary in some instances to establish Receiving Houses for the temporary reception of the able-bodied.

[1] Visits: Miscell. [2] Smart, 84500 (91–4). *See also* Tagg, Vol. VIII. App. lxxvii. (14); Morgan Vol. VIII. App. lvi. (21). [3] Hunt, 80952 *et seq.* [4] Visits: Miscell. [5] Smart, 84510–6.

640. The evidence which we have received from abroad supports the general conclusions we have arrived at as regards English colonies. Our Committee which visited these colonies reported that with certain advantages the free colony at Frederickoord in Holland represents much the same conditions as those prevailing at Hollesley Bay, and the Arbeiter-kolonien may stand for the Salvation Army Colony; but the other establishments visited by them are places of detention of a reformatory type.

641. In recommending the policy of establishing Labour Colonies we do so with a full appreciation of their limitations as at present recorded by their work. But the substitution of colonies for the general workhouse means open air or outside treatment for the able-bodied in place of the present intra-mural workhouse treatment; it affords opportunities for more varied methods of industrial treatment than are possible in the somewhat confined space of a workhouse. We cannot doubt that healthier influences, both physical and moral, will be associated with these new conditions and will conduce to the reform or rehabilitation of those sent to the colonies.

642. As regards cost, we do not think that the colonies will be found expensive in comparison with the present system. The expense of maintenance, site and building should be less than in the case of urban workhouses. Against this saving we must remember that, if supervision is to be thorough and stimulating, the staff of officers will bear a higher proportion to the number of inmates than is generally the case in the workhouse.

643. A colony is but another name for an institution, and classification is as necessary here as in other institutions. True, the colony in space and area is larger than the average institution: consequently division of inmates and their separation, if necessary can be more easily effected.

644. Many of our witnesses who are in favour of Labour Colonies expect from them the attainment of two objects which cannot be promoted by the same class of treatment. On the one hand it is held that Labour Colonies should be institutions providing technical and general training for men to whom it is desirable to teach a new occupation, and on the other hand, it is urged that the Labour Colony should be a more or less permanent haven for the derelicts of industrial life.[1]

645. Experience would seem to show that to endeavour to combine both objects in one colony would result in the failure of both, unless it were possible to effect complete division between the classes of persons treated. This was acknowledged by a number of our witnesses. They consider that colonies should be graded so as to admit of three or four different systems of treatment.[2] This would enable the Public Assistance Authority to deal with applicants in a way suitable to their respective antecedents and capacity.

646. If we take age as the criterion, the aged or those past hard work should receive different treatment and accommodation from men who are young or who have not attained middle age. The one class from age or infirmity have retired from active industrial life, the other class are, if possible, to be qualified by treatment to re-enter industrial life. No similarity of treatment for these two classes should be allowed. If we take conduct and antecedents as the criterion, there would again be a necessary gradation between persons who (say, previous to emigration) were sent for a short training, and those who came back to the colonies periodically. The treatment and accommodation of the former should be more eligible than that of the latter. It is clear also that, if it should be necessary to have colonies for women, they should be separate.

647. Assuming that the colony system must provide several distinct classes of treatment, we would leave to the Public Assistance Authority after consultation with the Local Government Board, discretion as to whether each class was to be treated in a separate colony or to be made a distinct division in one colony. It would probably be found convenient and economical for two or more authorities to combine and establish colonies for common use, in which case the combined colony would probably be confined to the reception and treatment of one class only.

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[1] Beveridge, 77832 (49); Hammond, 80733 (1 *et seq.*), T. Smith, 86726 (30); Hunt, 81054. [2] Bolton Smart, 84501 (83–88); 84553, 84722–3; Stepney, 79619 (15), 79795–802; Hunt, 80953 (7), 81012–9, 81053–63, 81036–44; Wood, 85747; Hughes, 85438.

648. Moreover, there are voluntary religious bodies who have establishments specially devoted to the cure and restoration of those who have fallen or slipped out of industrial employment. We strongly advocate the utilisation of these institutions for restorative purposes. The staff of such institutions is largely composed of earnest anddev oted men, who bring a religious fervour and constancy to the discharge of their work which no rebuff or occasional failure can check or discourage.

649. To establish Labour Colonies on such a scale as to make them a leading feature in the future administration of Public Assistance, will require much forethought, control and supervision. Unless the treatment in these colonies is uniform so that one class in one colony gets much the same treatment, food, and accommodation as a similar class in another colony, the new institutions will set up and repeat the very evils, inconsistencies and anomalies which we have shown to exist in the present administration of workhouses.

650. The colony system if it is to be effective must be carefully controlled and supervised at the outset by a strong body of officers and inspectors from the Local Government Board, and so far as we know there is not at present in that office sufficient expert opinion for this new and difficult duty. We therefore recommend that such an addition be made to that Department as will be adequate for this purpose.

651. Before we leave the subject of institutional treatment by the new Public Assistance Authority, there is one point of importance upon which we would propose a departure from the existing law and practice. Under the Poor Law, as now administered, there is no means by which a well-conducted and hard-working man in an institution can, if he performs well his daily task, receive any payment. We would relax this principle in the case of well-conducted men in institutions or colonies, and if a man shows industry during his time of training he might, we think, receive at the discretion of the Superintendent some small gratuity in the shape of good conduct pay: the greater part of such sum to accumulate and to be given him when he leaves the colony.

652. In proposing the establishment of the various institutions we have now described, we wish it to be clearly understood that in our view they should be available for a very different class from that which is commonly found in a workhouse. They should be suited to those whose unemployment is due to causes wholly beyond their own control, no less than those with whom it is self-caused—for the one they should be an honourable retreat from the storm—for the other a place for testing capacity and willingness to work. We look to them to provide the machinery for dealing with the results of prolonged depression in trade, a severe winter, a war, or any such interruption with the normal course of things. At the same time they will be available for individuals who are temporarily out of work, and will prevent the loss of efficiency which too often follows unemployment.

(g) Detention Colonies.

653. So far we have dealt only with colonies in which compulsory detention is not to be in force, but the experience of foreign countries is practically universal that no system of colonies can be effective unless there is in reserve a detention colony, to which those can be committed who either refuse to comply with the regulations of the voluntary colony, or as vagrants and beggars become a public nuisance.

654. We have given much consideration to the question as to whether these places of detention should form part of the system of the new Public Assistance Authority and be under their control or whether they should be an addition to the places of detention at present under the Home Office.

655. It would, in our opinion, be unwise to impose upon the new Public Assistance Authorities a duty outside their recognised functions, and which from its very nature they could not perform as adequately as the authority specially established to discharge similar duties. The Home Office have already the experience, the officials and the machinery essential for the proper control and supervision of institutions intended for the enforced detention of their inmates. We think, therefore, that the detention colonies for the able-bodied, which we now propose, should also be under the control and supervision of the Home Office.

656. But we do not consider that the cost of such places of detention should be wholly an Imperial charge. An arrangement should, we think, be made by which each Public Assistance Authority should pay the full cost of the maintenance of the individuals sent by them. As regards the details of the internal management of these colonies, such as diet, etc., we endorse the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy.*

657. We have now to consider the nature of the statutory offence which would entail committal to the detention colonies. We would define it as a wilful and persistent repetition within a given period of any of the following offences :—

(*a*) Wilful refusal or neglect of persons to maintain themselves or their families (although such persons are wholly or in part able to do so), the result of such refusal or neglect being that the persons or their families have become chargeable to the Public Assistance Authority.

(*b*) Wilful refusal on the part of a person receiving assistance, to perform the work or to observe the regulations duly prescribed in regard to such assistance.

(*c*) Wilful refusal to comply with the conditions, laid down by the Public Assistance Authority, upon which assistance can be obtained with the result that a person's family thereby become chargeable.

(*d*) Giving way to gambling, drink, or idleness, with the result that a person or his or her family thereby become chargeable.

The counterparts of the first two of the above offences are already punishable under the Vagrancy Acts, and a third repetition of them renders the offender liable to imprisonment for not more than one year with hard labour.

658. For this punishment we propose to substitute committal to a detention colony for any period between six months and three years. This proposal is in general harmony with the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, and we believe it to be essential to the proper treatment of the ins-and-outs, the "workshy" and the loafer. Moreover, by removing these cases to the care of another Authority, the Public Assistance Authority will be enabled to deal more effectively and more hopefully with the better class of workmen applying for assistance.

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* Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. [Cd. 2852] 1906. Pars. 290–2.

(h) Migration and Emigration.

659. With regard to Emigration, we have found considerable diversity of opinion amongst our witnesses. Many are in favour of it as an important means of lessening the evil of unemployment ;[1] some object to it on the ground that there is derelict land available in this country which should be utilised before sending men abroad,[2] others on the ground that the best men are sent away while the worst remain on our hands.[3] But the conditions of agriculture, and of labour in general, are so different in England and her Colonies that we do not regard either consideration as conclusive. In new countries, there is always room for much low-skilled labour which may be superfluous in an old country. There is ample evidence in the records of Emigration Societies to show that men who are "inefficient' in relation to the conditions of industry in England, may be "efficient" in relation to conditions in Canada. Some of the most successful work done under the Unemployed Workmen Act has been by way of emigration, and an analysis of the men sent by the Central Unemployed Body for London shows that a large proportion were unskilled labourers. The Secretary of the West Ham Distress Committee says of emigration that it is :—

> "The most beneficial form of assistance rendered under the Act, both in the relief to the locality as well as to the emigrants. The objection raised to such form of assistance under the Act on the ground that it is robbing the country of some of its best workers is greatly discounted in the fact of the small percentage of the best workers that register under the Act, and the small number of these who seek emigration aid. Of over 250 married and single applicants assisted out by the West Ham Distress Committee four only were of Class I." (*i.e.*, skilled and regular artisans), "and sixty of Class II." (*i.e.*, irregular artisans and regular labourers).[4]

660. The Lingfield Labour Colony, which deals with "the dull, the drunken, the intractable, the lazy, the physically or mentally unfit, and the unfortunate," finds emigration the best method of dealing with its cases after reclamation, and claims that its emigrants do well.[5]

661. The Church Army considers emigration "a most successful and ready means of permanently benefiting them, and at the same time of lessening the competition in the home labour market."[6]

662. While it cannot be considered that emigration by itself is a sufficient remedy for unemployment, we nevertheless regard it as a valuable means of dealing with a certain class of cases which are likely to make a fresh start under new conditions. More especially do we consider it as indispensable in dealing with districts where an excessive congestion of labour has taken place and where exceptional treatment is called for. As instances of such districts we may mention West Ham, Poplar, and Bermondsey; and we think that the new authority when constituted should turn their attention primarily to the dispersal of labour from those districts. The distress there is chronic and tends every winter to become acute ; and any attempt to deal with it on the spot only perpetuates the evil. Every effort must be made by migration and emigration to break up the congested mass of labour, and to allow the ordinary conditions of industry to resume their course. It may be found that special grants are necessary to carry out this policy, and if so we think that there should be no hesitation in making them.

663. We think also that this work of emigrating poor persons at the public expense falls well within the functions of the Public Assistance Authority, which would, however, naturally co-operate with established emigration agencies, and would be—either through those agencies or immediately—in close touch with the responsible authorities in the country of destination.

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[1] Owen, 86055 ; Hunt, 80953 (2–5), 80984 ; J. H. Richardson, 85642, *et seq.* ; Wheatley, Vol. VIII., App. lxxxii. (13); T. Richardson, 91141 (17–18), 91176–7; Stepney, 79619 (14); Maynard, 88089; Bailward, 78725–6; Bowley, 88166. [2] Barnes, 82883; Hughes, 85452; Fox, 84085; Anderson, 92524–6. [3] Gossip, Vol. VIII., App. xxxi. (8); Wheatley, Vol. VIII., App. lxxxii. (8). [4] Humphreys, 79408 (36), 79435. [5] Hunt, 80953 (2–5). [6] Hamilton, 93611 (55).

664. With regard to the previous training of emigrants and the use to be made of of farm colonies for that purpose, we would call attention to the Report of the Department Committee appointed in 1906 to consider Mr. Rider Haggard's Report on Agricultural Settlements in British Colonies. The following extract indicates the proper functions of farm colonies in this connection :—

> "We have incidentally had brought before us the utility of farm colonies in the United Kingdom in connection with the selection of suitable persons for emigration ; and with their preparation for colonial life. We do not regard it as essential, nor in many cases even desirable, that an attempt should be made to provide instruction or training in agriculture in this country. We have had evidence from several witnesses that the difference between the conditions of agricultural work in this country and the colonies makes it desirable that the emigrant should receive the necessary training in the colony to which he proceeds.
>
> "Accordingly, we do not suggest that a period of work on a farm colony should be made a necessary condition of any assisted emigration.
>
> "We think, however, that farm colonies may have a distinct utility in connection with emigration. There are, we believe, many cases in which persons who might be very suitable for emigration, and who would be likely to become successful colonists if they were in good condition, could not, temporarily enfeebled as many of them are, be advantageously sent out, without a period of physical training in the country. Moreover, a farm colony offers, perhaps, the most suitable means of subjecting applicants for emigration to a test of their willingness to work, and to face with courage and energy, the inevitable hardship of an emigrant's life. We anticipate, therefore, that the farm colonies conducted in connection with committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, or with philanthropic societies, will be found of considerable value in the working of any organised system of emigration from this country." [1]

665. The Departmental Committee recommended a grant in aid to be made for emigration either to committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, or to Emigration Societies.

666. We have recommended that in order to facilitate migration, passes be issued by the Labour Exchange entitling workmen for whom situations have been found to travel at specially cheap railway fares. We think that as the Labour Exchange is to be under the Board of Trade, a limited sum from the Exchequer might be placed at the disposal of the local Labour Exchanges, so as to enable them to defray the cost of these passes in suitable cases ; but when this is done, the expenditure incurred should be in the nature of a loan or advance recoverable either through the employer or otherwise from the wages of the workman who has received the pass. Some of us, however, are of opinion that the necessary expenditure should be provided and recovered by charitable agencies or the Public Assistance Authority.

(i) Political Disqualifications on Account of Public Assistance.

667. The question how far relief from the Public Assistance Authority should disfranchise its recipient is more closely connected with the relief of the able-bodied than with any other class of recipients of Public Assistance. We hold generally to the principle that those, who either from misfortune or otherwise have failed to successfully manage their own affairs, ought not by law to have power to interfere in the management of the affairs of others. But Public Assistance will often assume a transient form, and we are not disposed to disfranchise wholesale and unconditionally all who receive public assistance. We therefore recommend that only persons who have received assistance other than medical relief, for not less than three months in the aggregate in the qualifying year be disfranchised.

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668. We have now described the changes and additions we propose to make in the permanent methods of assistance applicable to the able-bodied unemployed. They consist as will be seen, of a co-ordination of agencies, some existing, some new, but all of which will work in accord and whose object will be to meet distress by methods of assistance. curative and restorative in their principles. The governing principle is that there shall be only one authority in each district dispensing public relief, but associated with such authority there shall be a number of co-operating organisations, each with a distinct sphere of action and each aiming at maintaining or restoring the independence of the unemployed workman.

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[1] Report of Departmental Committee, 1906 [Cd. 2978], p. 7, pars. 31–3.

(3) Transitional Measures.

Ultimate adequacy of Public Assistance system for dealing with all distress.

669. In the preceding sections we have described at length the new organisations which we propose to establish for the purpose of meeting distress arising from want of employment.

670. We have recommended the formation of a national system of labour exchanges, connected and in close communication with one another, and working under the direction of a Central Authority, viz., the Board of Trade. These institutions if duly developed upon the lines of sympathetic co-operation between employers and employed, should become effective instruments in promoting mobility of labour; time, however, will be required for their expansion.

671. We have recommended the general adoption of schemes of insurance against unemployment, to be set in motion either through existing trade organisations or through groups of persons engaged in similar occupations and combined into an organisation for the express purpose of insurance. We have suggested that assistance from public funds be given to encourage such organisations. Time, again, will be necessary before insurance can become a great operative force.

672. We have recommended the recasting of the present system of Poor Law relief. In future, if our proposals are adopted, there will be at the offices of the Local Government Board, under the charge of an Assistant Secretary, a separate Public Assistance Division in which all matters relating to Public Assistance will be dealt with. Emphasis will be given to the existence and importance of this separate and specialised Division by the presentation to Parliament of an Annual Report relating to Public Assistance in a separate volume distinct from the remaining portions of the Annual Report of the Local Government Board. The work of this Division will be of a very responsible character, as it will have to consider and control the new proposals put forward by the Public Assistance Authorities in connection with the various forms of assistance enumerated in our last chapter, and which should be at the disposal of these local bodies. New institutions, colonies, and other establishments will have to be set on foot and existing institutions reorganised. Combination between different local authorities for these purposes may be necessary, and, possibly, will have to be enforced. To further these objects effectually the staff at the disposal of the Public Assistance Division of the Local Government Board will have to be strengthened and enlarged. There will thus be a centre of Public Assistance in Whitehall with improved sources of information, watching over the many problems connected with the relief of the necessitous and the working of the new and reorganised institutions.

673. Correlated to this Central Authority will be the local authorities. These will not be so numerous as at present. In each County and County Borough there will be a Public Assistance Authority, or Statutory Committee of the Council, formed on broad lines of selection and nomination. This authority, according to the terms of its constitution, will be the responsible local organisation, acting under the supervision and, if it be ultimately necessary. under the direction of the Central Authority.

674. Appointed by the Public Assistance Authority, there will be in each County and County Borough one or more Public Assistance Committees. These will not be independent but auxiliary bodies. They will have at their disposal all the machinery provided by the Public Assistance Authority of the County or County Borough, or by two or more such authorities, acting in association, for the assistance of necessitous persons by means of industrial colonies or institutions. Thus they will be in close touch with a local centre of Public Assistance—a centre where questions of distress can be considered for the County or County Borough as a whole, where emergencies may, as far as possible, be anticipated, and where in any case preparation and readiness will be a first duty.

675. Allied to these Public Assistance Authorities and Committees, and constantly* co-operating with them, there will be in every district statutory Councils of Voluntary Aid and Voluntary Aid Committees supplementing the work of Public Assistance in various ways, and bringing beneficial and preventive influences to bear upon those in distress. These Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees will be connected with the Central Authority

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* *See* Part VII.

in London. In this way, we hope to do away with the separation now existing between voluntary and official forces, and to secure co-operation in place of isolation and mutual exclusiveness.

676. Under these arrangements we may, we think, anticipate a definiteness, consistency, and completeness of policy which have not hitherto been possible.

677. When all the different parts of our scheme are properly developed, we believe that, in the aggregate, it will be adequate to arrest and deal with the distress due to unemployment. It is upon this assumption that we have insisted that, in the future, there should be, in each area, one, and only one, public authority empowered to grant assistance out of public funds to necessitous individuals. We therefore recommend that the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, should expire as soon as the new system has come into operation.

Need of interim measures in case of prolonged acute distress.

678. It is clear, however, that the permanent system which we propose to set up will take some time before it can become thoroughly effective. This applies not only to the organisation directly dealing with distress, but also to the measures, preventive of distress, which we suggest. But, during the earlier stages of their development prolonged distress of an acute kind may occur. If there be no special machinery in reserve, and our proposals, not having had time to develop, should prove inadequate to meet this exceptional distress, the new system of Public Assistance may be overtaxed. It seems, therefore, necessary for the success of the reforms we propose that, during the early years of their existence, they should be, for a strictly limited period, safeguarded by some kind of reserve power or safety valve, available only under exceptional circumstances.

679. Any special machinery for dealing with exceptional distress is open to objections, the force of which we fully admit. Such machinery tends to shake public confidence in the sufficiency of the permanent system of relief, and to give occasion to competing schemes. But unless, during the inevitable transition period, there is some official organisation ready to meet the emergencies to which we have referred, the public will insist upon extemporising in the future, as they have done in the past, remedies both dangerous and demoralising, and they may even force the Government into passing hasty and temporary legislation.

680. The evil of extemporised, and in a sense opportunist, methods does not end with their inadequacy nor with the demoralisation which they temporarily produce: they tend to persist, as methods, after the emergency which called them into existence has passed away. Nor is this all: in persisting, they sometimes deteriorate and come to be looked upon as permanent methods of assistance parallel with the normal Poor Law or Public Assistance system, and, to a certain extent, superseding it in a harmful way. Thus, charitable efforts, which worked well under proper supervision and organisation at the time of the Lancashire cotton famine, in later years have been superseded by "Press funds" and "Unemployed Funds," with the unfortunate results upon which we have been obliged to animadvert. Similarly, municipal relief works, which were advocated by the Central Authority for times of special distress, have tended, especially in certain localities to persist and become recurrent; indeed in some places they have outlived the establishment of the distress committees which were intended to supersede them.[1] Again, we have seen how the Unemployed Workmen Act was intended to meet times of exceptional distress, and how, in fact, it has come to be regarded as part of the normal and permanent machinery of relief.

681. If, then, there is any likelihood that during the early years of the schemes we propose, at a time of exceptional distress, pressure will be exerted upon the Government to supplement our proposals by special remedies or special works, we must take such a contingency into consideration.

682. Past experience shows that extemporised methods of relief have generally been futile and mischievous in their ultimate effect. This is inevitable when uncontrolled impulse attempts to deal off-hand with difficult social phenomena. The conclusion is, therefore, forced on us that, if any such reserve power is to be brought, even for a limited period, to the aid of the ordinary system of Public Assistance, its scope, character, and effect should be carefully thought out in advance.

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[1] Green, Vol. VIII., App. xxxii. (16–19.)

Precedent and arguments for special "commercial" works.

683. The Lancashire Cotton Famine in its magnitude and duration is, perhaps, the most intense instance of industrial depression ever known in this country. Towards its close, charity had become well organised and was working in cordial co-operation with public relief, but in the opinion of the Government of that day further measures were necessary. Additional aid was given to the distressed districts in the form of public works started, managed, and regulated on a commercial basis. No demoralisation was caused among those engaged upon the works. Neither was there any expectation or demand that such work should become a perennial source of occupation in the localities where they had been started. In contrast with the comparatively good results then obtained from works of this character, we must place the conclusions contained in the reports and evidence made to us as regards the relief works set in operation during the last few years. (*Vide* pars. 392–408.)

684. A good example of the different results obtained under the two systems, both in regard to the workmen and in regard to the cost of the work done, is afforded by the following instance of the operation of "commercial-works" and "relief-works" in the same locality and on the same class of inhabitants. The quotation is from the statement of evidence of the engineer of a large County Borough:—

"Commercial" works.

"In the year 1903, the corporation took in hand an extension to their sewage works (about five miles from town), the estimated cost of which was £32,000. In view of the unemployment in the borough it was decided to carry out this work by direct employment, and to give a preference to . . . (local) men. Subsequently arrangements were made to convey the men to and from the work in motor waggons, which were purchased for the purpose of conveying materials to the site. The charge of the works was placed in my hands. My instructions were that the men to be engaged were to be fit for their work, and that I was to have the usual power of discharging any men whose conduct or work was not satisfactory. In short, the engagement of the men was on the same terms as if the work was being carried out by contract. The standard rate of wages was paid. The result has been quite satisfactory; the work has been well-done and at a reasonable cost. Of course, there have been a large number of changes among the workmen, some being discharged and others leaving of their own accord, but the number has not been greater than might have been expected in any contract of this magnitude. The work is still proceeding, and the number of men employed upon it is now about 100."

"Relief" works.

"A distress committee was formed in * * * under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, but the Act did not pass until after the special period of distress to which I have alluded had come to an end, and there was no real need for exceptional measures at the time the committee was formed The committee received applications from a number of unemployed workmen during the winter, and at their request the corporation found work for some of these men, first in laying a sewer, and second in levelling a playground in one of the parks. The arrangement made was that the distress committee should pay the wages of the men employed, and that the corporation should pay the committee for the work according to its value as measured up by me. The result showed that the labour cost the committee 75 per cent. more than its value. It was necessary to employ along with the men provided by the distress committee some efficient labour to carry out the timbering, pipe-laying, etc., which could not be entrusted to inexperienced hands. It was found that the good workmen deteriorated while employed alongside the others, and instead of his raising the standard of the unemployed to his own level the reverse was the case, and my inspectors and foremen have had considerable trouble in bringing back to their former efficiency the men who have worked alongside the unemployed."[1]

685. The vital distinction between these two instances is that, in the case of the relief works the men were taken on because they were necessitous, and the idea that they were necessitous and thus entitled to relief governed their engagement, their dismissal, and the whole conditions of the work. In the case of the commercial works it may be true that the men employed were necessitous, but they were engaged and dismissed in their capacity and according to their fitness as workmen and not from any idea of their claim for relief from public funds.

686. We therefore strongly hold that if, under the contingencies contemplated, any works are to be started to relieve a locally congested labour market, such works should be upon a "commercial" basis and be executed under contract.

687 It may be asked if work of this description will really help the situation. Whatever its nature, and, in all probability, whatever its amount, there will inevitably be left outside unemployed men of all trades and of all grades of skill. And, if the engagement is left to contractors, those who get employment in this way will be the best men for the particular kind of work, not the greatest sufferers, and not persons who have any preferential claim on public help. Moreover, as the work in question will probably be of

[1] Stubbs, Vol. VIII., App. lxxv. (7–8.)

a kind involving the employment principally of muscular unskilled labour, this will actually give a kind of protection to this class of worker over skilled artisans, tradesmen, and others who work more with their brains than with their muscles. All this we grant. But we would urge that no measures to meet exceptional distress have ever yet been devised which did more than employ a small number of those actually in distress; that the occupation provided has always been almost entirely unsuitable for the skilled artisan, tradesman, and others; and that such measures did, on the whole, afford a kind of protection for the unskilled classes.

688. On the other hand, we see two positive advantages in the "commercial" work recommended. Firstly, such work, if put on the market at a time of special distress, will help to restart the industrial machine at a time when the contagion of discouragement, want of enterprise, and timidity is making it move slowly and with great friction. The work will thus anticipate and tend to induce that general revival of industry which, in the present industrial organism, once started is equally contagious. Secondly, it will relieve the labour market to some extent, while assisting the classes least able to provide for themselves by insurance and trade organisation, and, therefore, most liable to deterioration.

689. We make no claim to having discovered a scheme for employing men profitably at a time when private capital and private employers cannot do so. But we may fairly claim to have had every aspect of the difficulty under our consideration; and if we put forward this, it is because it seems to us to involve the least disturbance, and to avoid the greater evils in which experience shows that "relief works" usually end.

690. We have now to consider the authority to whom this provision for exceptional and protracted distress should be given, and the precautions and restrictions to be imposed before any such works can be sanctioned. The proper authority to provide special works.

691. We dismiss at once any idea of such works being initiated, financed, or superintended by a National authority. It may be that schemes of great magnitude such as afforestation, the general arrest of coast erosion, and the provision of waterways are outside the grasp of any Local Authority or any reasonable combination of such authorities. If such works are undertaken it would be on the ground of national utility and they should be promoted as "commercial" works. But they will, as a rule, necessitate the provision of housing accommodation for those engaged upon them. The enterprise will tend to become permanent to employees, or at any rate will require continuous work over a number of years for its completion. On the other hand it is of the essence of such works as we recommend that they should not last longer than the exceptional distress which they have to meet.

692. Dismissing, then, the idea that the National Authority should undertake works of the class or character we suggest, we have to decide what Local Authority or what branch of a Local Authority should be entrusted with their promotion and control. We have devoted much of our Report to pointing out the confusion, overlapping, and other evils caused by the duplication of relief works by Voluntary, Municipal, and Distress Committees, alongside of the Poor Law Guardians, and we cannot recommend the renewal of these evils. If the works were to be "relief" works we should have recommended that the Public Assistance Authorities should undertake them, but as they are to be carried out on ordinary commercial lines and as such works would be quite outside the functions of a Public Assistance Authority, we require to fall back on other bodies who would be conversant with undertaking works of this character. Our opinion, therefore, is that the bodies best qualified to carry out this exceptional task during the period of transition are the Works' Committees of the various now existing Local Authorities.

693. We now turn to the financial aid which may have to be offered to the Local Authorities to undertake this duty, and also the restrictions to be imposed and the conditions to be complied with before any such help can be obtained. Two alternative methods suggest themselves. Financial inducements to the provision of special works.

694. The first is a direct Government Grant towards works which are approved by the Government. This has been in effect the method adopted in distributing the grant

Financial inducements to the provision of special works.

of public money voted under the Unemployed Workmen Act. It has many disadvantages inherent in or inseparable from the method itself. Among others it creates the idea that the Government out of National funds are providing local work for the unemployed. This method, in our judgment, is thoroughly bad, and we cannot recommend it.

695. The alternative method is for the Government to act through the Local Authority by lending them, on advantageous terms, money to facilitate the undertaking of special works. At the time of the Lancashire cotton famine, the course was adopted of allowing the Local Authorities to borrow from the Government at a less rate of interest than they themselves could have obtained in the open market, but the money was not advanced to the Local Authorities at a lower rate of interest than that at which the Government itself could borrow. What the Local Authorities enjoyed was the advantage of National over Local credit. Since 1863 the practice of Local Authorities borrowing money through the Public Works Loan Board has been largely extended, though the operations of the Board have recently been curtailed. The Board now refuses to lend money (except for the purposes of education, small holdings, etc.) to a Local Authority, the rateable value of whose area amounts to £200,000 or upwards, and in the case of other Local Authorities the Board will only lend for certain purposes, *e.g.*, education, Poor Law, sanitary works, housing, small holdings, etc.[1] We suggest that these limitations upon the powers of the Public Works Loans Board should be cancelled in regard to loans required by Local Authorities for the purpose of carrying out special works for the relief of the labour market such as we suggest. It is a condition of all loans granted by the Public Works Loans Board on the security of local rates that the rates of interest, which are fixed by the Treasury, shall be such that no loss is thrown upon the Local Loans Fund, but, without abandoning this principle, we think that it should be within the power of the Board to grant loans for the purposes we have indicated at the rate of interest at which the Imperial Government can borrow.

Safeguards against abuse.

But to give a Local Authority special financial facilities for the prosecution of public works might result in the inception of schemes unsound in themselves, and advanced only in order to enable the Local Authority to participate in the special loans. This undoubted danger is one which must be guarded against. We think, therefore, that, before a Local Authority should be allowed to thus borrow from the Public Works Loan Commissioners for the purpose of meeting temporary local distress, certain indispensable preliminaries should be complied with, which we will now enumerate. We suggest two safeguards :—

First.—The proof of exceptional and protracted distress due to severe industrial depression.

Second.—The proof of the soundness and utility of the schemes themselves.

These two conditions should be complied with before the special loan is granted, and we will now specify how these conditions can be fulfilled.

696. Under our scheme there will be in each locality a Labour Exchange well organised and forming part of a national system of Labour Exchanges. Through this exchange full and authoritative information as to the amount and intensity of local unemployment in any one place can be obtained by the Board of Trade.

697. Thus the Board of Trade will receive weekly from the labour exchanges accurate and detailed information as to the amount of unemployment throughout the country. From the time they are started the local labour exchanges would be able to give to the Board of Trade full and authoritative information as to the amount and intensity of local unemployment. In short, a Government Department will hereafter be able to test to the full the amount of alleged exceptional and protracted distress in any industrial locality in the country.

698. The Voluntary Aid and Public Assistance Committees, again, will be the agencies dealing respectively with private and public assistance ; through them could be obtained an accurate report as to the adequacy or inadequacy of their resources to meet the local distress. Thus the amount of distress and the resources of assistance would be capable of authoritative comparison and the Local Government Board would have trustworthy data on which to go in deciding upon the necessity for special loans.

699. We would not allow any authority to apply for a special loan until it had reports from the Voluntary Aid Committee and Public Assistance Authority of such a character as to justify the application. When the application has been made the

[1] Thirtieth Annual Report Public Works Loan Board, 1904–5 (224, 1905), par. xiii.

sanction of the Local Government Board, after consultation with the Board of Trade would have to be obtained.

Necessity for preparation beforehand.

700. To those accustomed to the haphazard methods of relief now in vogue, the procedure here laid down may seem tedious and to require more time for its consummation than is possible in an emergency. Our reply is simple. Measures hastily taken in an emergency are generally ill-thought out, ill-organised, costly, and ineffective. With the exercise of a little prescience and vigilance impending distress, especially if it be abnormal, can be foreseen. This is shown by the experience of the Indian Government.

701. The Indian Government is probably the most highly organised system of administration known. The local governments have each a separate and fully developed local administration, and above them is a Central Authority invested with almost absolute executive power, which it can exercise at once in time of emergency. Yet, even with the advantage of these rare administrative powers, experience has taught the Government that public works for relief of distress cannot be improvised, and that unless an emergency is anticipated by a careful preparation of schemes in advance, waste and demoralisation are certain to ensue when the emergency arises. The duty is therefore imposed upon every province and district to have schemes of this character thought out, and periodically revised and ready to be put at once into operation when the emergency arises, and all the engineer departments of the different provinces are so instructed and so act.

702. We therefore suggest that schemes for special works be prepared and drawn up by the Local Authorities in co-operation with other authorities and be revised from time to time ; such schemes to be submitted to the Local Government Board for approval. Works of this character need not necessarily be confined to the area of the Local Authorities promoting them but may be carried on outside such area.

Recommendations

703. Having thus laid down a procedure which would exact, on the one hand, proof from authentic and official sources of the existence of local distress from exceptional industrial depression, and would ensure, on the other hand, that the work proposed for the relief of the locality was of public utility, we may now recapitulate our recommendations :—

(1) Assuming that the Local Government Board, after consultation with the Board of Trade, are satisfied that the above conditions have been complied with, then, for the purpose of carrying out special approved works, the Public Works Loan Board should be empowered to lend to the Local Authorities money at the rate at which the Imperial Government can borrow.

(2) The special works should be carried out on ordinary commercial lines, by contract, and the fitness or unfitness of workmen for the work shall be the main consideration in engaging or dismissing them and in determining the conditions of their employment. All workmen so employed shall, as far as practicable, be taken from the register of the Local Labour Exchange.

(3) The wages paid will be the ordinary market wages for the kind of work done—whether piecework, or time rates.

704. We would further propose that the period of repayment of any loan sanctioned under this plan should vary according to the utility and durability of the work proposed. The less the durability the shorter should be the period of repayment.

ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS IN PART VI., CHAPTER 4.

(A.) Permanent Preventive Measures of a Social or Industrial Character.

I.—Labour Exchanges.

(1) A national system of Labour Exchanges should be established and worked by the Board of Trade (507) for the general purposes of assisting the mobility of labour and of collecting accurate information as to unemployment. (487.)

(2) The Labour Exchanges should be in charge of officers of the Board of Trade, assisted by Committees of employers, workmen, and representatives of local authorities. (507.)

(3) There should be no compulsion to use the Labour Exchanges, but the object of the Government and the Local Authorities should be to encourage and popularise them in every way, *e.g.*, by propaganda and by making use of the exchanges in engaging workmen. (519, 528.)

(4) The Labour Exchanges should be granted free postal and telephone facilities by the State. (520, 528.)

(5) Arrangements should be made to enable the Labour Exchanges to grant passes entitling workmen travelling to a situation to specially cheap railway fares; in suitable cases the cost of the passes might be provided and recovered afterwards from the workmen. (528, 666.)

II.—The Education and Training of the Young for Industrial Life.

(6) The education in our public elementary schools should be made less literary and more practical, and better calculated than at present to adapt the child to its future occupation. To this end the curriculum should be revised. (553.)

(7) Attention is drawn to the suggestions in paragraph 549 :—

(*a*) That boys should be kept at school until the age of fifteen instead of fourteen.

(*b*) That exemption below this age should be granted only for boys leaving to learn a skilled trade; and

(*c*) That there should be school supervision till sixteen and replacing in school if not properly employed.

(8) There is urgent need of improved facilities for technical education after the present age for leaving school. (550.)

(9) With a view to the improvement of physique, a continuous system of physical drill should be instituted which might be commenced during school life, and be continued afterwards. (555.)

(10) In order to discourage boys from entering occupations which offer no prospect of permanent employment, there should be established, in connection with the Labour Exchange, a special organisation for giving boys, parents, teachers, and school managers, information and advice as to suitable occupations for children leaving school. (527), (537–547.)

III.—The Regularisation of Employment.

(11) Government Departments and Local and Public Authorities should be enjoined ;

(*a*) To regularise their work as far as possible. (561, 568.)

(*b*) To endeavour, as far as possible, to undertake their irregular work when the general demand for labour is slack. (566, 568.)

(12) The Board of Trade should send officers to visit and hold inquiries in localities where intermittent employment prevails, and should endeavour through conference with employers and employed to arrange schemes for the progressive decasualisation of such employment. (563–568.)

IV.—Unemployment Insurance.

(13) The establishment and promotion of unemployment insurance, especially amongst unskilled and unorganised labour, is of paramount importance in averting distress arising from unemployment. (604.)

(14) The attainment of this object is of such national importance as to justify, under specified conditions, contributions from public funds towards its furtherance. (604.)

(15) This form of insurance can best be promoted by utilising the agency of existing trade organisations, or of organisations of a similar character, which may be brought into existence. (604.)

(16) No scheme of Unemployment Insurance, either foreign or British, which has been brought before us, is so free from objections as to justify us in specifically recommending it for general adoption. (604.)

(17) A small Commission or Inter-Departmental Committee of experts and representatives of existing trade benefit organisations should be appointed with an instruction to frame a scheme or schemes for consideration. (605.)

(18) After that Committee has reported, a special Advisory Board should be set up to help and promote schemes adapted to the varying conditions of different industrial communities. (606.)

(B.) The Permanent System of Public Assistance for the Able-Bodied.

V.—Organisations engaged in Public Assistance and their Functions.

(19) There shall be in every district four separate but closely co-operating organisations with the common object of maintaining or restoring the workmen's independence (607, 608), viz. :—

(*a*) An organisation for Insurance against Unemployment, to develop and secure (with contributions from public funds (604)) the greatest possible benefits to the workmen from co-operative insurance against unemployment. (608.)

(*b*) A Labour Exchange established and maintained by the Board of Trade to provide efficient machinery for putting those requiring work and those requiring workers into prompt communication. (608.)

(*c*) A Voluntary Aid Committee to give advice, and aid out of voluntary funds. (607–608.)

(*d*) A Public Assistance Authority representing the County or County Borough and acting locally through a Public Assistance Committee, to assist necessitous workmen under specified conditions at the public expense. (607, 608, 609.)

(20) It shall be a fundamental principle of the system of Public Assistance that the responsibility for the due and effective assistance of all necessitous persons at the public expense shall be in the hands of one and only one authority in each County and County Borough, viz., a Statutory Committee of the County or County Borough Council (Part IX., p. 23) entitled the Public Assistance Authority (609.)

(21) The guiding principles of the organisations engaged in the work of Public Assistance should be:—

(*a*) Co-operation, so as to secure prompt and efficacious treatment of appropriate cases by the various agencies. (611–614.)

(*b*) Discrimination, so as to select treatment appropriate for each case and yet encourage general thrift and independence. (615.)

(*c*) Restoration, so as to prepare workmen by restorative treatment, for return to independent life. (616–618.)

(22) From the point of view of treatment, the necessitous unemployed may be divided into three classes. (619, 622, 627, 628):—

Class I.—Those requiring temporary maintenance and work. (620–622.)

Class II.—Those requiring for a longer period maintenance and work with training. (627.)

Class III.—Those requiring detention and discipline. (628.)

(23) For Class I. and Class II., there will be available various methods of treatment under the Public Assistance Authority (622–626–627), but Class III. will be handed over to another authority—the Home Office—and dealt with in Detention Colonies. (629, 655–6.)

VI.—Methods of Treatment.

(24) There will be available for the Public Assistance Authority the following methods of treatment of the able-bodied (630):—

(1) Home assistance.

(2) Partial home assistance.

(3) Institutional assistance.

(4) Continuous maintenance in a Detention Colony under the Home Office.

(5) Emigration. (663.)

VII.—Home Assistance.

(25) By Home Assistance we mean assistance at the home, whether in money or in kind, and given without requiring the recipient to live entirely in an institution. The conditions under which such assistance should be granted to the able-bodied would be as follows (630):—

(*a*) That the requisite assistance is not forthcoming from any other source.

(*b*) That the assistance be given on condition of daily work in an industrial or agricultural institution or colony, or otherwise as the Public Assistance Authority may decide within regulations laid down by the Local Government Board.

(*c*) That the assistance should only be given to an applicant with a decent home and a good industrial record.

(*d*) That the order for assistance should only be for a strictly limited period, and subject to revision.

(*e*) That the applicant should be registered at the Labour Exchange, and that the relief should cease as soon as suitable occupation has been offered through the Labour Exchange.

(26) An essential principle to be observed in connection with Home Assistance to the able-bodied is that it should be, in some way, less agreeable than aid given by the Voluntary Aid Committee or than the receipt of Unemployed Benefit through Insurance. (623.)

VIII.—Partial Home Assistance.

(27) By Partial Home Assistance we mean Home Assistance for the family of an applicant, the applicant himself being maintained in an institution and given work. (624), (630.)

IX.—Institutional Assistance.

(28) By Institutional Assistance we mean continuous maintenance in an Industrial or Agricultural Institution or Colony without detention, except in so far as the applicant binds himself by a written agreement to stay for a definite period. (625.)

X.—Industrial or Agricultural Institutions.

(29) Industrial or Agricultural Institutions should be situated in the country or on the outskirts of towns (631–632), in many cases a disused workhouse might be adapted. (631.)

(30) They should include housing accommodation for those receiving Institutional or Partial Home Assistance. (635.)

(31) They should be built in an inexpensive manner and with sufficient land to employ a large number of persons. (631.)

(32) For industrial occupations, inexpensive workshops should be erected. (631.)

(33) The workshops and land need not necessarily be adjacent to the housing accommodation. (635.)

(34) The Industrial and Agricultural Institutions will be in direct communication with the Labour Exchange, and one of the primary objects of their officials should be the restoration to industrial efficiency and independence of the inmates under their care. (634.)

(35) On entrance into the institution the applicant should, as far as possible, be placed on work adapted to his previous occupation, and his capability and willingness to work will thus be ascertained. (634.)

(36) The different treatment and classification of the able-bodied should commence from the time that the application for assistance is entertained, and every effort should be made, at an early stage, to dissociate the respectable unemployed from the habitual "in-and-out." (634.)

(37) It will probably be found necessary to establish separate industrial institutions for women. (635.)

XI.—Labour Colonies.

(38) While appreciating the limited experience and success of Labour Colonies, we recommend their establishment (641) and use on the following grounds:—

(*a*) The open-air life will conduce to the re-habilitation of those subjected to its influence. (641.)

(*b*) The expense of maintenance, site, and building should be less than in the case of Urban Workhouses. (642.)

(*c*) The colony affords better opportunities than the workhouse for more varied methods of industrial treatment (641), and for classification. (643.)

(39) The colony system should provide several distinct classes of treatment, either in separate colonies or in distinct divisions of the same colony. (647.)

(40) Public Assistance Authorities might combine to establish a colony or colonies for their common use. (647.)

(41) The colonies of voluntary and religious bodies should be utilised by the Public Assistance Authorities for restorative treatment in suitable cases. (648.)

(42) The colony system should be carefully controlled and supervised by the Local Government Board. (650.)

XII.—Good-Conduct Pay in Public Assistance Authorities' Institutions and Colonies.

(43) Well-conducted men in institutions or colonies might, if they show indutsry, be awarded small gratuities in the shape of good-conduct pay, the greater part of such pay to accumulate and be given to the men on leaving the colony or institution. (651.)

XIII.—Detention Colonies.

(44) Compulsory Detention Colonies are essential to the success of a system of voluntary Labour Colonies. (629), (653.)

(45) Detention Colonies under the control and supervision of the Home Office should be established (655); to which might be committed, for any period between six months and three years (658) persons guilty of a wilful and persistent repetition of any of the following offences (657):—

(*a*) Wilful refusal or neglect of persons to maintain themselves or their families (although such persons are wholly or in part able to do so), the result of such refusal or neglect being that the persons or their families have become chargeable to the Public Assistance Authority.

(*b*) Wilful refusal on the part of a person receiving assistance to perform the work or to observe the regulations duly prescribed in regard to such assistance.

(*c*) Wilful refusal to comply with the conditions laid down by the Public Assistance Authority, upon which assistance can be obtained, with the result that a person's family thereby become chargeable.

(*d*) Giving way to gambling, drink, or idleness, with the result that a person or his or her family thereby become chargeable.

(46) Public Assistance Authorities should pay the full cost of maintenance of persons sent to Detention Colonies at their instance. (656.)

XIV.—Emigration.

(47) While emigration by itself cannot be considered as a sufficient remedy for unemployment, it is, nevertheless, a valuable means of dealing with a certain class of cases, which are likely to make a fresh start under new conditions. More especially is it indispensable in dealing with districts where an excessive congestion of labour has taken place, and where exceptional treatment is called for. (662.)

(48) This work of emigrating poor persons at the public expense falls well within the functions of the Public Assistance Authority, which would, however, naturally co-operate with established emigration agencies, and would be—either through those agencies or immediately—in close touch with the responsible authorities in the country of destination (663).

XV.—Disfranchisement of Able-bodied receiving Public Assistance.

(49) Only persons receiving Public Assistance (other than medical relief) for not less than three months in the qualifying year shall be disfranchised on account of such Assistance. (667.)

XVI.—Discontinuance of Unemployed Workmen Act.

(50) The Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, should expire so soon as the new system of Public Assistance has come into operation. (677.)

(C.) Transitional Measures.

XVII.—Special Works and Loans for times of Exceptional and Protracted Distress.

(51) For a strictly limited period during the earlier years of the reforms which we suggest (678), the following arrangements should be made :—

(*a*) The various existing Local Authorities (692) should draw up, either singly or in co-operation, and submit to the Local Government Board for approval (702) schemes of works of public utility (703) which might be put in operation in times of exceptional and protracted distress due to severe industrial depression. (695.)

(*b*) If the Local Government Board is satisfied, after consultation with the Board of Trade (697, 703), that there exists exceptional and protracted distress, to meet which the resources of the Voluntary Aid Committees and Public Assistance Authorities are inadequate (698), then the local authorities affected may obtain loans from the Public Works Loan Commissioners at the rate of interest at which the Imperial Government can borrow, so as to enable special works approved under (*a*) to be carried out. (695, 703.)

(*c*) The Special Works should be carried out on ordinary commercial lines, by contract, and the fitness or unfitness of workmen for the work shall be the main consideration in engaging or dismissing them, and in determining the conditions of their employment. All workmen employed shall, as far as practicable, be taken from the register of the Local Labour Exchange. (703).

(*d*) The wages paid will be the ordinary market wages for the kind of work done—whether piece-work, or time rates. (703).

PART VII.

CHARITIES AND THE RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

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PART VII.

CHARITIES AND THE RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

1. The charities of the country, endowed and voluntary, represent a very large force and considerable means, which are at the disposal of the community for the relief of distress. Many of them have the services of skilled and experienced workers. Their aggregate income is great. They are centres at which groups of persons of many kinds and classes are brought into direct communication with those who are in need or distress; and their aims and methods indicate generally, what are the thoughts and conceptions of the people in regard to charitable relief. Men and women, so far as they learn to consider and deal with the problem of relief seriously, find their training and guidance in part, no doubt, at boards of guardians, but chiefly in connection with these bodies. Every year new foundations are established and large amounts are bequeathed as endowments or left by bequest to voluntary institutions. The force represented by the charities is thus a growing force, which is affecting the well-being of the recipient classes in many ways for good or for evil.

In this Part we propose first to trace the relation between voluntary aid and public assistance and the institution of methods of control and revision in regard to endowed charities and of registration in regard to voluntary charities; then from the evidence at our disposal to state what is the general condition of the poor at the present time as indicating in some measure the problem with which we have to deal; next to summarise the evidence which we have received about dole charities, the suggestions which have been made to us and the proposals which we desire to make for the formation of a more responsible administration of voluntary aid than that which now prevails; and, lastly, to show how these proposals may be applied to the conditions of rural and urban districts.

I.—General Conditions of Charities and their Co-ordination.

2. As in the case of Poor Law administration, and especially in the distribution of outdoor relief, we have found great varieties of practice and sometimes a slipshod and purposeless giving which was altogether wasteful and very injurious; so in the case of the charities we have found instances of quite useless and ineffective gifts. The charities, both endowed and voluntary, are often checked and hampered by regulation, tradition and procedure in such a way as to render them, like the boards of guardians, self-centred and exclusive. They are not regarded and utilised as parts of a common organisation, though, however scattered and disconnected they appear, they have by intention been created to fulfil what is after all a common social purpose in many ways and subject to many differences. They continue to exist, just as they have come into existence, individual entities, each independent of the other, each fulfilling in separation its larger or lesser functions. They do not exchange information and have no common centre of inquiry and registration, except in so far as in some towns they may use the facilities which are placed at their disposal by Charity Organisation Committees. They stand aloof from each other and from the Poor Law, and the Poor Law from them. No doubt, like the Poor Law, they are, as we have said, tied and bound in many ways. But this state of things should not, we think, continue, and it need not do so. We are convinced, and the evidence has, in our opinion, amply shown, that the charities should be brought into the field of public work and responsibility, and that, expressly or tacitly, obligations should be imposed on them which are consistent with the purposes for which they were established; and we believe that if they are pressed and stimulated to fulfil these purposes vigorously in accordance with some accepted scheme of co-ordination, they will in their degree form a very real and effectual barrier to want and distress. It may be said, of course, that established casually, as various waves of thought and sentiment have passed over the country, they cannot now be endued with unity of purpose, and cannot, therefore, now take a responsible part in the administration of poor relief; and without question, to give coherence to the charities and thus augment their usefulness by co-operation, would entail the adoption of a definite constructive policy which would have to be carried out with very great patience and perseverance.

Yet so satisfied are we that the charities may become of infinitely greater service than they now are for the prevention of distress and degradation, that we propose to submit suggestions by the adoption of which they may, we think, find their place by degrees in a widespread auxiliary organisation or federation, which, working parallel to the official administration of poor relief, may assist the community very materially in the relief of the poor, the promotion of health and independence, and in much other cognate work.

The generally accepted method of charity.

3. As we shall show later on, the principles and methods of the administration of relief have been the subject of study and experiment during a large part of the past century in this country, in the United States of America and on the Continent; and as a result, among those who have been engaged in charitable work personally, and have followed the development of thought respecting it, there is a general agreement in regard to the main issues. It is now generally agreed that if charitable relief is to be of lasting service to the individual and his family and is to promote the well-being of the community, some such lines as the following should be adopted. Each application for aid or each case of distress should be considered individually, not merely in relation to the possibility or desirability of granting an allowance or making a gift—and so closing the matter, but in relation to some purpose or plan, which, if it be properly carried out, should produce lasting results. To effect this, the material facts that bear upon the question have to be ascertained either personally by voluntary workers, or in part by them, in part by paid or official assistants. The causes that have led to distress or want or degradation have to be learnt—not roughly generalised causes merely, such as widowhood, the largeness of a family, illness and the like, but causes, often more potent and less obvious, which lie in the character, habits and health of the family itself. From these data some plan of help should be formed, so far as it can be foreseen, sufficient to cope with the difficulties which have been ascertained; and with this object, according to the requirements of the case, assistance should be given, often with the help of friendly visitors who, being prepared to give time and thought to this branch of work, are also more or less systematically trained to do it well. By this method care is taken that whatever aid may be granted, it is, as far as possible, turned to good account. The visitor, wherever his services are necessary, may prevent want in many ways. He may continue to advise and to supervise, as occasion arises, until relations, who should assist, actually do so, or until, for instance, by forming new habits, the applicant becomes clean in house and person; or until, as circumstances alter, the family moves to other quarters, and new arrangements become possible for the well-being of parents or children. All this may be done according to the strength and quality of the force available, so long as the question is one of temporary help, or of the alteration or reform of the conditions of life in the home, and not a question of maintenance merely, under conditions in which improvement is impossible. In such circumstances, in many countries, if help is forthcoming at all, it is help which is given by way of maintenance in a poorhouse or some other similar institution, or in suitable cases by some form of continuous allowance.

4. Whether the relief be furnished from charitable sources or from a rate, and whether the visitors be voluntary or paid, this system of inquiry, purpose, plan, effectual aid and personal work, combined with the preservation of family ties and obligations, is equally applicable. And further, it is recognised that in any single case many remedies may be required. These remedies lie in many hands; and success may depend on their being used in conjunction. Hence action and fitting co-operation between the agencies which are suitable in the particular case, whether they be voluntary or official, is indispensable. And in this way the bodies, whatever they be, which administer general relief, become incidentally, by the mere expansion of their work, the active organisers of the relief of the community. They bring the relief in the forms in which it is required within the reach of individuals in distress; and whether the diversity of the charities be caused by the varying intentions of their founders or by the self-imposed regulations and procedure of their governors, they endeavour to neutralise its effect by stimulating and guiding the instinct of association in the direction of mutual help and united action. Thus in our discussion of the subject of charity and the relief of distress, we have before us a widely accepted method and standard of work, which may guide us in the development of a system of charitable relief as an adjunct and aid to the system of public relief.

II.—The Parallelism of Charity and the Poor Law.

The parallelism of charity and the Poor Law.

5. The administration of poor relief drawn from the rates and the administration of charitable relief run naturally parallel one to the other; and in view of our recommendations it is desirable to trace this parallelism. The Act entitled "An Act to redress the misemployment of lands, goods and stocks heretofore given to certain charitable uses," the 43rd of Eliz., c. 4, was passed in the same year as the "Act for the Relief of the Poor," 43rd Eliz., c. 2.[1] The preamble of the former Act, which defines the charities to which it applies, is still in force. It defines them by a kind of rough enumeration:—

> "The relief of aged, impotent and poor people; the maintenance of sick and maimed soldiers and mariners, schools of learning, free schools and scholars of universities; the repair of bridges, ports, havens, causeways, churches, seabanks, and highways; the education and preferment of orphans; the relief, stock, or maintenance for houses of correction; marriages of poor maids; supportation, aid, and help of young tradesmen, handicraftsmen, and persons decayed; the relief or redemption of prisoners or captives; and the aid or ease of poor inhabitants concerning payments of fifteens,* setting out of soldiers, and other taxes."

6. With this definition may be compared the objects of the Act of the same year for the relief of the poor (43 Eliz., c. 2):

> "For setting to work the children of all such whose parents shall not . . . be thought able to keep and maintain their children; for setting to work all such persons, married or unmarried, having no means to maintain them, use no ordinary and daily trade of life to get their living by; to set the poor on work; the necessary relief of the lame, impotent, old, blind and such other among them being poor and not able to work; for the putting out of such children to be apprentices."

3 William and Mary, c. 11, 12.

The method of meeting the wants of the poor by voluntary relief only had proved insufficient. But the aim of the act of Queen Elizabeth was not substitute a poor rate for voluntary relief, but to supplement it by a rate; and the churchwardens and overseers for a long time made voluntary collections for the purposes of relief under the Act.

7. Parallel to "the necessary relief of the lame, impotent, old, blind and others" who are "poor and unable to work" comes on the charitable side "the relief of aged, impotent and poor people"; and while in the Poor Law Act the children in large families are to be furnished with work, the Act on Charitable Uses refers to the education and preferment of orphans and the aid of poor maids and young tradesmen. In it no reference is made to apprenticeship; and "the relief, stock and maintenance for houses of correction" is set down as an object that falls within the province of charity, while the provision of employment for the men who have no "ordinary and daily trade of life" and for the poor is left to the Poor Law. These differences suggest a vague division of labour between charity and the Poor Law, according to the several provinces which were assigned to each at the time.

7 James, c. 1, sec. 3.

8. The administration of the Elizabethan Poor Law may also be compared with the administration of these charities. The charities were in general administered by the churchwardens of the parish or by the churchwardens and overseers, who were the authority for deciding upon cases under the Poor Law Act. Thus it may be said that the administration of poor relief for which a rate was paid was to a great extent in the hands of those who distributed the parish charities. The "oblations and alms" of the parishioners "for their poor neighbours" were also, it would seem, "in the custody of the parson, vicar or curate" and of "the churchwardens or any other two honest men to be appointed from year to year."[2] Thus the administration of Poor Law relief and of charitable relief in the parish, whether endowed or voluntary, was to a great extent in the hands of the two-fold authority of churchwardens and overseers.

9. And, further, for the better preservation of the endowed charities the Charitable Uses Act provided a method of investigation and order. Commissioners were appointed by the Lord Chancellor who were authorised to summon a jury of the county, in which

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* A tax on personal property levied for the last time in 1626.

[1] *Cf.* the three Acts of 39 of Eliz. for the relief of the poor, for charities, and for the repression of rogues and vagabonds. [2] *Cf.* The Royal Injunctions, 1559, Sec. xxv. Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, 1715, to inspect the Poor's Rates and Scavenger Rates, within the Cities of London and Westminster, and the Weekly Bills of Mortality. Journals, Vol. xviii., p. 392. Some account of the hospital and Parish of St. Giles-in-the-Field, Middlesex, by the late Mr. John Parton, 1822, pp. 259. 265. 281. *Cf.* Heale 69055–69063, 69068.

the property of the charity lay, with a view to the facts respecting the alleged misuse of the charity being ascertained and the "setting down" of "orders" to ensure its proper use in the future. And these orders had to be executed by the parties concerned and were registered in Chancery. As the management of the charities was a question of the administration of a trust, petitions in regard to their mismanagement came before the Court of Chancery; and eventually in 1853 the Charity Commission was created as an administrative tribunal for the quicker and more economical settlement of many questions relating to endowed charities, for the supervision of their accounts and the better observation of their trusts. The control of the poor rate on the other hand was given to the justices to whom the churchwardens and overseers at the end of each year had to render their "account of all sums of money by them received, or rated and sessed and not received." Eventually in 1834 the general supervision of the Poor Laws was placed in the hands of the Poor Law Commission, now the Local Government Board, and officers appointed by them and acting under their Orders audited the accounts of all boards of guardians; and "the allowance of the poor rate by the justices is now deemed a mere ministerial act, which the justices cannot legally refuse, if the rate be presented to them in proper form by the proper officers."[1] In both cases the supervisory control, general and financial, has passed to a permanent central department.

10. In different places at different periods, after the passing of the Act of Queen Elizabeth, the comparative importance of the parochial charities in relation to poor relief dwindled. The expenditure on poor relief from the rates becomes larger and larger, and the responsibilities of the churchwardens became relatively insignificant; and later when the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 was passed and unions instead of parishes became the area for the administration of the Poor Law, all direct connection between it and the administration of the parochial charities became impossible.

11. It is our duty to consider how the correlative action of the Poor Law and of the charities, whose field of work has now very largely increased, can be revived and resettled on the terms and conditions which are necessitated by the altered circumstances of the present day. The policy of charitable administration, it is evident, is to endeavour to draw into associative unity and consistency of purpose the energy, devotion, and resources of the trustees, managers, and officers of charitable bodies, and to create, as far as may be possible, an outer circle of friends and assistants whose duty it may be to prevent distress and on some settled plan share with the local authority for poor relief the responsibility of dealing with it.

III.—The Poor Law Commissioners of 1834 and Relief at the Home.

12. The desirability of voluntary help and the necessity of outdoor relief or allowances in certain classes of applicants is frankly recognised by the Royal Commissioners of 1834.

13. In regard to this policy, however, a question arises at the outset, and we may conveniently consider it here. It covers the whole field of co-operation between charity and the Poor Law; and upon our decision in regard to it will depend the possibility of our acceptance of any general scheme of co-operation such as we have suggested. It affects town and country districts alike, but at the present time, when pauperism is to so large an extent urban, it especially affects the towns. The question is technically that of "partial relief," as it was termed by the Commissioners.

14. To the principles affecting indoor and outdoor relief we have referred elsewhere. But, as we have said, we now propose to constitute a system of voluntary aid parallel to that of the Poor Law or Public Assistance, and the question which the Report of 1834 suggests is, Under what conditions, if any, can there be such a supervision or control over relief at the home as would prevent its becoming partial, purposeless and injurious?

15. Institutional relief includes the whole maintenance of the person assisted and in that sense cannot be 'partial.' But can the administrators of relief at the home, whether

[1] Poor Law Statutes, Vol. I., p. 541. J. Brooke Little.

it be provided from rates or from voluntary sources ensure the assertion of a similar sufficient or complete control? On this the efficacy of relief at the home depends, whatever be the form that the relief itself may take.

Cases to be dealt with by charity or by outdoor relief. "Hard cases" of the "able-bodied."

16. First, the Commissioners refer to the hard cases of the able-bodied; and "where cases of real hardship occur, the remedy," they say, "must be applied by individual charity, a virtue for which no system of compulsory relief can be or ought to be a substitute." Accordingly, in their judgement individual and voluntary charity should deal with all exceptional cases of this kind, and should be so administered as to be capable of doing so.

The "partially disabled."

17. Another class, to which the Commissioners refer, is the "partially disabled" persons who are not "indigent and helpless" but who, being "not able-bodied," are "from age or infirmity deemed unable to maintain themselves entirely."[1] For these, as well as for the able-bodied, the Commissioners considered partial relief undesirable.

> "They should either be set to work by the guardians in such a manner as may be suitable to their condition, or should not be suffered to do any work on their own account." "When the guardians feel under the obligation to provide entirely for these persons, they will be more likely to obtain adequate relief than when partially assisted, inasmuch as where relief is given in aid of earnings there is a constant desire to give the least possible amount, and the workhouse is made use of not for its legitimate purpose only, but is offered to the applicant with the view of inducing him to accept in lieu of it the smallest pittance."

18. Our investigations have proved to us that this result is not only quite possible but that it actually obtains at the present time. It does not, indeed, appear that wages given to the partially disabled and partially assisted tend to keep down the general level of wages in any particular trade or business. The gross effect of such subsidies is too small to influence the general trend of wages. But on the administrative side the objection remains and has still to be met. It is difficult to ascertain the facts, the amount of the income or earnings from other sources, and to control the conditions of relief. "For the able-bodied the remedy set forth in the statute [of Queen Elizabeth] was to make the indolent industrious," and "in proposing further remedial measures" the Commissioners kept "that object steadily in view";[2] but in the case of the partially disabled, the proposal to apply seclusive treatment has hardly been pressed, though on various grounds it is now proposed for a large number of the class as, for instance, for the feeble-minded;[3] and it may well be extended to others. Hence we may say that the partially disabled remain in great part, at least, applicants for treatment either by public or by private relief at the home. And the difficulty of ascertaining the facts and controlling the conditions of relief must be solved, as far as may be on "out-relief" lines.

19. Of widows, too, the Commissioners of 1834 wrote, treating them as an exception.[4] And in "the form of the Consolidated Order" published in the Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, that for the year 1836, widows are included as one of the classes for whom the guardians may order relief—"widows," that is, "who are destitute and are burthened with children incapable of working." They are referred to, not as "indigent," but as "destitute," for destitution is a state consistent with ability to labour, and thus, in their case also, the uncertainties and inconveniences of "partial relief" arise.

The indigent and helpless.

20. Lastly, there are the "impotent, using that word as comprehending all except the able-bodied and their families."[5] In regard to these, the Commissioners in the same Report write:—

> "No use can be made of the labour of the aged and sick, and there is little room for jobbing, if their pensions are paid in money. Accordingly . . . even in places distinguished in general by the most wanton parochial profusion, the allowances to the aged and infirm are moderate."

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[1] Report on the Further Amendment of the Poor Law, 1839, pp. 71, 72. *Also* pp. 147–149, 153, 155, 156. [2] Report of 1834, p. 262. [3] Report of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded, 1908 [Cd. 4202]. [4] Report of 1834, p. 42. [5] Report of 1834, p. 42. Report on the Further Amendment of the Poor Law, 1839, pp. 61 and 71; and Second Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, p. 92.

And to the "impotent" as "indigent" the guardians under the form of the Consolidated Order of 1836 were enabled to give relief, for "indigence [is] the state of a person unable to labour or unable to obtain, in return for his labour, the means of subsistence." The words of the form are:—

> "In the following cases of persons who are . . . paupers . . . namely:
>
> Persons who are indigent and helpless from age;
>
> Persons who are indigent and helpless from being crippled or from incurable disease;
>
> Persons who are indigent and helpless from temporary sickness;
>
> Widows who are destitute and are burthened with children incapable of working;
>
> the guardians may order weekly relief to be given, partly in money and partly in kind; that is to say, in articles of food, clothing, fuel, medicines or other articles of absolute necessity."*

21. These two classes of applicants, the widows and the indigent and helpless, might, the Commissioners suggested, receive outdoor relief or relief at the home; and the partially disabled, in fact, did so very generally, contrary to their advice. But, whether the relief be from the rates or from voluntary sources, in all these cases it is "partial," not necessarily in the economic sense, but in an administrative sense. For, as has been proved to us abundantly, most outdoor relief is "partial." As usually administered, it is not a subsistence, but a grant towards subsistence. There is often little or no evidence, whether it is too much or too little, and it is frequently given on the assumption that it is supplemented by aid from other quarters. It is often, indeed, a speculative gift made towards meeting an unascertained need. We have to ascertain, therefore, in regard to outdoor relief or relief at the home, by what method may this "partiality" of relief be avoided and adequacy take its place.

The lesson of voluntary institutions that give no partial relief.

22. The Commissioners, as we have shown, supported their opinion that the relief of the able-bodied should be indoor or seclusive relief, on the ground, amongst others, that such relief was adequate.[1] "Even if the condition of the independent labourer were to remain as it now is, and the pauper were to be reduced, avowedly, below that condition, he might still," they said "be adequately supplied with the necessaries of life." Following out this thought, the Commissioners recognised the good results achieved by voluntary institutions, which adopted this principle and which gave no partial relief."

> "The circumstances that conduce to the success of these excellent institutions," they said, "appear to be, first, that by classification of the objects of relief, the appropriate course of treatment is better ascertained, and its application and the general management rendered less difficult; and secondly, that the co-operation of persons of leisure and information is obtained."

23. In fact in institutional relief there is under good management a continuous and comparatively adequate control over the person assisted, with classification and appropriate treatment, and co-operation. If these be the conditions of success in institutional relief, it would seem that *mutatis mutandis* similar conditions might have been sought for and proposed in regard to relief at the home; but the question was not worked out. A reference is indeed made to selection by merit.[2] If merit was to be the touchstone of relief, the Commissioners said very rightly:—

Possibilities of supervision and investigation.

> "We see no possibility of finding an adequate number of officers whose character and decision would obtain sufficient popular confidence to remove the impression of the possible rejection of some deserving cases."

But even if merit were not the touchstone, experience gave no prospect of success on other lines. The contrary, rather. Independent labourers in the administration of the funds of their friendly societies had "long acted on the principle of rendering the condition of a person receiving their relief less eligible than that of an independent labourer." They gave allowances, but avoided "partial

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*It will be noted that the Commissioners apply the word "indigent" to those who are helpless—to the "impotent" of the Act of Queen Elizabeth who are "unable to work." But the widow who, like the able-bodied generally, is presumably able to work, is called "destitute."

[1] Report of 1834, pp. 228, 229, 308. [2] Report of 1834, p. 272.

relief," not allowing members to remain on the sick list after they had become able to work; and this result they secured by "incessant vigilance." "It was generally provided by the rules that a domiciliary visit should be paid by the stewards, or by a member, generally every day; these visits have to be paid at uncertain times, that they may increase the chances of detection." And yet these precautions were "ineffectual." If this investigation failed, what conclusion could there be but that "the only definite ground for relief is utter inability to work"[1]; and to this utter inability to work, as we have seen, to the assistance of the indigent and helpless, the Commissioners desired to limit outdoor relief almost entirely. And thus the question was closed. Outdoor relief was to be definitely limited to particular classes. In that limitation, it was hoped, safety would lie. Subject to the terms of the Poor Law Amendment Act, the guardians were entrusted with "the direction and control within the union" "of all relief to the poor," and, in spite of the admitted difficulties of investigation on these lines, paid relieving officers were appointed to "receive all applications for relief, and to examine into the merit and circumstances of each case, and report the same to the guardians at their next weekly meeting."[2]

Methods applicable to relief at the home.

24. Thus the Commissioners in carrying out their scheme in 1835 and 1836 had after all, to give scope for outdoor relief, including, in fact, the outdoor relief of the partially disabled, and to check it, as far as it was possible, by investigation; and it may fairly be urged, that they pressed their argument as to the impossibility of establishing a sufficiently vigilant administration too absolutely. The precautions adopted by friendly societies to prevent malingering may be ineffectual; but they are so only in a lesser degree. They have not failed seriously. The societies themselves are evidence to the contrary. Under good management they have prospered in spite of the difficulty of stopping all malingering. The human material and conditions with which the Commissioners were concerned did not admit of so absolute a judgment as they formed and pressed home. And allowing for some margin for mistake and aberration we may say that with good organisation and management, in spite of great difficulties, there may be a sufficient supervision and control of cases, which, after proper inquiry, are found suitable for relief at the home.

25. What method then should be applied? If the persons suitable for public assistance or "outdoor allowances" should generally be the indigent and helpless of the three classes mentioned above—persons who require "necessary relief" and are unable to work, there is a great mass of miscellaneous cases, which do not come under this category or do so only in part. For these voluntary methods of assistance, which are more easily adaptable than the methods of public assistance, may well be forthcoming; and thus on the general lines of the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834, a division of labour may be adopted with "classification," "appropriate treatment" and co-operation "with persons of leisure and information," in fact, on the same conditions as those which the Commissioners found to prevail in effectual institutional relief, but applied in other ways.

The Commissioners limited the classes eligible for outdoor relief and centralised its operations. Charitable administration even at the time had taken a different line of development. The theory of the day was in urban areas to divide parishes into districts and to appoint a deacon or visitor to each district; and this was consistent with the older traditions both of voluntary and municipal organisation.[3] But beyond the formation of relief districts as the areas for the work of relieving officers, outdoor relief, like indoor relief, was centralised in unions, and the forces of general charity were almost entirely ignored. Apart from Mr. Goschen's Minute and from special developments to which we shall refer later on, the entry in the Application and Report Book,[4] which we have most often found to be quite insufficiently filled up:—

> "If receiving regular or temporary relief, and any other, and what relief from clubs, charitable institutions, Government pensions or otherwise; such relief, pension, or allowance, or contribution to be described and the amount stated."—

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[1] Report of 1834, pp. 232, 272, 273, 274. [2] Form of Consolidated Order, Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, pp. 81, 92. [3] Hanna's Memoirs of Thomas Chalmers, ii., 297; and Report of Mr. E. C. Tufnell to the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, 1833; and *cf.* First Report of the Subdivision of Parishes Commissions, 1849, par. 10. Munsterberg, Vol. ix., 100300 (5). [4] General Consolidated Order, 24th July, 1847, Article 215; and General Order for Accounts (Unions), 14 Jan., 1867, Article 23, and Schedule F.

remains as an indication of the utmost that has been done in this direction. On the other hand, in regard not only to official but also to voluntary relief at the home, the principles of administration now almost universally accepted, in order to obtain advantages similar to those which the Commissioners had noted in the case of voluntary institutional relief, are decentralisation, individualisation, and co-operation. We have to consider how far these principles have been applied in actual administration in this country and elsewhere, and whether or how far they meet the difficulties, which the Commissioners thought were inherent in the system of outdoor relief, except in the case of the "indigent and helpless."

IV.—The Classes of Charities.*

Charities classed by reason of the sources of their income.

26. Charities, as a whole, endowed and voluntary, have to be considered for our purpose from different points of view; and they may be classed according to the origin and source of their income, according to their *status*, and in practical administration, according to their objects.

27. Considered in relation to the sources of their income there are endowed charities, with, as subordinate groups, ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical charities; mixed charities partly endowed and partly voluntary; voluntary charities, which include subscription charities in which the members pay contributions for the assistance of those who are in want either generally or in relation to some particular form of help; and benevolents ocieties, in which the members pay contributions for other members of their own craft or trade, institutions which may be described as partly charities, partly friendly societies.

Charities classed according to their *status*.

28. These charities may also be classified according to their public *status*, to which we will refer later: as eleemosynary or charitable corporations "established for the perpetual distribution of the free alms or bounty of the founder"—"created solely to fulfil a charitable purpose and holding their property in every case as trustees for the accomplishment of that purpose;" as charities held in trust by civil corporations; as charities held in trust by private trustees;† as charities registered under the Friendly Societies Acts; as charities registered under the Companies Acts; as voluntary charities unregistered, whose managers are responsible to their contributors only.[1]

Definitions of "charity" generally endowed or not endowed.

29. But broadly "What is a charity?" With the limitations in wh h the word is ere used, the general answer may be given—an institution or society founded and supported for a public, benevolent or eleemosynary purpose by free donation; and a "charity" thus stands contrasted with all institutions founded and supported by compulsory donation in the way of rates or taxes.

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* Note.—To prevent misunderstanding, it should, perhaps, be said here that in the following pages we are not concerned with educational charities, whether ecclesiastical or not ecclesiastical, but with eleemosynary charities; and further, neither here nor elsewhere in the discussion respecting registration do we make any reference to the endowed or the voluntary charities of churches or congregations granted for religious purposes, nor to the voluntary charities of churches or congregations provided for eleemosynary purposes. To charities of any kind it would be left open to register, if they so desired, and if otherwise eligible under paragraph 229.

† The definitions of "charity" under the Charitable Trusts Acts are:—

Definitions of endowed charity. Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Sec. 66.

(1) "The expression 'charity' shall mean every endowed foundation and institution, taking, or to take, effect in England and Wales, and coming within the meaning, purview, or interpretation of the statute of the forty-third year of Queen Elizabeth, chapter four, or as to which, in the administration or revenues or property thereof, the Court of Chancery has or may exercise jurisdiction.

Charitable Trusts Act, 1855, Sec. 48.

(2) "In the construction of the principal Act and this Act [the Charitable Trusts Act of 1855] the word 'charity' shall include every institution in England and Wales endowed for charitable purposes, but shall not include any charity or institution expressly exempted from the operation of the Act of 1853, and words applying to any person or individual shall apply also to a corporation, whether sole or aggregate."

Re Clergy Orphan Corporation [1894], ch. 3, 145, 150, 151.

"Endowment" includes all property of any description belonging to or held in trust for a charity, whether held upon trusts and conditions which render it lawful to apply the capital to the maintenance of the charity, or upon trusts which confine the charitable application to the income.

[1] The Law of Charities and Mortmain, being the fourth edition of Tudor's Charitable Trusts, 1906, pp. 62 and 63.

Charities classed according to purpose.

30. As we have seen, there is a very great variety in the form and *status* of charities. In point of fact, however, considered as parts of a common organisation of relief, or as affording assistance of different kinds for persons in distress, the division of charities into classes proceeds in another way, irrespective of whether the charities be, for example, eleemosynary corporations or charities supported by voluntary contributions. They are classified according to their purpose, the class of persons whom they assist, as for instance, the blind, the epileptic, the orphan, the homeless, etc. And the problem before us consists largely of a recognition and practical enforcement of this side of the question. Side by side with this practical administrative classification come the Poor Law or, speaking more generally, the rate or tax-supported institutions, which also have to be taken into account as fulfilling certain specific purposes.

V.—Endowed Charities.

31. To return to the endowed charities.

Alienation in perpetuity in the nature of a privilege: hence permissive only and controlled.

To be allowed to alienate land or other property in perpetuity for some particular purpose is to enjoy what is in the nature of a privilege. To alienate land was to free it from obligations which, if it were not alienated, would remain due from the possessor to his superior lords. They, by reason of the alienation would lose "their escheats, wardships, relief and the like." Accordingly for the alienation of land in mortmain the licence of the King ultimately became necessary. And, justified by a public policy which aims at preventing land from passing out of private use and control, the principle of the disutility of alienation in perpetuity still holds.[1] Accordingly the most recent Act, the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Act of 1891, leaves all kinds of property, except lands and tenements and hereditaments, capable of being disposed of in favour of charity, as freely as to an individual. If lands, tenements and hereditaments are given by will to charity they have to be sold, though the benefit of the gift, the money realised, remains to the charity. But it is "lawful . . . for the Charity Commissioners, if satisfied that land assured by will to or, for benefit of, any charitable use, or proposed to be purchased out of personal estate by will directed to be laid out in the purchase of land, is required for actual occupation for the purposes of the charity and not as an investment, by order to sanction the retention or acquisition, as the case may be of such land." If lands, tenements and hereditaments are given by instrument *inter vivos* the gift is subject to certain restrictions which are set out in Section 4 of the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Act of 1888.

32. On the other hand if the State desires to encourage gifts for public purposes, as sometimes it has done, it has to provide means for protecting the gifts in perpetuity. It has to secure that the property itself is not turned to other purposes, and that the conditions imposed upon the gift by the donor will be observed. It is with this object that the Charity Commission was established. Between the years 1819 and 1837, while the administration of the Poor Law was being reconsidered and ultimately resettled, investigations in regard to endowed charities were made by what are known as Lord Brougham's Commissioners.[2] They found that "funds, and even lands, were being lost from time to time; and that administration was not always strictly in accordance with the trusts; and that various trusts were either incapable of being carried out or were doing more harm than good."[3] These words "not always strictly in accordance with the trusts" hardly convey indeed the impression of waste, confusion, and misdirection which the Reports themselves leave on the mind of the reader. Hence, finally on the Report of a Royal Commission appointed in 1849 the Act of 1853 for "the better administration of charitable trusts" was passed and the Charity Commission was founded as a permanent body.

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[1] Tudor on Charities and Mortmain (1906), pp. 8, 18. [2] Report of Select Committee appointed to examine and consider the Evidence in the several Reports presented to the House from the Commissioners, 1835 [449]. First Report of the Commissioners, 1850, p. 4. [3] Sir George Young, 31109, 31190.

VI.—The Charity Commissioners.

33. The field of work of the Charity Commission is represented by those foundations or trusts which have a charitable purpose.

34. The purposes which have been held to be charitable are indicated by the 43rd Eliz., c. 4, which has been quoted above, and by analogy the definition by enumeration there set out has been applied to other purposes not there specifically mentioned.[1] Now generally they are placed under one or other of four heads :— Charitable purposes

(1) "The relief of poverty and disability," including "the relief of sickness";

(2) "Children who are under legal disabilities." These are, "it is said," the special objects of charity, and the charity in their case now takes the form of apprenticing and of education," but "education is now transferred for all purposes from the Charity Commissioners to the Board of Education."

(3) The promotion of religion; and

(4) "The benefit of the public."

In general "a purpose, in order to be charitable, must be directed to the benefit of the community or a section of the community."[2]

35. In order to carry out the objects of the Charitable Trusts Acts and to secure the due administration of charitable trusts,[3] the Commissioners have power: to examine and inquire into all or any charities, and the nature and objects, administration, management, and results thereof, and the value, condition, management, and application of the property; to require accounts and statements of all trustees or persons concerned in the administration of any charity; to require trustees and others to attend and to be examined; to take evidence on oath either by themselves or by their Assistant Commissioners.* They have also to receive and consider applications for advice from trustees and others concerned in the administration of a charity; and persons acting on the advice of the Board are indemnified. The Commissioners have thus very large and independent advisory powers. They have powers also for preventing unnecessary legal proceedings on the part of charities; and they may authorise proceedings, and, in relation to such proceedings, they may have local inquiry made by their Assistant Commissioners.[4] They may empower the trustees of a charity upon satisfactory proof to discharge any officer who is negligent, unfit, or incompetent. Upon representations made to them by the trustees they have power to make order under their seal for the granting of leases, and for the making of roads, laying down of drains, building or repairing, rebuilding or removal of houses, "although such leases or acts respectively shall not be authorised or permitted by the trust." "Under special circumstances" also they may authorise the sale or exchange of the land of a charity. Through their agency the lands of charities may be vested in the Official Trustee of Charity lands and stock and securities in the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds; and the capital of the charity, whether land or securities, is thus secured in trust for the use of the charity, while the income is expended by the trustees themselves.[5] Subject to appeal the Commissioners have also a definite and prescribed power of making orders. They may, for instance, remove or appoint trustees or make an order for a scheme. In case of abuse they certify the Attorney-General, with a view to proceedings. "They do not act on their own power; they are not a court of law, nor are they prosecutors in their own person; they certify the Attorney-General and the Attorney-General has, of course, full power to say: 'The Powers of the Charity Commission.

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* *Cf.* Appendix No. I., Report of Select Committee on Charity Commission, 1894 [221] p. 305. Memorandum on the origin and scope of the relations between the Charity Commission and Trustees of Charity; and Appendices No. xii., A and C, and No. xxiii. For the latter, revised to date, *see* Charities Appendix of this Report.

[1] Young, 31114. [2] Tudor on Charities and Mortmain, p. 37. [3] Young, 31133, 31140; Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Secs. 9, 10, 11, 12, and 1855, Secs. 6, 7, 9. [4] Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Secs. 16, 17, 23. [5] Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Secs. 48, 49, 50 and 51, and 1887, Sec. 4.

Commissioners are wrong in this, and I will not proceed' or 'the Commissioners are making too much of a small matter, and I do not think proceedings ought to be taken; but when the Attorney-General does move it is generally sufficient." Thus the Commissioners supervise the management of estates under powers delegated to them from the Court of Chancery and similar in many ways to those applicable to trusts in general.[1] Their office is also a centre of investigation and registration, advice, and control. Indeed, we may say that where the voluntary charities are weak, the endowed charities are strong. The latter have a centre for registration, the former have none. The endowed charities have, the voluntary charities have not, the advantage of an official trustee; and, as we shall show, instances occur in which property purchased by voluntary contributions passes surreptitiously into private hands. For endowed charities there is a recognised centre for the receipt of statements and accounts, for the voluntary charities there is none. And besides these, legislation, we think, might produce many indirect results that would be very beneficial.

36. Before passing to a discussion of the present position of endowed charities and to the conclusions that we may submit with a view to increasing the utility of these charities as parts of a common organisation for the relief of distress, we would draw attention to two questions—namely, on the one hand, the limitations imposed on the intervention of the Commission, and, on the other hand, the power of the Commission to make schemes and to adapt old gifts to new purposes of a kindred nature.

VII.—The Limitations on the Work of the Charity Commission.

Limitations imposed on the intervention of the Commission. The £50 limit.

37. The first limitation is due to a desire to exclude large and important charities from the intervention of the Commission unless the trustees themselves wished them to intervene.[2] If the gross annual income of the charity, exclusively of the yearly annual value of any buildings or land used wholly for the purposes thereof and not yielding any pecuniary income, amounts to £50 or upwards, the Commission can make no order, except upon application of the trustees. The Commissioners have full power to inquire in regard to all charities, but this limitation ties their hands in the case of many charities in which on other grounds their intervention would be most desirable; and it seems reasonable that the income of the charity should not be the sole condition by which they should be guided in making orders under the jurisdiction vested in them by the Charitable Trusts Acts.[3] If the policy is adopted of bringing the charities together for co-operative work, this proviso should, we think, be withdrawn. It would seriously interfere in the development of such a policy.

38. Next under Section 62 of the Charitable Trusts Act of 1853, there are limitations rather roughly defined by which certain classes of institutions are excluded, institutions that are educational and religious rather than eleemosynary.[4] Educational endowed charities are all now under the supervision of the Board of Education.[5] Friendly or benefit societies and savings banks belong to another Department and are excluded. Societies for religious or charitable purposes wholly maintained by voluntary contributions are excluded. In the case of charities partly maintained by endowments partly by voluntary contributions—the voluntary income is excluded from the cognisance of the Commission; so are donations or bequests legally applicable as income in aid of voluntary institutions; so are such moneys if appropriated or invested for some definite object or purpose connected with the charity under any rule or resolution of the governing body; so are donations or bequests in aid of any fund set apart for such a purpose.[6]

39. Thus, though possessed of property and having to that extent the element of perpetuity which would justify its treatment as an endowed charity, a voluntary institution may escape obligations similar to those imposed by the Charitable Trusts Acts, may send in no accounts and be liable to no supervision. We are inclined to agree with Sir

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[1] Charitable Trusts Act, 1860, 23 & 24 Vict., c. 136, Sec. 2, and Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Sec. 2 & 3. Young, 31133. Young, 31125. [2] Charitable Trusts Act, 1860, Sec. 4. [3] Young, 31131, 31209. [4] Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Sec. 62. [5] The Board of Education (Powers) Order in Council, 1900. [6] Young, 31166, 31242, 31245, Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853, Sec. 21; and 1855, Sec. 15, *re* Church Army (1905), 74 L. J., Ch. 624.

George Young that in these cases the question should not be "What is the origin of the property?"[1] But "What is the nature of the property now?" Is it a property in the nature of an endowment at the present time? We think that on the acquisition of land for the purposes of the charity the voluntary charity should *ipso facto* come within the jurisdiction of the Charity Commission. Several cases, the details of which are furnished to us in a Memorandum drawn up by the London Charity Organisation Society, confirm this view.[2] Some of them are as follows:—

(1) F. has founded and maintains a large number of institutions out of charitable contributions The properties have been acquired in his own name, or in the names of members of his family. He has declared his intention of handing them over to trustees for public purposes, as soon as they are free from debt, and in one instance this has been done.

(2) The Society was started many years ago by the late Mr. G., described as founder and sole manager.

In 1891 he purchased a house at the sea-side for the purposes of a convalescent home by means of public subscriptions and the issue of seventy mortgage bonds of £100 each. In 1900 he disposed of this house to a company for £14,000 or £15,000. The company's accounts soon got into confusion and a winding-up order was made on April 14th, 1908, upon a creditor's petition presented March 31st, 1908.

(3) This hospital was established in 1887 by Mr. H., a medical man, and his brother.

The institution had no treasurer, and year after year the balance sheets showed substantial deficits, which were said to be liquidated by advances from Mr. H. himself, until his claim against the hospital reached the amount of £3,207. The accounts, which disclosed "Cash advanced in 1887, 1888, 1889, and 1890, £2,425 8s. 10d." were not audited until 1891, when they were certified by a chartered accountant not in private practice. Mr. H. admitted that he had no documentary evidence of his claim, and formally cancelled the alleged debt. It did not appear, however, that he was ever in a position to make these advances, since during the period in which they were said to be made, three county court judgments were registered against him, while within a few months of his making the institution a formal present of £3,207, he had a distraint in his house for rent.

(4) These Homes were founded in 1875 by Mr. J., for the maintenance of deaf mute children from four years of age in the neighbourhood of elementary schools, where special instruction was given on the oral system. They were supported by voluntary contributions, and were under the personal superintendence of Mr. J., who was treasurer, and managed the finances, under which there was an ever increasing debt to him.

In January, 1898, negotiations were entered into between the London School Board and Mr. J. for a transference of a portion of the Homes to the Board, but the accumulated debt and the length of the leases presented insuperable difficulties.

On Mr. J.'s death, in April, 1898, the debt amounted to over £3,000. The Homes, with one exception, were then closed, and the executors under his will sought to dispose of the property as his private estate. This claim was resisted by the committee of the remaining Home, and by an Order of the Court of Chancery an Honorary Receiver was appointed. The Receiver died in March, 1900, and the Home had then been closed for a year.

40. In all these cases, and others also might be quoted, sums of money have been raised by widespread charitable appeals. They have been in part applied to the lease or purchase of houses, which remain the private property of the founder, and they are, or may be, treated as private property by himself in his will or by his creditors in the event of his incurring debt or becoming insolvent.

Conclusion.

41. We conclude that Section 62 of the Charitable Trusts Act of 1853 should be amended; that in all cases in which money is raised by charitable gifts and is invested wholly or in part in property by purchase or by lease of premises, the society or institution, on whose behalf the charitable gifts are received, should come within the terms of the definition of charities dealt with by the Charity Commission.

Incorporation by Act of Parliament.

42. Other limitations depend upon the *status* of a charity. An eleemosynary corporation created by Act of Parliament can only be altered by Act of Parliament unless, or in so far as, the powers of the Charity Commission are expressly reserved by the Act.[3] Accordingly the Charity Commission in these cases have to put in operation the old jurisdiction which the Commission possess under the Charitable Trusts Act of 1853 to

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[1] 31166. [2] Charities Appendix. [3] Young, 31129, Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Sec. 54.

make Parliamentary schemes.[1] "That has been done and several excellent schemes have been passed," Sir George Young told us; "although, of course, the usefulness of the provision is limited by the very small amount of time which Parliament has to give to such matters; and also by the fact that, unless a scheme is unanimously accepted, so long as there is any objection at all, owing to the forms of the House of Commons, it cannot get through." By this relatively cumbrous method of an amending Act, the exclusion of outside control which the Act of Parliament confers on the corporation is through the agency of the Charity Commission in some degree neutralised, to the great benefit of the charity.

Incorporation by Charter.

43. The constitution of a charity incorporated by the grant of a Charter or by Letters Patent cannot be altered by the Charity Commission, except in so far as their powers are expressly reserved in the Charter itself.[2] "It is the custom now," Sir George Young said, "on the recommendation of the Commissioners, to whom private Acts affecting charities are always referred, to insert clauses reserving the jurisdiction of the Commissioners, but in former days that was not done, and in the result a great many charities find themselves with a far too stereotyped form of constitution." The same comment applies to charities incorporated by charter; and in their case the only means of preventing a like result has been "to obtain from the Privy Council a promise to consider the insertion in all future Charters of a reservation of the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners." It no doubt adds to the dignity of a charity to receive a Charter; but in the interests of the progress of charitable administration, we would urge very strongly that ample consideration should be given to the question which has been submitted by Sir George Young to the authorities of the Privy Council.

> "Everything," he said, "which once admits the interest of the unborn ought properly to be under the supervision and the protection of a centralised body, like the Charity Commissioners, independent of popular election, who can secure that those interests are not overlooked. . . . All the interests, all the influences, and all the associations of bodies and companies of people at present in existence are on one side in this matter, and on the other side is the interest of those for whose sake the endowment is permitted to be an exception to the general rule of English law against perpetuities."

44. In regard to these two limitations, then, in affecting eleemosynary corporations created by Act of Parliament and those incorporated by Charter, there should be reservations to give the Charity Commission power to act in the future on the lines of the Charitable Trusts Acts. A private Act in a matter of large public importance should not practically override a public Act, unless for some conspicuous and altogether exceptional reason. In the main the duty of bringing all charities into a common relation one with another on the administrative side is of paramount public importance, for only in this way can that common spirit and purpose prevail amongst them which may make them responsible agents for the service of the community. To have in the Charity Commission a common central authority for the protection of their property and for their general assistance is one method of promoting this. If the Commission does not fulfil this purpose, as it is at present constituted, endeavours should be made to revise its constitution and to equip it thoroughly well for its task. And we would urge that this policy and not a policy of exemption and limitation should be adopted in regard to it. To leave it in charge of a large branch of most useful work, but not to enable it to do that work thoroughly, is the worst policy of all.

VIII.—The Application of the Doctrine of Cy-pres.

45. In the course of time the objects for which endowments have been made may change greatly. Objects beneficial, when, for instance, there is no Poor Law, may be deemed to be sufficiently met when outdoor relief is generally available; and new legislation, as in the case of education, may in many ways supply from the rates or taxes what was formerly in its measure supplied by endowed charities. The population, too,

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[1] Thirty-seventh Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1890, Sec. (17) [Cd. 5986]. [2] Young, 31128, 31130, 31240, 31241. Tudor on Charities and Mortmain, pp. 185, 196, 507.

may move from one district to another and a wealthy endowment established for the benefit of many may in the course of time be used with doubtful advantage for the relief of a few. Hence "courts of equity have always exercised the power of varying the means of carrying out the charity from time to time, so as to secure more effectually the benefits intended."[1] This process of adaptation is now largely enforced by the schemes of the Commissioners.

46. Sir George Young described the application of the principle of *cy-pres* in the revision of charities, as follows[2]:—

> "In the first place," he said, "the main intention of the founder is to be regarded, and for the purpose of giving effect to the main intention the means prescribed by the founder may, if necessary, be altered; secondly, where the design itself requires modification, there are various ways in which it may be modified. Amongst others, to take the case of a charity which has largely increased in wealth, the class of beneficiaries may be enlarged; another class would not, however, be substituted, nor would another be allowed by force of circumstances, or, as a consequence of general legislation, to acquire the benefits. . . . Purposes found harmful or liable to abuse, and purposes of no practical benefit, or of benefit small in proportion to the funds expended, may be modified or superseded."

Consolidation of charities.

47. In using these adjustive powers for the resettlement of charities on new lines,[3] it has been the policy of the Commissioners to suggest that, not the one or two charities only, in regard to which application may have been made to them, but all the several charities administered by trustees for the same parish or in the same place should be dealt with under a common scheme. After inquiry the funds which are available are then consolidated and allotted to different purposes according to a general interpretation of the doctrine of *cy-pres*. This doctrine is applied specially to doles—gifts payable, generally speaking, to the poor of a parish, sometimes given or bequeathed before the establishment of the Poor Law of Queen Elizabeth, but very frequently after that date.[4] The conditions under which these doles have been provided as gifts to the poor are very various, and, distributed merely as a supplement to the small resources of poor persons, they have been shown to be very injurious, as the evidence which we will submit later on indicates. Accordingly on the principle of *cy-pres*, since Poor Law relief, it was argued, had taken the place of doles. doles were assigned to "the second poor," as the poor who were not in receipt of poor relief were called; "and the doctrine was introduced that paupers were not entitled to the benefit of the charity, but the second poor only." This *cy-pres* application runs through the whole scheme-legislation of the Commission, and has initiated and promoted a division of labour between the Poor Law and the charities. It may be said to be both a rule of law and a settled policy that persons in receipt of Poor Law relief ought not to receive relief from endowed charities also.[5]

Separation of charities from Poor Law administration.

48. Thus, local endowed charities have been consolidated and the income of the dole charities has been made applicable to certain purposes set out in schemes, coupled with the condition that the benefits of relief under the schemes should be restricted to those who, at least, for a specified period, had not been in receipt of Poor Law relief.

49. But, while a clear line has been drawn between the Poor Law and endowed charity, the conditions under which endowments of the nature of doles may be used for other purposes have not been clearly marked.[6] Doles, indeed, have been freely applied to other purposes. Already in 1869, under the Endowed Schools Act, the *cy-pres* method was pushed very far indeed, and that, not with a view to the expansion of particular charities for the better fulfilment of the objects for which they were established, but with a view to the application of the charities to a new purpose altogether.[7] As the 30th Section shows, to receive education was counted a benefit equivalent to any benefit that might be conferred upon the people even by a revised application of the charities, which were diverted to educational uses. That section is still in force. It is as follows:—

> "In the case of any endowment, which is not an educational endowment as defined in this Act, but the income of which is applicable wholly or partially to any one or more of the following

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[1] Tudor on Charities and Mortmain, p. 202. [2] Young, 31153. [3] Young, 31142, 31143. [4] Young, 31166 and Appendix to Evidence, Vol. III., p. 621. [5] Tudor on Charities and Mortmain, p. 167. [6] Report of Select Committee on Charitable Trusts Acts, 1884, p. viii., and Appendix No. iii. [7] The Endowed Schools Act, 1869, Sec. 30. Young, 31154.

purposes; namely—doles in money or kind; marriage portions; redemption of prisoners and captives; relief of poor prisoners for debt; loans; apprenticeship fees; advancement in life; or any purposes which have failed altogether or have become insignificant, in comparison with the magnitude of the endowment, if originally given to charitable uses in or before the year of the Lord 1800, it shall be lawful for the Commissioners, with the consent of the governing body, to declare, by a scheme under this Act, that it is desirable to apply for the advancement of education, the whole or part of any such endowment, and thereupon the same shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be an educational endowment."

50. So far-reaching is this clause that it may be said to express not so much an application of the doctrine of *cy-pres*, as an application of the doctrine of appropriation.[1] The general end of benefiting the class of poor "by all or any forms of relief" was set aside for "the general end of benefiting" them, and others not poor, by the education of their children. "In fact, alteration of the manner in which the benefit has been conferred has been expanded . . . to an alteration of the benefit. . . . A considerable change has been made both in the nature of the benefit and in the class to whom the benefit came." Probably by the operation of Section 30 about £19,788 of the annual income of charities has been transferred to education, and a capital sum of £89,713 diverted to educational purposes.[2]

51. In 1892 the Commissioners wrote in their annual Report:—

The extended use, application of dole charities to other purposes.

"Following the example set in more recent times by the Court of Chancery, and fortified by the high authority of this judgment [that of the late Sir G. Jessel, in 1881, when Master of the Rolls, in the case of the Campden Charities at Kensington], we have for many years made it our first object, in framing *cy-pres* schemes for dole charities, to prescribe such an application of their funds as may tend in some degree to confer real and lasting benefits upon the poor, consistently with a due regard for the main intention of the founders of those charities.[3] We conceive, and in this view we have the support of the highest authority, that the particular directions of a founder, for the distribution of funds in the form of doles, are but means to the general end of benefiting the class of poor sought to be helped; and that subsequent changes (to use the language of Sir G. Jessel in the course of the above-mentioned judgment), in the value of endowments, in the circumstances of the locality within, [or of the population [for the benefit of which, the charity is administered, in the times, in the habits of society, or in the ideas or practices of men, are sufficient to justify the substitution of other and improved means for the attainment of the object proposed."

52. On this principle, in the case of the city parochial charities the application of the parish charities were by statute diverted even more widely.[4] The total income of the Central Fund of the City Parochial Foundation is £52,654, and only £5,000 is made applicable for charitable relief—for pensions. A sum of £152,959 was paid out of the capital of the City Parochial Foundation, as grants towards the building of polytechnics and institutes, which now receive grants from the State like other technical schools. Of the principle of extending the area of benefit, the scheme was a signal illustration. The charities previously restricted to residents of parishes in the city were extended to the whole police area of the Metropolis. A still further departure from the doctrine of *cy-pres* was permitted by the Allotments Extension Act, 1882, Section 14, where it is enacted that if part of the endowment of a charity in regard to which the Commissioners make a scheme is in land, they *shall* authorise the trustees of the charity to set apart a portion of the land for allotments.

Conclusion.

53. It may be concluded, therefore, that, while the doctrine of *cy-pres* has been applied in very many cases of particular charities, the State has adopted the plan of wholesale transference of dole and other charities to educational uses, or, as in London, to general philanthropic purposes—if the objects of the polytechnics may thus be described—or, as in the case of allotments, to meeting what was held to be a general want in country districts. The gravity of the assumed social demand has thus broken through the technicalities of normal procedure. For the doctrine of *cy-pres* has been supplemented by a doctrine of beneficial appropriation; and perhaps in the case of doles there was at the time administrative justification for this. There was a general consensus of opinion that doles were injurious when administered on the conditions usually attached to them; but even if they were freed from those conditions there was generally neither in the unions nor in the parishes any such administration

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[1] Young, 31153. [2] See Charities Appendix. [3] App. No. xiii. G. Evidence, Vol. III., p. 621.
[4] City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883. Return: Endowed Charities (County of London), 1894–1904, Vol. 8., p. 322, Vol. VI., pp. 936, 940, 954. Hayes Fisher, 30936 (7).

of relief as would turn them to good account. Hence resulted their diversion, as we have pointed out, to purposes quite unlike those for which they were founded. Had an administration suitable for their proper use and management under altered conditions been forthcoming, instead of being diverted to entirely different purposes, they might reasonably have been placed at the disposal of a suitable authority for continued application to the relief of the poor on new lines.[1] Such an authority we would desire to create. And in view of this, and since we believe that doles may be turned to good and proper account for relief purposes, we would strongly recommend that Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 should be repealed.

IX.—The Schemes of the Charity Commission.

54. Now, to turn to the schemes themselves. In the re-settlement of dole charities under schemes it was desired to fulfil two objects:[2] "First, the encouragement among the poor of habits of providence, thrift and self-help; and, secondly, the concentration of these endowments upon assistance to the poor at the times of their special and certain need, namely, in sickness and in old age." With these objects the schemes usually enable the trustees to apply the funds of the charity under their care in the following ways: (1) They may make subscriptions or donations:— The purpose usually entered in schemes for charities.

(*a*) In aid of dispensaries, hospitals and convalescent homes or any institution in which persons suffering from any bodily infirmity are taught a trade or employment so as "to secure the benefits of these institutions for the objects of the charity."

(*b*) In aid of any provident club or society established in or near the said parish for the supply of coal, clothing or other necessaries.

(*c*) Any duly registered and accessible provident or friendly society.

The clause respecting medical relief has been useful it is stated and has led to good results. The clause respecting friendly societies has not been so operative.

(2) The trustees may also make contributions for the following purposes: the supply of nurses; the payment of the expenses of travelling to hospitals or convalescent homes; the purchase of annuities; the cost of outfit on entering a trade, or occupation, or service; passage money for emigration; the provision of "proper care and supervision for poor persons requiring temporary change of air or special protection or treatment"; the provision or maintenance of recreation grounds; the acquisition of open spaces or the maintenance of any reading room, library, or workman's club; the support of any accessible museum, art collection, or art and industrial exhibition; and the provision of technical or art instruction.

In this class "the provision of emigration," Sir George Young says, is "liable to a good deal of objection." "The conversion of eleemosynary funds to the provision of recreation grounds or the maintenance of workman's clubs, is," he states, "obviously open to difficulty, and is probably only possible in special cases, and only expedient where there is plenty of money." And this applies still more to the clauses relating to museums and art collections.

Finally, (3) as a third class of permitted expenditure, there come:—

(*a*) The supply of clothes, linen, bedding, fuel, tools, medical or other aid, including surgical appliances, in sickness, disability or infirmity, food or other articles in kind to an amount not exceeding £ in any one year;[3] and

(*b*) Temporary relief in money, by way of loan or otherwise, in the case of unexpected loss, or sudden destitution, to an amount not exceeding £ in any one year.

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[1] Fortieth Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1893, Secs. (24), (25), and (26). [2] Young, 31141. App. No. xiii., Vol. III., pp. 615 and 621. [3] Vol. III., App. p. 619.

There is also sometimes a clause which permits the payment of contributions towards apprenticeship. The first of the two clauses (*a*) and (*b*) represents "the limit to which the Commissioners consider themselves able to cut down the pernicious operation of promiscuous dole charities." Of the second clause (*b*) it is said that "the standard represented by the clause is still a little higher than that which can be ensured in all cases throughout the country."

Relative utility of the purposes allowed in schemes. The better plan of general uses for distress.

55. On these statements we would make some comment. Of the ways of spending permitted by the schemes, that for the encouragement of habits of providence, thrift and self-help does not appear to have succeeded. Only wealthy charities can help to provide recreation grounds or open spaces, or to maintain working men's clubs and museums. "Emigration" is liable to objection. The "temporary relief," clause (*b*) works fairly well. But considered from the point of view of useful co-operative charity these many divisions, we must say, appear to us to be of very doubtful advantage. The requirements of particular cases of distress properly understood and provided for, personally and otherwise on some reasonable plan, are in our opinion the true guide to the best use of the resources of a charity. And as has been shown in the evidence the co-operation of the endowed charities with the charity of voluntary societies and private individuals will add greatly to the sufficiency of the assistance which they give; and further, this co-operation is often the means of connecting the administration of the endowed charity with actual personal work. To prevent the trustees reverting to doles the purposes for which the money available under the scheme might be used has been stated in very great detail. What is required is money applicable to any of the needs of distress as they arise, subject to the main principle "the encouragement among the poor of habits of providence, thrift and self-help, but not applicable for doles."

Provision of means of inquiry.

56. If sufficient inquiry is not forthcoming to ascertain the data necessary for such a purpose, it were better that the income of the charity should be reserved till means for making proper inquiry are arranged. But provision should be made expressly for this, as to a certain extent it now is, by the terms of the scheme itself. In the case of almspeople and pensioners the trustees are now required to make inquiries in regard to applicants for appointment; and it is said that "in the less populous parishes and places the means of securing inquiry are sufficient or might easily be made so."[1]

> "If a body of trustees came to us," Sir George Young stated,[2] "and said there is more work than we can do, we could reinforce them, of course, or we could give the powers, which after all they could take without assistance or leave, to act by agents or by committees to obtain information, or to utilise the services, whether of clergy, medical men, benevolent persons, district visitors, and others. . . . In various old towns whose charities are numerous, abuses are very apt to exist, but even there it is not for want of power that proper inquiry is not made. . . . It is notorious that charities in past times and probably in present times have been made the means of political influence, or have been utilised for the purpose of private interest. . . . Any reasonable expense for making inquiries would be allowed by the Charity Commissioners. . . . In very populous places the difficulties are, of course, greater, and there we have always been on the watch for suggestions as to the best way of meeting them; thus we have given power to the trustees to avail themselves of the local Charity Organisation Societies."

Means of visitation necessary. Insufficient staff of the Commission for these and other purposes.

57. To ensure that the standard of work is such as we have deemed reasonable, another condition also has to be fulfilled. Some method of visitation should be adopted in order to ascertain that the work of the charities for which schemes have been made is well and usefully conducted. But the staff of the Charity Commission does not at present permit of their making any except casual inspections.[3] This deficiency affects the whole administration.

> "The Commissioners ought to have power to see that all their schemes are carried out, but they have not sufficient staff or power to do so. There is no sufficient means of supervising the action of trustees to ensure that they will obey the scheme. A good deal of correspondence might be saved and some differences which are not now settled might be settled if we had rather more staff to deal with cases of complaint. We have a department which classifies the annual accounts carefully and produces them as wanted, whenever a case is taken up, and examines them so far as possible; but there is no sufficient staff provided for proper examination of the accounts.[4] Still less have we power to audit or surcharge."

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[1] Appendix. Vol. III., p. 616. [2] Young, 31151, 31152. [3] Young, 31145, 31149, 31150. [4] 31178. 31209.

Thus, however carefully drawn the schemes may be, the staff necessary to ensure that the system of supervision set in force by the Charitable Trusts Acts is properly applied is lacking, and still more is the staff insufficient to meet the demands of any large and well-directed extension of that system.

58. We are of opinion then, that under proper safeguards "doles" and other similar charities should be used more definitely for eleemosynary purposes proper than the schemes suggest—extremely useful as these schemes have often undoubtedly been; that the Commission should have power to audit *; and that the Commission should be staffed sufficiently well to enable it to supervise the working of the schemes and, when necessary, to revise them. Conclusion.

X.—Boards of Trustees.

59. In the draft schemes for the administration of endowed charities submitted to us by Sir George Young it is arranged that the body of trustees should when complete consist of a certain number of competent persons appointed as *ex officio* trustees, as representative trustees, and as co-optative trustees.[1] The *ex officio* trustees consist generally of local persons specially concerned in the administration of the charity by reason of their office, as for instance, the rector or vicar of the parish or parishes to which the charities belong, or the mayor of the borough, or the chairman of the parish council.[2] The representative trustees are appointed direct by the bodies that are given the right of representation, such as the parish council or a town council. The co-optative trustees are appointed for a term of years by the resolution of the trustees. On this method some comments are made by Sir George Young. He says:— The selection of Trustees.

> "There is no doubt that many of those who serve upon parish councils or town councils are not on a line with the Charity Commissioners in their opinion as to the comparative effects of dole charities and of the substituted provisions. Therefore, the representatives of these bodies very often take a line, which becomes of more importance owing to their representative position, in opposition to the principles which have been recommended by the experience of the Charity Commissioners, and there are indications that these matters are being introduced into local elections, and that an amount of what I fear I must call popular prejudice is not an altogether unheard-of method of commending a candidate to the electors. . . . I confess that I regard the general effect of the introduction of representatives into the Board of Trustees as beneficial; . . . it is necessary to bear that in mind, for instance, when the Commissioners are being pressed, as they are being pressed by a resolution of the House of Commons, though not by an Act, to constitute in all cases as a majority of the trustees representatives of the local authority.†. . . Without raising objections to this . . . I would very strongly urge that my successors should be left to exercise the discretion that they have hitherto enjoyed, and that undue pressure should not be brought to bear upon them to proceed too fast in this direction. . . . It must be remembered that persons are elected to town councils and parish councils for certain purposes, and those purposes are not in general the administration of charity."[3]

60. And in answer to the question, Who are the local authorities who would be consulted upon the draft of a scheme? the answer was:—

> "The district councils frequently, the parish councils invariably, and town councils invariably. . . . boards of guardians we should not consult as such. We should consult them in the form of local district councils and corporations which cover the same ground, but boards of guardians as such we do not, as a rule, consult; they would not be considered a local authority for the purpose."

61. This evidence suggests two points of difficulty which would have to be met in any reorganisation of endowed charities with a view to meeting distress. The witnesses, as we shall see, state again and again that there is no co-operation between the endowed charities and the Poor Law Guardians. This might, we think, be in some measure prevented if boards of guardians were consulted with a view to the administration of the charity being an independent but recognised part of the local arrangements for the purposes of relief and assistance. And next it is evident that to carry out a scheme, the election upon the board of representatives of bodies created for quite other purposes

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* It may be mentioned that under Sec. 58 of the Local Government Act of 1894 it is held that the auditors of the Local Government Board have the power of auditing the accounts of charities of which the parish council are the trustees.

† No resolution was passed. A motion was proposed that in their schemes the Charity Commissioners should "provide for the election of a majority of the Trustees by representative Authorities"; but the debate was adjourned and no motion was adopted.

1 Young, 31142-31148. Report of Select Committee on Charitable Trusts, 1884, p. ix., No. 306; and Extracts from the Fortieth (for 1892) Annual Report of the Charity Commission, reprinted on p. 325 of the Report of the Select Committee on Charity Commission. 221. 2 Vol. III. of Evidence, Appendix, p. 613. 3 Young, 31145, 31146, 31147.

must prove to be a very unsuitable method.[1] In practice, such an election may be a merely indiscriminate appointment of persons who are not in any way specially qualified to fulfil the duties of charitable administrators. To administer charitable help usefully, it would be better, we think, that the trustees should have comparatively large powers of co-optation on the settled understanding that, as far as possible, the persons co-opted should be qualified to be suitable members of the board, by their general knowledge of the subject or by their cognate knowledge of some department of work.

XI.—Other Methods of Registering Charities.

Registration under the Friendly Societies Act, 1896.

62. Before passing to the evidence submitted to us respecting the working of endowed and other charities, we may conveniently refer here to methods of registering charitable societies other than those connected with the Charity Commission.[2] Charitable societies can register under the Friendly Societies Act of 1896, Section 8, as "Societies other than friendly societies (in this Act called benevolent societies) for any benevolent or charitable purpose." Every registered society is required to have a registered office, to appoint trustees, to submit its accounts to audit annually, to make an annual Return showing separately its expenditure in respect of the several objects of the society, to deliver to every person on demand copies of rules; to supply copies of its annual Return; and to allow the inspection of its books. With these duties it has certain privileges. It can legally hold property (in the case of benevolent societies, not exceeding one acre) and other kinds of property in the names of trustees. It has remedy against fraud on summary conviction "whilst the only criminal remedy against fraud by its members open to an unregistered society is confined to cases of larceny or embezzlement."

> "If the society has stock in the funds in the names of trustees and the trustee is away from the United Kingdom, becomes bankrupt, etc., instead of having to apply to the High Court of Justice or to take any other proceedings which it would have to do if unregistered, it can have the money transferred by direction of the Chief Registrar on payment of £1 fee."

And there are provisions for the settlement of disputes by reference to the Chief Registrar or to a County Court or a Court of Summary Jurisdiction.

63. The Act, it will be noted, does not interfere with the decisions and work of the registered society. The rules of the society must be consistent with the terms of the Act; and the forwarding of accounts and Returns and the opportunities afforded by this and other business lead to the Registrar becoming both an inspector of accounts and a friendly advisor. But his powers cease there. The society remains independent. He does not control its investments nor require it to adopt one set of rules and one only, nor in the case of a friendly society does he fix and determine the scales of payment and the range of benefits. He stands as a kind of official guarantor to the members of societies and to the public that the work of the societies will be conducted in a businesslike manner. If a society does not register, it is not compelled to do so. But the general *status* obtained by registration is an advantage to a society, in addition to the privileges and the support and security which the Act affords.

64. We may compare the system of registration enforced by the Friendly Societies Act with the system of accountancy and supervision, adopted under the Charitable Trusts Acts. In the former case members, officials, and trustees, who may be ignorant of actuarial methods necessary to their business and who may need protection against fraud, are guided by the procedure of the Act and by the counsels of the Registrar. In the latter case the recipients of the charity and those who may claim under its conditions may be inclined to guard its bounty jealously as against all outside interference. But they can have no part in its government as members. Their interests are in the hands of the trustees of the charity. And *mutatis mutandis*

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[1] *Cf.* Report made to the Royal Commission on the Poor Law respecting endowed and voluntary charities, by Mr. A. C. Kay and Mr. H. V. Toynbee (1908), p. 59

[2] Friendly Societies Act, 1896, 59 and 60 Vict., c. 25, Sections 8, 24, 25, 26, 27, 39, 40, 47, 55, 68.

the Charity Commission is like the Chief Registrar the authority for seeing that the trustees do their duty; and similar machinery is required both in the one case and in the other. The Charity Commission deal only with endowed charities—with the trustees of the dead hand. The Registrar deals with, and through, responsible trustees who hold office for the enforcement of interests in which all the members are directly concerned. But in both cases, there is the condition to which Sir George Young drew attention. The institution is dealing with the interests not of the passing generation only, but in a great measure with the interests of its successors. The claims of one generation are closely involved in those of another; the investments are held in common for all members; the society, by the nature of its privileges and by its registration, assumes a kind of civic personality. Its property has for these reasons to be safeguarded from the point of view of its members and of the community. There must be continuous accountability, and the society cannot dissolve except formally and on certain terms. That this is an argument applicable to other than endowed charities is proved by the fact that not friendly societies only but "benevolent and charitable societies" take advantage of the Act.[1] These societies, however, in London at least, are with one exception—a hospital—benevolent societies, whose members are eligible to receive charitable benefits under various conditions by reason of their payments to a common fund, and not societies for the grant of eleemosynary benefits to outsiders who have paid into no such fund. But in spite of this difference, the argument in favour of some continuity of public supervision may be pushed one step further and applied to yet one class more. If it applies to voluntary "benevolent" societies it applies, though on rather different grounds, to voluntary eleemosynary societies. They, too, are in most cases managing their funds and carrying on their work for others than the members of the passing generation. Their organisation involves considerations that affect their future administrators very greatly. Sir George Young said[2]:—

> "It has appeared to me that a line might be drawn in regard to endowments arising out of voluntary contributions, of which the principal intention at the time seems to have been that they should have been spent as received, namely, if the administrators at the moment said: 'With regard to this sum that has now come in, we will not spend it this year, or next year, but we will put it by and use the income of it,' and, if that continues, that it might be considered that they had power to confer upon it, and that they did confer upon it, the nature of an endowment. It would seem rather hard, after one generation of prudent administrators, taking advantage of a windfall or of a wind that filled their sails and filled their coffers with money, had abstained from dispersing everything that came in, and had formed a nucleus which would enable the charity to tide over bad times in future, that that nucleus, that accumulation should still so far retain the character of a voluntary contribution in the eyes of the law, as to be liable to expenditure in any year that a body of administrators who had more extravagant or less cautious ideas happened to find themselves in possession of it."

Registration and incorporation under the Companies Act, 1867.

65. There are many societies which have investments which are in the nature of an endowment, that is to say, the income drawn from their investments is used to supplement voluntary contributions; and the capital itself is seldom realised and used for current purposes. And it may be thought that to treat this capital as an endowment and make it impossible for the managers to realise it without the permission of the Charity Commissioners would be to impose too great a restriction on the charity; but intervention need not be pushed so far. Charitable societies in want of the kind of security that Sir George Young would desire to give them are using as sufficient for their purpose the registration which is placed within their reach by the Companies Acts. Under Section 23 of the Companies Act, 1867, an association for the purpose of "promoting commerce, art, science, religion, charity, or any other useful object, which does not involve the division of profit, may, if it obtains the licence of the Board of Trade, be incorporated by registration with limited liability, but without the addition of the word 'limited' to its name." Here, as in the case of eleemosynary charities, the benefits of the charity are available for the common good, not, as is usually the case in benevolent societies, for the charitable advantage of particular members. Under the Companies Acts by the Memorandum of Association the association provides for the proper application of its funds and for the liability of members in the event of the association being dissolved. True accounts have to be kept, and to be open to the inspection of members. Once a year the accounts have to be examined, and the correctness of the balance sheet ascertained

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[1] Reports of the Chief Registrar, Part A., App. ii., p. 78, London, 1905.
[2] Young 31243.

by one or more properly qualified auditors. On the other hand the subscribers of the Memorandum, together with such other persons as may from time to time become members of the company, are a body corporate by the name contained in the Memorandum of Association, capable forthwith of exercising all the functions of an incorporated company and having perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to hold lands.

66. The number of charitable associations registered under Section 23 were four in 1904, eleven in 1905, ten in 1906, and seven in 1907.

Conclusion.

67. Subject, then, to the further consideration of the question, which must follow our examination of the present position of endowed and voluntary charities, we would conclude that the presumption is that some registration and supervision of voluntary charities is desirable, at least on the lines common to the Charitable Trusts Acts, the Friendly Society Act of 1896, and the Companies Act of 1867. In these cases registration carries with it requirements that tend to secure careful and business-like management, combined with privileges which give to the society which registers some of the advantages of incorporation.

68. But to set out the facts fully for our purpose, we have still to refer to one or two legislative provisions that bear upon charities.

XII.—Further Acts Affecting the Registration or Administration of Charities.

Registration of endowed charities at County Councils and the Councils of County Boroughs

69. The Local Government Act of 1888 transferred to the county councils and the councils of county boroughs the registration of charitable gifts, which was conducted formerly at the office of the clerk of the peace of the county or city or town being a county in itself, under 52 Geo. III. c. 102.[1] The registration was made by a memorial or statement of the real and personal estate and the income, investments, and objects of charities and charitable donations for the benefit of any poor or other persons in any place in England or Wales, with the names of the founders or benefactors and the persons having custody or control of deeds and other documents. The Act extends only to endowed charities as defined in Section 10,* and is, it would seem, practically obsolete.

70. In 1892 a Charities Inquiries (Expenses) Act was passed "to authorise the councils of counties and county boroughs to contribute to the expenses of inquiries into certain charities."[2] These inquiries were "conducted by the Charity Commissioners into any charities which are by the trusts governing their administration expressly appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of their county or county borough or of any part thereof." They were made in regard to London and to thirteen counties and the West Riding of Yorkshire and in some county boroughs. But the method has not been generally applied. Yet, if it were managed on economic lines, it would, with the information already in the hands of the Commissioners provide the data for a most useful and handy scheme of reference and registration. The Charitable Trusts Acts indeed do not require the Charity Commissioners to keep a register of charities, but it appears that by the necessities of their work a register has been compiled. We have already, therefore, a central register at the Charity Commission and a method which might be utilised for its extension for practical purposes; and the question arises how we may best turn these to account for the better administration of charity generally.[3]

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* That is, it does not extend to any charity or charitable donation not issuing out of or secured upon lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or directed by the donor or founder to be secured thereon, or to be permanently invested in Government, or public, stocks or funds, or to any charitable donation which, by the direction of the donor or by the lawful rules of any charitable institution may be wholly or in part expended in and about the charitable purpose to which the same may have been given, at the discretion of the governors, directors, managers or trustees of such charitable institution.

[1] Local Government (England and Wales) Act, 1888, 51 and 52 Vict, cap. 41, Sec. 3 (xv.). Tudor on Charities and Mortmain, p. 307. [2] Charities Inquiries Act, 55 and 56 Vict., c. 15. Thirty-sixth Report of the Charity Commission for England and Wales [Cd. 5685], pp. 12 and 13, and references in subsequent reports, especially App. B: Forty-fourth Report, p. 48. [Cd. 8413]. [3] Thirty-seventh Report, p. 13; and other subsequent Reports. [Cd. 5986].

71. It should be added, that the results of the co-operation of the Commission with the county and borough councils has been the discovery of unknown charities, the rescue of charities which were in danger of being lost, and the ascertainment of cases of improper administration on the part of trustees of charities.[1] These results suggest that an altogether closer relation between the Charity Commissioners and local administration would be desirable; and if local committees were formed in some definite relation to the endowed charities and to the Charity Commission—especially, so far as it may be possible, in some friendly and even informal consultative relation, the wish expressed to us by Sir George Young might be yet further realised. "We court," he said, "the opportunity of utilising the best experience of those engaged in charity work. Anything which would tend to increase the relationship between the Charity Commissioners and those who are engaged in personal charity work ought to be encouraged."

XIII.—Corporation and Parish Council Trustees.

72. Next as to municipal corporations. By the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 under Section 71 the policy was adopted of divesting the corporations of estates held by them under special charitable trusts and of providing other Trustees in their place.[2] The administration of the Charities was kept "entirely distinct from that of the public stock and borough fund." Again, under the Corporations Act of 1883, if a municipal corporation was dissolved, the Charity Commissioners were "empowered by means of schemes to vest their property in the charities in other persons or bodies corporate, as they might think right for the benefit of the inhabitants." Thus municipal charities have been freed from the corporations that formerly controlled them. Both legal estate and administration are in other hands. The point is of importance. If the charities in towns were reorganised, the trustees might be appointed by a local board of charities and the direct connection with the municipality would then cease.[3]

73. By the Local Government Act of 1894 the parish councils in rural parishes were in certain cases made the local authority for holding the property of parochial charities, but not as a rule.[4] A parochial charity, as distinguished from ecclesiastical charities, is defined as "a charity the benefits of which are, or the separate distribution of the benefits of which is, confined to the inhabitants of a single parish, or of a single ancient ecclesiastical parish divided into two or more parishes, or of not more than five neighbouring parishes." The legal interest in all the property of these charities, which had formerly been vested in overseers with or without churchwardens, passed to the parish council. The churchwardens and overseers were superseded by trustees appointed by the parish council; and with the consent of the Charity Commissioners trustees other than churchwardens and overseers were allowed to transfer property held for any public purpose connected with a rural parish to the parish council.

74. Under the London Government Act of 1899 provision is made for the vesting in the borough councils of all legal interest in property hitherto vested in churchwardens and overseers, other than property connected with the affairs of the church, and for appointing trustees in place of the overseers.[5]

75. In those cases the property vests in the local authority, the administration lies with trustees; and the facts suggest that if a local centre for the administration of charitable relief were desired, some of the trustees in a parish or a group of parishes might in part form it. The same suggestion may be made in regard to the trustees of borough councils in the Metropolis.[6]

76. If we make a survey of the statements and facts so far submitted, we may conclude that there is a definite standard of administration which may be applied as a test to the efficiency of administration as we now find it in different parts of the country. General conclusion.

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[1] Young, 31190, and Thirty-ninth Report of the Charity Commission, p. 19, and other Reports of the Commission. [2] Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, 5 and 6 Will. iv., c. 76, Sec. 71. Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Sec. 65. Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, 45 and 46 Vict., c. 50, Sec. 133. Municipal Corporations Act, 1883, 46 and 47 Vict., c. 18, Sec. 3. [3] Tudor on Charities and Mortmain, pp. 792, 795. Young 31131. [4] The Local Government Act, 1894, 56 and 57, Vict., c. 73. Sec. 75, 5 (2) (c) 14 (1) and (2). Young, 31156, 31159. [5] The London Government Act, 1899, 62 and 63 Vict., c. 14 23,(1), (3), (4). [6] Lewis, 22082.

This standard would require of those who participate in the administration the endeavour, not merely to supplement poverty by gifts, but to remove distress by well planned aid fortified by personal oversight and care. Next, there is accepted alike by the Charity Commissioners and by the Poor Law authorities, as exemplified in what is known as Mr., the late Lord, Goschen's Minute on Poor Law Relief, the principle that there should be a recognised division of work between the Poor Law authorities and the managers of charities, a division that implies that they should each fulfil a somewhat different function, but should none the less each co-operate with the other. We have seen further that a system of safeguarding endowed charities has been gradually developed and is now in operation, that a doctrine of *cy-pres* has been widely applied, and that under the provisions of Acts of Parliament a system of appropriating charities to altogether new uses has been enforced. On the other hand, there is no central administration applicable to voluntary charities though there is an evident desire on the part of many charities to obtain some kind of *status* by Act of Parliament, by Charter or by registration under the Friendly Societies Act of 1896, or under the Companies Act, 1867. Finally, apart from endowed charities which are administered under schemes by private trustees, there are charities which are administered by trustees acting for counties, county boroughs, parish councils, and Metropolitan boroughs, which, in conjunction with other endowed charities and with voluntary charities, might be the nuclei of some new local organisation.

XIV.—Extent and Causes of Poverty.

77. We propose now to submit the information that has reached us from the inquiries that have kindly been made through the bishops and clergy in most of the dioceses in England and Wales as to the state of poverty. They will indicate in some measure the local conditions with which those who administer voluntary relief have largely to concern themselves. Subsequently dealing with the country districts, and the towns, and the Metropolis separately, we would submit evidence respecting the charities and their management, and the proposals made to us for the formation of some administrative system of responsible local committees or boards of charity.

Of the diocesan returns themselves, we should add a word. They represent an endeavour to obtain a census of opinion from the clergy throughout the country in regard to the extent of poverty and in regard to a few points on which in common conversation there is frequent criticism of the Poor Law. The results appear to us to be very valuable, especially as to the condition of the poor in the country generally. This and the method of charitable assistance are the only points with which we are able to deal. But, considered as tests of opinion, the replies to other questions are hardly of less interest as, for instance, those made to the questions whether there is any amount of unrelieved distress due to the reluctance of destitute persons to resort to Poor Law relief; whether there is distress due to inadequacy of relief; how far there is overlapping. Altogether the returns, which in the case of many of the dioceses have been very carefully collected and considered, are of a somewhat special importance.

Reports from dioceses in regard to the extent of poverty in them.

78. From the rural and from the urban districts in the dioceses of Newcastle, Durham, Ripon, Liverpool, Manchester and Chester there are the following Reports :—

Of the Newcastle area it is said :—

Newcastle.

> "In the rural areas poverty does not exist to any appreciable extent. . . . Such poverty as does exist in the rural areas is found in the small towns, and in connection with the 'rights of freemen,' charitable trusts, and weekly markets. The first seems to limit enterprise, the second to attract an indolent class, and the third loafers."

> "In the small boroughs and market towns, especially in Berwick, poverty is in evidence, largely due to 'casual labour,' mismanagement and drink. In the south-east corner of the diocese, where the population is almost entirely industrial, poverty exists to a greater extent, and especially among the lower-class labourers, and again it is owing to lack of regular employment, want of thrift, ignorance of household management, drink and gambling. Among the miners, of whom there is a large proportion, there is considerable reluctance to support their aged and infirm parents, owing, perhaps, largely to their becoming independent at an early age, and this is aggravated by the number of miners' representatives on the board of guardians, who are ready to support applications without enforcing the duty of children to parents."

Of the colliery and rural districts in the Durham Diocese, it is said :— Durham.

"There is, comparatively speaking, little poverty in the colliery and rural districts except among the aged, widows and those who are physically unfit, and that is not increasing in intensity except among the last-named class. This increase is due, as in the towns, to the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Acts in making it difficult to find employment. With this exception, such poverty as does exist in those districts is almost invariably ascribed to moral causes, intemperance, gambling, thriftlessness, etc."

"In the slum districts of the towns there is a considerable amount of chronic poverty. There is, however, little evidence to show that it is increasing either in amount or intensity. . . . The proportion of 'poor' to the whole population is not increasing. But in towns dependent on shipping, ship-building and allied industries, recent depression of trade has caused great distress."

In the Ripon Diocese :— Ripon.

"The rural parishes contain little or no poverty. In the great majority of cases the reply is that whatever real poverty there may be is due to the moral causes of intemperance and improvidence, and to the economic one of wages being too low to enable a saving to be made against sickness and old age."

"The case in towns is very different. In some parishes poverty is intense and increasing; in others it is but little in evidence, but on the whole there seems to be a decrease in the amount of poverty."

Wakefield :— Wakefield.

"The Diocese of Wakefield is chiefly industrial; and the population more or less dense. On the whole . . . while some poverty and distress exists, it does not appear to be generally acute or increasing."

In the Liverpool Diocesan Report it is said that :— Liverpool.

"While more than a third of the parishes, urban or rural, report the existence of a considerable degree of poverty, only one-seventh of the total number believe that there is a tendency of it to increase."

In the Manchester Diocese in the rural districts there is :— Manchester.

"Not much poverty, and what there is appears to be decreasing. It exists chiefly through drink and gambling, also through sickness and early marriage."

"In all the large towns of the diocese there is a considerable amount of poverty, though at the beginning of the year when trade was exceptionally good the number in distress were less than usual. Where poverty exists in the towns apart from unemployment it seems to be traceable to drunkenness, gambling, thriftlessness, and early marriages, to the irregular employment, especially of unskilled labourers, and 'a desire to work only part of the week.'"

From the Chester Diocese it is reported :— Chester.

"The summarised returns for the thirteen rural deaneries of the Chester Diocese agree in stating that, on the whole, there is not much poverty." With respect to the purely agricultural rural deanery of Malpas, it is stated that: 'There is no real poverty.' And 'little or no poverty is said to exist in the agricultural districts of Cheshire,' too absolute statements which, it would appear from the report, "require some modification."

"In towns where there is some flourishing industry, *e.g.*, Runcorn, Stockport, Crewe, there is little poverty. The greatest distress obtains in places where trade is bad, *e.g.*, in the salt district and at Nantwich, and where a town has no important industry but considerable opportunities of casual employment during part of the year, *e.g.*, at Chester."

In the Birmingham Diocese :— Birmingham.

"Where urban conditions prevail, on the whole, poverty seems to be increasing, the exception being in the outlying districts. Of the fifty-two (out of ninety incumbents) who answer this question, thirty-three definitely state that it is increasing, sixteen say that it is not increasing, and four affirm that it is decreasing."

"The returns for forty-five rural parishes, many of which have a population of less than 500, are practically unanimous in stating that there is no general prevalence of poverty, and several of them state that there is *no* poverty in the parish. . . . It cannot be said that the problem of poverty exists in an acute form in the rural parts of the diocese, except in so far as the difficulty of provision for old age is concerned."

79. Taking next the Dioceses of Worcester, Lichfield, Southwell, Peterborough and Ely, the replies are :—

Worcester :— Worcester.

"Not much poverty, except in congested areas, and not increasing. It is very prevalent where there are endowed charities. What poverty there is in country districts is caused by the precariousness of employment, which causes improvidence. In the town of Dudley, the reason for poverty is stated to be a disinclination to employ people over sixty years of age. Most of the poverty is traceable to intemperance and to a disinclination to regular work."

Lichfield.

Lichfield:

"In a large percentage of parishes there is little real poverty. There are three archdeaconries—that of Stafford, which covers a large mining and industrial district known as the Black Country, together with a considerable agricultural area. Here poverty is marked as increasing in twenty-six parishes, decreasing in 120. The Archdeaconry of Stoke contains the large pottery towns, together with a mining and an agricultural district. There is not much poverty in 104 parishes; there is poverty in twenty-five; in eight it is increasing. In the Archdeaconry of Salop there is only one large town, and a certain number of market towns, a large proportion of the parishes being country villages. Here there is little or no real poverty, at all events of a chronic nature, in 104 parishes. In two instances there is increasing poverty, and considerable poverty in eight."

Southwell.

In the Diocese of Southwell, out of 444 replies received to the question: "Is there much poverty in your parish?" the answers in 410 were in the negative.

"A large numerical proportion of the parishes are purely rural and scantily populated, whilst the mining and industrial centres are, for the most part, enjoying the benefits of good trade and regular employment."

Peterborough.

In the Peterborough Diocese the answers to the question: "Is there much poverty in your parish?"

"Reveal the fact that there is very little real poverty, or, at any rate, distress, over the whole area. In a few parishes it is said to be fluctuating with the state of trade; but in no less than 380 there is said to be very little, and in only thirty-one any considerable amount. These thirty-one, however, represent a total population of 148,711, of which nineteen are parishes with populations of over 10,000."

The "considerable amount," therefore, refers chiefly to the larger towns.

"Out of 106 parishes which answer the question whether it is increasing or decreasing, thirty-two state that it is increasing, thirty-two that it is decreasing, and forty-two that it is practically stationary."

The increase is in the more populated parishes, the decrease entirely in parishes with a population under 500.

Ely.

The Ely report does not contain the question as to the extent of poverty, but in 387 parishes for which figures are supplied, the approximate number of poor families is thus returned:—

"Total number of families - - -	86,650	about 9 per cent.
Families living on insufficient wages -	2,800	
Dependent upon charity or Poor Law relief -	5,600"	

80. Another group may be made of the dioceses of Gloucester, Hereford, Bath and Wells, Exeter, and Truro.

Gloucester.

The Gloucester reply relates: (*a*) to parishes in Gloucester and Cheltenham. Here, it is said, that there is a good deal of poverty, mostly among the casual workmen, but destitution is met by the Poor Law; (*b*) to parishes with populations of 3,000 and over, and the reply is: "Always poverty, but destitution is met by Poor Law relief—not increasing in intensity;" (*c*) to parishes with populations under 3,000. In regard to these the answer is the same.

Hereford.

Hereford reports:—

"In a diocese where employment is chiefly agricultural, with wages of 11s. to 15s. a week, poverty of the kind implied in such wages is, naturally, taken for granted. 'We are all poor' is a common verdict. But, apart from the privations admittedly attendant on wages like these, poverty of a severe type is said not to exist widely. There is an almost unanimous consensus of opinion that it is not increasing, and some little evidence that it is decreasing, and that, too, although there are frequent complaints of a steady diminution of industrial efficiency among the labourers. In only two replies is general poverty stated to be on the increase."

Bath and Wells reports:—

"There is not 'much poverty' in Somerset. Of the 325 of the clergy who reply to the question, 95 say that there is 'none,' or 'very little,' or 'not much.' Only thirty report to the contrary, and they speak almost entirely for the towns and chiefly for Bath."

Exeter reports :— Exeter

"There is a general consensus that in country parishes throughout the diocese poverty is decreasing; and that such poverty as there is, exists, possibly to a small extent from low wages, but much more from drink habits, consequent thoughtlessness, improvident marriages, and the unwise administration of doles, which last breeds a pauper temper. In the country proper, there are few unemployed, unless for some reason or other they are practically unemployable."

"In towns, especially the larger towns, it is said that though poverty does not increase in ratio with the increase of population, there is a great deal of regrettable poverty. Immorality tends to poverty; but the chief causes of poverty are the same as in country districts, only in a more aggravated form, viz., intemperance, want of thrift, large families, and local charities and doles."

"In large seaside places where tourists create a summer harvest, the intermittent character of much of the work has a degenerating influence. Money easily earned in the summer season is not husbanded to meet the stress of winter. In 'The Three Towns' there is the reduction in dockyard labour, ups and downs of the building trade and occasional dislocation of labour. . . . It is generally agreed that the causes of poverty are more moral and social and hereditary than economic."

Truro reports :— Truro.

"There is a large mass of pauperism that we are called on to relieve, which from local causes is not just now largely increasing (mining boom, etc.), except in some special parishes."

Passing to Wales, we have from the Diocese of St. David's the following note :— St. David's.

"The great majority of incumbents expressed the opinion that there does not exist much poverty in their parishes and that it is not increasing in intensity. Only sixteen incumbents, of whom eight were from the industrial area, stated that much poverty existed in their parishes; and only seven considered the poverty to be increasing in intensity."

"In rural parishes the poverty is said to be due to old age and sickness; and in towns to drink, thriftlessness, and in a few cases, to lack of work."

81. The St. Asaph reply states that "the population is mainly agricultural and pastoral," apart from the Denbighshire and Flintshire coal districts, while a certain number are engaged in lead mining and quarries and some at seaside and pleasure resorts. St. Asaph.

Of the agricultural and pastoral area—

"The answers are nearly uniform, a large number of poor, but very little actual poverty. Those who are disabled by age, or infirmity, or sickness are willing to receive Poor Law relief, which is administered fairly liberally. In most of the parishes there are coal and clothing clubs, and in some places sick clubs. . . . Benefit societies, Oddfellows, Foresters, and the like are also very general, and undoubtedly do much to stave off want in times of sickness."

In the mining and industrial area in one or two places, Bagillt and Flint, for instance, owing to exceptional industrial causes, such as the transference of industries elsewhere, there has been much actual poverty. In other places—Buckley, Brymbo, or Ruabon—business has been fair and poverty has been kept away.

In watering places there always will be a certain amount of poverty and distress. They draw together the unthrifty who do not mind a short spell of hard work but will not plod through a task all the year round; and lodging-houses are a speculative business often started on insufficient capital.

82. The south-western dioceses, exclusive of London and Southwark, may be taken next—Salisbury, Winchester, Chichester, Canterbury, Rochester. Salisbury writes :— Salisbury.

"Ninety per cent. of the returns state that there is no real poverty; the remaining 10 per cent. say that there are some cases, and attribute the causes to drink and thriftlessness, improvident marriages, increase of insanity, and fluctuations in a particular trade or employment; all agree that poverty is not increasing."

For Winchester a few abridged Returns are given :— Winchester.

I.—A fair amount of poverty increased lately. Unemployment normal last winter.

II.—No special poverty. Conditions normal. Agricultural.

III.—Great poverty. Seamen and dock labourers. Caused by drink, overcrowding, and casual labour. . . . Dock labour constant source of distress. Attracts wastrels; is intermittent.

IV.—Not much poverty, and not increasing.

V.—Considerable and increasing poverty; due to want of independence and backbone. Riverside work casual, seasonal, uncertain, employment better.

VI.—A good deal of poverty. Unemployment due to dockyard discharges.

VII.—Large amount; acute poverty much increasing, largely due to migration from slums into new streets here.

VIII.—A good deal of poverty; but not increasing. Many live on visitors, making money in the summer; out of employment in the winter. Moral causes: intemperance, idleness of men, living on wives' earnings.

IX.—Not acute poverty. Employment normal.

X.—A good deal of poverty. Employment irregular. Want of thrift and drink causes poverty; 200 men out of work last winter.

Chichester.

In the diocese of Chichester replies have been received of ninety-three town and 227 country incumbents :—

"There is a general consensus of opinion that in the towns conditions as to food, clothing, and housing, have improved, but some deterioration in housing (arising from high rentals or the unsuitability of the houses for the working classes) is mentioned in a few of the returns." "On the whole, there is not a general increase of poverty. Where such increase is reported, it is almost entirely confined to the towns of Brighton and Hastings. Amongst causes of poverty are mentioned drink, the want of thrift in prosperous times, and in some cases betting and gambling."

From the country two-thirds of the returns state that there is no actual poverty, and the remainder—

"Very little. . . . For such poverty as does exist the main causes mentioned are intemperance and want of thrift."

Canterbury.

From the diocese of Canterbury come the following statements :—

"In the country parishes we find that there is no real poverty. There is nearly always work enough for those who can do it. If in some cases the employment is not constant, there is the possibility of supplementing it even in the winter by work of another kind. The poverty that does exist is due for the most part to moral and not to economic causes."

"In the towns there is poverty varying in different localities. But much more stress is laid upon the moral rather than economic causes. As to the latter, the chief reasons assigned are want of work amongst unskilled labourers. . . . High rents are also mentioned. Amongst older persons, the poverty is attributed in the towns to the difficulty to find employment. With regard to the moral causes, with reiteration we find poverty assigned to 'the waste of money in drink,' 'thriftlessness, money spent on pleasure out of all proportion to earnings,' 'growing extravagance in the manner of living,' 'improvident marriages,' 'slate clubs as substitute for benefit societies,' 'a spirit of pauperism has been fostered by petty doles and local charities,' and this last applies equally to church charities and to those controlled by parochial and municipal authorities. . . . There is an increasing tendency on the part of children to allow aged parents and relations to apply for out-relief. . . . In the country, a large percentage make no effort to save . . . and, this is from Croydon. . . . 'the lack of sense of filial responsibility has increased during the period in which the State has done so much for the children. . . .' We are driven back again and again to the moral cause. The poverty is to be attributed to a failure in character, rather than to any particular economic cause. . . . The expectation of relief appears to have contributed in no small degree to the encouragement of pauperism. . . . Another bad feature in some towns is the number of unskilled casual workers who are content to live on the earnings of women; when the latter are unable to work, distress instantly ensues."

Rochester.

The Rochester reply is as follows :—

"Dividing the parishes roughly into urban, manufacturing, and agricultural, to the first part of the question: 'Is there much poverty' the answer from more than half of the (187) parishes is in the negative, *i.e.*, that there is little or no poverty. In those parishes where poverty is reported to exist, it is almost invariably stated to be increasing, or likely shortly to increase. . . ." Out of a total of about 116 parishes that may be classed as mainly agricultural, distress is admitted to exist in only twelve, or of those twelve in only two cases is the distress attributed to general agricultural depression.

"Practically all the urban parishes attribute distress to depression in the building trade, increased in some cases by thriftlessness and drink."

St. Albans.

83. St. Albans includes the populated districts on the East of "London—London over-the border, in which are situated some of the very poorest parishes in England." Extreme poverty in the diocese is mostly confined to this area. The definition of "much poverty" varies in different localities and with different men, but sixty-four town parishes speak of much poverty, and thirty-eight say that it is increasing.

Fifteen country parishes say that they have much poverty and six say that it is increasing. Acute poverty in country districts would appear to be rare. "Those out of work leave the place."

84. Lastly we take the replies for the dioceses of Southwark and London. From Southwark. Southwark the reply is :—

> "In the suburban and country parts of the diocese, there does not seem to be any growth of poverty except that incidental to the building trade, which is rather slack in some places; but in the Metropolitan area, and more especially in the Archdeaconry of Southwark, reports show a considerable increase.
>
> "The causes for this seem to be, from the moral point of view, drink and thriftlessness, from an economic point of view to be owing to the fact that the richer people are gradually going further afield, and leaving many who used to be employed by them to shift for themselves, and further, to an excess of unskilled labour, and to ignorance of domestic management, consequent upon too early marriages."

It is difficult to generalise about London, and the Bishop of London's Commission London. have therefore published examples of replies as indicating the state of things, instead of drawing up a summary. To the questions: "Is there much extreme poverty in your parish? If so, to what do you attribute it?" The examples of replies are as follows :—

> (i.) No; though proportionately, this parish containing few of the artisan class, there is too much. Rents here are very high, but the chief trouble is irregularity of employment, particularly in the cases of unskilled labour.
>
> (ii.) Yes, many of the men are casual labourers, and many only obtain work in their calling during part of the year. There is a good deal of drinking, both amongst men and women.
>
> (iii.) Not a great deal of extreme poverty, except under special circumstances when trade is bad and casual labour is in small demand. High rents, which mean sub-letting, are, in my judgment, a chief cause of squalid living and low ideals and want of self-respect.
>
> (iv.) There is a good deal. Much attributable to drink; but a good deal also to the fact that many of the younger men have never learned a trade.
>
> (v.) In a population of 6,500, there are about 1,000 desperately poor. The sole causes seem to be drink and extravagance; especially extravagance in dressing the children and in expenses on holiday excursions and treats.
>
> (vi.) About 1,000 people belong to the "slum class." Their poverty is, in my opinion, due to :—
>
> (*a*) The uncertainty of employment for the *unskilled labourer*.
>
> (*b*) Improvidence :—
> (i.) Reckless marriage.
> (ii.) Drink.
>
> (*c*) Disproportionately high rents for tenement property.

To the questions: "Is the distress increasing or decreasing? What is the cause of the variation?" the following examples of replies are given :—

> i. The last two years there has not been quite so much out of work, but a *serious feature* is the difficulty lads—fairly capable, honest and sober—find of obtaining work.
>
> ii. Increasing. Poorer people coming to live here.
>
> iii. Increasing on the whole. This is largely due to the migration of better-class families to the suburbs. Undoubtedly religious influences are among the chief causes for this aspiration after more congenial surroundings.
>
> iv. Steadily, if slowly, increasing. The better-off folk push *out*; their places are taken by a lower social class.

85. We have given these notes at some length, both because they indicate what may be accepted as a brief summary of the state of the country, and because they suggest the conditions which any schemes for the better relief of distress would have to meet. Needless to say that scattered throughout our evidence many references could be cited in support of the various opinions and generalisations which we have epitomised.

86. The statements of the causes of distress it is not necessary to reproduce in further detail. They tell their own tale. Economic causes are constantly at work to alter social conditions and to place within the reach of people both many opportunities for

good wages and many obstacles resulting from the instability of industrial and commercial life. But, after making all allowances for these, the vital issues in the problem are rather moral than economic. And many of the evils to which reference is made in the reports can hardly be affected at all by relief, though relief unwisely given may aggravate them. To obtain results, therefore, with or without relief, some other element has to be brought into play, which, whether it work through personal influence or by considerate refusal of relief, or by treatment, or by general measures will strengthen and develop self restraint and independence of character.

87. The impression which the evidence gives in regard to the rural districts is that, though there are low wages in the country and in that sense "we are all poor," the poverty of the rural districts is not what some of the writers have called "actual poverty," or "poverty of a severe type." It is the clean and self-respecting poverty which is consistent with a small wage, that is spent according to a routine of careful expenditure, and so suffices. "Actual" or "special" or "acute" poverty is due to misfortune, the misfortune, for example, of the migration of a trade to some other place or to some want or uncertainty of employment, the results of which have not been, or cannot be, avoided without loss and suffering. But this is a very small part indeed of the whole. "Actual" poverty is due, also, it is repeatedly stated, to degrading habits of some kind, such as intemperance, immorality, or gambling, or to, what one may call, fatal and habitual social misjudgment, which shows itself in many ways, such as improvident marriage, thriftlessness, and disinclination to fulfil the duties of relationship. The periods of out-of-work due to physical causes, sickness and old-age have their effect also—difficulties which it should be possible to meet in great part by insurance and foresight, as they represent evident and calculable risks. But, after all has been said, in far the larger number of rural parishes there is not much poverty or little or no poverty, and very seldom is it on the increase. Indeed, the reports as a whole are most satisfactory.

88. The distress in industrial towns, on the other hand, especially among the unskilled classes, is serious. The inducements to excess of some kind—which may be summed up in the words "moral causes"—have a freer play, while at the same time economic instability is greater. The individual has thus to educate himself to bear the pressure and distraction of influences to which he becomes very slowly habituated; and social aid and charitable help find their office in promoting this process of habituation, so that the great self-restraint and steadfastness necessary to an industrial life in the large centres of population may be acquired by a larger number of the unskilled class, as it has been acquired by the greater part of those engaged in industry. Its relation to this question, and to the cases of individual distress which come to light, partly in connection with it, gives a special character to charitable work in these centres, and suggests the nature of the administration which should be put in force in them.

XV.—Endowed Dole Charities in the Country and in Towns.

89. With this general view of the problem before us we turn to the endowed charities in the rural and in the urban districts.

Almshouse pension and dole charities: their amount.

90. It would appear that the total gross income of the endowed charities which come within the scope of our Report is £991,959, of which £666,147 is applicable to the maintenance of almspeople and pensioners, and £325,812 to distribution among the poor.[1] The whole of this sum is appropriated: "most of it very strongly appropriated to localities." This is a consideration which affects endowed charities especially, but relatively by habit and procedure it affects also the great mass of voluntary charities. Whatever scheme of general organisation may be proposed, the charities themselves are established to fulfil certain definite purposes, and an adaptation of them to other even slightly varied purposes is very difficult.

Endowed Charities (Almspeople, Pensioners, etc.).

91. The endowed charities which in general terms are called doles receive very severe criticism, managed as they are at present. It is not possible to read through the evidence—the replies from the bishops and clergy of the dioceses, the evidence taken

[1] Young, 31182, 31183, and App. No. XII. (G), p. 621, Vol. III., and (H), p. 623, Vol. III. Mr. Drage's Return, 1898, 110. *See also* the Report of Select Committee on Charitable Trusts Acts. p. 5.

by the Commission, and the reports furnished by our investigators—without coming to the conclusion that some far-reaching changes in regard to them are absolutely necessary; and we preface a more detailed examination of the subject by a statement of this evidence.

Diocesan Reports. Opinions respecting the dole charities chiefly in country districts and small towns.

92. It is stated in the Peterborough Report that "most parishes, except the new districts in towns, have doles of some sort, though they vary from 'bad,' 'mischievous,' 'pauperising' and 'leading to jealousy' to 'good,' 'beneficent,' 'useful,' and 'adding to comfort and happiness.'[1] To some extent, at any rate this is a matter of administration. In many parishes, however, a share in these ancient charities is obtained by all householders who are in receipt of weekly wages as a right, whether in money or kind, and the feeling seems quite general that when the amount given is small and universal it becomes at once mischievous and even of an immoral tendency." In two parishes, one of them under 200 in population, £70 and £80 is annually distributed in cash. The vicar says: "All the village participate in it, except those owning live stock," and he has a "distinctly unfavourable opinion" of it.

> "A strict inquiry seems to be desirable into what constitutes eligibility (so far as position is concerned) for the old parochial charities. Strong working men in the prime of life claim their share, *simply as labourers*, while widows and aged people suffer, for whom the charity (*if kept for them*) would be a real and valuable boon. The keenness of these men to obtain their share however small it may be, shows the harmful effect upon an otherwise manly and independent character."

The Ely Report contains some weighty sentences on the administration of endowed charities.[2]

> "Our imperfect statistics which lack the particulars of almost a hundred small parishes, prove that the income of the endowed charities in the diocese exceeds £22,000. Though not a large amount as compared with the funds of some other dioceses, it is large enough if efficiently administered to produce important results. Unhappily the documents before us tend to show that, under existing conditions, the administration neither is nor can be efficient.
>
> (1) The mere fact that there are 935 separate trusts is a very serious obstacle. A separate organisation for managing every £20 of the income! But even that is not the worst. A great number of these trusts have an income of from £3 to 15s., sums not large enough to effect any solid good, yet quite large enough to be the objects of intrigue, and the causes of much jealousy and ill-feeling. Only if the administrators are both entirely wise and entirely trusted by the people can the distribution of such funds be innocuous.
>
> (2) It has already been shown that in the majority of parishes the trusts are administered either by the incumbents alone or by the incumbent and churchwardens. Now it is only a minority of the clergy who have received any training in the principles of charitable relief; and the answers we have received make it clear that such knowledge does not come by the light of nature. Still less can we expect the churchwardens, who are appointed for reasons quite independent of almsgiving, to possess this kind of skill. Clergy and churchwardens alike are exposed to the criticism of the ignorant, whose idea of justice is always a mechanical rule. What wonder, then, if the administration of small funds is often either arbitrary or mechanical? We cannot refrain from quoting an example of churchwardens' charity which is given in one of the returns:—
>
> "Our considerable charities are made of little use by being divided up among the whole of the cottagers. Families earning £3 a week are treated in the same way as those who are in real poverty; but the churchwardens cannot be persuaded of the folly of this waste." This is, indeed, the prevailing vice of distributing committees. Fearing the criticism which would be provoked by substantial gifts to deserving cases, they shield themselves by a mechanical allotment of useless doles. As to the other bodies of trustees we have no direct evidence; but it is reasonable to assume that many of them labour under the same disabilities.
>
> (3) One of the besetting sins of charitable trustees is a desire to act independently, refusing co-operation with other bodies which are doing similar work. The effect of this feeling is that, all over England, plausible mendicants make a comfortable income by obtaining grants from several sources. This diocese is no exception to the rule. In those many small parishes, indeed, where all the funds are in the hands of the incumbent, and the Nonconformists give no relief of any kind, the danger is not serious. But in the larger parishes, especially in the towns, there are frequent instances of overlapping. Of the incumbents who are aware of the evil only twenty (mostly in town parishes) are able to say that an attempt has been made to co-ordinate the sources of relief. Where a Committee has been appointed to deal with all the local funds, and to work in concert with

[1] Diocesan Report, Peterborough. [2] Diocesan Report, Ely.

the guardians, the results are said to be thoroughly satisfactory. The town of Bedford is particularly well organised in this respect, and derives much advantage therefrom. But the effect of the want of system, which is so general in the diocese, may be read in the discouraging answers given to our fifth and eighth questions. The perusal of them leaves a depressing conviction that the greater part of the "relief" which is being given is either useless or positively injurious to the recipients.

(4) The wisest administrator can effect little good if he is bound by covenant to devote much of his care to mischievous objects. We have, therefore, to consider the purpose for which the charitable trusts have been founded. Some of them are excellent. Parts of 72 trusts are devoted to education, of 60 to the housing of the poor, of 15 to apprenticing boys, 11 to hospitals or district nurses, and a few to allotments of land. But "charities" of another class are more numerous and better endowed. No less than 172 provide for doles of coal, 125 for doles of bread, 91 for doles of money, and 82 for doles of clothing. The returns contain many laments over the mischief which these relics of an obsolete conception of charity are inflicting upon the present generation. Where the funds are large (and in some places they are very large) widespread demoralisation is the result. All the parishioners are inclined to grasp at a share in such distribution; and trustees exposed to the fire of local criticism must be unusually courageous if they can wholly resist the claim. Consequently, for every case of deserving poverty which is relieved, several who are undeserving obtain a portion of the spoil, while several more are not less pauperised because their unjust desires have been disappointed. We cannot wonder, therefore, if the wiser clergy are anxious to be relieved of a responsibility which involves so much odium, and carries with it so little power of doing substantial good.

These charities are subject to the Charity Commission; and many of them are administered under schemes drawn up by that body. Some of the schemes are intrinsically bad; some fail in practice because they assume too large a measure of wisdom and courage on the part of the trustees. We cannot help thinking that the time has come for a wholesale revision of these antiquated instruments.

The Gloucester Report[1] states there is a general consensus of opinion that endowed charities, which consist of doles have a demoralising effect on the recipients, and the Committee think that the Charity Commission might with advantage sanction schemes for the conversion of dole charities to purposes more beneficial to the parishes concerned.

The Exeter Report states:[2]

"It is agreed that the existence of large endowed charities in a place tends to create whole areas of dependence and destitution."

The Hereford Report has the following sentences:[3]

"It is most regrettable to find that a large number of parochial endowed charities are of the kind known as "dole" charities. They are generally described as "unsatisfactory," "wasteful," and "demoralising." These doles are given in bread, coal, clothing, boots, and cash, and bread is stated to be the most wasteful form of gift. Some recipients will not even take the trouble to call for the bread which has been allotted to them. Very many of the parochial charities have under the trust deeds to be distributed to fixed numbers of persons or families in money or kind, and it appears frequently to occur that these numbers are in great excess of the really necessitous poor of the parish. Even where the hands of the trustees are not fettered by the terms of the trust, it is the practice of many parish councils and other trustees, as a result of custom or a mistaken sense of justice, to distribute the proceeds of the charities in doles among the entire working population of the parish. Complaint is made that in some cases these doles have to be earned by a regular attendance at church services, and there are clergy who strongly resent having to perform divine service before a congregation consisting partly of paid worshippers. The doles are sometimes too large, often insignificant from excessive division, and, being regular, are anticipated before receipt, and for all practical purposes serve no useful end, but are merely aids to low wages, which they help to make still lower. Many incumbents express hopes that powers will be taken, if such are not now existent, to revise the trust deeds. There is an almost entire agreement that these dole charities would be better reserved for emergencies, such as cases of sickness, sending patients to convalescent homes, or providing outfits for girls of necessitous parents to enable them to enter domestic service, or in paying parish nurses. There are also important proposals for utilising the capital for the provision of almshouses, as indicated under the last question.

"Closely connected with the question of outdoor relief is that of the provision of pensions. It is not quite easy to gather from the returns how many parishes have a satisfactory pension system already in operation. Twenty-nine speak of such a system, but

[1] Diocesan Report, Gloucester. [2] Diocesan Report, Exeter. [3] Diocesan Report, Hereford.

it seems to be on a very restricted scale, consisting, in some instances, of 2s. 6d. a month to a few old people, sometimes of 1s. a week to aged church folk; in one instance it is given frankly as a weekly reward to old people who attend church regularly.

"In seventeen parishes the endowed charities have been converted, under a scheme drawn up by the Charity Commissioners. The amount formerly used for doles is, in these cases, applied usually, in the first instance, to pensions. Almshouses, nursing funds, apprenticing, and other good objects are also included in the schemes. We are glad to notice that the clergy are evidently anxious for change. Speaking from personal experience some members of your Committee can point out that, whatever opposition there may be at first to the adoption of a scheme, it speedily dies down when once the improved methods get to work. Also, it may be added, the Charity Commissioners are prepared to vary their scheme in order to meet the special needs of the neighbourhood.

"In several parishes out-relief is reported to be dying out, being rendered unnecessary by the pensions provided under the scheme. In one or two cases the church and the endowed charities co-operate to provide pensions for all who are beyond the working age and have a good record behind them.

"Meantime, it appears that there are eighty-six parishes, of those making returns, in which there are endowed charities which are given away entirely or almost entirely, in doles. Many strong criticisms are passed upon the result; the money is given in coals and clothing to people who don't want them, and fifty-one loaves every Sunday to people who don't want them. 'The parish suffers from the number of Christmas doles.' 'So many loaves are given each Sunday—all wasted money.' In one parish the endowed charities yield an income of over £600 per annum, of which more than half is distributed in doles. That, of course, is exceptional."

"In the Canterbury report it is said that there appear to be many unreformed charities:—[1]

"'Two loaves a week through six winter months to widows and poor attending church. Another charity gives coal at Christmas and money to about eighty persons at Easter.' In the same parish, population 1,350, '£15 a year to thirty men and women over sixty; also grants of £1, £2, £3, to fifteen others in need of help.' Again, in another parish, population 2,321, 'On Ash Wednesday, 100 persons receive 10s. each.'

"When such grants are made we are told often that persons do not need them. It would obviously be well in some cases to secure an alteration of old schemes, and where new schemes are unwisely administered by parochial bodies, to make suggestions as to the more helpful alternatives offered by such a scheme.

"The Committee is of opinion that if the separation between Poor Law and charity were made, the desired change in the method of administration would come about of itself."

Some of the clergy write in regard to the question whether there is overlapping in these terms. "Yes; owing to the reckless way in which tickets for city charities are given to the most undeserving by city authorities." "Canterbury is a sink of small charities." And from another parish there the report is:

"There is a great deal of overlapping between various charities. A great many municipal charities and charities in the hands of trustees and almshouses which might well be reorganised. There is a regular scramble for their doles."

'From St. Albans come the following statements:—[2]

"As regards endowments, the very considerable amount of money that appears to be given away in doles is surprising. Whether such doles are, in all cases, really productive of good results may be open to question:—

1. "If my poor fund runs low, I have only to say so in church, and the congregation will give readily."

2. "Total about £125, of which I have official knowledge. Much in addition to this is done by private almsgiving."

3. "The charities for the relief of the poor have been amalgamated . . . they are now to be used for the upkeep of a club and reading room."

4. "I think the extent of our dole charities is on the whole mischievous, and should be glad to have the revenues devoted to some permanent object of helping appreciably the aged deserving poor."

5. "We get a little from Ecclesiastical Charities, but the recent conditions of its distribution greatly minimise its value."

6. "In my opinion wasted. Any change would be resented unless it were part of a general system prescribed by law."

7. "There are no endowments of any kind, and I think this fact has been a blessing to the parish."

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[1] Diocesan Report, Canterbury. [2] Diocesan Report, St. Albans.

8. "There are no endowments, I am thankful to say."

9. "I think the money spent on doles according to the conditions of the trust deeds might be more beneficially expended."

10. "The parish charity is useless, and might with others of the kind be given to some other object—preferably old-age pensions."

11. "Every parishioner, including children, whose weekly wage does not exceed 25s. per week, is entitled to share in the endowed charities, so that in some cases as much as £2 goes to one house."

Dole charities Evidence of witnesses as to country districts.

93. To pass to other evidence. One witness referring to the dole charities in his parish, says:[1]

"As to the effect of these charities, I doubt if they serve any useful purpose. It would be better if it were possible to utilise part of these charities as the contribution of the poor to some good object, such as the provision of a certificated nurse for the parish."

Another says that:

"The effect of the charities on the poor is rather degrading, as they cringe to the trustees." There is "great discontent, as few are satisfied with what they get as charity."[2]

Another said:

"I have to do with parishioners who know that they have no charities whatever and with parishioners who know that they have many. Although the two belong to the same class the difference between them is very marked. . . . It may be fancy on my part, but it really seems to change the whole tone of the people, socially and even spiritually."[3]

Another says of the small endowed charities:

"The benefit from them is received by persons who are not in need. As regards one of the charities, bread is only given to certain people who attend divine service on particular days. The consequence is that persons who never enter a church on any other occasion flock to it at the e times. The doles, therefore, partake of the nature of a bribe for taking part in religious worship, and certainly have anything but a good effect on the recipients, as far as religion is concerned." "Once they [people who do not really need the gift] get on the list it is very difficult to strike them off, and it is also very difficult to refuse to give to other people in the same position. I have struck off some. For instance, there was a woman who was keeping a shop and who kept cows and had 7 or 8 acres of land, and she had benefit from these charities and these doles. In another case there was a widow who was paying £15 a year for her holding, and had a pony and trap and kept cows. They had this charity, and they thought they ought to have it."[4]

94. There is also a widespread depreciation of the endowed charities of the small towns. Of the results of their administration at Beverley, one said:[5]

Dole charities in towns.

"The dole charities are an absolute waste. The money is taken to the first public-house. They have a bad effect on character and independence. Before Christmas people get themselves up shabbily, and touch their hats at street corners." "They look on the church as a place out of which there is something to be got." "Many of the people live on charity. Cadging is the order of the day. The charities deter people from improving their position."[6]

A trustee said:

"My bell used to be continually ringing with people asking for tickets for groceries, etc. The deserving people keep away, and the undesirables come."

95. Passing to the larger towns, we have the same criticism. Of the doles in Norwich, "More than one of these informants who had been officially connected with the administration" spoke of the dole charities as an unmitigated evil. Another, an incumbent, said:

"Norwich is pauperised to a degree, and a large portion of idlers appear to live on the 'generosity' of the Norwich 'charitable.' The poor are helped too much, and if they were helped less, and made to help themselves more, we should have less poverty and discontent."[7]

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[1] Batchelor, 68879, (13). [2] Hood, 71523, (13). Jebb, 71698, (21). [3] Moody, 71940, (10). Burges, 72139, (11). Kevill Davies, 72681 (25), 72766, 72831 (2). [4] Platten, Vol. VII. App. No. cxciv. (8). Report on endowed and voluntary charities, p. 29, Beverley. [6] *Cf.* Lichfield, p. 32. Ludlow, p. 34. Bourne, p. 35. Staunton-on-Wye, p. 43. [7] Norwich, p. 14.

So at York the incumbent of a city parish said:

> "The people come in swarms to the school-room, and the gifts do them no good at all. There is no limit of age; people of thirty, and under, get the charity. Prostitutes take a room in the parish before Christmas and try to get it. It is given to men earning good wages, for instance, a telegraph wire-man, earning 28s. to 30s. a week, with a drunken wife and three or four children. The charities destroy my spiritual position. When I visit the people, they say: 'What has Mr.—— brought?'" [2]

96. In support of all this generally unfavourable evidence, many cases might be quoted, of which the particulars are given in the investigators' report, for they made independent inquiries in regard to a large number of cases taken at haphazard.[2] These show that the doles fell to many of the unjust, and to some of the just. They came to drinking and immoral people living in dirty homes, to the lazy and disreputable, to people quite well enough off to do without them; to old almspeople who were already in receipt of a pension, or had a place in an almshouse; to widows of good, bad, or indifferent character; to steady and well-doing people, and to thriving families. They were indiscriminate. They promoted dependence among the independent, and palliated demoralisation, and did little or nothing to ameliorate a state of poverty, or prevent a state of distress.

Dole charities conclusion.

97. These charities are a principal factor in the settlement of any reorganisation of the local relief. Where they are small in comparatively small populations they cannot be ignored, and where they are large it is indispensable that they should be revised and brought into co-ordination. To a great extent they are now used to supplement outdoor relief. If, as we would desire, the policy adopted heretofore by the Court of Chancery and the Charity Commission and the Poor Law, as represented by Mr. Goschen's Minute, were to prevail, they would be administered on lines parallel to the Poor Law. Co-operation would take the place of supplementation. But to make the charities useful, and to bring them into co-ordination, is usually a very unpopular task.[3] Local residents and trustees fear to undertake it. Reform, therefore, must in great measure come from without.

XVI.—Suggestions of Witnesses in Regard to Dole Charities and the Local Organisation of Voluntary Aid.

Suggestions of witnesses and others as to the development of a reformed system.

98. We next turn to some of the comments and suggestions made by witnesses in regard to the better application of doles and the better organisation of local voluntary aid. The Rev. Charles H. Heale, the Vicar of Williton in Somersetshire, in his very interesting evidence, told us that[4]:—

> "Under the old schemes each parish provided for the relief of their own people, and the money of these old charities was practically given to the help of the parish generally. If you examine the old overseers' accounts and the old churchwardens' accounts, you invariably find that they relieved their own people; and sometimes people connected with the place left a small sum in charity to go towards lessening the local expenses. . . . There was a house kept in almost every parish where the very poor people, who were helpless and could not take care of themselves, were herded together. . . . As far as I can gather, there was very little out-relief given in the old days, and what was given was only given in cases of sickness. I am going back more than 100 years now. Charities 'left for giving a small sum or clothing annually to the second poor, *i.e.*, those not in receipt of parochial relief' were given to people who were not in the house."

The parish poorhouses have vanished, and their place has been taken by the union workhouses, which have often developed into general institutions for the care of the sick and aged poor rather than workhouses. Now, usually, it is possible to take advantage of much more various means for dealing with those in distress than formerly; and institutional relief may be said to include, not only treatment of the sick in infirmaries or infirm wards under careful nursing, but the maintenance of the afflicted and of children in special homes. And these means may be still further developed by making use of private certified homes, and by regulated co-operation between the public authorities and the managers of voluntary agencies. Hence

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[1] York, p. 18. Coventry, p. 23. Kendal, p. 27. [2] Norwich, p. 13. York, p. 17. Coventry, p. 25. Kendal, p. 25. Lichfield, p. 31, and Lloyd, 32062. Also the Abstract of information, p. 235. [3] Report on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, p. 32, p. 39. [4] Heale, 69047, 69055, 69058, pars. 29–31.

by the scheme we suggest, while the dole charities, subject to an indispensable modification, namely, that they are applicable to cases of distress, are left in the hands of trustees for local use, the Poor Law, in the larger area of the county, and with the aid of county rates, would provide such institutional relief as might seem right for the individual applicant, instead of only "the workhouse" and the "offer of the house." Outdoor relief would be restricted in its scope, and charitable association throughout the union by means of the Voluntary Aid Committee would, as far as may be, take its place.

99. Speaking of the possibility of an unification of outdoor relief and charity, Mr. Heale thought it was not possible to work local charity and Poor Law together; if this were carried out, people would cease to give to church collections, money would not be so freely given by individuals, and there could be no system or method. The charities or endowments left to the second poor ought, he considered, rather to be used for old-age pensions than for the relief of the poor under the Poor Law.

100. This line of thought is taken by several witnesses tentatively. The Rev. Henry Moody, Vicar of Wolverhampton, who was very familiar with the methods of the Poor Law, and who from about 1870 had worked continuously among the poor, in towns—in the East of London, and in Leeds, and in country districts, gave us the results of his experience.[1] He said that:—

> "In some cases charity and out-relief should go hand in hand together, but at present there was no connection between them. In some way or other there should be provision for the two to work together. . . . Some means should certainly be devised so that each knows what the other is doing. . . . Occasional charity is no doubt of the greatest value, and one cannot see how the poor could possibly tide over certain times without it. In the hour of their real want they seek charity rather than Poor Law relief. In the interests of the poor themselves by all means do away with harmful relief and substitute useful charity, if it can possibly be arranged, and I think it might."

101. Another witness,[2] the Chairman of the Stretton Board of Guardians, suggested that the charities in a parish or town might be pooled and provide—

> "A number of small pensions to carefully selected cases, and letting it be known that, unless forfeited by bad conduct, such pensions will be continued through life. In a former parish with which I was connected," he said, "a number of small charities no one of which alone was of sufficient value to do any permanent good, when distributed amongst all the aged, or all the widows, or all the spinsters of the parish, by being pooled, produced an aggregate sum from which we were able to pay thirteen worn-out folk, all of the classes for which the charities were originally intended, a weekly pension of 3s. 6d. each. All these people must have, but for this charitable help, been on the outdoor relief list at, perhaps, from 2s. to 2s. 6d. each. They had no longer any fear of the money being withheld, provided they behaved themselves reasonably well—all the annoyance and quarrelling caused by frequent distribution of doles was done away with, and the poor rate was relieved to an appreciable extent."

102. Here by consolidation dependence on the rates was reduced. In co-operation with the board of guardians, if State pensions led to its being desirable to revise such a settlement, the charities could be equally well turned to some other account on similar lines.

103. Another witness,[3] Mr. Thomas Emberton, speaking of Ellesmere, where he had been a guardian for fifteen years and vice-chairman six years, proposed that a—

> "Committee might with advantage be formed to administer both outdoor relief and the charities." "There is," he said, "a good deal of dissatisfaction. You see there is the vicar and the churchwarden; there is the trustee from the parish council and a trustee from the urban council, and one or two more of the other minor parishes that have been lopped off from the Ellesmere parish that have trustees really." "The guardians," he continued "have nothing whatever to do with the trustees; there is no conference with them in dealing with cases; the urban council elects a trustee; the guardians have no standing whatever."

The committee, he suggested, might be composed for the greater part of guardians (whose service on it would be compulsory) with, say, the vicar and one of his churchwardens as trustees, the secretaries of friendly societies—the Oddfellows and Foresters, and of a women's club. The committee would then refuse out-relief if they thought

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[1] Moody, 71940 (10–14). [2] Burges 72129. [3] Emberton, 71324, 71341, 71375, 71350.

there was fraud of any kind; or where the applicants "lived under insanitary conditions in cottages which are unfit for them to reside in" and "when they have no one to look after them and they can get no attendance; and, where we find it is some drunken, careless, improvident individual, we do not see that we are in a manner bound to give him out-relief at all." For the reasons which we are about to state we have not advocated a combined Poor Law and Voluntary Aid Committee as is here suggested, but otherwise this evidence describes what we think is desirable.[1] In this case the Voluntary Aid Committee would deal with the whole union, an agricultural union with a population of about 2,000, with Ellesmere town as its only urban centre.

104. Another witness from the same union,[2] "a dissatisfied distributor of Phillip's charity which, up till 1905, annually provided blankets and flannel (about £100 worth) for distribution in Ellesmere parish" said:—

> "The co-ordination of medical and all other agencies for the help of the poor is sorely needed. One representative body might undertake the work of the hospital, the dispensary, the trained nurse, etc., and be in touch with the guardians, the charity trustees and other, at present, separate organisations."

105. Mr. John MacGowan,[3] the general secretary of the Oddfellows Widow and Orphan Society, at Bridgwater, said:—

> "To endeavour to prevent this ('a too liberal dispensing of charity, which tends to make people sordid and seems to cause them to be more and more disinclined to depend upon any effort of their own'), all charity should be organised, and its indiscriminate distribution discouraged. This might be done by establishing permanent charity organisation committees in each locality, the members thereof to be elected and some co-opted. The aim of such a committee should be to centre all charity within its own sphere of work. If charity thus organised could be assisted by aid grants from the State, the present system of out-relief would, I think, be greatly reduced, and in time might disappear in its present form.'[4]

106. Miss Joseph,[5] a guardian of the Williton Union, said:—

> "I believe, if out-relief were the exception and not the rule, and there was co-operation between the charity of a district and the Poor Law to meet the 'hard case,' that in the course of a generation there would be a marked improvement in the economic condition and *morale* of the district; but where out-relief is given it should be adequate and the circumstances of the recipient be reviewed frequently."

She suggested that the parishes or villages in unions might be grouped, and that in each group there might be a sub-committee—

> "Different people representing the various interests in those villages, and that one of their members should work on the central committee and report to the central committee of the union, which would meet on the board day of the board of guardians after the meeting of the board. The sub-committee would not make any expenditure without reference to the central committee, and the funds should be raised on each case. There are a certain number of endowed charities which we hope to get. Then there is a great deal of private charity, and if we could bring the charitable to our point of view, we hope to get the money which they now give individually. . . . The idea of the scheme in the first place was to keep cases from becoming chargeable by timely aid."[6]

The suggested rules require that "relief shall not be given to supplement outdoor relief; that the board of guardians allow their clerk and committee to report fully to the committee after investigation that the money needed must be raised specially for that case; that a reserve fund be raised from private donors for certain specific objects; that members of the committee must under no circumstances give relief without the authority of the committee; that members must be encouraged to visit cases regularly and report to the committee; that every decision be reported to the board of guardians as soon as possible.[7]

107. This scheme deals with the whole union, and would serve a purpose similar to that of the more simple scheme adopted by the guardians at Farnham, which Mr. Baldwyn Fleming described to the Commission. Mr. Fleming said[8]:—

> "Take Farnham, for instance, which has been referred to by Miss Hill. They have an admirable institution by the side of the board of guardians' work. They call it a benevolent

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[1] 71324 (2). [2] Jebb, 71698 (16). [3] MacGowan, 68814, (16), 68835, 68844. [4] Malaher, App. cxxxvi., Vol. VII. (2), (3), (4), (7). [5] Joseph, 69293 (3), 69334, 69359. [6] App. iii., Vol. VII., p. 365. [7] App. iii., Vol. VII., p. 366. [8] Fleming, 9417–9422.

fund. This benevolent fund is subscribed to by people who live within the district, and if any case goes before the board of guardians which they think the application of the Poor Law works hardly upon, and which is evidently a deserving case, but only of temporary distress; and if they want to save the person becoming a pauper—if, for instance, it is the case of a man who can be got to work by purchasing tools for him—they apply to the benevolent fund, and the benevolent fund gives what is necessary, possibly on loan. The man having got his tools and to work, would gradually repay them back. Colonel Fitroy, who is the treasurer of the Benevolent Fund, told me recently that in no year had they spent more than £20.

"It is a question whether it ought to be done at the cost of the rates."

"It would be a most excellent thing to have such voluntary funds annexed to boards of guardians elsewhere. Mr. Bland Garland told me that when he started the reformed administration in the Bradfield Union he put aside £100 to meet cases of that kind, and that he had only used a small amount of it. . . ."

And Mr. Fleming agreed that "It is mostly a little advice and sympathy that is helpful to the people"; and that there was every reason why, even in the poorest districts, there should be some kind of organisation of a voluntary character working side by side with the Poor Law system, if you could only get the people to do it. And he thought that—

"The funds that would be required would be so small that they could always be forthcoming. There was an enormous amount of charity given away, and if that charity were utilised instead of being wasted, it would much more than do what is required in the direction that we are now considering."

108. Of the usefulness of parochial committees and similar organisations we have received much evidence.[1] 'In the Report for the Winchester Diocese special attention is called to them. Parochial committees are to be found, it is said, mostly in town parishes; but we may take this statement as applicable to parishes in the smaller as well as in the larger towns.' The rules frequently adopted by these committees suggest what might be a line of division between the Voluntary Assistance Committee which we have proposed and the Committee of Public Assistance. The parochial committee, it is said:—

"Must bear in mind that there are many cases in which the granting of relief is likely to encourage idleness, lack of thrift, or forgetfulness of family responsibility. Consequently relief shall not be gsanted:—

(*a*) In ordinary out of work cases, unless there is evidence of thrift, or unless there is illness, and there is reasonable prospect that circumstances will improve.

(*b*) In cases of destitution, when there is no prospect of circumstances improving—these are Poor Law cases.

(*c*) In cases of chronic sickness, unless they are suitable for a permanent allowance on the ground of good character, thrift, provision for the future, and readiness of relations to assist.

(*d*) In cases in which near relations, able to help, are unwilling to do so.

109. And in regard to a parochial committee at Shalford, Sir William Chance gave the following account:—

"May I say on the other point of voluntary effort taking the place of outdoor relief, that there is a parish close to where I live, Shalford, near Guildford, where last year they established a parochial relief committee; that relief committee has the vicar of the parish at the head of it, but he has called in a certain number of laymen, the chief constable of the county being one, and two guardians and one or two ladies. Every month they have a collection in the church for this relief society. Then they meet once a month, and all the cases that have been relieved during the time are reported, and perhaps in difficult cases they meet in the interval to consult whether a case should be relieved or not. That has worked extremely well. The charity is cut off entirely from the church, with this exception, that every month a collection is made for it, but it has nothing at all to do with the church. The consequence is that now practically we get no demands for outdoor relief in that parish; we get a few demand for medical outdoor relief, but no longer any for outdoor relief. I hope that before very long we shall have that system established all over our union, and I hope that these parochial committees, consisting of the clergy, ministers, and laymen and people who are interested in the thing, will gradually be able to deal with all the deserving cases. I hope that that principle may possibly extend to the country. That is one reason why I do not want to upset the present system, certainly in the country, more than is necessary, because I do feel that there is an enormous movement for good going on all over the country now, and pauperism is going down."

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[1] Diocesan Report, Winchester, and App. xvi., Vol. iii. Diocesan Report, Canterbury. Diocesan Report, Hereford. [2] *See* also Charities App.: Cases dealt with by Parochial Committees.

110. We thus pass from suggestions to plans which are at work successfully, and which, conducted under slightly altered methods and in alliance with the public assistance committees, would, we believe, lead to a good use of endowments, adequacy of relief, diminishing dependence, and friendly and personal help.

XVII.—Poor Law Relief and the Endowed Charities Considered in Relation to the Unions.

111. In many parishes there are few and trifling or no endowed charities; and the same may be said of not a few unions, if we consider the unions as groups of parishes. But, as we have seen, in very many places these charities are well worth considering in relation to the relief of distress; and we have selected Cricklade in Wiltshire, Ellesmere, Taunton and Lichfield as illustrating the position.[1] The population of the parish of Cricklade is 1,517. Most of the inhabitants are agricultural labourers. The wages of the labourers are said to be 12s. to 14s. a week with a cottage. The demand for labour is fairly steady. The Diocesan Report states that in 90 per cent of the parishes in the diocese there is no real poverty; and "all agree that poverty is not increasing."[2] From the endowed charities at Cricklade £204 2s. 5d. in doles was distributed in 1906 to 230 single persons or heads of families; the recipients are returned at 830, who would accordingly receive on an average about 4·91s. each.

> "Of recent years the trustees have reduced the number of recipients by striking off the names of about fifty recipients whose circumstances seemed to disentitle them to the receipt of charitable relief, but the list still includes, in addition to ordinary labourers, the names of small farmers, gardeners, grooms, tradespeople, shopmen, railway men, postmen, and others earning good wages."

Twelve months' residence qualifies for the reception of the doles.

112. Apart from the endowed charities about £20 is raised by the two churches for sick and poor funds. This is distributed by the clergy in one case, and through district visitors in the other. Out-relief to the extent of £283 is distributed in the parish, making in all a distribution of £625 a year; in a population of 1,517 persons. The pauperism of the parish is high. "There has been no communication between the board of guardians and the trustees of the charities or any understanding arrived at as to the class of cases with which each should deal." There is a good nursing association, the benefits of which are available on payment of a small subscription; and there are 304 adult members of permanent registered friendly societies. Clearly there is very little distress.

113. Already in this parish there is practically a central board. Under a recent scheme the rector of one parish, the vicar of another, the high bailiff of Cricklade, serve as *ex officio* trustees for the endowed charities, together with the representative trustees appointed by the parish council. All the dole charities might by general statute be assigned to the relief of distress, and, further, according to the distribution of the population a part might be assigned to the Voluntary Aid Committee for the union, and a part retained by the parish. The demand for the relief of distress would be very different from the demand for the charities' gifts. The former would be met by relief according to the needs of the case, and there would be comparatively few cases; for the latter any so-called poor person is a claimant. The trustees would be represented on the Voluntary Aid Committee.

114. There are fourteen parishes in the Union. Two have no endowed charities, six have charities with incomes of between £2 and £17, five have incomes of £88, £80, £61, £58, £35 respectively. As to the management of the charities: in eight parishes the trustees of the larger amount of the charities are the rector, vicar, and trustees appointed by the parish council. The rector, vicar, and churchwardens as trustees deal in these parishes with an income of £28. In one parish trustees appointed by the parish council and co-optative trustees deal with an income of £75. If therefore we take the union as a whole there is a good basis for the formation of a Voluntary Aid Committee, and from the point of view of the trusteeship,[3] this conclusion would apply equally to the other Unions to which we refer.

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[1] Report on endowed and voluntary charities, pp. 37, 205, 246. [2] Diocesan Report, Salisbury. [3] Charities Appendix.

115. The general position, financially, may be summed up thus :—

Poor Law relief :—

(1) Indoor relief in the half-year ending Lady-Day, 1908—108 persons.

(2) Of those in receipt of indoor relief sixty-nine had received relief for ninety days and over. They are, therefore, presumably most of them aged or infirm.

(3) Outdoor relief—half-year, as above: recipients, 338: of these undoubtedly a large proportion are the aged.

(4) On outdoor relief in the year ending Lady-Day, 1908, was spent £1,634.

(5) Thus in the union with a population of 11,357 persons, apart from indoor relief, £1,634 was expended on outdoor relief *plus* £719 from endowed charities: in all £2,353.

(6) The charge of £1,634 would, in future, so far as it referred to the aged, fall on the Exchequer, in a subsequent generation, when the pension at 70, instead of poor relief may be claimed.

(7) It is clear that, as we shall show in other instances, the endowed charities and voluntary charities could meet a great many of the miscellaneous cases now assisted by the Poor Law.

116. Next we take the Ellesmere Union.[1]

The population is 14,486. The income from endowed charities is £632. Nine parishes with populations varying from 44 persons to 624 persons have no endowed charities. In four parishes the charities are under £17. In the remaining eight parishes the income of the charities is £600, of which £25 is available for almspeople, in a population of 9,476.

The general position, financially, is as follows :—

(1) Endowed charities, £632.

(2) Indoor relief for half-year to Lady-Day 1908—100 persons.

(3) Of these seventy-two had been in receipt of relief ninety days and over.

(4) On outdoor relief in the year ending Lady-Day, 1908—the expenditure was £726; which, for the half-year, may be analysed thus :—

	Persons.	Expenditure in half-year. £
Infirm	66	216
Widows	13	62
Illness	17	53
Miscellaneous	15	35

(5) Here in a succeeding generation the major part of the infirm would probably be old-age pensioners; illness would be dealt with under the scheme in Part V.; and it should be quite possible by co-operation within the union, by the endowed charities, and otherwise to deal with the cases of widows and with the miscellaneous cases.

117. Taunton Union has a population of 38,653.[2] There are in it forty-two parishes. Ten parishes with small populations have no endowed charities. The income of sixteen charities from their sources is in all, £136—£25 being the maximum. The rest of the income, £4,932, lies in sixteen parishes, with a population of 29,741. Of this income £1,364 is payable to almspeople. The total income of endowed charities for the union is £5,068.

Here the financial position stands thus :—

(1) Endowed charities £5,068.

(2) Indoor relief for half-year ending Lady-Day, 1908—243 persons.

(3) Of these 180 have been in receipt of relief for ninety days and over.

(4) On outdoor relief in the year ending Lady-Day, 1908, the expenditure was £1,224.

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[1] *See* Emberton, 6324(2), Jebb, 71697, and other entries—Index to Vol. VII. Report on effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages, etc., Shropshire, by Thomas Jones, p. 17, and Charities Appendix. [2] *Cf.* Report by A. D. Steel Maitland and Rose Squire, and Charities Appendix.

(5) In the half-year ending Lady-Day, 1908, the figures may be analysed thus :—

	Persons.	Expenditure. £
Infirm	112	336
Widows	19	68
Illness	39	120
Miscellaneous	36	98

(6) Here, if we have regard to the amounts available in the different parishes and take into account the reports we have received about the Taunton Charities for instance, it would seem again quite feasible in connection with a Voluntary Aid Committee, and in co-operation with the Public Assistance Committee, to deal with all miscellaneous cases and with the cases of widows.*

118. Again, to take the case of Lichfield.[1] It is a "typical small cathedral city." The population is 7,902. There are three breweries employing under 200 men, and two small iron foundries; and about 150 men are employed by an architectural sculptor. The only other occupation of any importance is market gardening. Labourers' wages are 5d. to 6d. an hour, rents are low, the population increases but very little.

119. The following is a table of the charities :—

Endowed Charities.	Trustees.	Object.	Gross Yearly Income.
St. John's Hospital	Governed under statutes made by the bishops. Proposed—a body of trustees.	12 inmates over 60.	£1,250; will shortly be considerably increased.
The Municipal Charities	15: 3 appointed by the town council, 3 by electors of the north ward, 2 by those of the south ward, and 7 co-optative.	Pensions, almshouses, 5s. grants, etc.	£650
Dr. Milley's Hospital	The Dean of Lichfield and 2 trustees appointed by the city council, 1 appointed by the trustees of Fecknam's Charity, and 3 co-opted trustees.	Almshouse.	£540
Lowe's Charity	5 trustees appointed by the town council and 7 co-operative trustees.	Coats, caps, pensions, etc.	£520 (shortly).
Henry Smith's Charity	Churchwardens of St. Mary's.	Flannel, etc., for the poor of the City	£18
Wakefield	4 trustees.	Doles.	£103.
Passam's Charity	Incumbents and churchwardens of 3 parishes.	Doles.	£26.
Hinton's Charity	Mayor of Lichfield.	5s. gifts in sickness or distress.	£26.
Haworth's Charity	The Dean of Lichfield.	Monetary and other relief; very poor persons.	£45
The Close	2 trustees not connected with Lichfield.	Deserving poor of the Close.	£71.

*Data in regard to two or three other towns are given in the Charities Appendix.

1 Report on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, pp. 30, 179 and 286.

120. Besides these are eleven other charities distributed, some in all three parishes, some in one or another—amounting to more than £90 a year. Apart from those which are mostly distributed by the incumbents of the several churches and the churchwardens, who are the trustees, there are, as the above list shows, nine different sets of trustees. This fact and the figures suggest that there might be one committee of trustees for the city; that all these sums and the almshouses and pensions might be made available for the relief of distress in a larger area. With the single body of trustees in the union might be associated representatives of the voluntary societies of the city and others. A Voluntary Aid Committee would thus be formed. There are several useful Voluntary charities in Lichfield, a nursing home, a branch of the Ladies' Association for Friendless Girls, a White Ribbon Mission and Maternity Home, trades unions, church and chapel charities, and a Charity Organisation Society. Thirteen per cent. of the population are members of friendly societies, and there is a medical provident society with 2,818 members.[1] At present, though of the eight guardians for the City of Lichfield six are trustees of endowed charities, five of them being trustees of the municipal charities, this has not resulted in bringing about any system of co-operation between the board and the charities. A Voluntary Aid Committee acting in co-operation with the friendly societies would promote that, and other movements that tend to independence might be strengthened.

121. Altogether the income from the endowed and voluntary charities in Lichfield, and the amount expended by the guardians on out-relief is £4,290—in a population of 7,902. And the investigators report:—

> "If the standard of administration of the almshouse and pension charities were raised, and steps taken to secure help from relations, old employers and others, which is never done at present, and if the £361 (the yearly sum available from endowments for temporary help) much of which goes in useless doles, were differently applied, the expenditure of £484 on out-relief somewhat laxly administered, might, in our judgment, become unnecessary, or at least be reduced to a small amount.
>
> "To secure this result it is essential that the charities should be brought into definite relation with the administration of the Poor Law. Instead of this there is often overlapping between the two."

The total expenditure on outdoor relief is £483; and but for the help given from the charities, the outdoor relief, it is agreed, would be heavier.

The Lichfield Union contains thirty-five parishes. Their total population is 42,542. The total income for endowed charities is £5,231. In the half year 377 persons received indoor relief, of whom 225 received it for ninety days and more. There were 611 persons relieved outdoor in the half year; and in the whole year £3,900 was spent. Of this, £2,658 appears under the heading "Infirm;" under "Widows," £513; under "Illness," £536; under "Miscellaneous," £191.[2]

The total expenditure for the year from the Poor Law, apart from indoor relief, and from endowed charities was £9,131.

Clearly in this union also concerted administration would produce great changes for the better, on the lines we are about to consider.

122. In the Charities Appendix will be found data in regard to other Unions and parishes.

XVIII.—The Suggestions and Criticisms of the Investigators.

123. Mr. A. C. Kay and Mr. H. V. Toynbee were appointed by us to make inquiry in certain urban and rural areas as to the administrative relations between charity and the Poor Law and as to the extent and actual and potential utility of Endowed and of Voluntary Charities. What the nature of the reforms should be the suggestions and criticisms of these investigators indicate; [3]and before proceeding further it may be well to state their opinions briefly. We will touch on the main points in succession, adding notes also taken from general evidence.

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[1]Cf. the circumstances of Kendal, p. 161. [2]See Charities Appendix. [3]Report on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, pp. 59–79.

1. Administrative Relations between Charities and the Poor Law.

124. On this point the comments of the investigators are :—

> "In most cases it does not seem to have suggested itself to the representatives of either the one or the other that it was even desirable that such relations should be established, or that it was possible that any advantage might be derived therefrom. In no single instance, so far as we could ascertain, had any conference taken place between the endowed and voluntary charities and the Poor Law guardians, as to the policy which they should respectively pursue in dealing with the relief of the poor, nor had any attempt been made to define the sphere of operation which each should fill. Here and there we met with an individual who appreciated the importance of co-operation, but this was quite exceptional, and it is no exaggeration to say that the majority of those whom we saw had given the subject no thought, and surprise was sometimes expressed at the suggestion that such co-operation was advisable."

2. *Mr. Goschen's Minute of* 1869. *Registration and the Prevention of Overlapping.*

125. Mr. Goschen's minute, to which we make reference again later on, advised the guardians that there should be some recognised division of labour between them and the charities; but "representation of the boards of guardians on the charities is not likely to lead to any change of policy unless there is a recognition on both sides of the great importance of working in co-operation" on some such lines. Minute of the Poor Law Board, November, 1869.

> "One of the recommendations there made is 'that in all those cases where the board o guardians are granting relief—and in all such cases the relief must by law be adequate—the almoners of charities should abstain from giving food or money, or supplying any such articles as the guardians are themselves strictly bound to grant, and especially from giving their charity in such a manner as would constitute a regular increase of income.'
>
> "As a means of bringing about such an understanding, it is suggested 'that there should be every opportunity for every agency, official or private, engaged in relieving the poor, to know fully and accurately the details of the work performed by all similarly engaged. The lists of the relieving officers would form the natural basis for the necessary information. No funds are at the disposal of the Poor Law Board with which they could appoint a staff and provide offices for organising a general registration of Metropolitan relief. Other means must, therefore, be sought for providing that a public registering office should be established in every large district, where registers should be kept of all persons in receipt of parochial relief, with such particulars attached as might guide others in their inquiries. The clergy of all denominations, and the representatives of all the charities in the neighbourhood, should be invited to send in their lists to such offices, and to make themselves acquainted with the other lists deposited there, by which means an accurate dictionary or reference book might be framed, which would supply the necessary information about almost every person who had once received relief, either parochial or charitable. In the absence of any sufficient legal power in the Poor Law Board to enforce an organisation of this kind, the working of the plan must mainly depend on the voluntary action of the guardians and of the various charitable bodies, but the Poor Law Board will be happy to afford any aid that may be in their power, and to authorise such expenditure as may fall within legal limits. They would be prepared—
>
> 1. To authorise the guardians to print weekly lists, containing the names and addresses of outdoor paupers, and the sums given in relief in each case.
>
> 2. To authorise any reasonable remuneration for extra work to officers whom the guardians may employ to carry out this arrangement.
>
> 3. To instruct their inspectors to facilitate the communication between the official and private agencies, where such interposition may be of any service, and to assist in systematising as far as possible relief operations in various parts of the Metropolis."
>
> "It is further suggested that the trustees of the charities should refer to the relieving officer all totally destitute applicants who properly fall within his sphere, while he, on the other hand, should pass on to the charities all those not actually destitute, who seem likely to fall within the class which charity undertakes to assist."

126. This minute is supplemented by the General Order (Metropolis) 1878, by which the guardians may cause lists to be prepared at such intervals as they may deem expedient, being not oftener than once a week, showing the name and address of each pauper who has during the interval been admitted into the workhouse or has received outdoor relief . . . and the amount or value of the outdoor relief so received in each case, and may cause such lists or any parts thereof to be printed and circulated and distributed in such manner as they may think fit. This Order and Mr. Goschen's minute apply to the Metropolis only.

127. We propose that they should be enforced throughout the country in a modified form consistent with the general scheme of poor relief which we recommend.[1] Heretofore it would seem, the investigator's report, "that the minute would have remained entirely inoperative but for the practice of the Charity Organisation Societies, which are invariably in constant communication with the Poor Law authorities with a view to avoid the supplementation of out-relief and to promote the transference of cases from one body to the other as the one or the other could best deal with them." In Norwich a weekly return of cases dealt with by the Charity Organisation Society with the decisions arrived at was sent by the society to the guardians. At Kendal the society had opened a general register with a view to the prevention of overlapping. Casual supplementations of poor relief is the rule, however. The investigators state that in all places which they visited the charities have been applied in a greater or less degree in supplementation of Poor Law relief with two exceptions.[2]

Norwich.

Kendal.

"It was our practice to submit lists of the recipients of the various endowed charities to the relieving officers, who marked the names of all those who were on their out-relief books. In every place, apart from those mentioned above, it was found that there were numerous cases in which people were being helped both by charities and the Poor Law."

Kendal. Results of over lapping.

"In Kendal it was stated by a trustee . . . . that if the trustees did not give to people in receipt of poor relief, they would have no recipients; and an informant at Beverley said that 'if the doles were not given to Poor Law cases, the money could not be spent'."

York.

"At York, when lists (not complete) of the recipients of the charities were submitted by us to the relieving officers, over sixty cases of people receiving out-relief were at once, much to their surprise, recognised by them. The following are particulars of the amounts received in some of these cases from the endowed charities:—

OVERLAPPING OF CHARITIES AND POOR LAW RELIEF IN YORK.

No. of Cases.		£ s. d.		Amount Received from Charity.
1	Pension of	20 16 0	a year.	
3	„	13 0 0	„	
1	„	10 10 0	„	
4	„	10 0 0	„	
1	„	6 0 0	„	
5	„	5 18 3	„	(3 also received gifts of 40s., 22s., and 12s. respectively.)
1	„	5 4 0	„	(besides doles.)
1	„	5 0 0	„	
5	Gift of	2 0 0	„	(4 of these also received 1s. a month and a loaf weekly.)
1	„	1 10 0	„	
3	„	1 2 6	„	
13	„	1 2 0	„	

"The overlapping is not confined to endowed charities. Out of thirty recipients of help from the York Benevolent Society, taken at random, nine were found to be on the outdoor relief list, and five in receipt of occasional relief.

"In Norwich, the endowed and voluntary charities (apart from the Almshouses and pension charities) go very largely to those in receipt of out-relief.

"In the case of the Norwich Society for the Relief of the Sick Poor, out of twenty-five cases taken at random, ten were found to be in receipt of out-relief."

Necessity of Registration.

128. To prevent this aberration of charity, registration is essential.[3] It is adopted and is being extended by degrees wherever the problem of relief has been carefully studied—at Berlin, and generally wherever the Elberfeld system in its different forms is in force: in Holland; in some cities in the United States of America, but especially at Boston, Massachusetts. In England probably it is now most completely applied in the civil parishes of Chelsea[4] and Hampstead.

Results of Registration.

129. At Chelsea, churches and charities and the Poor Law guardians are by degrees to a larger and larger extent using the "Chelsea Mutual Registration of Assistance,"

[1] Report, p. 60. [2] Report, p. 61. [3] Report, p. 74. [4] Memo.: Chelsea Committee of the Charity Organisation Society and Sketch of Hampstead System. Charities Appendix, Blankenberg, 100020 (55). Munsterberg, 100300 (8), (18).

together with various institutions whose work in some measure lies in Chelsea, though they do not have their central quarters there. The scheme was instituted more than three years ago " with a view to the prevention of overlapping and promotion of co-operation among the relief agencies in Chelsea."

> " The procedure is that ' the agencies forward monthly or weekly lists of their cases to the office, where they are compared, and if the same name is found on two or more lists, the fact is notified to those agencies. The scheme,' the hon. secretary writes, ' receives increasing support, and we have lately commenced holding monthly conferences of the overlapping agencies for the purpose of considering the possibility of restoring the families to a state of independence and mutually agreeing upon future action in regard to them.' "

130. This statement of itself proves the positive utility of the method. The statistics show each year an increasing number of communications made to those who have registered cases, as year by year the plan has been utilised by a larger number of charities.

131. The figures, according to the average monthly numbers for each year, are :—

	1905.				1906.				1907.			
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Dec.
Communications - - -	180	222	216	254	210	136	199	129	246	274	181	358
Families concerned - - -	107	130	133	130	132	92	115	58	152	174	116	188
Cases of overlapping within four weeks excluding pensions -	49	55	56	81	53	42	59	31	73	69	82	72
Cases of overlapping within eight weeks excluding pensions - - - - - -	–	–	–	160	73	58	77	34	87	90	83	84
Communications to the Board of Guardians - - -	51	49	88	68	45	31	42	22	51	58	28	58
Families assisted - - -	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2,152

132. It was found that the register at Chelsea was of very great service to the London Unemployed Fund in 1904–5, and the agencies that are members of it bear witness to its great utility.[1]

133. Such registration can only be developed, it is evident, with great perseverance and by demonstrating to the charities how it may serve their several needs, may prevent duplication of inquiries, and may secure that either one agency deals with the case, or that each agency, instead of unconsciously supplementing the work of others, co-operates for a common object. A scheme of general registration is so necessary that we recommend its adoption in every union area.

3. *Want of information, and inquiries.*

134. The investigators report that in their opinion[2]:—

> " The trustees are not sufficiently alive to the importance of making thorough enquiries regarding applicants. In many cases we found that the trustees considered inquiry unnecessary, on the ground that they knew all the poor people already. This may, no doubt, be true in a country village, but can hardly be so in larger places, except in cases in which no publicity is given to the charity, and appointments are practically confined to persons known to the trustees or their friends. Forms of application, with inquiries regarding the character and circumstances of applicants, may be usefully employed, but we frequently found that such statements, if certified by two or three householders, were accepted as sufficient. It is important, we think, that independent inquiry should be made by the trustees themselves, or through an inquiry officer, or an agency such as the Charity Organisation Society, for the purpose of verifying the statements on the application form, and ascertaining the character, thrift, resources and home conditions of the applicant."

[1] Report of Central Executive Committee : London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5. [2] Report on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, p. 70.

135. Of the necessity for inquiry, a point to which we have already referred, evidence has come to us from almost every quarter, and we are of opinion that it should no longer be left to the trustees of charities to make inquiry or not to make inquiry in regard to those who apply to them for the benefit of a charity.[1] The Charity Commission in the case of almspeople and pensioners requires that there be "full investigation of the character and circumstances of the applicants, and inquiry whether they have shown reasonable providence, and whether and to what extent they may reasonably expect assistance from relations or others," and they have added in more recent schemes—that for the purpose of this clause the trustees may avail themselves of any suitable agency.

Necessity of securing proper means of inquiry.

136. We think that many facilities for making inquiry in regard to applications will result from the unification of charitable work on the lines we are about to suggest. Both voluntary and paid help will be more easily provided for the purpose; and as trustees and others desire to effect more through their intervention, they will be led to require a better system of investigation for their own guidance and for the benefit of those who have asked their assistance. In any case, we are of opinion that means of making suitable inquiry should be assured in regard to all charities as part of the schemes, under which they are administered; and that there should be some supervision to ascertain that so necessary a condition is fulfilled.

4. *Appropriation of Means and Supervision.*[2]

137. Among the objects mentioned as permissible to trustees are those contained in clauses we have quoted above: "the supply of: (*a*) Clothes, linen, bedding, fuel, etc; and (*b*) temporary relief in money, etc."; representing, as Sir George Young said: "The limit to which the Commissioners considered themselves able to cut down the pernicious operation of promiscuous doles."

Difficulty of obtaining the service of suitable Trustees.

> "It is clear," the investigators write, "that a fund left at the disposal of a body of trustees for application under provisions such as those of the scheme for general benefit of the poor referred to above might, with care and intelligence, be made productive of very great benefit to the poor. Help, adequate in amount and wisely directed, at a time of special need, through sickness, want of employment, or other misfortune, may often prevent a family from drifting into a condition of pauperism."

138. With this we agree; but the agreement implies two conditions—the appointment of competent trustees or managers, and a supervision of the administration.

139. On the former question there is a difficulty.[3] Trustees are inclined to accept the pleasure of patronage as the compensation which they receive for undertaking the management of the trust. Hence the common practice of allowing each trustee in turn to nominate to the charity. What should be the duty of the trustees jointly becomes the privilege of the individual trustee; and the decision of the common body, which is intended to prevent the domination of private interests may yield to the dictates of a merely private patronage. But further:—

> "Unfortunately, the work of selecting 'helpable' cases and providing assistance suitable to the varying circumstances of each case demands an amount of knowledge and interest in charitable work, and an expenditure of time and trouble which can rarely be found under the conditions of charitable administration prevailing in the towns the investigators visited. . . ."
>
> "In some of the places which we visited we were unable to discover any elements out of which a really satisfactory body of trustees could be constituted."
>
> "The administration of almshouses and the granting of out-pensions as compared with other modes of charitable relief . . . makes much less demand upon the time and capacity of trustees. It is, consequently, much easier to find a body of trustees who will make good appointments of alms-people and pensioners than who will satisfactorily perform the difficult work of from time to time giving appropriate assistance in cases of special need and distress."

140. It is clear from this and other evidence that the building up of a good administration will not only necessitate a careful choice of trustees, but will also involve the imposition upon them of a new and ordered responsibility in connection both with

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[1] App. xiii. (c) iii., p. 616. [2] Report, p. 76, and *see* ante, para. 54. Young, 31141. [3] Report pp. 70, 56, 78.

a local committee of administration and with a central supervision of some kind. Otherwise, as the investigators say :—

> "We should feel considerable doubt as to the expediency of leaving any considerable sum at the disposal of the trustees as a liquid fund applicable for the benefit of the poor, unless a serious endeavour is made to ensure that the administration is sound."

> "In the absence of effective periodical inspection we see reason to fear that a fund left at the disposal of the trustees for the relief of distress would too frequently be frittered away in the same ineffectual manner as is common now; and in this case, if experience should show that the money is not being applied in ways calculated to be of real benefit to the poor, it should be diverted to other modes of application which leave less scope for unwise expenditure."

5. *Raising Money for Relief Purposes and the Cases assisted.*[1]

141. It may be feared that if a system of doles is set aside for a system of reasonable charity, consistent with the standards which we described in the earlier part of this section, a very large amount of money for relief purposes would have to be raised by public appeal. If the method discussed by the investigators and described by several witnesses is adopted, this would not be the case.[2] The investigators point out that if there were careful selection the funds of the charities would go much further. They would not be wasted. In regard to almspersons and pensioners, they say :—

> "We have frequently referred to cases in which it seemed to us that the almspeople might have been maintained by sons or relatives, and we think there is some laxity of administration in allowing sons, who are fairly well-to-do, to be relieved of their obligations at the expense of the charities. We also think that more might be done in supplementing the allowances from the charities by contributions from children, old employers, and others.

> "If these points were kept in mind in the administration, the funds of the charities would go further, their benefits would not be extended either to persons who do not really stand in need of the assistance, or to those whose character and antecedents do not entitle them to any exceptional consideration, and who might well be left to the guardians for support, and there would be better security that the benefit of the charities are really going to the best and most deserving cases."

142. It is well that this should be thoroughly understood; and accordingly we mention one or two cases illustrative of it.[3]

The two cases which follow, taken from different localities, show the waste of doles :—

> Husband was formerly in Marines; said to have been discharged with "very good" character forty years ago (but discharge papers said to have been burnt) .No pension. Children said not to help. According to several trustworthy authorities, husband and wife are said to be intemperate, the former lazy, and in habit of begging, and the latter of doubtful moral character. Dole, ½ ton coal biennially.

> Husband, crippled with rheumatism, and wife, almost blind, have done no work for eight years and have been in receipt of out-relief most of that time. Single son, 20, labourer, lives with them, contributing 5s. a week. None of the other children help. There were originally fourteen children. Statements said to be unreliable, and six credible informants stated that recipients were notoriously untruthful, cadgers, and drunkards, and the man's condition was due to his intemperate habits. Doles, Lane's Gift £5; husband, 1 shirt and 1 loaf every 3 weeks; wife, 1 shift, 2s. from church occasionally.

143. The two almshouse cases which follow, show insufficiency of relief :—

> No. 79.—Man, single, 66, formerly labourer. Room and occupant both very dirty, supported parents for many years. Complained of the smallness of allowance from charity, 3s. 6d., which is now his total income. Said on reliable authority to be very respectable.

> No. 81.—Widow, 73, late husband foreman in a mineral water factory for twenty-five years, earning 40s. per week. One son, who has never assisted. Recipient's character said to be very good. Total income now only 4s. (the almshouse stipend). Husband was in Ancient Order of Foresters and another club, and widow received £24 at his death, twelve years ago.

144. In these instances a dole is granted or an admission to an almshouse, but there is no plan adopted to see that it is of actual use.[4] "The effects of the dole charities as a means of relieving the poor are insignificant."

145. There are two ways of obtaining the assistance required for cases of distress. One is to open funds for relief purposes. The endowed charities are funds of this kind

Raising of funds for the relief of distress.

[1] Report on Voluntary and Endowed Charities, App. x., p. 234. [2] Report, p. 70. [3] Report, pp. 32, 35, 36. [4] Report, p. 71.

hemmed in by many restrictions. When the fund is used up all the good that it can do is done, and, whether the money which is given is or is not sufficient to meet any real need or fulfil any real purpose, it is given and there is an end of it. The other method is to use funds but not to rely upon them alone, but to raise in addition from other sources what is necessary. This has many advantages. In the first place probably greater care is taken in considering what should be done and how the persons in distress can be properly helped. Next the charitable feeling of those connected with the family is kept alive. The relations are asked to help, and former employers, and friends. This is good for all parties. The family tie is strengthened, and so on one important side the plan justifies itself; and similarly it justifies itself on other sides. Many will help in this way and for some definite purpose who otherwise will not help at all. Again, no large fund, always insufficient, always likely to raise claims and to assume large and even preposterous dimensions in the popular imagination, always likely to create greater demands than it can meet, will be found to be necessary.[1] The charity of individuals forms a more comprehensive and more constant fund than any large collection made by appeals and circulars; and, directed in the manner which has been suggested, it is much more useful. And further, in addition to the gifts of the endowment consisting sometimes of considerable sums and sometimes of one or two insufficient shillings, an amount adequate to the need is raised from the endowment and from other friendly sources, while in addition personal care and friendliness comes to the rescue to assist in many other ways.[2] The endowment has, in fact, become vitalised. It is wrought into life again and is meeting once more the real needs of the people.

"*H.* family.—Bermondsey United Charities gave £5 12s. 8d. towards temporary allowance and convalescent treatment.

"The father of a large family was dying of phthisis when the case was first referred to the Trustees of the Bermondsey United Charities. He was being carefully nursed at home, and help was continued until he died. In addition to this, a good deal of help was given directly by the trustees. After his death, assistance still had to be given until the Charity Organisation Society had obtained the admission of three children to Church of England Homes, the Children's League of Kindness paying 2s. a week for each, and until the delicate eldest son had been convalesced and had started work, and a girl had become old enough for employment. In addition to this it was found necessary to obtain hospital and convalescent treatment for the widow. The family was self-supporting for some months, but the oldest son developed rapid consumption, and help was again needed. The total cost so far has been about £30.

"In this case there was co-operation between the Bermondsey United Charities, Children's League of Kindness, Society for Relief of Distress and Courage's Fund. The 'Sons of Thames' Lodge of Oddfellows (M.U.) have also been helping."

146. Here the endowed charities granted £5 12s. 8d. The total help has cost £30. In another case the £2 11s. 6d. of the endowed charity becomes £12 1s. 6d. by the increments of assistance obtained from other sources; and there is added a friendly care or visiting that supervises the whole.

"*E. C.*, girl, aged 15.—Bermondsey United Charities gave £1 11s. 6d. to complete training at Clark's College for Typewriting and Shorthand.

"The mother, widow of a police inspector, has three daughters, one of whom is almost a dwarf, and very frail, and another (the above-mentioned) has a crippled left hand. The tiny daughter was in work, but required much care, making it difficult for her mother to be absent for long hours. E.C. was sent by the Charity Organisation Society to Clark's College to learn typewriting, shorthand, and book-keeping, the total cost being £12 1s. 6d. The mother and son paid £4 4s., a friend through the Society for Promoting Employment of Women £4 4s., Ragged School Union £2 2s., and the remainder was made up by the Bermondsey United Charities as above.

"Sixteen months after training she was earning 13s. 6d. a week."

147. Or to take the case of aged people:—

"*F.M.*, a widow, aged 82.—The City Parochial Foundation gave a pension of £6 10s. a year.

"F.M. is a Belgian who has lived nearly forty years in London. She earned her living by laundry work, and supported her sick husband for years. Of her seven children, a married daughter only remains. F.M. managed to save as much as £100, and when past work kept herself on this till it was almost gone, and she was obliged to ask for help.

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1 *Cf.* Witnesses as to newspaper appeals: Maynard, 78372 (3); Marshall, 82176–8; Richardson, 85662, 85689; Gardiner, 78694, 78731. 2 Hayes Fisher 30906 (18), 31042.

"The Charity Organisation Society at first raised an allowance of 9s. 9d. a week for her, towards which a Foreigners' Society contributed 5s. a week, her daughter 1s., and the clergy 1s. The rest was given by private persons till the City Parochial Foundation granted her an allowance of 2s. 9d. a week. Now the old lady is too frail to live alone her daughter gives her a room in her house rent free, and the Society of Friends of Foreigners in Distress and the City Parochial Foundation give 5s. a week between them."

6. *Pooling of Funds and Supervision.*

148. Further, it is suggested by the investigators that it would greatly facilitate the work of reorganisation which they have sketched, if the parochial charities could be "pooled," and the parochial boundaries, which have not been allowed to stand in the way of the unification of civil government and of the Poor Law, should also be set aside in the administration of the charities in favour of the Union or some other area.[1] In Norwich and York there is a migration of the population from the inner and more fully endowed parishes to the parishes in the circumference of the town. At Norwich the city parishes, in which no new houses or very few have been built, contain only 26·4 of the population, and have no less than 85·0 per cent. of the endowed charities and 48·2 per cent. of the church charities, while they are responsible for 37·9 per cent. of the expenditure on out-relief And similar conditions prevail in York, and no doubt in other largely endowed towns. In these circumstances we think that a "pooling" of charities and a revision of boundaries should take place under statutory powers, but conditionally on the introduction of an effectual administration on the lines which we propose.

149. Lastly, to carry out the necessary improvements of administration Assistant Commissioners who have been trained in the methods of relief should be present at the meetings of the voluntary aid committees, whose creation we suggest; and they should, as far as possible, use their influence to ensure that suitable inquiry is made, well-considered plans put in force in individual cases, the necessary relief raised, and friendly visiting and co-operation promoted.[2] In the past, as we have amply proved, the charities have been distributed to individual applicants on quite general lines, and without any special attention to detail. Now, if they are to be used for adequate help and for the prevention and relief of distress, a right consideration of details will be of the first importance. Official Assistance.

XIX.—The Reformed System of Poor Relief in Germany.

These statements, drawn chiefly from the Reports of our investigators, may be taken as a fair summary of the suggestions that may be made, not only in regard to places in which there are considerable eleemosynary endowments, but relatively to other towns also. But to obtain a different view of the problem, we would submit a statement in regard to the organisation of relief in other countries, but especially in the State of Hamburg. The system of municipal relief.

150. The German system of poor relief as reformed on the lines of the administration at Elberfeld, is not so much a new method as a reversion to earlier post-reformation methods combined with much resettlement of details.

151. There are one or two primary principles on which the German system of poor relief is founded.[3]

152. The Poor Law in effect imposes on local relief authorities throughout the Empire the obligation "of relieving every poor person conformably to his need"; and it defines settlement. The administration it leaves to local authorities acting for the parish, the municipality, and the province. The administration is not centralised in a Government Department. and there are no Government Inspectors.

"There are towns which refuse outdoor relief, and others which refuse money and give relief only in kind, so that the practice everywhere is quite different; but, as a rule, one can say that outdoor relief is prevalent."

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[1] Report on Voluntary and Endowed Charities, p. 75. [2] Report, pp. 78 and 79. [3] Munsterberg, 100508, 100511, 100315, 100385, 140389, 100420.

No actionable right as against the Relief Authority. The franchise subject to considerable property qualifications.

153. Next, the council of the town or parish is elected by the votes of three classes of electors graduated according to a property qualification. Each class elects a third of the council.[1] Thus, at Berlin in 1902, "electors of the first class numbered 1,501; those of the second class, 28,017; and those of the third class, 314,032."[2] The administration of relief for the town is entrusted to one special committee subordinate to the town council, and is formed out of members of the town council with the addition of other inhabitants. The mayor or his representative presides over the committee. There is thus a restricted franchise and a responsible central committee for the supervision of all public relief, composed in large measure of persons other than members of the council.[3]

154. Next, "an actionable right of the poor to poor relief is not recognised by German legislation. The legal conception is that every community is obliged, in the interests of public order, to grant the relief requisite in individual cases."[4] In England, "an indictment will lie against a relieving officer for negligence in relieving the poor." This would not be so on the German system. The applicant, if he considers himself aggrieved, may appeal to the superior administrative authority. Hence there is a lesser disinclination than in England to refuse cases, if it is thought desirable to do so.

The relief to be necessary relief only.

155. Next, in the local administration of relief it is an accepted principle that the relief afforded from the rates should be only necessary relief. A poor person who needs help, and is unable to work, or only partially able to work, is eligible for public relief, if no one else is both liable for his relief and able to relieve him, or if private charity does not provide for him.[5] A poor person who needs help, but is able to work, is relieved on the same conditions, but he must prove that he has honestly striven to obtain work, though it be without result. He is obliged to perform any work which may be found for him. Persons living alone, and heads of families whose income is sufficient for providing for themselves and their families what is absolutely necessary for their maintenance have no claim for relief.

The relief to be less eligible relief.

156. Next, in the local administration of relief the principle laid down by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834, that public relief should be less eligible than an independent maintenance, is accepted and made applicable to outdoor relief.[6]

> "The pauper shall not be placed in a better position through relief than the person who provides for his own support by free labour.[7] On the other hand, care must be taken to ensure that it remains possible for him to lead a life consistent with human requirements, and that he does not receive such relief only as will merely prevent starvation."

The administration by voluntary officers with decentralisation of services.

157. Lastly, the older German or Elberfeld method, which is considered best in Germany, proceeds on the principle that, properly guided and assisted, voluntary workers, acting not only as Poor Law guardians on their committees, but as enquiry and relieving officers in their districts, can safeguard relief and yet avoid inadequacy. The process by which this is to be accomplished is decentralisation, and an extreme sub-division of work amongst the members of a large band of voluntary assistants, coupled with a strong centralisation in many other respects.

158. Summing up, we may say that, as in England, the conditions of relief to the applicant should, on this system, be such as would be less eligible in his eyes than self-support, and the relief he would receive should be only necessary relief.[8] The administration is placed in the hands of very closely controlled volunteers, in such a way that a definite and restricted task is imposed upon each of them; and the nature of their responsibility in relation to the application for relief is different from that of a relieving officer, and less absolute. The system is legal not voluntary. But to it, as a legal system, the voluntary service of the visitors or helpers gives a charitable or philanthropic character; and it is the evident wish of the authorities that this element in it should be retained and developed. "On the activity of the helper depends the weal or woe of the applicant; on it, too, primarily depends

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[1] *See* here, and generally Appendix on Poor Relief in Germany, and regulations for the administration of poor relief in Hamburg, Berlin and Elberfeld. *See* also the Report made to the Commission by some of its members in regard to Labour Colonies on the continent and the administration of relief at Hamburg. [2] Munsterberg, 100462–67, 100497–99. [3] Appendix: Germany, pp. 15 and 21. [4] Munsterberg, 100569, 100347, 100300, 100394 (2). *Cf.* Adrian, 936–43. [5] Munsterberg, 100300 (14). [6] Munsterberg, 100300 (14). [7] Berlin, Instructions, Sec. 50. [8] Berlin, Instructions, Sec. 10.

the social and moral value which is the characteristic of an ordered care of the poor. He must be the friend and counsellor of the poor and in the granting of relief assist them by word and deed."

159. Some of these points we will now consider further. A board of guardians is a comparatively large body of persons elected on a popular franchise for the administration of Poor Law relief in a large area after an inquiry which is made by paid relieving officers. Large unions were formed in England partly with a view to providing a workhouse that would admit of classification, and partly for the determination of cases by an impartial non-parochial body. Here a different process is adopted. The institutional area remains large, and the central committee of control supervises that area. But the adjudication of relief is decentralised and administered in small districts, but yet by persons who are appointed by, or whose appointment is sanctioned by, a central board.

The area of administration in relation to institutional and personal work.

XX.—The Method of Decentralised Supervision.

160. We would illustrate this in some detail and as a whole.

In the State of Hamburg the senate is the supreme administrative authority. The public authorities who are in charge of separate branches of the administration of the State consist either of members of the Senate or of members of the Senate and of members elected by the council (*Bürgerschaft*). The senate appoints on each administrative authority one or more of its members and decides which of these members is to be president of the authority. Among the branches of administration, the authorities of which consist partly of members of the senate partly of members elected by the council, and are delegate authorities (*Deputationer*), are, in the department of public assistance, the *Armenkollegium* or poor relief corporation and the corporation of the orphanage. The *Armenkollegium* consists of three members of the Senate, one of them appointed by the Finance Deputation, and fifteen elected by the council.

The administration of relief at Hamburg. The President and Director.

161. The duties of the Collegium are: the issue of all general instructions necessary for the guidance of the administration; the publication of all decisions and orders bearing on questions of fundamental importance; the demarcation of the boundaries of poor divisions and poor districts; the settlement of complaints against the orders and instructions of subordinate authorities; the selection of district superintendents, and the ratification of the appointment of deputy district superintendents, of district almoners, men and women, and of women-helpers, and the appointment of medical officers. The president, with the aid and co-operation of the director, is responsible for the supervision of the administration throughout the State.

162. Next in order below the Collegium come the poor divisions. Of these there are eleven. At the head of each of these is a divisional superintendent, who holds office generally for three years. He is appointed by the Collegium from those of its members who are elected by the Council, and while he acts as superintendent of one division he is also deputy superintendent in another. It is his duty to see that the regulations of the Collegium are carried out in the districts which lie within his division. He has the right of taking part in the district meetings, to require information from the almoners in regard to individual cases, and according to his discretion to obtain information respecting these cases by visiting the home and otherwise.

The Divisional Committee and Superintendents.

163. The divisional superintendent and the superintendents of the district committees within the division form a divisional committee. The divisional superintendent is chairman of it; and the chairman of the Collegium, any members of the Collegium appointed by him, the director and such officials of the central office as the director may order, have the right to take part in it. This meeting is usually held monthly. The divisional meeting choose and dismiss the almoners; make the nominations for the selection of divisional superintendents; alter the boundaries of districts; allow or disallow relief in excess of that permitted by the regulations; decide whether the payment of back rent may or may not be permitted in particular cases; and settle as to the placing of persons in families or as to their admission

to public and private institutions, except in the case of hospitals; and they decide also on complaints submitted to them in regard to resolutions of the district committees.

The district committee, district superintendent and the almoner.

164. Next in order comes the district committee, consisting, as a rule, of not more than fifteen almoners and a district superintendent, who is elected by the Armen-Collegium out of three persons nominated by the divisional committee. The superintendent holds office for three years. It is his business to act as intermediary between the district committee and the central office, the divisional committee and the Armen-Collegium, and to obtain from them whatever information may be required; to select the almoners who should deal with particular cases; to summon the meetings of the district committee; to guide them and to ensure that their restrictions are carried out; to ensure that the regulations for the care of the poor are closely followed, and to promote uniformity of procedure; to inform himself according to his judgment in regard to the cases in his district, and with that object, to pay visits at the home; to prepare the prescribed returns of helpers and other returns, and to see that the district returns of cases in which continuous relief is being given, and the district minutes in which are entered general resolutions and resolutions respecting the relief of persons helped on a single occasion, are properly prepared. Applicants are referred to him, and his chief duty is to find the right helper for the right case.

165. There are 112 district committees and 1,513 almoners. The almoners are chosen by the divisional meeting, one out of two persons nominated by the district committee, and hold office for four years. Women may be elected on a three-fourths vote of the divisional meeting. The district committee meeting consists of the almoners and, as a rule, of the helpers (*Hilferinnen*), women who assist the almoners, especially in cases of women living alone, or families with children. They are consultative members of the committee, but they have a vote in regard to cases which have been entrusted to their independent care. The medical officer is required to attend, but he has only a consultative vote. The almoner is bound to attend, whether he has a case to submit to the committee or not. The President of the Armen-Collegium, members of the Collegium appointed by him, the divisional superintendent, the director of public poor relief, and officials of the central office on his instructions are entitled to take part in the district meeting. The meetings are monthly. They elect the deputy district superintendent. They decide on the applications for relief. They have to settle the kind and amount of relief that should be given, and how long it should be continued. They have to receive the approval of the divisional committee in cases in which relief beyond 5 shillings is proposed, and in regard to admissions to institutions and the placing of individuals in family care. The first business of the meeting is to consider circulars, notifications and resolutions of the Armen-Collegium or the divisional committee, and to discuss general questions raised by the district superintendent or an almoner; then the cases are taken. Stress is laid on the utility of the discussion of general questions. In the discussion of cases it is urged that the district superintendent should arrange that more time should be spent on the new cases, and that the almoners should all take part in it. At the conclusion of the meeting all the case papers and minutes are sent to the central office. When the entries have been noted, the books are returned to the district. The President of the Armen-Collegium is entitled to postpone any resolution of a divisional or district committee, and the superintendents of the divisions and of the districts have similar powers in regard to their divisions or districts. They may prevent the enforcement of any resolution provisionally, and may submit the question to the Armen-Collegium or the divisional committee, as the case may be.

The Central Office.

166. This closely linked and supervised organisation is further supervised and supported by the central office. At the central office is the director, who is the intimate adviser of the president. Under his guidance it is the duty of the central administration to support the voluntary officials in the conduct of their work, to carry out the resolutions of the Armen Collegium, the divisional and district meetings, and to attend to the official business arising out of the cases which are dealt with. All additional notes in regard to particular cases are put together in case-papers (*personalakten*). It is the policy of the administration indeed to take off the shoulders of the almoner all responsibilities except that of attending to the cases placed in his care. The system of

case papers has been simplified. All the papers are kept at the central office. The cases of applicants are taken down in the first instance at that office. All questions that arise as to the claims on relations on the part of those who are assisted, as to action to be taken against persons who refuse to maintain, etc., are dealt with by the central office. Since 1892, when the whole system of poor relief at Hamburg was reformed, the staff at the office has been largely increased. It now consists of five departments—a general office and registration department, where all papers in regard to cases are collected and placed with the several case-papers, and where the applications afterwards referred to the almoners for verification and for submission to the district committee are taken down; a scrutiny department which carries out the decisions of the district committees on the financial side, and notes the payments to be made to the almoners for their cases. It also makes all the arrangements for the admission of applicants to institutions, for the placing of cases in family care, for the admission of tuberculous patients to institutions, for the housing of the furniture of persons admitted to the poor house, and for the storing of the property of paupers which on their death passes to the Poor Administration. Next there is a legal department to deal with all questions of legal claims, whether claims on the part of the administration on the property of paupers, or claims on the part of applicants on relations or on burial clubs or sick clubs, or trade clubs, or for insurance in infirmity or old age. They have also to deal with all the legal business in connection with prosecutions, and with minors. Lastly, there is a pay department from which amongst other business the sums which have been approved by the district and divisional committees as payable to applicants are paid to the almoners. The staff, as we have said, has largely increased since 1894, but it is stated that the cost of it has been more than covered by the sums raised from various sources, from property accruing to the administration from the estates of those relieved, from payments from other poor administrations for non-settled cases, from payments from clubs and from insurance, from the relations of those relieved, or from the poor themselves.

167. This statement of the organisation of poor relief in Hamburg will have to be supplemented in some ways in order that its relations to charitable work may be made clear, but one or two points that it suggests may be noted. Hamburg contains a population almost as large as that of Liverpool, and if the proposal were adopted of employing voluntary workers in greater or less degree in the administration of poor relief, its methods might be considered as fairly applicable to cities of that size and to smaller cities of any considerable population. First, there is a strong central organisation which controls the treatment of cases in detail throughout the several circles of co-ordinated authorities of which the administration is composed. The kind and amount and continuance of the relief is no doubt settled by the district committee, but there is a limitation to the amount, proposals for assistance in excess of which have to come before the divisional committee, and the committee cannot settle as to the admission of persons to institutions or their committal to the care of a family. These questions come automatically from the district committee to the divisional committee, and they settle them, accepting or rejecting the proposals of the district as they may deem best.

168. The divisional committee is a small committee of eleven persons, the divisional superintendents, one from each district. The president of the Collegium or one of the members of the Collegium, the director and other officials of the central office, can take part in it. The president of the divisional committee and that of the district committee can control the business of his committee by postponing any decisions which he thinks desirable. The president of the Armen Collegium can postpone any decision of either the divisional or the district committee. At the district committee, too, the Collegium and the central office may be as strongly represented as at the divisional committee. The whole system is placed under the supervision of a paid director, and in connection with a central office it is organised so as to ensure that the register is examined to ascertain if the case is known, that the case is taken down at that office in the first instance, and that subsequently on its settlement that office carries out the decisions in so far as these entail admissions to institutions or questions of an obligation to maintain. Thus the control and influence of the director and the central office and of the divisional superintendents tend to give unity to the whole organisation, and to remove from the helper burthens and responsibilities that would exceed his powers. All that remains for the almoner is the verification

of the facts as noted when the case was taken down, the care of the family, and the taking of the relief. Yet the administration on this side is extremely decentralised. The almoners have the care of only 5·8 cases each, and it may be said that apparently such an organisation as this meets the objection of the Commissioners of 1834 to relief at the home at least on one point—the impossibility of "finding an adequate number of officers whose character and decisions would obtain sufficient popular confidence to remove the impression of the rejection of some deserving cases." On these terms then we have a large institutional area, and a central committee of control which supervises that area, with the aid of the superintendents of divisional areas or divisional committees. On these the settlement of admissions to institutions depends, a small representative committee, as we have pointed out, whose members are severally acquainted with all the cases dealt with by the district committees in their areas; and the central office carries out all the arrangements. Finally, burthened only with the minimum of writing or reckoning there are the almoners, fifteen to a district, making up, it is alleged, "that adequate number of officers" which is required.

XXI.—The Decentralised Method of Supervision in Relation to Voluntary Assistance.

169. Taking this organisation as representing what is generally considered desirable in Germany, we will now refer to its charitable side, and then submit some statistics and criticisms.

The Voluntary Fund of the Central Office.

170. First, then, here, as in Berlin, there is a central charitable fund.[1] The Poor Institution (*Armen-Anstalt*) was formerly an institution, in the management of which the State of Hamburg took part, and which was also constituted a legal corporation (*Juristische Person*), but it was supported by endowments and contributions and not at all by subsidies from the State. Subsequently these sources proved year by year less sufficient, and State grants were made in constantly increasing amounts until in 1870, owing to the passing of the laws on education and on settlement, the education of the poor and public relief were finally taken over by the State. The endowments of the Poor Institution amounted to a capital of about £85,000. Some of this was used for educational purposes, but eventually in 1898 £60,000 was placed at the disposal of the Armen-Anstalt for preventive charity, a method which they were entitled to adopt under the Act of 1892; and they had already in 1878 established a separate fund for this purpose. Thus the Poor Institution besides, and parallel to, the public funds which it administers on behalf of the State, has a charitable fund consisting of about £61,258, and with other annual receipts producing an income of £3,986.[2] This sum is used in co-operation with other associations in payment of rent and in the relief of urgent cases, etc., in the treatment of cases of tuberculosis, and in sending children to sanatoria and to holiday colonies.

The registration of charitable endowments.

171. But further action has been taken in two ways. There are about 500 charitable foundations in Hamburg, with a capital of £2,000,000; and these funds, it is stated, were administered arbitrarily and not in accordance with the public interest. By an Act passed by the State in 1907 the supervision of charitable endowments is placed in a section of the Armen Collegium, consisting of one of the members of the Senate serving upon the Collegium as chairman and six Council members, chosen yearly by the Armen Collegium out of the number of their members of that class. The supervision extends to all corporations for the relief of individuals—excepting foundations managed by the State, the civil parish or the church authorities, and, generally, foundations which by their trust deeds are managed entirely in the interest of members. For the rest the managers of the foundations have to produce documents and papers and send in yearly accounts, yearly lists of the persons assisted, notifications of changes in their governing body, and other returns. The committee of supervision in cases of neglectful management may report to the Senate, and in special circumstances the Senate may dismiss the members of the committee of management and appoint others in their place.

[1] Das öffentliche Armenwesen in Hamburg, p. 66. [2] Annual Report for 1907, pp. 15, 16.

172. Next an information office has been established at the offices of the Poor Administration which supplies to inquirers in regard to cases information drawn from the case-papers of the Armen-Anstalt, the case papers of the police authorities, and the evidence supplied by the managers of charitable foundations and associations and obtained from the private sources. It reports as to the amount of the poor relief which has been granted, the extent to which there are pensions or allowances, the amount of the relief granted by charitable foundations in single gifts or continuously, and finally, the settlement of the applicant, so far as it is possible to ascertain it. A report is also made in regard to the character of the applicant, his reputation, the circumstances of his family, the cause of his distress, and other matters. The issue of reports on these lines increases largely year by year. Information office.

173. Each year an address, bearing on some important question of the day in reference to assistance and social work is given by the director to the members of the administration, and some institution for the relief of distress is visited by them. In addition to the assistance of the women helpers (*Hilferinnen*) referred to above, the members of an association for the care of the home assist in the homes in certain cases, if, for instance, the wife is incapacitated for a time by illness or some other cause. In the year 1907, ladies from this association aided 1,510 persons in co-operation with the Poor Administration which supplied the necessary relief.

174. In this and other ways the administration in Hamburg is developing new relations year by year with the charitable institutions in the State, and is carrying out, indeed, the policy which many of our witnesses have strongly supported. In spite of this, however, it did not appear to the members of the Commission who visited Hamburg on our behalf that, so far as they could judge, the consideration and treatment of individual cases was so careful and sympathetic, or so preventive and helpful as it is in England among persons trained to the duties of associative charity. They thought that the old evils of giving small landlords a security in their rentals by reason of the fact that their tenant was a recipient of public relief tended to reappear; and the grant of outdoor relief to women with one or more bastard children, born sometimes during the period of their receiving relief was open to very grave objection. To the necessity of avoiding a procedure that would stereotype the methods of relief, whether public or private, the authorities are fully alive; but the applications are chiefly dealt with from the point of view of allowances, and obviously great care has to be taken to prevent these being granted without sufficient consideration or being continued indefinitely.

XXII.—Statistical Results and Comparisons.

175. Some statistical results should now be stated. The general statistical test of administration in Germany is the average number of cases, or the average number of continuing cases, assisted with monetary outdoor relief in the course of the year, apart from medical relief. In 1892, the administration of relief in Hamburg was reformed. The average of continuing cases in May, 1893, was 9,178, and in 1907 it was 8,762, while the population had increased from 585,671 to 930,889. Thus, in fifteen years these cases had decreased 4 per cent., while the population had increased 59 per cent. The temporary cases decreased from 2,652 in 1900, to 2,331 in 1907. The inmates of the work and poorhouse, according to a day count, increased from 1,220 to 1,777, or 45 per cent., between January 1st, 1892, and January 1st, 1908, but the persons in this department who were placed under family care decreased from 201 in 1903 to 163 in 1907, or 18 per cent. This shows that whether by process of gravitation or by conscious policy there has been an increase in the indoor relief coupled with a marked decrease in outdoor relief, a result which would be anticipated from a stricter administration of Poor Law relief on English lines. Generally, it is said that where the stricter methods of administration have been introduced on Elberfeld lines with a sufficiency of almoners, there is a reduction in pauperism, and an increase in the amount of relief in individual cases. In detail the German statistics consist usually of a monthly average of continuing cases (*Parteien*) in receipt of outdoor relief and cannot be compared Statistical results.

with the English day count of all persons in receipt of indoor and outdoor relief, including medical relief, on a particular day, reckoned according to the instructions of the Local Government Board. But, as a general measure of the increase or decrease of pauperism the results arrived at according to each method may be roughly compared. Thus, at Elberfeld, the average number of cases of single persons and families assisted by outdoor relief and of children under care is returned at 1·76 per cent. of the population in 1855, when the reform of the administration was introduced, and at ·63 per cent. in 1906. Of the other forms of relief, outdoor medical relief, and indoor medical and other relief there is no continuous return. On the other hand, at Leeds, for instance, between 1851 and 1901, the population has increased 151 per cent., and the numbers of persons in receipt of relief of all kinds, in and out on January 1st in those years has decreased 14·54 per cent. The percentage of pauperism on population has dropped from 5·9 to 2·0 in this period. This reduction in the gross figures of pauperism we have found in many unions, due partly to changes in the population and differences in economic conditions, partly to a more fixed and regular administration. Many more salient examples of the reduction of pauperism in English unions than that we have quoted might be adduced. But a comparison of the English figures with those of towns in Germany, where the administration of relief is managed on the stricter system, suggests that results similar to those attained by good administration in England, on the lines of the limitation of outdoor relief, and the greater use of the workhouse and other Poor Law institutions of the union, may also be secured by the close scrutiny of individual cases and by the closely controlled services of voluntary assistants on the German method. On the other hand, if we may judge by Berlin, where the control is more difficult, and the cases are not in the first instance taken down by an official at a central office, and where it is hardly possible to obtain the aid of a sufficient number of helpers, the check on the expenditure of relief at the home can hardly be sufficiently strong.[1] At least, there the figures show an expenditure increasing considerably beyond the increase of the population, and similarly an increasing number of persons continuously relieved. Thus between 1892 and 1905 the population has increased by 25·94 per cent., and the number of recipients of permanent outdoor relief at the close of each year increased by 49·97 per cent.; and the number of the children of widows and others for whose subsistence outdoor relief is paid, increased by 36·36 per cent.

XXIII.—Difficulties of the Decentralised Method.

The enlistment and control of helpers.

176. Dr. Munsterberg,[2] whose evidence has been of the greatest service to us, on account both of his frank avowal of difficulties, similar to those with which the Commissioners were familiar, and by the clearness of his conception of the main issues of poor administration, threw some light on these figures incidentally. To take one or two points.[3] The control over the work of the district committees without paid officers in the districts is hardly sufficient, though Dr. Munsterberg, as President of the Poor Relief Board, by official instructions and by personal influence, does much to secure uniformity of action and administration.

> "I am myself," he said, "very careful to see that the instructions are followed. I allow audience to every poor person in the town, which consists of more than 2,000,000. Every poor person may apply to me directly. I have three days of the week audience, and everyone may apply to me; so that by this personal influence care is taken that the district committees are not out of touch with the head of the administration. Local forces, however, are very strong and greatly affect the selection of the helpers. The chairman of the district committee and the helpers are appointed by the town councillors, and the town councillors appoint them as they will. The whole town is distributed to the town councillors, and they find out honorary people; and there are also small communities, a kind of clubs, who do not allow anyone who is strange to them to enter a district committee. We have little communities of citizens in a very small area, they are well acquainted with each other; and if a man of more progressive character, for instance, a social democrat, wishes to be appointed, it is very difficult to bring him into that district committee, because the others resist; and it is the same with the women."

177. At Hamburg the city is smaller and the almoners or helpers more numerous; and "they are accustomed to a more thorough investigation than in Berlin." Also as the city

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[1] Munsterberg, 100309, 100458, 100493, 100300 (2).
[2] Munsterberg, 100404, 100420, 100459, 100308.
[3] Munsterberg, 100479.

develops, classes separate, and rich and poor communities are formed. This is cause for anxiety. The helpers are by the rules resident in or quite near their districts, but with the expansion of the town this becomes more difficult. "I believe," Dr. Munsterberg said, "there will come the time when we shall be obliged to have some paid officers in order to supplement the inquiries of our ordinary people." There is a difficulty, too, in the supervision of continuing cases. At Hamburg able-bodied men may have relief from month to month, "if a thorough investigation proves that there is need of help." Persons over sixty years of age can have relief granted to them for as long a period as a year, but "the helper is under an obligation to ascertain from time to time if the need of help continues to the extent anticipated." In other cases relief may be granted for three months. The same rules prevail at Berlin, except that relating to able-bodied men—who at Berlin "are not as a rule to be considered eligible for relief." But Dr. Munsterberg says :—

> "I am not quite sure that the district committees are as careful as they should be in every case. It is a mistake to allow permanent relief for a whole year, and if I could do away with it I would. I think every case must be inquired into at least every month."

By the General Orders the helpers should maintain a permanent supervision of the poor, and :—

> "If the Orders were carefully followed it would be impossible that any change in the conditions of the person relieved could escape the view of the helper; but, as a fact, I confess that we have cases in which the change does escape. That is a fault of administration, and not a fault of rule."

Grants of allowances for maintenance can never be kept under control, unless they be made for very short periods and checked by an active and constant revision. Next the whole system depends on the sufficiency or, perhaps it should be said, the stringency of the inquiry. The inquiry is the alternative to the test. If it fails, the relief can hardly be otherwise than partial, controlled by private and personal influences, irregular, arbitrary and injurious.

178. On another side also there are difficulties.[1] The measures contained in the Imperial Penal Code for the punishment of drunkards, idlers, beggars and tramps are not carried out. The evils indeed in Germany are those to which the Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy have drawn attention as prevailing in England. In regard to the desertion of families Dr. Munsterberg says :— Measures of repression.

> "It is really a pity to see the healthy and able-bodied people walk through the town and desert their families, when we have no means to punish them, or if we bring them before a judge he merely fines them 10 marks, which they can earn within a week."

Therefore on this side, again, the administration is not properly supported.

179. From this evidence and other indications we are led to conclude that in any application of this decentralised method of voluntary helpers, whether it be considered as part of a recognised voluntary administration or as a new method for the control and distribution of public outdoor relief in our large cities, and especially in the Metropolis, greater reliance would have to be placed on skilled and paid local assistance in England than has hitherto been placed on it in Germany. This, it seems to us is an indispensable condition, if the employment of voluntary workers on the lines of decentralisation and individual treatment is to be introduced here to any large extent. Safeguarded, however, in this and other ways, we are in favour of its adoption, as part of the scheme of administration which we recommend.

180. In making this statement we are expressing views in substantial accordance with those of the Poor Law Commissioners in 1836—so far at least as the indigent are concerned—with this difference only that what they proposed to do by paid relieving officers only, and by boards of guardians, we should propose to do in towns partly by voluntary assistants, working in conjunction with paid officers and with local boards,

[1] Munsterberg, 100362, 100300 (29), 100446.

constituted differently from the present boards of guardians, and partly in co-operation with voluntary agencies. The indigent under the definitions of the Form of the Consolidated Order of 1836, form a considerable group, the indigent who are helpless from age, or from being crippled, or from incurable disease, or from temporary sickness.

181. The question of the application of the system of individual treatment remains to be considered in relation to the special classes to which the Commissioners of 1834 referred, the "partially able-bodied" and the widows; and there is also the problem of the able-bodied. We take this first.

182. We said in an earlier page that "only if the conditions of the treatment of the able-bodied, whatever they may be, are fully and finally settled, is it possible to settle with any completeness what time should be adopted in regard to other classes, whether with the aid of public or official relief, or of private and voluntary help."

XXIV.—The Decentralised and Individual Method in Relation to the Able-bodied.

183. The Hamburg rules state that an able-bodied man is not, as a rule, to be considered entitled to relief (*helfsbedürftig*); but in exceptional cases, if he prove that he has been active in the endeavour to obtain sufficient work but without success he may have temporary relief from month to month. In suitable cases, in which the willingness to work is assured, able-bodied men may be referred to labour information offices; and in Hamburg in 1892 agreements were made between the poor administration and some fifty of these offices with that object. In the years 1898 to 1902, 1,613 persons were so referred and 406 or 25 per cent. informed of work, but how far these may have found work upon the docks not independently but through the municipality cannot be ascertained. Men are also sent to the neighbouring labour colonies. But the question is being dealt with also from another side.[1] A Hamburg Act of 1907 authorises the formation of a Committee for relief work, who may serve as an administrative court. If a person has received public relief for himself or for his dependents he may, on a resolution of the Committee, be required to do any work that is suitable to his strength, if such will enable him to provide for his needs wholly or in part; and on his refusal to do the work he may on the resolution of the Committee be removed to a poor relief workhouse and there detained. This is an experiment, but the effect of it is receiving the fullest attention from experts, and it opens altogether new lines of possible development.[2] Speaking generally, Dr. Munsterberg said:

Suggestion of an administrative court in relation to relief work.

> "If the case is one of a really deserving man, whose willingness to work is undoubted, he is relieved several times, perhaps two or three months, without hesitation. We are quite satisfied with the results, if, as I must repeatedly point out, there is a thorough investigation."

In charitable work this line was adopted by the Kensington Committee of the London Charity Organisation Society, in the winter of 1904–5, with very good results, on the same indispensable condition of "thorough investigation."[3] Dr. Munsterberg proceeds:

> "If we have able-bodied men who are not deserving, who live with their families, then perhaps we give the wife and the children relief, and tell the man to go to work; if he does not, we refuse further relief, and then he must do something. If he is very undeserving, and the children are in danger of being neglected, then we ask for a judicial order so that we may take the children away, because we have no power to compel the man to give us the children. We have no other power than to decide upon relief or no relief. If we say we refuse relief, then the case is rejected; but if the district committee becomes aware in that case that there are children in a very bad state, neglected, ill-treated, and such things, then they report it; and we try to have the children placed under our authority. For those purposes we need a judicial decision."

"With thorough investigation it is quite without danger to give outdoor relief"; and to the question—

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[1] Munsterberg, 100376. Munsterberg, 100300, (29). [2] Munsterberg, 100468, 100399, 100563, 100431, 100432, 100444. [3] Jackson, Evidence, Appendix No. xl., Vol. VIII. *Cf.* as to Nottingham, Wright, 87323 (2).

"What is there in the way of deterrence that is to prevent people from applying who might, with a little exertion, be able to provide for their own needs unless you have a workhouse test?"

the reply given was :—

"You refuse relief. If the commit'ee is of opinion that he is an able man, and he might take care of himself and his family, we refuse him relief. We apply the workhouse test only in those cases in which we find there is a man with a family and wife, or a woman who needs relief, but which relief, on account of unworthiness, we will not give in money or in kind. Then we offer him or her the House; but in the case of able-bodied people we do not offer the House, we simply tell them we refuse relief: We have inquired into your case, and we are of the opinion you are able to help yourself."

Insurance against want of employment.

184. But it is only fair to say that this position of granting relief to the able-bodied it is proposed to buttress by the system of insurance applied to unemployment, a method which, as we have said elsewhere, we would strongly urge for experimental adoption by local authorities or agencies in the first instance. The opinion that the provision of factitious employment, furnished with a view to meeting distress is desirable or indeed ultimately practicable is now losing ground. "For skilled artisans who are in want of work"[1] the Report of the Strassburg Unemployed Committee states, it is impossible under existing economic conditions to organise work suitable for their callings. For them, there is no resource except relief in money or insurance." The application of insurance or provisional funds to the unemployment of unskilled labourers we have discussed elsewhere. In Berlin some employment is provided by the town authorities, but not any considerable amount.[2] Reliance is placed on other measures. One of these is insurance for "invalidity" and old age. It tends to classify and in part provide for one group of claimants. The cards for his invalidity insurance which the applicant is required to produce serve indirectly also as evidence of character. It "is a great help. If a man, for instance, has the twelfth or thirteenth card with stamp, that is a sign that he has had work all the time." Thus a difference in policy comes to light. One policy is that of the Commissioners of 1834. They wished to prevent the creation of a dependent class of able-bodied men, and ultimately, it may be said, succeeded in doing so by the use of one method, by the offer of the house—the clearly less eligible maintenance—with more or less uniformity everywhere. The other, the German method, the method which this evidence suggests, is to adopt various expedients, to break up the problem; to prevent claims by insurance of the several kinds, which directly, in the case of unemployed insurance, and indirectly in the case of other insurances, supply substitutes for relief; to deal with exceptional cases by allowances; to provide relief works to a moderate extent; to use "colonies" of the Belgian or Swiss type where, if the inmates are not reclaimable they are at least provided with work under less eligible conditions, and for a time kept out of temptation where they are separated and treated, as the Commissioners of 1834 recommended, "as a class, placed in its proper position below the position of the independent labourer"; to strengthen the law against those who shirk reasonable work; to link out-of-work help, whether from unemployed insurance funds or from the relief authorities, with the labour agencies in such a way as to keep the unemployed under a very sharp supervision; to lighten the task of providing employment, by proceeding promptly on lines of repression against all unsatisfactory men who apply for poor relief, by the refusal of this relief, by the "offer of the house," and in the more extreme cases by the removal of children to the care and authority of the poor administration. In all these, and in other ways, there is, what may be called, an adjustive ineligibility in the offer of the authorities; and behind this there is a local administration strongly centralised on the official side, and on the side of the voluntary helper decentralised but supervised closely. Finally, there are charitable means available in exceptional cases. As we have said elsewhere we think that some such combination of methods may be adopted in England, subject to strict adherence to the principle that the offer of relief to the able-bodied, and indeed to all claimants for public relief, should be less eligible than maintenance by their own efforts. But as we have also urged we do not think that relief in a workhouse under the conditions usually prevalent at the present time is the only satisfactory method of meeting the requirements rightly involved in the application of this principle.

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[1] Report of members of the Commission as to Strassburg. [2] Munsterberg, 100300 (28), 100468, 100471, 100376.

185. The corollary of this conclusion in relation to voluntary institutions and social and charitable work is obvious. The voluntary institutions registered and inspected on the lines we have proposed, would be brought into relation with the administration as recognised assistants in the public relief of the country, as institutions that did not give "partial relief," but dealt with the individual wholly and separately. And with a recognised development of voluntary personal work preventive assistance would have a larger scope. There would be a better classification of the objects of relief, a better ascertainment of the appropriate course of treatment and its application, with a better organised system of co-operation. To this question we have now to turn.

XXV.—The Development of Responsible Voluntary Action and Co-operation.

Registration of cases in towns and co-operation.

186. Legislation in Holland has aimed at leaving all poor relief in the hands of churches and private charities on the understanding that the public administration should intervene only in cases in which they are unable to help.[1] Practically, relief is administered by three recognised authorities: the State provincial or communal authorities; the churches; and private institutions, that is, institutions which are not official bodies nor yet of a confessional or ecclesiastical character. By degrees a larger share of the administration is passing to the official authorities and to the private bodies, a decreasing share to the churches.

187. The percentages representing the share of the total expenditure which each authority meets are as follows:—

Year.	Public.	Churches.	Private.
1854	40·1	50·4	9·5
1903	47·6	39·1	13·3

188. Every municipality keeps a register of all charities in the locality and the institutions, subject to penalty, send it to their rules and regulations. They have also to forward annual statistics of their work, and they are under an obligation, if required to do so, to submit to the municipal authorities evidence to show why, they, rather than the municipality, should not assist an applicant. There is no legal right to relief. Public relief is limited to what is "strictly necessary."[2] In Amsterdam an association of charities (*Liefdadigheid Naar Vermogen*) has been formed and has established a central register of cases; and its relief has been administered on "Elberfeld" lines for the last fifteen years by a staff of 400 or 500 workers. The municipal relief also is now taken to the houses of the poor by its voluntary workers. This system has been in force only one year, but it has hitherto answered very well. Societies similar to that in Amsterdam are established in the larger towns of Holland, and work generally on Elberfeld lines. Mr. Blankenberg, who was one of the founders of the association of charities in Amsterdam, and who was for a long time a member of the board of guardians of the city and is now a member of the town council, submitted to us evidence on which this short statement is based; and he considered that the main points round which a future reform of the administration of relief would probably centre were the following:—

(1) In every town an association of all the existing charities (public, church, and private) to be established, in order to secure co-operation and efficient organisation.

(2) In every town a central register to be instituted, in which all the names and addresses of the assisted poor shall be recorded for consultation by all the associated charities.

(3) Public relief to be organised on the Elberfeld plan.

189. As we have said, voluntary charity should, in our opinion, form a kind of outer circle of assistance, of which the centre is public relief, and by its means many of those who are in distress should be aided outside the Poor Law in such a way as to prevent

[1] Blankenberg, 100020, (9). [2] Blankenberg, 100086, 100147, 100076, 100125, 100126, 100020, (43), (48), (55).

their dependence on the community. In Berlin, as in our own country, the co-operation between the public relief authorities and the voluntary agencies is not systematic or effective, though in many German towns the relations between the two are, it is said, "very good and helpful."[1] But in Holland, as we have seen, these relations are much more fully developed. A kind of partnership between the two administrations has been recognised, and an "Elberfeld" system on charitable lines is being utilised for municipal purposes.[2] The registration of charities is also there in force, indeed, the registration is necessary in order that the institutions may have civil rights, be competent to plead in Courts of Justice, to receive bequests, and to collect contributions. Except on these conditions, "the charities, so to say, cannot exist."[3] Among the proposals recommended by a Special Parliamentary Committee in Belgium on the Reform of the Public Administration of Relief which reported in 1900, are included proposals for the registration of charities with the object of promoting co-operation between them and the public authorities, and for the establishment in each commune or union of communes a central joint information committee, on which both the voluntary and the official institutions should be represented.[4] Reference need only be made to the laws for the recognition of voluntary associations and of foundations in France. They amply support our general proposition on that head, as does also, in Paris, the decentralised method of relief adopted in the divisions of the *Arrondissements* placed under the care of unpaid *Administrateurs* and their assistants. Thus, the evidence that we have received from abroad from experienced witnesses and from documents may be said to confirm our opinion on two points; that there should be a close association between the administration of official and of voluntary relief; that with that object voluntary societies and institutions should be enabled to acquire a recognised and responsible *status* that would make them competent for such association; and that a system of trained voluntary visitors should, as far as possible, be brought into alliance with the authorities entrusted with the duty of public relief, or should be directly associated with them in its fulfilment.

Societies and institutions.

190. During the past thirty years the movement of thought in the United States has been in this direction.[5] In many towns there are friendly visitors who work in connection with the Associated Charities or the Charity Organisation Society of the town. The Boston Associated Charities states as its object:—

> "To secure the concurrent and harmonious action of the different charities in Boston in order to raise the needy above the need of relief . . . to encourage thrift, self-dependence and industry . . . to prevent children growing up as paupers . . . and to accomplish these [and other] objects, it is designed [amongst other means.]:—
>
> "1. To provide that the case of every applicant for relief shall be thoroughly investigated; 2. To provide a means of confidential exchange of information between overseers of the poor, charitable societies and agencies and benevolent individuals. . . . 5. To send to each poor family, under the advice of a district conference, a friendly visitor."

191. In the course of the year some 900 to 1,000 friendly visitors are employed, while about 1,800 families are cared for by friendly visitors, and some 2,700 families are otherwise dealt with or worked for.

192. The society is organised like a Charity Organisation Society with a central council and district committees or conferences. The friendly visitors visit cases for longer or shorter periods as the circumstances require, both cases dealt with by the Poor Law and others. "The friendly visitor is not expected to investigate a family, for investigation is made by the agent." Nor is he "an almsgiver, for where relief is needed experience has taught clearly that it should be obtained from someone else." His aim is by friendly help and influence "to give people a fair chance to retrieve their fallen fortunes," whether their difficulties have been "caused by ignorance misfortune, or moral defect; to help them to improve their condition"—"not simply to relieve distress, but rather to ascertain and remove its causes." This method has led to the prevention and removal of much distress. It is an application of the "individual"

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[1] Munsterberg, 100319, 100512 [2] Blankenberg, 100257-72. [3] Réforme de la Bienfaisance en Belgique: Resolutions etc. de la Commission spéciale, 1900. [4] Appendix vii., Systems of Poor Relief, p. 4. [5] Charities Appendix.

system, combined with central registration, the training of workers and localised supervision; and it has been at least an important concurrent force in the reduction of outdoor relief. One of the distinctive features of the "associated charities" is the exclusion of all relief from their direct administration. Relief is not granted by them; it is obtained from other sources, as they may think best, whether from private agencies or individuals or from the Poor Law. Another is the large reliance placed upon the friendly visitor in dealing intimately and continuously with cases of every kind. But here, consistently with the other evidence we have received, the cases are in the first instance, taken down and investigated by a paid officer of the committee.

193. We have analysed as far as possible the conditions of one or two larger towns and cities, as we have those of rural districts and the smaller towns. Information in regard to them will be found in the Charities Appendix; and later bearing in mind the statements which we have just submitted and the experience gained in the administration of relief in Great Britain, we will formulate our recommendations. Other evidence in the same direction is to be found in the methods and development of the Charity Organisation movement.

XXVI.—Suggestions of Witnesses for the Re-organisation of Charities in relation to the Poor Law in Country Districts and the Smaller Towns.

Suggestions for the development of a reformed administration.

194. We have now to consider the suggestions which have been made to us for a development of administration on lines resembling those which we have indicated but partially and tentatively. They will, we think, justify the position we have taken.

195. It is stated that outdoor relief cannot be abolished under present conditions of administration; that the charities cannot take the place of outdoor relief; that a reform of the endowed dole charities is urgently required; that though there may be supplementation of outdoor relief, there is little or no co-operation with the guardians; and that in many places there is overlapping between administrators of the Poor Law and administrators of the charities and donors.

196. (1) In most parishes in the country districts there are no Voluntary Relief Committees, and there no change need be made except that the terms under which the dole trusts are held should be altered, so that they become unconditional trusts for the general relief of distress in the parish, or are applied, wholly or in part, to some purpose of an eleemosynary character approved by the Charity Commission. Where the parishes have Voluntary Relief Committees, these committees, if registered, would be represented on the Voluntary Aid Committee of the union. The applicants to the Public Assistance Committee would be referred to the Voluntary Aid Committee for help, if suitable, from the distress (formerly the dole) charities of the parish in which they are resident and from other sources of benevolence. The trustees of the parish charities, though the legal interest in the charities is in some cases vested in the parish council, are independent trustees; no question need arise, therefore, of the rights of the councils. The use of the charity would remain as heretofore in the hands of the trustees, some one of whom would be desired to serve on the Voluntary Aid Committee, but the funds of the parish would still be applied to residents within the parish. (2) If, however, the funds are large, out of all proportion to the population and rateable value, it would be open to the Charity Commissioners to make an allocation of the charities proportionately to population to the several parishes in the union, or to make a scheme for their application in connection with the Voluntary Aid Committee for some special eleemosynary purpose that experience has shown to be satisfactory. As we have seen, provision for the aged by way of almshouses or pensions is said to have been very useful; but the utility of these charities may be greatly modified after a time by the introduction of State pensions. The provision of nurses for the sick and infirm is greatly desired by many witnesses, and where a scheme is necessary owing to the largeness of the endowments, part of the funds might well be applied to this object,

not for the parish only, but, so far as is practicable, for the union.[1] The detailed requirements of the third section of the model form of scheme would no longer be necessary: "The supply of : (*a*) Clothes, linen, bedding, etc.; or (*b*) temporary relief in money by way of loan or otherwise, in case of unexpected loss, etc.," for the doles would be transmuted into a distress fund not available for the poor generally, but for those only who are proved to be in distress. (3) By the Charitable Trusts Acts all trustees have now to send in accounts yearly to the Charity Commission; it will now be recommended by us that these accounts be made up in accordance with definite forms and be sent to the Voluntary Aid Committee for publication in their Annual Report, as well as to the Charity Commission. The registration of all cases assisted in the union might be better undertaken by the Voluntary Aid Committee than by the Public Assistance Committee. In these and other ways there would be built up a voluntary system of relief parallel to the public system, which might take over the duty of giving relief at the home, in co-operation with agencies and persons in the several parishes.

XXVII.—Mr. Goschen's Minute of 1869.

197. The desire to develop a systematic scheme of co-operation between charity and the Poor Law, especially in regard to outdoor relief, is very generally expressed in the evidence. Mr. Goschen's Minute, to which we have already referred, represented a turning point in public opinion in regard to this question and suggested a line of co-operation which in some of the unions of London has been carried out to a considerable degree by the guardians acting in correspondence with the District Committees of the Charities Organisation Society. We therefore draw attention to it again in some detail.[2] Mr. Goschen laid down a principle and suggested a method. The principle remains. The method, in our opinion, requires revision and extension. The principle was that there should be co-operation between Poor Law and charitable societies, but not overlapping; that is, that each case should be fully dealt with by either one or the other agency, and that, neither unwittingly nor of set purpose, should there be a supplementation of the allowances of one agency by the relief granted by others. After referring to "one of the most recognised principles in our Poor Law," "that relief should be given only to the actually destitute, and not in aid of wages," he says:— Mr. Goschen's Minute of 1869.

> "The general principle to be borne in mind seems to be that the obligations of the guardians should not be curtailed, and that where the charitable associations consider it within their province to deal at all with persons on the parish lists, they should do so, not by affording additional means of income, but by supplying once for all such articles as do not clash with or overlap the relief administered by the guardians."

To carry this out, Mr. Goschen proceeds:—

> "The first point is that there should be every opportunity for every agency, official or private engaged in relieving the poor, to know fully and accurately the details of the work performed by all similarly engaged."

Then he suggests communication between the boards of guardians and the charities with that object. The Poor Law Board would, he says, be prepared:—

> "(1) To authorise the guardians to print weekly lists, containing the names and addresses of outdoor paupers, and the sums given in relief in each case; (2) to authorise any reasonable remuneration for extra work to officers whom the guardians may employ to carry out this arrangement; (3) to instruct their inspectors to facilitate the communication between the official and private agencies, where such interposition may be of any service, and to assist in systematising as far as possible relief operations in various parts of the Metropolis."

And he suggests as at least one practical line for the division of labour between charitable and Poor Law work for relief purposes:—

> "It may be well to add that boards of guardians cannot legally give relief (1) in redeeming tools or clothes from pawn; (2) in purchasing tools; (3) in purchasing clothes (except in cases of urgent necessity); (4) in paying the cost of conveyance to any part of the United Kingdom; (5) in paying rent or lodging; so that assistance rendered for any of these purposes will not interfere with the action of the guardians."

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[1] Batchelor, 69011. [2] Davy, 3291. Alford, 31693(11)

198. The Local Government Board,[1] as the evidence shows, have been ready to approve any useful co-operation between the Poor Law and charities, but in general it may be said that but few active steps have been taken by the inspectors "to assist in systematising as far as possible relief operations in various parts of the Metropolis."

The principle of Mr. Goschen's Circular we accept. However it may be defined, the Poor Law authorities should have a definite province of work and a clear and undivided responsibility in regard to it, though they may find it proper or necessary in the interests of those who apply to them to obtain the services of charitable societies or institutions or the aid of voluntary workers. The methods of co-operation should, however, go further, we think, than those suggested by Mr. Goschen. In each Poor Law Union there should be a register of cases which are being dealt with or have been dealt with by the Poor Law authorities, the charities and parochial and other agencies, managed, as may seem best, by a central Voluntary Aid Committee, or by the Public Assistance Committee. Next a broad division of labour on either side should be accepted; and the Public Assistance Committee should refer to the Voluntary Aid Committee of the union cases in which people should be "kept off the rates," persons who can be assisted to become or to keep independent. We do not think that the Poor Law should become a charitable fund for the relief of the poor as it was before 1834. We think that cases in which relief goes beyond the relief that is necessary to meet destitution, reasonably interpreted, should not be relieved by the Poor Law, though the aid of voluntary workers be called in for the better supervision of these cases. And we are of opinion that, if there is to be co-operation, some working plan of cross representation of the Public Assistance Committee on the Voluntary Aid Committee and *vice versa* is indispensable.

199. That there is a wide field for such co-operation may be gathered from the special return of persons relieved during the year ended 30th September, 1907. This suggests that many cases of temporary distress might be dealt with by voluntary agencies instead of by the Poor Law. Thirty per cent. of the applications to the Poor Law were cases of persons whose aggregate period of relief during the year did not exceed one month, and who were not relieved on more than two occasions during the year.

XXVIII.—The Method of Co-operation between Poor Law and Charity, and its Practical Results.

The required co-operation between Poor Law and charity.

200. As a general statement of the kind of co-operation required the evidence of one or two of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board may be quoted. Mr. Preston Thomas, who has had a large experience both at the Local Government Board and in the practical work of inspection, says:[2] –

> "It always seems to me that the one complement that you want to the Poor Law is, in every place, some organisation to deal with what ought not to be Poor Law cases. There are lots of people who are ready to subscribe money if they can be certain that the money is not wasted, and you want some organisation in every union, in every district, to take off the rates people who ought not to go to workhouses, and whom it would be kindness to prevent from going to workhouses, or indeed from being pauperised otherwise, and who would not come within hard and fast regulations. I should like to see that very much. Of course, in London you have got various societies which help in that way."

And Mr. Preston Thomas' evidence in regard to Exeter shows how, in connection with a careful administration of outdoor relief, Mr. Goschen's suggestion of the circulation of printed lists of applicants was of service, while the material for carrying out our proposals for the formation of a Voluntary Committee are there at hand. He says:[3]—

> "I found the administration was very unsatisfactory in many respects; in the first place its workhouse was bad, its accommodation for the sick was adversely criticised by Sir William Chance in an address which he published—I think the epithet he used was 'abominable,' and altogether it was as bad as it could be. Forty-two per 1,000 for a town of that sort, abounding in charities, everybody only wanting to find somebody to bestow charity upon, and Poor Law relief given broadcast! They had not grasped, until it was represented to them, how much pauperised they were in comparison with other places, and when they came to know that, and came to know that fixed rules were desirable and that giving relief indiscriminately was not good for anybody, they reformed their ways—one or two very influential guardians took up the matter thoroughly, and instead of having 1,127 outdoor paupers they have at the present time under 500. I think the last return sent to me was 450 something. . . . That saved them £2,700 a year, so I was then able to go to them and say: Well, now you have been saved this, do not you think you can provide properly for your sick inside the workhouse and build a decent infirmary? They said: That is a fair way of putting it, we will; what do you want us to spend? They have now built a very excellent infirmary, and their Poor Law relief is going down still. I took the trouble to go round only a week or two ago for the purpose—knowing I should have the honour of being examined before this Commission—of finding out whether there was any hardship from this at all. I went to the clergymen of the different parishes, to the chief constable, to the

[1] Davy, 3264. [2] Preston Thomas, 12318, 12427. [3] Preston Thomas, 4438, 4439.

secretary of the Charity Organisation Society and to the secretary of the Church Army. I had talks with all those people, and the universal opinion was that the result had been wholly beneficial. One of the clergymen, who has a parish of, I think, about 4,000 or 5,000 people—a man who knows the condition of every man, woman, and child in his parish—was able to turn to a book as to all the smaller houses, in which he kept the names of people living in the houses; he could tell you about Mary Smith and William Jones, and every individual, and what they were doing. He was a man who knew all about it, and I went over the old lists of paupers with him. The Exeter guardians do a very useful thing; they print the names of their paupers in their half-yearly book, half-year after half-year. Then they circulate these books a great deal, and sometimes people come and say: This man or this woman does not want thie relief; he or she has a flourishing son who lives at so-and-so, and could perfectly well afford to keep her or him; and, on the other hand, some one may come and say: This woman is only getting 3s. a week; it is very hard on her; she ought to have more. It is a very useful thing to do that. I went through some of the names with the present clerk of the guardians; he was once a relieving officer and therefore has a very large knowledge of the whole thing; he was able to indicate this person and that person and say of her, That person is doing very well; she sells apples in the market, or she peddles—she is making herself very comfortable indeed, and her son lives with her. Then someone else now lives with a married daughter, someone else lives with a married son, and so on. Lots of these people who had had relief seven years before were living on, and had got merged in the general population, and were earning their living, or being supported by people whose proper duty it was to support them, without any harm to anyone, but with great benefit to the rate-payers."

Other evidence of Your Majesty's inspectors confirms the utility of co-operation. Mr. Hervey suggests that [1]:—

"The clergy of all denominations and representatives of charities in the neighbourhood should be invited to send in their lists to some central charitable organisation and to make themselves acquainted with the other lists deposited there, by which means an accurate dictionary or reference book might be framed to supply the necessary information about almost every person who had once received relief, either parochial or charitable."

And the utility of the method is practically confirmed by its use by boards of guardians and charity organisation societies by mutual arrangement. Mr. Lockwood says [2]:—

"Not a few boards of guardians have amongst their members those who are members also of the Charity Organisation Society. An excellent practice prevails in a certain number of boards, and I wish the number were greater, of referring applicants for relief through the guardians representing the society to the Charity Organisation Society where such a course seems desirable. The arrangement works very satisfactorily where adopted, and saves a quite appreciable number of persons from becoming chargeable to the rates. In the report of the Whitechapel guardians for the year ended Lady Day, 1905, is given a return of cases assisted by or through the agency of the Charity Organisation Society, whence it appears that 113 persons were so assisted during the year in various ways." [3]

The procedure is almost invariably this:—

"Some member of the committee or of the board who is there, and who happens to be a member of the Charity Organisation Society, takes down the particulars, and then the applicant is told to attend at the office of the Charity Organisation Society at a certain hour. If a member of the Charity Organisation Society does not happen to be present, then the applicant will be given a note to say that the guardians think it will be better for the Charity Organisation Society, in the first instance, to deal with the particular case.

"At St. Pancras at almost all the relief committee meetings a member of the Charity Organisation Society, who is not a guardian, attends and notes particular cases, and to a certain extent enters into the deliberations with regard to the case, but has no official *status*.

"The agents of the Charity Organisation Society at St. Pancras always come round to know what we know about their cases, and they are always willing to show us their case-papers with regard to any case that we may have, or to render assistance to the relieving officer with any information that they may have on any particular case."

Mr. Morris, the Vice-chairman of the St. Marylebone Board of Guardians and Hon. Secretary of the Charity Organisation Committee, said:—

"The procedure, ever since I remember, has been that at the relief committee a member of the Charity Organisation Society has always been sitting. I have been sitting there since I have been elected, and prior to my being elected there was one of the justices of the peace who always used to sit there. When cases come up for consideration if any member of the committee considers they are suitable for the Charity Organisation Society's work, it is suggested they should be referred; but I should think that quite half the cases that are referred to us come from the relieving officers who say, before bringing this up to the committee, 'Is not this a case rather that you feel would be suitable to you?'"

And on the financial side Mr. Morris said:—

"I do not think in Marylebone we ever have been in the position [of being unable to meet the needs of a case that had been investigated, owing to lack of funds]. I think possibly in the year 1897 we might have been pushed into that position, but we had at that time as

[1] Appendix to Vol. I., App. xxxiii. (A). Davy, 2971. [2] Lockwood, 12919, 13163, 13190, 13177, 13185, 13211. [3] Morris, 16278, 16805, 16820, 17051, 17061. Millward, 18766. Craig, 19696. Cleaver, 35917.

representing us on the board of guardians, a gentleman who gave very freely, and he used to bring the cases from the guardians to the Charity Organisation Society, and he himself very largely financed them. So that although at that time, when we were trying really to almost do away with out-relief in Marylebone, we had a great pressure at the Charity Organisation Society's office. We weathered it. Since then we have, I think, never had a really good case for assistance which we felt should be dealt with by charity, and yet been obliged to refuse it."

Speaking of London, Mr. Toynbee,[1] an Organising Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society confirmed these statements. Asked whether the Poor Law authorities throughout London generally co-operated with the Society, he said :—

"The practice differs very much in different districts. In some parts of London there is the closest possible accord. There is, for instance, in Whitechapel. In others, at the present time, there is not very close co-operation. But in most cases I think I am right in saying that there is a reference to the Society on the part of relieving officers, and very often on the part of individual members of boards of cases which they think can be better dealt with by the Society than by the Poor Law—even where co-operation with a board, as a board, is not known.

"30651. May you say that it is the regular practice, then, of a majority of the London Boards of Guardians to refer cases to your Organisation ?—Undoubtedly.

"30652. Would you say that in a majority of cases thus referred, which otherwise would come upon the Poor Law, you have been able to do something to prevent them coming upon the Poor Law ?—It is difficult to say whether the majority have been helped by the Society to that extent—a very large number, at any rate, have.

Asked, "In the great majority of cases, have you been able to help the people and to put them on a better footing than before, so that they may render themselves independent for the future ?—I should say in the majority of cases that is so ; but, undoubtedly, there are a certain number of recurrent cases—cases that come back to us after a time which we thought we had permanently helped. On the other hand, there are, as I say, a great number who do not come back, who have been reinstated once and for all, and whom we never hear of again.

"30644. Then may you say that you think your curative work has been considerable and effective ?—Undoubtedly. I should say, roughly, that about half the applications made to the Society are not helped, for one cause or another. Some are withdrawn forthwith when the question of investigation is broached ; others are already in the hands of the Poor Law guardians, and as it is the practice of the Society not to supplement Poor Law relief, they would at once be ruled out ; and then, of course, a large number are rejected on the score of character after the investigation has been made.

"Outdoor relief cases could be dealt with to a very large extent . . . by the existing agencies, if there was the proper close co-operation." [2]

Mr. T. Hancock Nunn, a member of our Commission, has cited another class of cases in which there has been useful co-operation with the Poor Law authorities.[3]

"After considerable controversy it was agreed, between the Guardians and our Executive, that, in accordance with the principles of Mr. Goschen's circular, these young women should, in every first case, at the outset, be offered the alternative of being dealt with by a woman worker—one of the members of our Rescue and Maternity Committee. By these, the young women, who almost invariably accept the alternative thus offered, are sent first to a Maternity Home and then to a Maternity Hospital, often the same institution. For the first three, six, or sometimes twelve months of the baby's life, the mother is enabled to earn her livelihood in the Maternity Home without separation from the life of her child. A glance at Appendix VIII. will indicate what measure of success has attended this difficult work. Of the influence on character—the most important thing—a schedule can only speak most vaguely. But it speaks definitely on two tendencies ; firstly, the prevention of application to the relieving officer, and, secondly, the steady increase in the number of cases in which the man has been successfully prosecuted."

The Charity Organisation Societies and systematic co-operation with the Poor Law.

201. It is hardly too much to say that, as these quotations suggest, all systematic co-operation between charity and the Poor Law authorities for the exchange of information, the prevention of overlapping, and for mutual help has on the charitable side been promoted and carried out almost solely by charity organisation and other similar societies. Of the method generally, Sir William Chance, who has studied the problem of relief from the historical side and also practically as a guardian, and as the member of a Charity Organisation Committee, gave evidence. He said[4] :—

"How different is the administration of public relief by the vast majority of boards of guardians, and of private relief by a properly organised Charity Organisation Committee. Before such a committee all the facts of a case have to be ascertained before a decision can be come to, and when these facts have been ascertained the question of how it can best be helped may occupy a considerable time, and even then it may have to be adjourned for further information before the final decision. And the discussion is carried on by 'experts,' by men and women who really know the poor and live among them. Surely equal if not greater care should be taken by those who have the public purse to draw upon."

And speaking of the possible withdrawal of outdoor relief consistently with the encroachments of voluntary effort, he said :—

"I think certainly something would have to be put in the place [of outdoor relief]. I am not going to answer for London whether that can be done or not ; but I think for the country

[1] Toynbee, 30717. Grisewood, 37204–7, 37228. Crowder, 17387 (6), (11), (13), 17651. Toynbee, 30629, 30643, 20649, 20652, 20646, 20782. [2] 30716. [3] *See* page 703. [4] Chance, 27061 (48), 27106–8.

that a far better thing could be put in the place of outdoor relief—not by the Local Govemennt Board nor by the State. . . . I believe that voluntary effort could perfectly well manage to relieve all the so-called deserving cases which otherwise would be relieved by outdoor relief.

"There would be a difficulty [in great districts growing up near London where the mass of the people are poor], but at the present moment it is almost impossible in some of these districts for voluntary effort to do very much, because the Poor Law gets in its way. Even in some of these districts that you talk of I am not at all certain that people would not come forward to help, because after all it is not always the rich people whom you want; we want everybody to help. You will very often find in some of the poorest parishes less pauperism than in a very rich parish. If you go abroad to the Tyrol you will not find a pauper there. The Tyrol is extremely poor, but everybody looks after themselves and they help each other. The abolition must be done extremely gradually, but I am not at all certain that it could not be done. You cannot say to-morrow outdoor relief shall be abolished. That was not done even in Bradfield; it was done quite quietly by not allowing any more outdoor cases to go on the lists. I quite recognise the difficulty you mention, but still I cannot help thinking that charity will meet it with benefit both to the poor and to the rich—the well-to-do rather."

202. In several of the larger towns, as for instance, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool and Bristol, Charity Organisation Societies have adopted the decentralised form of organisation, and have usually a representative central administration with district committees. In London there are forty district committees, one or more in each union. To these committees the applications are made and are taken down on "case-papers" similar to those used in the administration of poor relief in Germany. The district committees have the services of a paid or hon. secretary and an inquiry officer, and the committees are composed of voluntary helpers and persons connected with parochial and local work, who, some of them, conduct the work of inquiry and the business of the committee, some of them help by friendly visiting, for which purpose many persons associated with other agencies give their aid. A large number of voluntary workers are in active co-operation with the society. Four hundred are working in connection with the district offices.[1] In view of the conditions of London life, it has hitherto been thought best in the treatment of cases not to create a general visiting system, but, as far as possible, to make use of the services of persons already at work in the district, and to ask their aid in the several ways that may seem suitable in the particular case.[2] With the object of yet further decentralisation, the formation of parochial relief committees have been promoted and ward committees proposed.[3] Co-operating with the Charity Organisation Society, the guardians have been aided both to improve administration and to reduce pauperism. In their work the society has aimed at restoration to independence, "lifting them out of the circumstances that necessitate recourse to Poor Law relief."[4] The three main conditions that govern the action of a district committees of the society may thus be stated:—

"That there should be (1) a thorough knowledge of the character, circumstances and cause of distress of the applicant; (2) a definite scheme of really adequate help directed to the restoration of the applicant to a position of independence, and (3) co-operation in carrying out the scheme on the part of (*a*) relations; (*b*) employers and others upon whom the applicant may have some claim, and (*c*) charitable agencies."

Results of the method of co-operation with guardians and agencies.

And the results of the method are its best illustration and its justification. The following is one of many cases that have come before us in evidence[5]:—

"A.M. was referred to the Charity Organisation Society by the Church visitor. He was ill with pneumonia. His club contributions were in arrears, so no sick pay was available. Five quite young children made it impossible for his wife to earn. Although for several years the man's wages had been small and irregular owing to bad health, it was evident that they had done their best to keep the home comfortable and take good care of the children. The Charity Organisation Society raised money to pay up the man's club arrears, gave an allowance of from 15s. to 20s. a week until he was entitled to sick pay, and sent him twice to a convalescent home by the sea. (He had a relapse after his first visit, because he tried to begin work too soon.) By the kindness of one of the Society's visitors two of the children were sent for three months into the country to enable Mrs. B. to give more time to nursing her husband, and to lessen the household expenses. After many months of careful treatment, in which the district nurses took a large share, the man recovered, but was not strong enough to resume his former work. An introduction was obtained for him to the manager of one of the tram lines. He obtained work exactly suited to him and was quite able to support his family."[6]

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[1] Charities Appendix. [2] Toynbee, 30622 (2); and Dalton, 31363. [3] Toynbee, 30622, (60); (6–10), 30715. [4] 30766, 30631, 30639. [5] Toynbee, 30622, (15). Report on the effect of outdoor relief on wages in London. pp. 18, 31, 33, 36, 38, 40. [6] Report on the effect of outdoor relief on wages in certain unions in England, 148.

203. In co-operation with the guardians the following are cases taken at random. Mr. Morris says[1]:—

"I will take one which is a case we are dealing with at the present moment, which I think is a typical one, in which I think charity can help. It is a case of a very badly crippled girl, who was placed by the guardians in a special home for cripples. I went to see the girl there, and I brought the case under the notice of the Charity Organisation Society, and consequently one of our ladies found a suitable dressmaker, and the girl was taken out of the home. A brother, who was not legally liable, was written to, and he helped to pay the cost. The guardians, instead of paying to the home, will be paying for about two years a small amount, and at the end of those two years that girl will be self-supporting. There was a piece of work which was very largely not relief work, it was the arrangement and the management of the thing, which I think will save the rates a very considerable sum. That was one of the cases.

"Then the second I have brought is a case that is now being worked out. It is really only just commenced; it only came in about a month ago. It is a case in which a man had insured against fever in an insurance society, and had dropped it some three months before, thinking he would never have fever. Then he took scarlet fever, and the relieving officer found it was rather a hard case. The wife went to ask if the guardians could pay the rent. We found that the relations were willing to help with the food, and so on, and it seemed to us rather a pity that the wife, under those circumstances, should get on the rates. That is a case we are dealing with at the present time. That is a temporary case for rent.

"16713. The guardians did that?—No, the Charity Organisation Society. These are cases we have taken off the hands of the guardians. The next case was a case where one of the out-of-work men applied to the relieving officer. This was one of the cases that was referred to us. That man has just been accepted for emigration by the Central Unemployed Body. That was the case of a man and his wife and five children, and it is a case where I think probably they would have had to go into the workhouse, but in that case he was sent to us before the order for admission was given. We went into the case, and found it was not without spot or blemish, but it was a case where we thought he might be emigrated, and the Central Unemployed Body took the same view, and the family is being emigrated to Canada this next month.

"The fourth was a case which was sent to us in the middle of last month, a man who had gone into the workhouse; he was blind, and they asked me if I could look into it and give some advice with regard to it. I found he had been educated at the Blind Institution at Hampstead, had behaved very badly indeed; had stolen and behaved disgracefully in many ways. That was a case where I thought it best to leave the man for a time in the workhouse. I thought it better to put him to grinding corn for a time, and when he had learned what steady work was one might see what could be done with him, so as to put him back to his trade, which is Braille printing.

"16714. Has he learned the lesson?—That lesson is in process of being learned. These are all quite recent cases. I took the last five cases. As it happens, instead of all being old-age cases, they are various cases, they are not all of one type. The last case is a pension case; an old woman of eighty-one, who had been very largely helped by her adopted daughter. The relieving officer, when she applied to him, felt it would be rather a mistake to bring an old lady like that up to get her relief from the rates. He thought her adopted daughter had behaved so splendidly to her that it would be better to arrange the relief through charitable people. We found that someone who knew her was willing to help, and we have raised the balance. Those are five cases that have come to us recently from the guardians, and show the sort of co-operation that goes on. It is very largely a co-operation of the relieving officers; all the relieving officers come to our offices and know us, and if they think there is a case which seems a suitable case for us, they pass it on."

204. An example of the method of co-operation applied to the relief of school children, with the results attained by it was submitted to us by Mr. Toynbee.[2]

"The cases showed how varied was the needs of the different families and what different methods were required if they were to be effectively assisted."

205. Of cases that fail the following, taken from the report of investigators of the question of the effect of outdoor relief on wages, may be cited as typical:—

"A. C.—Widow, forty-two. Left with five children in 1902. Two were taken by the guardians. The woman was taught good cooking and a situation was found for her as daily servant. She did not like the regularity of her life, grew very slack and was dismissed. She was not willing to make another effort, and now gets casual work and receives occasional help from the guardians.

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[1] Morris, 16712–5. [2] Toynbee, 30622 (41–44).

"G. R.—Came for help, as her husband had consumption, and it was necessary for her to become the wage earner. It seemed promising, and she was taught fine ironing with a firm of shirt manufacturers, where she could have earned up to 25s. a week when she was skilled. Her home was kept for her for three months while she was learning. At the end of the time she informed the foreman that she did not like it, did not mean to work every day, and preferred to do casual charing and get 'what help she could.' She has since drifted to the Poor Law."

206. In these two instances what appeared to be hopeful plans for the help of those assisted failed owing to the temperament and character of the applicants. The extent to which this affects the administration of relief, and especially of any curative treatment, is hardly understood. It is possible that personal influence might, in these cases, effect the change of mind which would make the assistance of service ultimately; but too much should not be expected from that method. Or even a decentralised scheme of public relief, such, for instance, as that at Hamburg, as our colleagues report, there is very little power of inducing a recovery of the better position in life which the applicant once held. The method of voluntary friendly visiting as practised at Boston and elsewhere might achieve more. But all that can be done is to put in operation the best personal forces that are available; and by a completer organisation of these, as we suggest, and by the training of both paid officers and men, better and more preventive results may be accomplished.

207. In addition to the evidence which we have quoted, we have the evidence of the Jewish Board of Guardians. They may be said to make a minimum use of the Poor Law and conduct their work, it would seem, very successfully on the lines of inquiry and assistance with the visitation by districts.[1]

208. It may be urged that it makes little difference whether the applicant receives relief from the Poor Law or from some well-administered voluntary organisation. Here the question of the efficiency of the voluntary organisation is the critical question. What the standard should be we have stated above (p. 2).[2] Of the general utility of preventive help, there seems to be but one opinion. We desire both to increase its utility and to extend it.

XXIX.—Further Developments of Decentralisation, and Proposals for Co-operation.

209. In the last year or two there has sprung up another movement consistent with the lines of charity organisation, but differing from it in the stress laid upon the personal care of individual cases on "Elberfeld" lines. Mr. Grisewood, the secretary of the Liverpool Central Relief and Charity Organisation Society, gave us evidence in regard to it. In Liverpool there are now eighteen district committees with 250 voluntary friendly visitors, a number which it is hoped to raise to at least 500, in accordance with a plan of undertaking certain duties under the guardians on well-defined limits.[3] The voluntary visitors might, Mr. Grisewood suggests, "be placed in contact with the Poor Law organisation," and be semi-official visitors "in actual connection with the Poor Law." And on the guardians' part:—

"Every case should be dealt with as a problem in itself, precisely the same as we deal with our cases in charity organisation work. We say, What can be done for this family? In what way can they be restored to self-support? What natural means of help are there? And we resort to those means of help, and we use those means of setting them on their feet again. . . ."

"I fear there would still be a number who could not be treated in what we might call an effective way; but, at all events, when they came into a position to be treated effectively, it ought to be done."

210. Thus, at Liverpool we have the Central Relief Society developing on "Elberfeld" lines with the definite object of its visitors becoming the semi-official visitors of the board of guardians, and the guardians adopting what may be called a "charity organisation" policy.[4] At Bradford, Bolton, and elsewhere, guilds of help have been recently

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[1] Stephany, 30349, 30499, 30513, 30520, 30314, 30525. [2] Dalton, 31567, 31571, 31330, (10).
[3] Grisewood, 37105, Secs. 24, 25, 63; 37121, 37127, 37328, 37317, 37320. [4] Cooper, 36692 (19).; Milledge, Vol. IX., App. lxxvi.; Paton, Vol. IX., App. lxxix.

established on lines parallel to the Poor Law, with, it would seem, a similar aim in view, at least, to the extent of their visitors becoming the visitors of a remodelled scheme of public assistance. On the other hand, there is some criticism. Mr. Cleaver, for instance, the experienced clerk of the West Derby Union, whilst strongly in favour of co-operation with charitable societies and ready to adopt the suggestion that the visitors of the Central Relief and Charity Organisation Society should visit all the widows in the union, was of opinion that it was better to adhere to the present division of labour between the Poor Law and voluntary agencies.[1] It was, he thought, impracticable to grant relief through voluntary agencies. "He did not think we should get the voluntary assistants here that they can there." But on this question we will not enter. We think that those who may undertake the work of visiting should assist the recognised voluntary aid committee, the establishment of which we propose, and should thus take a position parallel to that of the officers of the boards of guardians on the public assistance committee, co-operating with them and visiting for them as the cases may require; and we have made our recommendations accordingly. This represents the length to which the "semi-official" assistance should go. We believe that it would preserve its spontaneity and effectiveness to the best purpose if it were associated with the public administration of relief and worked in recognised alliance with it, but was not part and parcel of it.

211. At Hampstead,[2] under the guidance of Mr. T. Hancock Nunn, a member of our Commission, an interesting experiment in what is styled communal co-operation is being carried on. First he and those co-operating with him aimed at securing three conditions:—

(1) That the actual hand felt by those in distress be the hand of a friend, and not of an official organisation.

(2) That the helper should yet be backed by a powerful instrument for handling the network of agencies that exist for social betterment.

(3) That the relationship between helper and helped should continue long enough to develop the knowledge essential to friendly help.

And to secure also the individuality and spontaneity of the several societies that co-operated and wishing to avoid centralisation they aimed also:—

(1) Complete intercommunication between the associated agencies,

it contented itself with merely offering—

(2) Opportunities for any closer co-operation that might be desired, either permanently or as a temporary expedient,

and maintained—

(3) The complete freedom of action of each agency.

They next surveyed the borough, and made a registration of all agencies, municipal, endowed, voluntary or mutual, and subsequently a registration of all assistance. Next inter-parochial conferences were established to consider how co-operation might be effected in the cases in which overlapping occurred, and as "common meeting places to promote special organisation, local schemes for the improvement of the condition of the poor, or any meetings of common interest." This led to the formation of inter-parochial committees of assistance. The object of these committees was to improve the relation of the district visitor to the poor, by enabling her to substitute friendly visiting for the dispensing of alms; to bring into operation a committee of men of business and working men, who would be better equipped for the actual work of making wise decisions than the district visitor; to facilitate co-operation with municipal and other bodies. For purposes of social education a board of social study was established. And the scheme was also organised so that there should be co-operation with the friendly societies and with the Public Libraries Committee, the Public Health Committee, and the Distress Committee of the Borough Council, with the elementary schools and the Poor Law guardians.

"We saw that Poor Law relief and voluntary aid were two forces whose interaction was inevitable, and that unless the closest co-ordination could be effected between them they must thwart one another at every turn. The temptation to a board of guardians to play the part of charity is as

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[1] Cleaver, 36155, 35887 (33), 35917, 35917, 36159, 36150 [2] *See* p. 684.

irresistible as it is dangerous, and is illustrated up and down the country in union after union; and the only solution of this difficulty seemed to be, so to man the board with voluntary workers and voluntary associations with guardians, as to ensure an enlightened policy on the part of both. At any rate, the Hampstead Board, after having been dominated by a chairman to whom the poor rate was a constant temptation to lavish out-relief, became a board of social workers, who realised that the legal limitations of a destitution authority practically precluded any serious form of charitable enterprise."

Finally, as a centre for discussion a Council of Social Welfare was established representative of the agencies in the district and of the inter-parochial Committee. This Council appointed a Domiciliary Visiting Committee of which the results are stated as follows:—

(1) Virtually complete inter-communication between all assisting agencies had been secured by our system of registration, whilst the permanent allocation of certain families (composite as to their relations with several churches) to certain churches and societies and to the guardians, had minimised the possibilities of overlapping.

(2) The release of the district visitor in several parishes from almsgiving, and the administration of assistance by weekly or fortnightly committees representative of the churches had purified the friendly influence of the visitor, and the spiritual influence of every Church.

(3) The Social Study Circle, by rendering continuous social study easy, attractive, and practical, had paved the way for the Continuous Course, now running, which aims at providing such a general equipment as to eliminate the necessity, in all but exceptional cases, of employing a fresh visitor to meet fresh needs unstudied by the visitor already at work.

212. Of the general movement of thought towards the development or establishment of some central administration, representing, for co operative purposes, voluntary effort and the charities, there is a mass of evidence from London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Newcastle-on Tyne, Tynemouth, Huddersfield, Sheffield, Leeds, Leicester.[1] But we think that without special efforts being made by inspectors and others in charge of the direction of public relief, "to assist in systematising, as far as possible, relief operations" in these and other places, little may be accomplished. If co-operation with voluntary agencies, personal and institutional, assumes an official importance equal to that of the administration of Poor Law relief by separate and independent boards, great progress in it may be made. But this can hardly be expected on the present lines, so long as the Poor Law has no active relations with the general charities, and is managed usually as an independent and isolated organisation.

XXX.—Voluntary Societies.

213. Before submitting recommendations on this point, however, we would refer shortly to the large group of voluntary societies in the great cities, but especially in London. In considering these, the following statements should be taken into account.

(1) Charitable work of the best type is becoming more and more preventive in its nature:—

"That that is so is due in no small measure to the increased study which is now devoted to social questions. It is now becoming common for would-be social workers to equip themselves for their responsible duties by attending lectures and classes and submitting to a course of practical training under those who have already had experience. These workers are no longer satisfied with giving relief; they begin to enquire into the causes which make relief necessary and so come to be attracted to such work as health visiting, the promotion of thrift, the industrial training of children and the better organisation of labour."

For their instruction classes have been arranged at the School of Sociology and Social Economics in London, coupled with practical work at the district committees of the Charity Organisation Society, and courses of instruction for relieving officers and others.[2] Similar classes are being furnished in connection with the Victoria University at Liverpool; and centres for the examination of Poor Law officials who wish to stand for the relieving officers' examination are being opened in

[1] Toynbee, 30622 (59) (60). Grisewood, 37105 (31). Bradley, App. cxv., Vol. IV. Rogers, 45454. Tillyard, Vol. IV., App. clvii. Manton, 43659. Moll, Vol. V., App. xcvii. Simey, 5165. Parkin, Vol. V., 51535, 51550. Frater, Vol. V., 52086 (12). Chapman, 84791 (49). Dyson, Vol. IV., App. lxiv. (17, etc.). Verity, 42232. Blockshaw, 41349 (12). Ford, 39776 (69), 39943. Harper, Vol. IV., App. cxxxiii.; Hincks, Vol. IV., App. cxxxiv. (28).
[2] Alford, 31693 (13). Hill, Vol. IX., App. lxiv. Munsterberg, 100481, 100483. Craig, 19466 (29).

London, Liverpool, and other parts of England. This method, it appears to us, is worthy of general adoption. If greater reliance is to be placed on the individual official or voluntary worker, the assistance, both of those who, like many capable officers, have been educated by the experiences of life and of those who have studied the administration of relief as a department of work and thought, like an increasing number of officials and voluntary workers, will be required. In this way, to a great extent, "the co-operation of persons of leisure and information" and also of a well-instructed paid staff will be promoted.

The Rev. B. H. Alford, who, as clergyman and Poor Law guardian has had a long experience of districts, rich and poor, urged upon us the advantages of the "interaction of State and voluntary agents" on the intellectual side of administration :—

> "I desire it," he said, "as a volunteer, in order that philanthropists may be steadied in their work by a fuller sense of its wide significance; that visitors to the poor may be moved to a more continuous study of the poor, and more considered and persistent action, as feeling their responsibility to a board which entrusts them with civic duties.
>
> "I desire it as a guardian; for I recognise with Mr. Birrell that there is 'a charm about voluntary work which could never be obtained in connection with work done at the expense of the taxpayer or ratepayer.' Also I see that in this way something of a novitiate may be provided to train the judgment and supply acquaintance with details of work among the poor. So candidates for the board might prove more suitable for election, and when elected more ready to acknowledge that there is no issue out of the perplexities of pauperism save by following patiently and through many long passages the clue of experience."

Arising, in great part, out of this new demand for special instruction, there is a new and widespread endeavour to use old institutions and agencies in a new way. They are being pressed out of their isolation. Miss Nussey, the almoner at the Westminster Hospital, showed us to how large an extent, with a view to the better care of out-patients, new connections were being opened out on all sides with general and parochial agencies.

> "The difficulty of getting the various charitable and endowed organisations to combine and come together is growing considerably less." "It is difficult . . . but it is far easier now than it was to get people of various denominations to work together, and to get the various charities to co-operate. For instance, you will find on some of the parochial relief committees Nonconformists sitting. I am quite certain that some years ago it would have been quite impossible to have brought this about . . ."

As to co-operation :—

> "I think the people are much more dissatisfied with the state of affairs than they were. They find the overlapping which goes on is so prevalent and so unsatisfactory, and that the way relief is given leads to no good results when it is given in such very small amounts. I think there is a great desire on the part of people to see that the work is done more thoroughly." [1]

(3) The cure for overlapping is co-operation.[2] Overlapping is a soft and quiet thing. It is due in part to heedlessness and to want of experience, in part to a feeling of the privacy of charity. It can neither be found out nor checked as a rule, except by local inquiry (if, even then, the facts happen to come to light), and by reference to those who are mostly likely to be givers of relief in the area. Hence the use of registration. At the offices of centralised charitable societies it cannot be ascertained. They can prevent the grosser abuses of overlapping by reference to some general society for inquiry and mutual aid, but they cannot do more. By personal and continuous friendly visiting alone probably will be learned the facts, and that often incidentally. Hence, overlapping, as a rule, cannot be stopped by large measures of unifying, or, as it may be vaguely called, co-ordinating institutions, but by the general use of a common method of inquiry and by the perfection of local friendly care.

214. Thus, as we have said, the cure of overlapping is co-operation. And this co-operation is constantly increasing in reference to individual cases. If an institution is co-operating with others in regard to the people who want its help, it is probably fulfilling its function properly and for the common cause. It is wrong to take the mere number of the charities as in itself evidence of want of co-operation or inefficiency. One must also judge them by what is much less easily observable—by the to and fro of co-operation that goes on between them.

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[1] Toynbee, 30621, 45. Toynbee, 30705. Nussey, 32917 (4), (6), (7), (16), (18). [2] Thorburn, 35693 (66–72).

215. The charities of provincial towns endowed and others are not usually very large: those of London are comparatively large. But to judge of them fairly, it is necessary to consider as London charities only those charities that find their field of work wholly or for the most part in the Metropolis. The population of larger London is great, but not a few charities have their headquarters in London, which to a very large extent deal with cases outside London, and are national rather than metropolitan. On the other hand, many charities outside London are local, but yet are available for London cases. The largest and most important charities are usually in modern times the voluntary charities. A classified return of the receipts of "charities in or available for the Metropolis" is printed in the Appendix.[1] The summary of these charities is as follows:—[2]

The charities of London and provincial towns.

SUMMARY.

The income of the agencies dealing with material needs may be thus summarised:—

	£	£
Charitable contributions	3,664,022	
Payments by or for beneficiaries	955,847	
		4,619,869
Interest on invested funds		1,537,712
Legacies		735,197
Industrial receipts and sundries		367,080
		7,259,858
To this must be added the minimum income of local charities		419,883
Making a total in and available for the Metropolis of		7,679,741*

It should be noted that large sums are also contributed congregationally for the purposes of relief, the distribution of which would not necessarily pass through the above channels. Thus in 1905–6 the contributions entrusted to the Church of England for the support of the poor amounted, in the Diocese of London, to £84,533, and, in the Diocese of Southwark, to £39,716. Similar information with regard to other religious bodies is not available.

In addition to the receipts for material relief given above it must be noted that charges on public funds have been excluded from the summaries; consequently, in estimating the sums available for expenditure, the following amounts have to be added:—

	£
County and other councils' expenditure on asylums for the insane and epileptic of the Metropolitan area	566,845
Treasury and public grants to industrial and reformatory schools	360,038
Total expenditure of guardians on relief of the poor in the Metropolis	3,864,973
	4,791,856

The classes of charities each stand for some definite want on the part of the people, and as such they have a logical social claim and justification. Nor, in many instances, is the income for the class of charities out of proportion to the obvious needs of those who may be in want of relief from such charities. For example, the income of the charities for the blind in London and throughout the country is £205,961. A common registration is greatly needed in the relief of blind persons, but the income cannot be said to be excessive. So in regard to other classes. On the other hand some institutions, forgetting the three requirements of efficient administration, to individualise, to decentralise, and to co-operate—such as some hospitals in their out-relief departments, may, while doing much good work, promote and foster much that is indifferent and harmful. In these cases a change of method which should now be sufficiently understood would meet the evil. In other instances the institution itself may be administered on entirely wrong lines. In these cases it is a question whether it should not be permissible to appeal to some authority to consider and report whether it is in the interest of the community that such an institution should be established. The question of the establishment of shelters is an instance in point. We are of opinion that if a suitable central body such as we have suggested were set on foot, it might very rightly report on such matters.

216. What we have said leads us to these conclusions. The income of the charities is large, and they represent not only a large sum invested in the assistance of the distressed and afflicted, but a very large amount of experienced paid and voluntary work. They are the natural co-operators with any organisation for public relief. Public relief on its

* Adding the income of spiritual charities (£2,386,662) would bring the total income of charitable agencies to £10,066,403.

[1] Charities Register and Digest, p. cccxii., 1908. [2] Charities Appendix.

side absorbs the proceeds of a large capital. In England and Wales in 1905–6 £3,374,427 was spent on outdoor relief. The effect of good administration is generally two-fold. The number of those who make application is reduced. Those who are relieved are, generally speaking, relieved both to a larger amount, if the financial question only be considered, and very much more thoroughly and sympathetically. The need of the individual is not generalised into half-crowns or other purposeless gifts; it is met according to its character, with money or without money, as may prove best. Co-operation implies, therefore, a better utilisation of means and an economy of means. But if this result is to be secured, there should be some recognised grouping of charities in each city, and some central body representing them. The parallelism between the Poor Law and charity should be carried through. If the bond between them is of value, each party to it should have the best opportunity for fulfilling it, the charities as well as the Poor Law. Each brings different qualities to the solution of the problem, the one a certain spontaneity and devotion, the other a more regularised and defined intervention. But it cannot be urged, as it is sometimes implied, that the Poor Law has the means to deal with all questions of relief completely, while the former, supported only from voluntary resources, can deal with them only incompletely. In the Poor Law, under the form of official continuity, there may be great changes in policy and great derelictions of duty; and these may hardly come to light, or come to light very slowly. The completeness and social utility of an institution does not depend on its command of resources only. Other elements of activity, energy and direction of purpose have to be taken into account, and what is, or seems to be, incompleteness may be in part only an indication of growth and of a process incident to the adoption of new ways. We think, therefore, that while help is given to promote the co-operation of charities, a larger rather than a lesser range should be given to voluntary effort; and that it should be the policy of the Local Government Board and the administration of Public Assistance to promote it and to utilise it as far as possible, and not either directly or indirectly to supersede it.

Three methods of reforming the dole system in relation to a reformed outdoor relief considered. Outdoor Assistance administered by Committee of Public Assistance and Voluntary aid by a Voluntary Aid Committee.

XXXI.—Conclusions.

217. We have now completed our survey, and would submit our general conclusions and recommendations, which indeed we have already in great measure indicated.

The first method. The withdrawal of all non-institutional relief.

218. Three methods of reorganisation have been considered by us. The first method was the withdrawal of all non-institutional Poor Law relief. To this objection was made to us by those who fully concurred in the criticisms of outdoor relief, which we have elsewhere stated at length.[1] They were witnesses of great experience, who had spent a great part of their lives in the administration of poor relief, and their knowledge of the whole subject—alike from the point of view of the poor and from that of voluntary charity—was exceptional. They felt, however, that outdoor relief, or what would elsewhere be called "help at the home," if the antithesis of indoor and outdoor relief may for a moment be set aside, had become so definitely and absolutely a part of the administration of the country that it could not be wholly abolished. And we, accepting this view and at the same time appreciating fully the very grave evils of the present administration of outdoor relief, have made proposals which, we believe, would modify very greatly the general conditions under which outdoor relief is now given. As we have shown, by the inter-action of the Committee of Public Assistance and the Voluntary Aid Committee new forces will be brought into the field; and it will be the duty of the Public Assistance Committee to deal with no applications that can be dealt with equally well or better by the Voluntary Aid Committee; and also, as we have shown, the persons who can be assisted by the Public Assistance Committee are those, and those only, who fulfil certain conditions. In this way, under proper supervision and subject to the proper training of those who take any responsible paid service with the committees, we think that the burthen of home relief which now rests on the guardians will become less and less and the responsibilities of the Voluntary Aid Committee will become greater. And thus we may hope that in the course of a few years outdoor relief will shrink to small proportions. In these circumstances we have recommended a policy of diminution and limitation instead of abolition.

[1] Crowder, 17474; Alford, 32039; Chance, 27106; Mackay, 29861.

The second method. A single Committee for the administration alike of rate furnished and of voluntary relief.

219. The second method which we have considered is to form a single local board in each union area, which should have at its disposal such moneys as might be receivable from the rates, supplemented by any relief that might be obtainable from voluntary sources. This method we have not adopted. It seemed to us that relief from the rates must, for the good of the community, be administered subject to definite limitations, and to merge the two into one would result in introducing into rate-furnished relief an uncertainty in direction and purpose, which would lead to great confusion and much inequality of expenditure, and possibly much extravagance. Thus it might be very desirable that by some temporary aid an applicant should be so helped that he might no longer require to apply to the public relief committee. But if the resources of both the public committee and those of the charities formed one fund, the prevention of dependence would be made more difficult. There would be no intervening body, which with many private influences and sometimes considerable private means at its disposal, might stop dependence, if possible, at the outset.[1] Nor is it likely that the trustees of charities and charitable persons would be willing to place their funds and their generosity in the hands of a public rate-supported body. Rather would they say, as the trend of gifts and bequests for the endowment of charities seems to indicate, that what the State does not undertake they will help, what it does undertake they will leave to it wholly.

The third method. Separate Committees for Public Assistance and for Voluntary Aid.

220. For these and other reasons we have concluded that there should be two recognised bodies, parallel each to the other, one dealing with relief from the rates and one with relief and aid from endowed and voluntary sources. While we are of opinion that these two bodies should be distinct and separate, they should, we think, also be for certain purposes associated. What is desired is a division of labour accepted in concert and consistent with the same principles. For this reason we would arrange that representatives of the charities should be nominated to serve upon the Public Assistance Committee, and that some members of that committee should be co-opted on to the Voluntary Aid Committee. Again our desire would be that funds now in the hands of trustees for gifts to the poor should become funds available for the relief of distress or for certain purposes of charity to which they may be permanently applied. There would thus be a much larger amount of money available for the relief of distress than there now is; and the many obsolete conditions that now surround the use of doles and render them injurious or unserviceable we would, as suggested below (*see* par. 237 (21)) remove by an alteration of the Charitable Trusts Acts, combined with a simplification of the Commissioners' methods of modifying the application of charities by scheme.

221. This method would apply to the rural districts. There we find that the administration of voluntary relief is in the hands of the clergy and churchwardens and the trustees of the non-ecclesiastical charities.[2] Sometimes the trustees of the non-ecclesiastical parochial charities are appointed by the parish council. But besides these there may be other non-parochial charities which are under the charge of independent trustees. There are also the church and chapel collections and some voluntary gifts; and sometimes a nursing or sick relief association.

222. *Mutatis mutandis* the problem in the towns is the same. The provision of relief is usually more abundant. There are large voluntary charities of many kinds, which often meet both the needs of rural districts, and sometimes those of the neighbourhood generally, as well as the needs of the locality itself. There are many voluntary workers also attached to the parochial organisations and the churches and chapels, and to voluntary societies. There are endowed charities, in proportion to the amount available for relief usually smaller than those in many parishes in the country. And there is a comparatively elaborate system of Poor Law relief.

Establishment of Voluntary Aid Committee and their Duties.

223. Our object is to bring these agencies into some continuing relation to one another, and, as a body, also into relation with the public administration of relief. We propose therefore the establishment of Voluntary Aid Committees parallel to the Public Assistance Committee on these lines. These Committees would be specially concerned with relief and aid at the home, the personal help of those in distress, the prevention of distress, the visiting of cases of all kinds in connection with applications made to it directly, or in connection with public health or educational authorities. Further, as we have else-

1 Young, 31191. 2 Charities Appendix.

where shown,* we propose that outdoor relief, or relief at the home, if provided from the rates, should be administered on certain conditions, which may be summed up as follows :—

(1) That out-relief or home assistance be given only after thorough enquiry, except in cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

(2) That it should be adequate to meet the needs of those to whom it is given.

(3) That persons so assisted should be subject to supervision.

(4) That with a view to inquiry and supervision the case-paper system should be everywhere adopted.

(5) That such supervision should include in its purview the conditions, moral and sanitary, under which the recipient is living.

(6) That voluntary agencies be enlisted as far as possible in the personal care of individual cases.

Co-operation with Public Assistance Committee.

224. The division of work between the charities and the Poor Law would take the following form. The limitations to the claim of public relief which at present obtain would continue. Only destitute, or as we prefer to call them, necessitous persons would be eligible for it, and destitution is thus defined :—

> "Destitution when used to describe the condition of a person as a subject for relief implies that he is for the time being without material resources : (i.) Directly available ; and (ii.) appropriate for satisfying his physical needs ; (*a*) whether actually existing ; or (*b*) likely to arise immediately. By physical needs in this definition are meant such needs as must be satisfied : (i.) In order to maintain life ; or (ii.) in order to obviate, mitigate, or remove causes endangering life or likely to endanger life or impair health or bodily fitness for self-support."

Those who do not come within this definition would be dealt with by charity or, rather, by the Voluntary Aid Committee.

225. The Public Assistance Committee would proceed by trying to settle some plan of help, instead of considering only the question whether an allowance should be given, and how much it should be. They should not help in any case in which the necessary assistance could be obtained from other sources. Thus, instead of the present isolation of the board of guardians, there would be a constant reference of cases to the Voluntary Aid Committee for their help. Also, in so far as charitable institutions existed or came into existence to meet definite wants, they would undertake the cases of those in distress, as might be arranged, freely or on payment by the Public Assistance Committee. That committee would also be able to refer applicants to the Voluntary Aid Committee in order to arrange that visits should be paid to their homes by a competent visitor, with a view to some definite object being carried out, such, for instance, as household cleanliness, the proper use of the relief, etc.

226. This scheme of relief, coupled with the proposals made above, would, as far as possible, put a stop to the supplementation of outdoor relief. The grants of out-door relief are at present often so small that charitable means of every kind are used to supplement them. But in future the standing excuse for inadequate outdoor relief will no longer be preferred, namely, that it is given on the assumption that it is eked out by the addition of other undivulged means. The inquiry would have to show that the sum which it is proposed to give, *plus* sums definitely ascertained to be forthcoming or actually obtained from other sources, is enough according to a reasonable standard of necessary relief, or it would be illegal for the Public Assistance Committee to grant the relief at all. As an alternative they could offer institutional relief of some kind or they could leave the relief to the Voluntary Aid Committee.

Area of Voluntary Aid Committees and their development.

227. The area of the Public Assistance Committee would be that of the present Unions. In the country the area of endowed and private or voluntary relief is the ecclesiastical

* *See* Part IX., par. 79.

parish. To a large extent this is so also in the towns and cities; but voluntary charities and sometimes the endowed charities extend over a larger area, such as that of the whole town, which is usually contained within one Union. We propose that the area of the Voluntary Aid Committee be the Union, but the Union considered as built up and composed of the parishes comprised within it. In the country and in all but the larger towns and cities the parochial divisions would be of special importance. The work of the Voluntary Aid Committee could be decentralised and might in part devolve on them, so far as the care of individual cases might be in question, and often its relief also. Thus, if it were thought necessary, the parish might be a unit of administration in connection with the Committee of the Union. And in the larger towns other subdivisions might be adopted according to local needs and requirements. The Voluntary Aid Committee might thus be developed into a kind of "friendly visiting" or a kind of "Elberfeld" system. In any case it would be the standing counterpart of the Committee of Public Assistance.

228. Our proposal for carrying out this method is as follows:—

Registration of Voluntary Charities at the Charities Commission

First it is necessary, in our opinion, that charities that undertake any responsible public duties should be registered. Already the system of registration and certification has been carried far; and it is of great service to the public as providing guarantees of *bona fides* and accountability. This we would extend. Some common centre for registration is necessary. We suggest that the Charity Commission, subject to certain changes and alterations, should be the centre of this registration. A Department for the registration of voluntary charities should be opened at the offices of the Commission, and it should be within the power of every voluntary charity to register if eligible within the terms of paragraph 229. A voluntary society by registration would have privileges similar to those of an endowed charity or a friendly society. It would have a limited civil personality and would become a voluntary body publicly recognised as performing certain definite functions for the community. Registration would be the condition precedent to the representation of a society on the Voluntary Aid Committee. Endowed charities, which may not be known to the Charity Commission and therefore would not have been registered by it, would have to be registered before they could be represented on the Voluntary Aid Committee.*

229. We begin, therefore, with a scheme of registration for voluntary charitable and benevolent societies; and we have defined as eligible for registration any voluntary charity that holds any property in land or houses obtained by purchase or by leasehold, or that is the tenant of any property under a yearly or other agreement.

The Charity Commission to become a "Charities Commission"

230. The Charity Commission would be enlarged to meet this new work and would, we suggest, take a new position. It would become the Charities Commission, and would be attached to the the Local Government Board. The President of the Board would represent it in the House of Commons.

231. But apart from the registration of charities it would have a further duty.

The establishment of Voluntary Aid Councils

To set on foot the Voluntary Aid Council, we place the initiative on the Lord-Lieutenants, Chairmen of County Councils and Mayors of County Boroughs in each county or county borough. It will be incumbent on them in co-operation with managers of Charitable Societies, Trustees of Endowed Charities, and members of the Public Assistance Authority, to establish a Voluntary Aid Council consisting in part of trustees of endowed charities, of members of registered voluntary societies, of some members of the Public Assistance Authority, and of such persons as are members of friendly societies and of trade associations, and of other persons being co-opted members.

* As was stated on p. 455, we are not here concerned with educational charities, whether ecclesiastical or not ecclesiastical, but with eleemosynary charities; and further, neither here or elsewhere in the discussion respecting registration do we make any reference to the endowed or the voluntary charities of churches or congregations granted for religious purposes nor to the voluntary charities of churches or congregations provided for eleemosynary purposes. To charities of any kind it would be left open to register, if they so desired, and if otherwise eligible under paragraph 229.

232. The scheme under which the Voluntary Aid Council is formed must receive the approval of the Charities Commission.

Constitution of Voluntary Aid Committees.

233. It shall be the duty of the Voluntary Aid Council to appoint the members of the Voluntary Aid Committee. These committees would consist partly of representatives of trusts and foundations—endowed charities—registered at the Charities Commission and partly of representatives of voluntary societies so registered. These endowed charities and voluntary societies would be registered as engaged in local work in the Union area or in any of the parishes in the Union. The Committees would also consist partly of social workers and of persons of influence in the locality interested in charitable work. The schemes for these Voluntary Aid Committees would also in turn be approved by the Charities Commission in accordance with some settled lines of organisation. The Commissioners no doubt would consult with persons representative of the administrators of charities, and would formulate model schemes applicable to the varying conditions of parishes in rural unions, villages, smaller and larger towns, and county boroughs. A Voluntary Aid Council or Committee, should be eligible for subscriptions from the Public Assistance Authority on the lines of 42 & 43 Vict., c. 54, Sec. 10. No subscription should be made under the Act to any unregistered endowed charity or voluntary society.

Scheme to be approved by the Charities Commission.

Duties of the Voluntary Aid Councils.

234. The duties of the Voluntary Aid Councils would be for the most part supervisory. The Voluntary Aid Council would supervise the operations of the Voluntary Aid Committees generally, and they would, as far as possible, maintain the same standard of help and relief throughout the area under their charge. They would collect funds for distribution to Voluntary Aid Committees, and they would allocate funds to poor districts. The County is already the accepted area for many benevolent and philanthropic purposes. The local infirmary or hospital is frequently a County institution. There are County nursing associations, and the County is the recognised centre in connection with various naval and military charitable associations. We propose that the Voluntary Aid Council acting for the County should promote these and any other voluntary institutions, associations, or societies for which the County, as a whole, has need. Its duties would thus be both distinctive and important.

Dole charities to become charities for the relief of distress.

235. With regard to all dole charities there would be a statutory provision enabling the trustees to administer them as relief for persons in distress, and to co-operate with the Voluntary Aid Committee and with any sub-committees it may appoint in the administration of this relief.

236. In the solution of these questions, it has been our endeavour to apply a general principle of the Report of the Commissioners of 1834 and the suggestions of the Minute of Mr. Goschen of 1869 to the new conditions of the present time, in so far as they bear directly or indirectly on that charitable and voluntary provision and organisation, which should, we think, be established and extended on lines parallel to the Poor Law, or rather, perhaps we should say, parallel to a new public administration in very many ways different from what is known either as " the old Poor Law before 1834 or the new Poor Law after 1834. We have proposed measures for meeting cases of indigence and helplessness, partly by outdoor relief (as the Commissioners approved) ; and for providing partly by voluntary organisation (a branch of the subject which they did not discuss with any fulness), cases in which it may seem possible to " lift " people "out of the circumstances that necessitate recourse to Poor Law relief." We have drawn attention to the laws relating to the supervision of endowed charities and for the registration of voluntary benevolent societies. We have submitted a sketch of the general conditions of the poor, the administration of doles in various places, and the suggestions made for their reform. We have also described in some detail the methods of public assistance in some of the towns in Germany, not because we propose to include that method in the English Poor Laws, but because we think that it furnishes many suggestions for the organisation of helpers, who, working on voluntary lines but as the recognised coadjutors of the Poor Law authorities, could definitely undertake on behalf of the community the visiting of Poor Law cases, but, above all, the preventive work of social and charitable aid. We have described the work of voluntary societies and the success that has attended co-operation with the Poor Law and co-operation between societies, wherever it has been carried out. We have shown how the movement of thought and the recognition of the need of social education coincide with our proposals, and, accepting the principle of Mr. Goschen's Minute, we have recommended a general and intimate co-operation between the Poor Law and charity, so as to give to the latter not merely the opportunity to co-operate, if it may, but the *status* and encouragement that may enable it to become both in town and country the responsible and competent fellow worker of the administrators of public assistance.

XXXII.—Establishment of Voluntary Aid Organisation.

237. Our recommendations in regard to the organisation of Voluntary Aid are as follows:—

Establishment of the Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees.

1. That in the area of each Public Assistance Authority, that is in each County or County Borough, there be formed a Voluntary Aid Council, consisting in part of Trustees of endowed charities, of members of registered voluntary charities, as defined below, of some members of the Public Assistance Authority, and of such persons as members of friendly societies and trade associations, of clergy and ministers, and of other persons being co-opted members, as may be settled in schemes approved by the Charities Commission.*

2. That a statutory obligation be imposed upon the Lord Lieutenants, the Chairmen of County Councils, the Lord Mayors and Mayors of County Boroughs to take steps, within a given period, and after consultation with the managers of charitable societies, Trustees of endowed charities, and members of the Public Assistance Authority, for drawing up schemes in accordance with the preceding recommendation, which schemes must be submitted to the Charities Commission for approval.

3. That the Voluntary Aid Council submit to the Charities Commission proposals for the formation of Voluntary Aid Committees to be drawn up in the form of schemes to be approved by the Commission, and that the Voluntary Aid Council under such schemes appoint as members of the Voluntary Aid Committees persons such as those mentioned in Recommendation I.

4. That Voluntary Societies and Charities as defined in Recommendation 17 be entitled to register at the Charities Commission on lines similar to those of the registration of Friendly Societies under the Friendly Societies' Act.

5. That a registered voluntary society be entitled to nominate members of its own body for appointment to the Voluntary Aid Council and to the Voluntary Aid Committee of the district in which either its institution or any branch of its institution has an office.

6. That it is desirable that the Voluntary Aid Committee have its offices in the same building as the Committee of Public Assistance.

Functions of the Voluntary Aid Council.

7. The duties of the Voluntary Aid Councils would be for the most part not executive but supervisory. The executive work would be assigned to the Voluntary Aid Committees. The Voluntary Aid Council would supervise their operations generally and would, as far as possible, maintain the same principles of help and relief throughout the County or County Borough. They would collect funds for distribution to Voluntary Aid Committees, and they would allocate funds to poor districts. The County is already the accepted area for many benevolent and philanthropic purposes. The local infirmary or hospital is frequently a County institution. There are County nursing associations, and the County is the recognised centre in connection with various naval and military charitable associations. We propose that the Voluntary Aid Council acting for the County should promote any voluntary institutions, associations, or societies for which the County, as a whole, has need. Its duties would thus be important and distinctive.

Functions of the Voluntary Aid Committee.

8. That the Voluntary Aid Committee aid (1) persons in distress whose cases do not appear to be suitable for treatment by the Public Assistance Committee, and (2) applicants for Public Assistance whose cases have been referred to the Committee by the Public Assistance Committee.

9. That, with a view to the thorough treatment of individual cases, the Voluntary Aid Committee make such arrangements for the investigation of the applications made to them as the Charities Commission may deem necessary and sufficient.

10. That in dealing with persons in distress for whom it is desired to provide aid by way of monetary relief, it shall be the duty of the Voluntary Aid Committee to obtain such sums as may be possible from relations of the applicant, from friends, and from charitable sources generally for the aid of individual cases.

* *See* Recommendation No. 18 as to the proposed change in the name of the Charity Commission.

11. That with the administration of aid on the part of the Voluntary Aid Committee there should be associated such a system of voluntary visitation as the Committee may deem advisable in view of the responsibilities of their work in providing effectual aid, and in view of the physical needs and the habits of those whom they decide to assist.

12. That the Voluntary Aid Committee be empowered to appoint such Local Committees as it may deem necessary, subject to the approval of the Voluntary Aid Council.

13. That a Voluntary Aid Committee shall, as far as possible, register the cases dealt with by the Public Assistance Committee and by the Charitable societies and institutions in the district.

14. That Voluntary Aid Committees receive the support of the Public Assistance Committee, and of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, with a view to systematising the relations between the Public Assistance and Voluntary Aid Committees and promoting co-operation between them.

15. That Voluntary Aid Councils or Committees be eligible for subscriptions from the Public Assistance Authority, on the lines of 42 and 43 Vict., c. 54, Section 10.

The Charities Commission.

16. That the Charity Commission be attached to the Local Government Board, and that the Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, permanent or temporary, be appointed by the Local Government Board, whose President should represent it in the House of Commons.

17. That the Charity Commission be enlarged, and that there be assigned to it two departments of work, the supervision of endowed charities on the lines of the Charitable Trusts Acts, and the registration of Voluntary charities or Societies which hold any property in land or houses by purchase, or by leasehold, or are the tenants of any property under yearly or other agreements.

18. That the name of the Charity Commission be the Charities Commission.

19. That the staff of the Commission be strengthened so as to fulfil all the various additional duties that may devolve upon them :—

1. As a centre for the registration of voluntary charities.

2. In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of Voluntary Aid Councils and for registering such schemes.

3. In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of Voluntary Aid Committees and for registering and supervising their administration.

4. In the scrutiny of accounts and statements relating to Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees.

5. In the supervision of other schemes ; and

6. In the scrutiny of the accounts of endowed and registered charities.

20. That Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act, 1869, by which certain charities founded for purposes of relief may be applied to purposes of education, be repealed.

21. That it be provided in a Statute amending the Charitable Trusts Acts that, by order of the Charities Commission, any charities, as defined in Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Acts, 1869, exclusive of Loan Charities, Apprenticeship Charities, and Charities for Advancement in Life, may be used for the relief of distress, subject to such conditions respecting enquiry and other matters as the Commissioners may determine under a general order.

238. We have included in the Charities Appendix a draft of suggestions for the formation of an organisation of Voluntary Aid in the Metropolis.

PART VIII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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Chapter 1

INVALIDITY INSURANCE.

1. We have shown in another Chapter the great changes that have taken place in the organisation of industry during the last eighty years. The more intimate and interdependent relations that often used to exist between employers and employed have been superseded by a system which, in appearance and also largely in fact, divides the interests of the employers from those of the workmen. This in turn tends to efface duties which might have been urged on the one side or on the other as a kind of moral obligation.

2. The evidence shows that, with very few exceptions, what working-men desire is the "cash nexus"—the bare wage contract uninfluenced by any but purely economic considerations—and the employing classes generally have accepted the situation and consider their obligations fulfilled when they pay the wage. Over the great trades, wages are determined by collective bargaining between Trade Unions on the one side and large employers and associations of employers on the other. The issue of the system is, for those who find employment a maximum wage during the prime of life, and no wage at all when the prime is passed.

3. The theory of industry which used to prevail was that the worker should maintain himself throughout life by his own exertions, providing for contingencies and for old age by thrift, or that, if he could not do so and his relatives were unable to help, he should receive poor relief. But of late years the "cash nexus" has been supplemented and modified in two different ways—the Employers' Liability and the Workmen's Compensation Acts* and the Old-Age Pensions Act †—the one insuring the operative against the accidents more incidental to work than heretofore, the other providing for a time when he is no longer able to work for his own support.

4. But it has become evident that these two methods do not meet all the exigencies which have arisen under this system. Accidents are not the only checks to wage-earning during active life, and wage-earning itself, as we have seen, generally ceases before the pension age of seventy.

5. From the Chapter on "Social and Industrial Developments since 1834,"‡ it seems clear that the present organisation of industry, with its excessive specialisation and universal application of machinery, has raised the standard of work required from the ordinary operative. From such an organisation, many, we fear, owing to want of original capacity and want of early training, must always be excluded and fall into intermittent and ill-paid occupations.

6. Trade Union regulations have worked in the same direction. The "standard wage" is based on the assumption that the worker employed is worth that wage to his employer; if the employer does not consider him so, the man is dismissed.

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* Under the Workmen's Compensation Act where death results from the injury, if the workman leaves any dependants wholly dependent upon his earnings, there is payable a sum equal to his earnings in the employment of the same employer during the three years next preceding the injury, or the sum of £150, whichever of those sums is the larger, but not exceeding £350 in any case. . . . If he leaves no such dependants, but only those who are partially dependent on him, a sum lesser than that which would have been payable under the preceding clause is agreed or determined upon; and where total or partial incapacity for work results from the injury a weekly payment during the incapacity, not exceeding 50 per cent. of his average weekly earnings during the previous twelve months" is payable.

† The Old-Age Pensions Act, 1908, allows a gratuitous pension to a person who has attained the age of seventy, and has 12s. a week or less; all who have £21 a year or 8s. a week or less, receive a pension of 5s. a week. A person who has an income of £21, or 8s. a week will thus have in all 13s. (5s. *plus* 8s.); and those who have an income of between £21 and £31 10s. receive an addition of 4s., 3s., 2s., or 1s., so that their income also may reach 13s. a week in all. But a person is disqualified for receiving, or continuing to receive, a pension while in receipt of poor relief (other than medical relief), and until 31st December, 1910 (unless Parliament otherwise determines) if at any time since January 1st, 1908, he has received, or hereafter receives, any such relief. He is disqualified also if, *inter alia*, before he becomes entitled to a pension, he has habitually failed to work according to his ability, opportunity, and need, for the maintenance or benefit of himself and those legally dependent upon him. The pensions are payable from the Exchequer, and new authorities have been created for their administration.

‡ Page .

7. The same tendency seems to have been strengthened by the working out of the Employers' Liability Act and the Workmen's Compensation Acts. Whatever be the cause, the fact remains that, since the passing of these Acts, the number of injuries registered has constantly increased. Against the undue extension of this liability, the insuring bodies, whether employers themselves or outside companies, must protect themselves, and the system necessarily excludes many who cannot fulfil the insurance standard whatever it may be. Those presumably more liable to accident, though still more or less efficient, are excluded, and a new standard of ability is created which reacts on industry generally. A large class grows up of partially efficient unemployed men. They accept the situation, with complaint, indeed, but with submission, and thus assume a new position which imposes on society many new anxieties and difficulties.

8. We have, again, evidence to show that industrial demand, as it now exists, draws many younger unskilled men into a kind of employment, in its early stages remunerated by a wage which will not increase at any later period of their lives but will rather diminish. Such a demand in effect puts a premium on want of skill; if it be inevitable, it suggests that measures should be taken by way of insurance to prevent in part the evil results which must follow.

9. The years between the withdrawal from wage-earning and the pension age present a more serious problem than ever before. Trade Union regulations make it difficult for men skilled in the great trades to work on at their trades and accept a lower wage, and partial employment is more difficult to get. If, as frequently happens, there is not enough put by to cover this period, insufficiency of means or the acceptance of relief seems inevitable. In such cases the fact of other men getting a State pension at the age of seventy, on the ground that they are unable to earn a wage, may create a feeling of injustice on the part of those who have not attained the age and are yet as effectually barred from wage-earning.

Unless, therefore, some system of wages graduated according to age can be adopted, it is clear that workmen above a certain period of life will for the future find it more difficult to keep themselves in continuous employment. We do not forget that for the solution of these and other industrial problems we may look with growing confidence to methods of remuneration such as co-operation and co-partnership. Of their importance and promise we are convinced; but we have felt that to deal with them fully would take us far beyond the terms of our reference.

10. We seem almost driven to the conclusion that a new form of insurance is required, which, for want of a better name, we may call Invalidity Insurance. The early superannuation of the best workmen is so well recognised that it will, in all probability, give rise to demands for lowering the pension age, and will, at some point or other, entail a financial burden beyond the power of the national resources to bear.

11. We have made strong recommendations as regards insurance against temporary unemployment, but this does not meet the case of such persons when entirely incapacitated from wage-earning. It would, at any rate, be more agreeable to them, and more consonant with the feeling of the community, that they should fall back on an insurance fund to which they had at least contributed a part, than that they should be forced to have recourse to the Public Assistance Authorities. Such a scheme of Invalidity Insurance strongly appeals to us as calculated to meet many of the evils which we have been discussing.

12. One thing, however, must be borne in mind. Whatever be the risk insured against, whether it be sickness, accident, old age or unemployment, the possibility of such insurance depends on the existence of savings, whether these savings be in private or collective hands, or be put in the hands of the State by taxes which represent the savings, or what otherwise might be the savings of its citizens. Insurance, in short, is only a method for the utilisation of those savings. Whatever may be said, in order to insure, some people must have saved, individually or collectively.

13. As the necessity for such insurance seems to arise from the very organisation of industry which the nation has adopted, such a fund, it seems to us might appropriately be supported partly by contributions from employers, partly by contributions from em-

ployees, and partly by a subsidy from the State. In considering the amount of any subsidies to be granted by the State, we think that full weight should be given to the fact that a very heavy charge has recently been imposed upon the revenue of the country by the Statute granting gratuitous old-age pensions to all above 70 years of age who comply with certain conditions.

Actuarial inquiry into cost of invalidity insurance.

14. We have consulted three eminent actuaries as to the weekly premiums for which a man aged twenty-one in good health and employed in a healthy occupation could insure the receipt of 10s. 6d. a week during the first twenty-six weeks of illness, and 7s. 6d. a week during the remainder of illness up to age sixty-five. Mr. T. G. Ackland, F.I.A., taking a 3 per cent. basis, places the amount at 3·9d.; Mr. George King, F.I.A., assuming $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. as the rate of interest, estimates the amount at 3·74d., and Mr. F. G. P. Neison, F.I.A., at 3·62d.[1] These sums are little in excess of the average weekly fee payable per child at school up to 1891, and remitted by the Act of that year.

15. Though we have obtained a good deal of information from the Board of Trade concerning systems of insurance both at home and abroad, and also from a number of witnesses representing the provident and benefit societies of this country the information is not sufficient to enable us to make specific recommendations. An account of some of the foreign systems of Insurance will be found in the following Note. It will be seen that none of them exactly meets the case, and, moreover, generally the schemes have not been long enough in operation to enable us to judge as to their measure of success. The foundations of any future legislation ought to be very closely scrutinised. They should be broad, solid and capable of continuous extension, and the organisations resting upon them should be so constructed as to expand automatically according to need. The great trade and benefit organisations in existence in this country ought to be very freely consulted before any proposals are made in Parliament. If time had permitted, we might have been able to make definite recommendations under this head, but, in view of the urgent necessity of laying our more important proposals before Your Majesty, all we feel justified in doing is to state our opinion that the information at our disposal requires to be supplemented before legislation can be attempted.

NOTE AS TO FOREIGN SYSTEMS OF INSURANCE.

Danish scheme

I. In Denmark the claim for statutory assistance in old age is inability, on reaching the sixtieth year of life, to provide what is necessary for the maintenance of oneself and such dependants as have a claim to entire support, or, in case of sickness, inability to provide medical relief and care. The poor relief authorities settle the cases and grant the allowances. In 1905–6 the average allowance per head in Copenhagen was £8 7s. 3d.; and the average subvention per head £10 3s. 6d. For the whole country, including; Copenhagen, the average figures were £6, and £8 1s. 11d.

II. The following figures show the results:—*

—	Heads of families and single persons.	Dependants.	Communal grants. £	State grants, £
31 December 1892	30,959	12,867	82,008	53,883
1897	39,048	15,240	112,080	112,077
1902	46,015	16,791	161,059	161,059
31 March 1905	49,490	17,388	186,764	190,050

III. On this method of what may be called statutory old-age poor relief it is clear that the claimants and the charges tend to increase seriously from year to year. But the

* *See* Statistisk Jaarbog, 1901, p. 115; 1905, p. 120; 1907, pp. 132–3; 1908, p. 138.

[1] Statistical Appendix, Part XVI.

scheme reaches the labouring classes. It gives them relief provided by State and communal grants at sixty years of age; and what, in practice, simplifies administration is its association with the Poor Law.

IV. Not unlike the Danish scheme is that adopted in France in 1905* for the assistance of the aged, infirm and incurable who are without resources (*privés de resources.*) French scheme.

V. The claim for assistance is thus defined:—

> "Every Frenchman who is without resources, and, either more than seventy years of age, or suffering from an infirmity or a malady adjudged to be incurable, receives the assistance prescribed by this law, subject to certain conditions."

VI. Lists are drawn up annually by the *bureau d'assistance* of persons who fulfil these conditions and reside in the commune. The lists are revised by the Municipal Council, who settle the admission to assistance of those who have their settlement in the commune and determine the conditions under which they shall be assisted, whether at their homes or in an institution. Provision is made for appeal. The Departmental Committee settles the admission to assistance of persons who have a departmental settlement, subject to approval by the General Council of the Department and subject also to appeal.† The approved claimants, if settled in the commune or department, have relief at their homes. But with their consent they may be placed in institutions, and there maintained. The mode of assistance which is adopted in each case is not fixed (*n'a aucun caractère definitif*). It usually consists of a monthly allowance—not less than 5 francs, nor, unless in exceptional cases, more than 20 francs. The cost is met by the communes and departments and by State subvention.

VII. The numbers who were assisted under the Act in 1907 were 340,610.‡ The estimate of the number to be assisted in 1909 is 495,000.§ The charges for the year 1907 on the Commune Departments and the State may be taken at £1,961,980:‡ the charges for the year 1909 are estimated at £3,760,000.§

VIII. Here, too, the charges appear likely to increase very greatly. The measure is a Poor Law measure and it is non-contributory; but allowance is made for other resources such as pensions and savings. The allowance thus, as in our Old-Age Pensions Act, provides a kind of bonus on contingent resources up to a fixed total. In France this fixed total is about 9 francs a week.‖

IX. Both the Danish and the French schemes provide not only for old age but also for infirmity; but neither is on a contributory basis, though the French scheme, as we have just said, is so applied as to give advantages on account of savings up to a certain point. The Belgian scheme, on the other hand, depends on voluntary effort stimulated to make provision by reason of the largeness of the bounty it receives. As aiming at a growth in thought and habit, it cannot reach unskilled labourers so immediately, but it merits very careful consideration. It suggests a method which, applied to medical insurance, old age, invalidity, and also to accidents might very quickly harmonise with English institutions and legislation in this department. Belgian Scheme.

X. The following brief description of the Belgian *Caisse de Retraites* is compiled from the Board of Trade Report on Provision for Old Age in certain European Countries (1899) the "Transactions of the Second International Actuarial Congress" (1898), and "Le Caisses de Retraites Ouvrières," by J. Lefort (1906).

XI. The fund was first instituted in 1850 as a system of deferred annuities, to be bought entirely through the savings of the recipient, but working under the guarantee

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* Law of July 14th, 1905, Sec. 1., modified according to Section 35 of the Financial Law of December 31st, 1907. † *Ibid.*, Secs. 7–18. ‡ L'Assistance obligatoire aux Vieillards, aux Infirmes, et aux Incurables: Edouard Campagnole, p. 50 (1908). § *The Times*, October 30th, 1908. ‖ Law of July 14th, 1905, Sec. 20.

of the State, and bearing interest at the rate of 4½ per cent. The principal changes in the present position are that the contributions of the recipients are largely subsidised, and that the rate of interest has been reduced to 3 per cent. The regulations under which the fund is now administered are as follows:—Any person over eighteen years of age may pay money into the *Caisse* with the object of acquiring an annuity for himself or for another person, but persons into whose account sums are paid by another must not be under six years of age.*

XII. The annuity purchased may be immediate or deferred, and the terms of purchase may provide for the return of the capital at the death of the insured person. The maximum annuity payable to any one person is 1,200 francs (£48). A deferred annuity may be purchased also by a single payment or by a series of payments, of which, however, either must suffice (having regard to the age of the insured person, and the time of life fixed for the commencement of the annuity) to purchase an annuity of at least 1 franc (9·6d.). Sums of not less than 1 franc may be paid into the fund, but they are treated as ordinary savings bank deposits until enough has been paid in to purchase an annuity of 1 franc.

XIII. The age at which an annuity is to become payable is fixed at sixty-five, but a person who becomes invalided earlier may draw his annuity at a rate reduced in proportion to his age.† But persons whose incapacity is due to loss of a limb or an organ or other permanent infirmity arising out of their employments may draw the full amount of annuity without reduction.

XIV. Annuities payable by the *Caisse* cannot be assigned or attached, except in the circumstances provided in the Civil Code respecting the reciprocal obligations of parents, children and married people. In these circumstances annuities exceeding 360 francs (£14 8s.) a year may be attached to the extent of one-third, provided the remainder be not less than £14 8s.

XV. A sum of 25 francs (£1) as burial money is paid out of the fund to the relatives of deceased annuitants who are in indigent circumstances.

XVI. The various steps by which the system has been turned from almost complete failure in its earlier years to a very considerable success are suggestive. Up to 1887 the fund was little used, except for soldiers' accounts opened by Government. In 1888 the State entered upon a vigorous propaganda by means of widely distributed pamphlets and notices. In 1890 the Post Offices were placed at the disposal of the institution. Progress began, but still slowly, and it was not until 1895 that the working class came in to any considerable extent. Since then the increase has been rapid amongst the workers, who in 1903 numbered 87 per cent. of the whole membership, *i.e.*, 544,606 out of 624,086 (population, 6,000,000).‡ This success is attributable mainly to:—

(1) The simplification of formalities to be complied with.

(2) The reduction to 1 franc of the minimum sum for deposit (1884).

(3) The reduction to 1 franc of the minimum amount of deferred annuity (1896).

(4) An appeal to employers to affiliate their workers to the fund.

(5) The subsidising of Friendly Societies.

XVII. It is really the last step which appears to have been most influential in attracting new members; and, in entering upon this policy, the State seems to have been influenced by the fact that in Belgium Friendly Societies are legally prohibited from providing life annuities for their members. In 1891 a subsidy was voted to be divided amongst recognised Friendly Societies, in proportion to the number of new subscribers to the fund, and the amount of payments made to it through their agency. This subsidy was renewed annually on an increasing scale until 1900, when it was made permanent on the basis of a percentage on every payment (60 centimes per franc), and an annual subvention to the intermediary society of 2 francs on every account on which at least 3 francs has been

* Board of Trade Report, p. 29. † Lefort, p. 126. ‡ Lefort, p. 130.

paid during the past year.* The result has been a rapid increase, both in the number of societies and the number of accounts opened. The number of affiliated societies increased from 232 in 1896 to 4,924 in 1903; while the number of new accounts opened annually increased from 10,549 in 1896, to 114,978 in 1903.†

XVIII. It must be noted that many of these new societies have been formed solely for the purpose of bringing new subscribers to the fund; they are sometimes quite small, and serve no other function than that of collecting the payments at the homes of the members and receiving the subsidies.‡ Nearly all of them are said to be organised on a political basis, and the fear is sometimes expressed that the State would refuse to recognise them if their politics should be displeasing.§

XIX. In addition to the State subsidy, these societies generally receive subsidies from their honorary members, from their provinces, and sometimes also from their communes. It is estimated that of the whole sum invested, 55 per cent. is due to personal effort, 45 to various subsidies.‖

XX. So far it is said that the fund has touched only the *élite* of the working class, and it is feared that it will fail to attract members of the poorest or of the least provident classes.¶ It has been suggested that for those who are really poor, recourse should be had to charitable societies which should open accounts for them, while, for the improvident, it is suggested that their employers might make enrolment compulsory. More promising than either plan would seem to be the movement which is taking place in the elementary schools, where societies are formed by the teachers, who collect the smallest subscriptions from the children, and are paid a small premium in proportion to the sums paid in. These school societies are recognised by Government, and in 1901 they numbered several hundreds, while more than 2,000 Friendly Societies had a school section for the same purpose.**

XXI. Two points remain to be noticed. As a temporary measure the law of 1900 provides a pension of 65 francs for indigent workers already over sixty-five, and for those who were over fifty-five on January 1st, 1901, when they shall reach the age of sixty-five.†† The granting of these pensions is left to local *Comités de Patronage*, and some complaint is made of the facility with which they are given; over 40 per cent. of the population over sixty-five having received them in 1901.‡‡

XXII. The second point is the fact that the savings may be returned. "Sums are paid into the *Caisse* by Friendly Societies for their members on one or other of the following conditions:—

(1) That when the pensioner dies, the capital be handed over to the society for the benefit of its own funds.

(2) That when the pensioner dies, the capital be handed over to his own family.

(3) That no capital be returned. In this case the rate of pension is much higher than in either of the other two cases.

XXIII. The last named arrangement is, however, but little approved of by the workmen's families, and by far the greater number of investments are made in accordance with the second arrangement by which the capital is paid over to the family on the decease of the member."§§

The contributions made by the State are on a non-returnable basis.

XXIV. This scheme seems to contain much that is applicable to conditions existing in this country. The element which is peculiarly applicable is the utilisation of Friendly Societies and the encouragement of their work. Special advantages might fairly be accorded to members of Friendly Societies, in return for the services of the society in collecting and remitting payments. By making the fund a centralised one, under the guarantee of the State (as in Belgium), the necessity of any further interference with the management of societies, than that at present involved in their registration would be avoided. In England the Friendly Societies have never been organised as political agencies, and it might be well to guard against any such development by recognising for the purposes

Question of applicability of Belgian system to England.

* p. 126. † p. 129. ‡ p. 131. § p. 130. ‖ p. 132. ¶ p. 130. ** p. 134. †† p. 126.
‡‡ p. 138 §§ Board of Trade. Report, p. 31.

of the fund only such societies as were really mutual benefit societies, granting sick pay to their members. The benefits of State subsidy would then be accorded only to permanent invalidity.

XXV. The following figures show the working of the Belgian system :—*

—	New Savings Books.	Old Savings Books.	Contributions not returnable.	Contributions returnable.	Number of Mutual Aid Societies.	Balance on Deposits.	Pensions paid.	Invested Funds.
			£	£		£	£	£
1898	43,873	288,156	89,365	50,864		22,553,131	45,793	872,387
1900	136,384	719,732	102,650	102,192	4,996	26,460,303	54,872	1,187,877
1906	86,151	2,138,576	310,118	238,156	7,079	32,483,717	66,159	3,823,268

XXVI. The table shows what a very great incentive to insurance the bonus of the Government has given. The machinery of the Act is very simple also, and all the trouble, heartburnings and often litigation that follow on adjudication on individual claims are avoided.

German Scheme.

XXVII. In Germany there may be said to be three public insurances, the Accident Insurance, with which is closely related the Sick Insurance, and the Invalidity Insurance, with which again the old-age insurance is so closely related that the latter may be considered as merely supplementary to it.

(1) Accident Insurance.

(1) The Accident Insurance led up to, and almost necessitated, the Sick Insurance. "All workmen and managers, the latter in so far as their yearly wage or salary does not exceed £150, are according to this law insured against the consequences of accidents which may occur in their industry, while they are engaged in it;" and definitions follow. The word "manager" has a side connotation. [1]

The object of the insurance is to provide for compensation proportioned to the loss which ensues from injuries to the body or from death.[2] In the case of injuries, there is provided as compensation for loss from the beginning of the fourteenth week after the occurrence of the accident :—

1. Free medical treatment, medicine and other medical aid.

2. An allowance during the continuance of unfitness for work. If it be a full allowance, it consists of 66⅔ per cent of the year's earnings; if a part allowance, it consists of some lesser sum than this reckoned according to the degree of incapacity for work which has ensued.

The earlier weeks' illness are met by the sick insurance.[3] In case of death the compensation is :—

1. As burial money, the fifteenth part of the year's wages, but at least not less than fifty shillings.

2. Allowances to dependent relations, proportioned to the wages, from the day of death. Thus a widow would receive an allowance equal to 20 per cent. of the year's wages; and so a child up to the age of 18.[4]

The contributions are assessed on the employers according to wages and risks.

(2) Sick Insurance

(2) The Sick Insurance is managed chiefly by groups of associations. The assurance is compulsory on workmen and on employees who have yearly salaries up to £100 and are engaged in trade or commerce. (For agriculture and home industries there are special rules.)

The contributions are met two-thirds by the employees and one-third by the employers.

* Annuaire Statistique de la Belgique.

1 Gewerbe Unfallversicherung Gesetz 5 July, 1900, § 1. 2 *Ibid.*, § 5. 3 *Ibid.*, §§ 12, 15. 4 *Ibid.*, §§ 16, 17.

The benefits are medical treatment and sick pay for thirteen weeks at the rate of 50 per cent. of the average daily wages; or free treatment at a hospital with half sick pay for the family. Confinements also are provided for, and burial.

(3) Lastly, as a third form of insurance, an Invalidity and Old-age Insurance supplements the Sick Insurance. The insurance is compulsory on all wage earners, as defined, managers, foremen and others who have a salary of less than £100. The employers and employed each contribute half of the necessary funds, and the State contributes fifty marks for each annuity.[1] (3) Invalidity and old-age insurance.

XXVIII. Persons who do not come within the terms of the Act may insure voluntarily if their wage does not exceed £150; and there are other classes of persons also who are allowed to insure, such as small employers and home workers. [2]

XXIX. The object of the insurance is the claim to receive a pension or allowance in the case of inability to work or of old age. The allowance for invalidity is payable irrespective of the age of the insurer and continues during inability to work. If the inability to work is due to an accident, the claim for the invalidity allowance is valid only in so far a the latter exceeds the allowance granted for the accident.[3]

XXX. The old-age allowance is payable without regard to the question whether the insurer is or is not able to work.

XXXI. An insurer who is not permanently unable to work, but who has been unable to work for twenty-six weeks continuously, receives an allowance for the further period of his inability to work. [4]

XXXII. If an insurer is so ill that, as a consequence of his illness, he has to be cared for in order to prevent his becoming unable to work and thus claiming an invalid allowance, the insurance office is required to allow him to undergo medical treatment within such limits as may appear to them suitable. The insurance office can do this by bringing the sick person into a hospital or a convalescent home. The charges for this institutional treatment fall not on the Sick Insurance Fund but on the Invalid Insurance.

XXXIII. During this treatment a relief allowance has to be paid for such dependants of the insurer as he has hitherto maintained out of his wages, if the insurer does not come within the terms of the legal provisions for the sick. This relief insurance, in so far as the insurer was under the legal provision for the sick up to his coming into relation with the insurance office, amounts to one-half of the sick pay allowed to him during the legal continuance of the sick relief, besides a fourth of the customary local daily wage of the ordinary day labourer in the place where he was last employed or last resided. [5]

XXXIV. These funds, it will be noted, are very closely related the one to the other. They apply chiefly to wage-earners and to employees who earn less than 2,000 marks, or £100 a year, and they give large advantages of treatment and maintenance. The following table shows the totals paid in certain years for compensation for injuries due to accidents:— Accident Insurance.

—	Accidents Insurance Compensation for injuries.
	£
1890	1,015,766
1895	2,506,289
1900	4,332,247
1905	6,771,896
1906	7,221,843 [6]

[1] Invaliden Versicherungs Gesetz, 1899, § 1. [2] *Ibid.*, § 14. [3] *Ibid.*, § 15. [4] *Ibid.*, § 16. [5] *Ibid.*, § 18.
[6] Amtliche Nachrichten des Reichs Versicherungs amts 15 March, 1908, p. 326.

Invalidity, Sick, and Old Age Insurance.

XXXV. The following table gives the number of current pensions or allowances under their several heads :—

Years.	Total.	Of these :—		
		Invalid Pensions.	Sick Pensions.	Old Age Pensions.
1st January, 1897.	365,625	161,670	—	203,955
„ „ 1900.	519,452	324,319	5,118 (1901)	195,133
„ „ 1905.	897,406	734,955	16,985	145,466
„ „ 1908.	978,960	841,992	20,081	116,887 [1]

XXXVI. The total expenditure upon these forms of insurance, and upon contributions returned to insurers, treatment, hom care, and extraordinary expenditure has been in the following years :—

	£
897 - - - - - - - - - -	— 2,994,691
900 - - - - - - - - - -	— 4,636,463
905 - - - - - - - - - -	— 7,911,000
1906 - - - - - - - - - -	— 8,301,957

Of the last sum £5,864,076 were paid by the insurers, employers and employees, and £2,437,880 by the State. [2]

XXXVII. The wage-earning population which is dealt with in Germany is 15·4 millions ; and to this population £8,301,957 was paid in the year ending January 1st, 1908 for the three insurances, [3] and for accident insurance in 1906 £7,121,343. [4] The yearly increment of pensions for invalidity appears now to be lessening, and the old-age pensions vary little in number from year to year. Perhaps, except in the case of the accidents insurance, a maximum has been reached. On the population of 15,000,000 the number of current pensions is 6 per cent.

XXXVIII. There is, we believe, no reason to believe that there has been any considerable decrease in pauperism or in Poor Law expenditure in consequence of the insurances, judging by the statistical standards applied to poor relief in Germany. When the sick allowance has run out or an invalidity allowance is not sufficient, on an application to the Poor Authorities it is frequently supplemented by poor relief. The relief per head is thus probably larger than it was. The existence of three funds gives rise to unnecessary complications and expenditure. It is suggested that the next step of reform will be the consolidation of the funds in one single fund with one insurance payment for all benefits. [5] The total expended by the working classes and by the employers through these funds is very large, amounting to £15,000,000 a year for all the insurance purposes, a sum withdrawn from the ordinary circulation of the market and devoted to a special purpose. The justification for this withdrawal is the same as that for the poor rate, namely, that, if it were not for compulsory contributions, the money would not be forthcoming to meet needs ; and those who most wanted the help might least obtain namely, that, if it were not for compulsory contributions, the money would not be forthcoming for the needs of the people ; and those who most wanted it might least obtain it. The scheme coincides with the industrial system. The levies are made out of wages on pay days, and the employers act as agents. The obligation on each party is fixed and transformed into a monetary transaction. It is accepted as part of the business system of the country and thus becomes a matter of routine ; and as in other ranks of life insurance through insurance societies is used to cover most of the financial risks of life, so in these classes a national insurance in great measure supersedes clubs and savings banks and sick funds.

XXXIX. If a contributory scheme were adopted the choice would seem to lie between the Belgian system and the German. The Belgian system would fall in with the great Friendly Societies organisation in this country and might be supplemented. The insurances of the country might be reorganised on such a basis, settling the purposes to which public insurances should be applied and defraying the expenses in great part by Government grants on the Belgian lines.

[1] Amtliche Nachrichten des Reichs Versicherungs Amts 15 March, 1908, p. 366. [2] *Ibid.*, p., 368. *Ibid.*, p. 326. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 368. [5] Münsterburg 100,333.

XL. The alternative is the German system. To produce benefits according to the standard of living in this country would involve the charging of considerable premiums and the laying aside of a very large capital. But it would have one advantage. It would make a provision for the poorer classes at once, though it would not, like the Belgian system, directly stimulate habits of self-support and thrift. If the formation of such habits is of the first importance, more important than the provision of relief without regard to them—then the Belgian system is the better.

XLI. It is true that such schemes scarcely touch the unskilled worker, but efforts, in the first instance experimental, might be made in this direction. In most poor districts there might be club centres, to which by arrangement the employers might pay some part of the wage to the account of their workmen, who would thereby become contributing members for the prescribed benefit. By way of experiment the Treasury might allow the Registrar of Friendly Societies to appoint one or two organisers to promote or extend clubs for this class, in co-operation with the employers and existing societies in the locality. In this way the contributory system might be extended.

Discussion of Memorandum by Bishop of Lichfield, Lord Avebury and Sir Edward Brabrook.

XLII. We would also call attention to a Memorandum which has been submitted to us by the Bishop of Lichfield, Lord Avebury and Sir Edward Brabrook. The suggestions made in that Memorandum are for the creation of a pension fund administered by the State, and are summarised under the following heads:—

(1) Registration on birth fee.

(2) School fee.

(3) Voluntary contributions of payments at fixed interest, subject to limit of £52 a year.

(4) Temporary State addition to contributions of persons of more advanced age not qualified to receive pensions.

(5) Temporary provision of free pensions to persons too old to buy any pension, subject to limit of income and to a certain amount of discrimination.

XLIII. No estimate is given of the sums necessary to be paid, but it is said that:

> "The registration fee and school pence will, in the generality of cases, have been adequate to provide for the child a pension of 5s. a week at the age of seventy, and a certificate of the pension that has been ensured by those payments should be granted to the child. It should at the same time be intimated to the child that he or she is at liberty to make further payments to the pension fund administered by the State. The essential condition of that pension fund is that all payments made to it should be accumulated at a fixed rate of compound interest. If the earnings of the investments of the fund do not in any year amount to that rate of interest, the deficiency is to be voted by Parliament, and added to the investments of the fund. The payments to the pension fund should be voluntary, and might be applied to increasing the amount of the pension already earned, or lowering the age at which the pension may be claimed. In cases of persons above school age, or scholars for whom pence have not been paid, payments to the pension fund might be made of any amount at any time, and corresponding cards or certificates issued, specifying the pension thereby acquired. No person should be entitled to insure in the pension fund any sum exceeding in the aggregate £52 a year—£1 a week."

Chapter 2.

SETTLEMENT AND REMOVAL.

Origin of Law of Settlement and Removal

16. The origin of settlement extends into those remote periods which are responsible for the body of judicially recognised custom known as the Common Law.[1] An early legislative recognition of a kind of settlement may be found in the Statute of Labourers, 12 Rich. II., c. 3, which enacts that "no servant or labourer . . . shall depart, at the end of his term out of the hundred . . . where he is dwelling, to serve or dwell elsewhere," without "a letter patent";[2] and also "that every person that goeth begging and is able to serve or labour" shall be punished until means have been found of securing that they return to serve and labour in the town whence they came.[3] Also "beggars impotent to serve shall abide in the cities and towns where they be dwelling, and if the people of the said cities and towns will not or are not able to maintain them they shall withtake themselves to other towns and cities within the hundred, or to the town where they were born, and shall there continually abide during their life."[4] Thus, with the well-known qualification that all relief in those days was voluntary relief, this enactment seems a distinct recognition by Parliament of the principle of referring both able-bodied and impotent applicants for relief to the town of their birth or residence. The Act for Artificers and Labourers (5 Eliz., c. 4) controls the movement of labour on the same general principle as the Act of Richard II. Settlement is thus due, in part, to the desire to keep labourers available in the places where they are wanted, and at the same time to keep those who beg for or require relief within their parishes, and thus prevent mendicancy and vagrancy.*

17. There is accordingly a demand for settlement on two grounds, the regulation of labour and the local administration of relief. And when, as after the Acts of Queen Elizabeth respecting relief, "abiding places" were provided and "work," there was, as subsequent Acts show,[5] a new attraction as between parish and parish from the point of view of the provision of "employment" as well as of "relief."

18. The Poor Relief Acts of 1572, 1597 and 1601,[6] although they contained no direct reference to settlement, incidentally made it more important by making each parish definitely responsible for the relief of the poor and by requiring that there should be a compulsory rate for setting the poor to work. Indeed, the Act of Charles II. (1662),[7] under which settlement acquires its chief significance for modern Poor Law, was directly due to the difficulty of deciding who were and who were not the poor whom the parish was to maintain or set to work under the Act of 1601. The parish authorities were, as required by the Elizabethan law,[8] in the habit of providing "stock" for setting the poor to work, and were desirous of defending it against the inroads of strangers, much as Distress Committees at the present day find it necessary to exclude from their relief works all who have not resided one year in their district. In order, therefore, to prevent "the great discouragement of parishes to provide stock when it is liable to be devoured by strangers," and "to prevent the perishing of any of the poor, whether young or old, for want of such supplies as are necessary," power was given to the parish authorities to remove within forty days any newcomer to such parish where he was last legally settled, either as a native, householder, sojourner, apprentice, or servant, for the space of forty days at the least, unless he gave sufficient security for the discharge of the said parish to be allowed by the justices. This removal might be made though the newcomer had not applied for relief. It was the safeguard against prospective chargeability. Thus forty days' residence without removal, or, by another provision of the Act, occupation or

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* *See also* 1 Edw. VI., c. 3. "The mayor shall see all maimed, lamed, sore, aged and impotent persons, who cannot otherwise be taken for vagabonds, bestowed and provided for."

[1] Report to Poor Law Board, on the Law of Settlement and Removal. H.C., 675, 1851, Coode, p. 7. [2] "History of the English Poor Law," Vol. I., Nicholls, p. 56. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 58. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 58. [5] 3 Charles I., c. 4. 14 Charles II., c. 12, etc. [6] 14 Eliz., c. 5. 39 Eliz., c. 3. 43 Eliz., c. 2. [7] 13 & 14 Car. II., c. 12. [8] 43 Eliz. c. 2.

a tenement of £10 annual value, gave a right to "settle." Other conditions under which settlement could be acquired were made legal by subsequent Acts, and in 1834 the nine various modes of settlement were enumerated by the Royal Commission.

19. The power of removing all new-comers, subject to certain limitations, continued until the Act, 35 George III., which prohibits the removal of others than persons actually chargeable.

20. In 1817, a Select Committee on the Poor Laws drew attention to the expensive and embarrassing litigation to which the laws of settlement had given rise, and to the fraud and chicanery to which they had given occasion; but they thought "that something short of a total repeal of the law of settlement" would meet the evils of which complaint was made, and they proposed several important simplifications. As to litigation they pointed out that the money expended in litigation and the removal of paupers in 1815 amounted to £287,000, while the appeals against orders for removal, entered at the previous four Quarter Sessions amounted to 4,700.[1] The Royal Commission of 1832 wrote in the strongest terms against settlement and were in favour of its entire abolition, but they did not include a recommendation for its abolition among their recommendations.[2] A Select Committee in 1847 passed a series of resolutions against the law, but "though not agreeing to a report, they were united in condemning the narrow area of rateability." The Commission, appointed by Mr. Charles Buller:—

> "Established beyond question all the evils that followed from the system of parochial settlement, the clearing of parishes, the driving the poor out of them, and thrusting them into places already overcrowded, and into dwellings more fitted for beasts than for human beings."

In 1854 and 1860 two other Select Committees of the House of Commons again considered the operation of the laws, and in the Acts of 1865 and 1876, large simplifications and changes were made. The *status* of irremovability was adopted. A residence of one year on certain conditions gave irremovability; and in 1876 it was agreed that a continuous residence of three years should give settlement. In 1879, a Select Committee of the House of Commons recommended the abolition of the law, but, partly, no doubt, owing to the adoption of Union chargeability, no important change in the law has been made.

21. We would now deal with the question more at length, from the year 1834 to the present time. In 1834 the nine methods in force for obtaining a settlement were as follows: (1) birth; (2) parentage; (3) marriage; (4) estate; (5) apprenticeship; (6) renting a tenement; (7) payment of parochial rates; (8) serving a parochial office; (9) hiring and service.[3] The Royal Commission described at length the evils arising from settlement, the fraud, the neglect of the paupers' interests, the litigation, and perhaps worst of all the stagnation of labour due to the labourer's fear of "losing his parish;" and they concluded by saying: View of Commissioners of 1834.

> "These evils arise almost exclusively from the heads of settlement, which were introduced in consequence of the 13 & 14 Car. II., and might be almost entirely removed if those heads of settlement were put an end to. But there are others greater and more extensive, which arise from the mere existence of a law of settlement whatever the law may be, which increase in intensity in proportion as the limits of the district, which has to support what are called its own poor, are restricted, and could be mitigated only by its extension, and removed only by its entire abolition."* [4]

22. Nevertheless, they subsequently recommended that settlement by birth, parentage, and marriage should be retained. The introduction of settlement by residence, which had been recommended by the Committee of 1817, they definitely rejected as likely to aggravate existing evils.[5] One difficulty which they anticipated from it is especially interesting in view of subsequent history:—

> "Again, the demolition of cottages, and the forcing the agricultural population into the towns and the parishes in which property is much divided, though we fear that they must, to a certain degree, arise under any law of settlement whatever, would be much promoted by a law which would fix on a parish every labourer who should have been allowed to reside there for any given period, unless the period were so long as to render the law almost inoperative."[6]

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* The meaning of the quoted passage is doubtful. The "*its extension*" obviously relates to "district" and not to "settlement." Does not "*its abolition*" mean also abolition of district or abolition of parochial system? *See also* p. 165. "All these are the natural result of the parochial system," etc.

[1] Report from the Select Committee on the Poor Laws, 462, 1817, p. 26. [2] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, pp. 152–64, 344–6. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 152–3. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 164. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 343. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 344.

23. Some indication of the extent to which the labourers had suffered may be found in the further recommendation of the Commissioners that:—

> "Instead of the present mode of first removing a pauper, and then inquiring whether the removal was lawful, the inquiry should precede the removal." [1]

Legislation following report of 1834.

24. It was only to a very limited extent that Parliament, either in 1834 or subsequently, adopted the recommendations of the Commissioners with respect to settlement; and the existing law still retains eight forms: birth, parentage, marriage, estate, apprenticeship, renting of tenement, payment of parochial rates and residence. Here it will be seen that "hiring and service" and "serving an office" have been omitted; while residence was added at a much later date (1876), carrying out the recommendation of the Committee of 1817. [2]

Non-resident relief.

25. The Royal Commission of 1832 foresaw in their Report that if their policy of refusing outdoor relief to the able-bodied were carried out, questions of settlement would diminish very much in importance [3]; and this has in fact happened. A further mitigation of the hardship arising out of settlement laws is found in the practice of some Guardians in granting "non-resident relief." It is generally open to a Board of Guardians, as an alternative to removing a pauper to his parish of settlement, to grant relief and pay it by arrangement through the Board of Guardians or other agency in the parish in which he is residing. But this practice was found at that time to be open to great abuses.

> "The granting of non-resident relief continued to be a widely adopted practice, because, bad as it was, it was a less costly and unjust expedient than removal. At Lady-Day, 1846, there were 82,249 persons receiving non-resident relief, and Mr. Coode points out that though this practice led to a large amount of imposture, demoralisation and fraud, yet, if we reckon 2½ persons as affected by each order of removal, it had prevented some 32,899 warrants of removal." [4]

Limitation of power of removal.

Illegal removal.

26. In 1846 Parliament passed a Poor Removal Act prohibiting the removal of any person who had resided in a parish for five years "next before the application for the warrant," providing that the five years did not include residence in a prison or lunatic asylum or hospital, receipt of parish relief, etc., etc.[5] It is significant also that it attached a penalty to the offence of causing any poor person to become chargeable to a Union to which he was not previously chargeable, by removing him or assisting him to remove, and such penalty attaches, however the removal may have been brought about, whether by direct or indirect payment, by facilities of conveyance, by promises or by threats. [6] The Act provided that no warrant should be granted for the removal of a person becoming chargeable in respect of temporary illness, nor for a removal of a widow within twelve months after her husband's death in the parish. [7] The *status* of irremovability thus created was further developed by the Poor Removal Act of 1861, which reduced the period of residence from five years to three, and substituted residence in the Union for residence in the parish; [8] and by the Act of 1865 which diminished the period of residence to one year. [9] Finally, in 1876:—

Settlement by residence.

> "It was enacted that where any person shall have resided for the term of three years in any parish, in such manner and under such circumstances in each of such years as would in accordance with the several statutes in that behalf render him irremovable, he shall be deemed to be settled therein until he shall acquire a settlement in some other parish by a like residence or otherwise." [10]

27. These repeated attempts to diminish the hardships of compulsory removal represent a compromise between the desire to abolish settlement altogether, and the fear of leading up to a national poor rate. It was thought by opponents of the change that the abolition of settlement involved the abolition also of all local chargeability, and the evils of having local authorities spending a national rate were felt to outweigh those of removal. In 1854 Mr. Baines, then President of the Poor Law Board, introduced a Bill: "To abolish the compulsory removal of the poor on the ground of settlement, and to make provision for the more equitable distribution of the charge of relief in the Unions," pointing out in his speech that if all the orders issued in 1849 had been executed upwards of 40,000 poor persons would have been subjected to the hardship of compulsory removal. [11] The Union Chargeability Act of 1865 was opposed in

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[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 344. [2] Adrian, 356–8. [3] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 345. [4] "History of Poor Law," Vol. III., Mackay, p. 350. [5] 9 & 10 Vict., c. 66, Sec. 1. *See also* Adrian, 387. [6] Sec. 4. [7] Sec. 2. [8] 24 & 25 Vict., c. 55, Sec. 1. [9] 28 & 29 Vict., c. 79, Sec. 8. [10] Adrian, 366. [11] "History of the English Poor Law," Vol. II., Nicholls, pp. 433–5.

the House on two grounds, firstly, because it did not include the entire abolition of settlement, and, secondly, because it was feared that it would lead ultimately to a national rate.[1]

28. Subsequently, in 1879 a Select Committee of the House of Commons reported strongly in favour of the abolition of compulsory removal :— Recommendation of Committee of 1879.

> "Your Committee having given due weight to the various arguments and opinions that have been placed before them, recommend that in England the law of removal should be abolished, and that for the purposes of poor relief settlement should be disregarded, with the following exception: That with respect to seaport towns, persons landing in a destitute condition, and immediately applying there for relief, be chargeable to the place of their settlement for non-resident indoor relief." [2]

29. Since then the only change in the law has been that effected by the Poor Removal Act of 1900, which provides that a person who has resided five years continuously in England shall not thereafter be removable to Ireland.[3]

30. But the situation is to some extent modified by the power given to Boards of Guardians to refer disputed cases of settlement to the Local Government Board for decision in order to avoid litigation. It is partly due to this practice, but more to the introduction of Union chargeability, that the expenses of removal and of litigation have very much diminished during the last fifty years. Appeals to Local Government Board and effect of Union Chargeability Act.

31. As we have seen, for a very long time the abolition of the law of settlement has been strongly advocated, and many witnesses have placed that view before us. We will now, accordingly, consider that question, and in relation to it the questions of removal and non-resident relief. Mr. Joseph Brown, President of the Poor Law Unions Association, says :—

> "I believe that less harm would result in any case from the abolition of the law of settlement than is anticipated. I question whether many unions obtain the relief by settlement which they imagine they do. If the two sides were carefully estimated, I do not think the burden would be serious that would be thrown on any union, whilst the hardship inflicted on many a family would be saved. It is from that standpoint that I dislike the law of settlement and removal." [4]

32. The Clerk to the St. Pancras Board would like to see settlement abolished in London :—

> "The settlement is always difficult to decide, because we are confronted with a great tendency to evade the truth on the part of the people. Sometimes they have an objection to being sent back to their homes, and, therefore, we have to prove everything." [5]

33. Sir William Chance states :—

> "A very necessary reform is, to my mind, the final and complete abolition of the law of removal that has long been condemned, and so lately as by the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1879. Such a reform would put an end, at once, to all the abuses connected with non-settled relief and non-resident relief.' [6]

34. Mr. Willis Bund states :—

> "No reform in dealing with the sick poor can be carried out without a change in the law of settlement. The best thing would be to abolish it entirely, but if that cannot be done to make the county the area of settlement, not the union, and to make six months residence or employment sufficient to give a settlement." [7]

35. Mr. John Laverack states :—

> "Law of settlement should be done away with, relieving paupers wherever they become chargeable." [8]

36. Mr. Cripps, K.C., would :—

> "Strongly advocate the abolition of the law of settlement." "I look upon the law of settlement as really a survival of the old penal laws, and it ought to have been done away with, I think, when the parish was no longer the unit, and the union was made the unit. With the county as the unit, I think there would be no necessity for it at all." [9]

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[1] "History of the English Poor Law," Vol. III., Mackay, p. 363. [2] Report from Select Committee on Poor Removal, H.C., 282, 1879, p. v. *See also* Adrian, 409. [3] 63 & 64 Vict., c. 23, Sec. 1. *See also* Adrian, 390. [4] Brown, 25118. [5] Millward, 18906. [6] Chance, 27061 (64). [7] Bund, 76546 (16). [8] Laverack, 76227 (4). [9] Cripps, 76394 (4), 76422.

37. The abolition or simplification of the law of settlement is one of the reforms most generally urged upon the Commission by Boards of Guardians and their Chairmen throughout the country. Thus 37 recommended that the law should be "abolished," 25 others that it should be "simplified or abolished," and a further 198 that the law and decision of settlement should be simplified.[1]

38. In view of much of this evidence it may be asked with some reason why the Legislature has refrained from abolishing the law of settlement. The evidence that we have received indicates the answer. In urban centres at the present time there is a feeling that the law of settlement limits to a certain extent the local chargeability of the pauperism which arises among migrants in a moving and changing population. And this feeling is accentuated perhaps in cities which are large seaports or are close to such seaports, like Liverpool and West Derby.[2] There is also the general feeling that it is fair that the place to which an applicant is attached by some tie of settlement, such as birth, parentage, or continued residence, should be responsible for his maintenance. "There is a certain amount of fairness in the law."[3] On the other hand, it must be admitted that settlement now, and in its present form, neither restricts the mobility of labour, nor makes it more difficult for the poor to find houses in their Unions. We do not believe that the prospect of becoming removable as a pauper is at present sufficiently imminent to the majority of workmen to act as a deterrent to them in moving into a district where they hope to get work. Moreover, the old tradition of the labourer that he was settled in a particular parish and that it was dangerous to move from it for fear that he should lose his settlement has long since disappeared. A *status* of irremovability may be acquired in any Union by one year's residence[4] and a settlement by three years' residence[5] in any parish, and there is no evidence to show that the fear of getting inadequate relief in a particular Union has any appreciable influence on the economic influx of labour into that Union. We are inclined, therefore, to agree with Mr. Davy that the law of settlement as now administered has no serious effect on the mobility of labour.[6]

Hardship of removal.

39. But other arguments are used. One is that the law of settlement is the cause of hardship to the poor.[7] During the year 1907 upwards of 12,000 persons, or one out of every 141 paupers, were removed from one Union to another in England and Wales.* The law of settlement led to the law of irremovability; and the existence of this law is in itself evidence of the recognition of the hardship resulting from an untempered law of settlement. It has seemed hard, for instance, that a person who has acquired new ties in the place where he has resided, in the event of his receiving Poor Law relief, should be liable to removal to his native place, if his settlement is a settlement by birth. And similarly, in other circumstances which entail settlement, such as parentage, or marriage, or residence. To modify this hardship, as we have seen, a person who is ill temporarily cannot be removed, though he be not settled in the Union in which he becomes chargeable; nor can a widow be removed within twelve months of her husband's death; and, finally, a residence of one year now renders a pauper irremovable. The hardship, however, is still felt where removal is in all cases insisted on.

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* Removal is more frequent in urban Unions than in rural Unions, as the following figures show:—

	One removal amongst
London	72 paupers
Extra-Metropolitan Unions:	
Wholly urban	148 ,,
Mainly urban	183 ,,
Mainly rural	289 ,,
Wholly rural	366 ,,
England and Wales	141 ,,

Moreover, this movement takes place principally between the urban Unions, and, upon the whole, the movement is slightly to the advantage of those Unions, the rural Unions receiving a rather larger number of paupers than they remove.

1 *Vide* Appendix. 2 Cleaver, 35887 (12), 35894. Macdonald, Vol. IV., App. xlv. (13). 3 Cutter, 19332. 4 28 & 29 Vict., c. 79, Sec. 8. 5 39 & 40 Vict., c. 61, Sec. 34. 6 Davy, 3895. 7 Davy, 2549; Brown, 25121; Gaunt, Vol. IV., App. lxxii. (14).

40. On the other hand, the fact should not be overlooked that, in a large number of cases of removal, removal has been beneficial. Children have been returned to parents and aged people to relations or friends. And whole families have been sent back to their native places on their failure to succeed in some locality to which they had been allured by false pretences. This point was brought out before the Select Committee of 1879, among other witnesses by Mr. Higgins, removal officer for the Parish of St. Pancras, and apparently the only witness before the Committee who was continually in contact with persons under orders of removal. Mr. Higgins points out that, under the law of removal, in one year alone the St. Pancras Guardians were able to return to their parents in the country 200 unfortunate girls who otherwise would have gone to swell the ranks of prostitutes in London.[1] 28 & 29 Vict., c. 79, Sec. 3.

41. In 1905–6, £270,728 was received by Boards of Guardians in repayment of relief given by them to paupers not settled in their Unions, and the amount appears to be increasing.[2] On 31st March, 1906, the number of persons in receipt of non-resident relief was 21,884.[3] About one-half of these persons are aged, and Mr. Davy suggests:—

> "I think that in the case of people over sixty it is a great hardship that they should be removed against their will, and I unhesitatingly recommend that no removals of persons over the age of sixty or sixty-five should be allowed. If that were done we should, to a great extent, automatically put an end to non-resident relief."[4]

42. In certain cases it is at present within the powers of Boards of Guardians to give non-resident relief to their own paupers, and they may pay non-settled relief to the paupers of other Unions.[5] Unions which are "strict" in their administration frequently refuse to do either, and insist upon removal.[6] This course is, in many cases, a great hardship to old people or those who, on account of some physical or mental disability, are best cared for when living with their friends or relatives; and if removed they are placed in institutions at a greatly increased cost.

43. A person who has resided for twelve months in a Union cannot be removed or charged to his Union of settlement; but this does not gain a settlement for him. On the other hand, if he becomes chargeable before he has resided in the Union uninterruptedly (with certain exceptions) for twelve months, he may receive non-resident relief from the Guardians of the Union of his settlement. This relief is administered by the Authorities of the Union where he resides, and it is obvious that the Guardians of his own Union have to trust to them entirely, both in regard to the investigation of his circumstances and the necessity, sufficiency, and continuance of the relief which they grant. There is often found to be a want of adequate supervision, when the relief is granted by one Board and administered by another, and Poor Law officers who have appeared before us have expressed themselves very strongly against it on these grounds. They are in favour of remedying the evil by making removal compulsory except in the case of infirm persons living with relatives who look after them.[7] Non-resident relief.

44. Non-resident relief has, by reason of its careless administration, led to evils which are laid at the door of the Law of Settlement; the evils result from less care in investigation, discrimination, and supervision being exercised by the authority administering the relief, because they are entitled to re-imbursement by the authority of the place of settlement. We believe that these evils are exaggerated. Little evidence has been given which leads us to believe that the evils are widespread; at least, they are no more extensive than the laxity in administration of settled relief. Where one form is lax, the other form is usually lax also. In the next place, persons are always in receipt of relief before the question of settlement really arises. It is true that, on dealing with an application for relief, particulars as to residence which bear upon settlement must be taken down. This knowledge of its probably being a non-settled case rarely enters into the quality of relief in the first instance. It is not dealt with as a suitable case for relief on the strength of possible repayment, as the settlement has got to be proved to the satisfaction of the authority of the place of settlement. It may therefore be said generally that non-settled cases do not get relief more easily than a settled case.

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[1] Report of Select Committee on Poor Removal, H. C. 282, 1879, Higgins, 2122, 2216, p. 113. [2] Thirty-Sixth Annual Report, Local Government Board [Cd. 3665], 1907, p. cxxxviii. [3] Statistical Appendix, Part II., Table 2. [4] Davy, 2549. [5] Davy, 2937. [6] Davy, 2423. [7] Peters, 20052–3. Dyson, 20117, 20185–7 (14), 20236.

45. The evils, such as exist, usually occur in cases in which, when once relief has been given, and the place of settlement proved and repayment obtained, less supervision is exercised, and changes in circumstances are not notified as carefully as in a settled relief case. Such a defect in administration is an obvious one, which can be easily guarded against by a rule to make it, on the part of the authority of the place of settlement, an imperative duty to require a full report on the circumstances of the case on a specified form transmitted with each demand for payment.

46. We can, therefore, conceive of non-settled cases of relief being as well-administered as settled cases. In the treatment of settled and non-settled cases there should be no difference whatever. It is only a question of charge, not one of treatment.

47. The effect of settlement at the present time may be stated in the following words:

> "The obligation to relieve must now be held to lie, in the first instance, on the parish where the poor person is. Settlement merely affects the question whether the parish which relieves has any right to transfer the burden elsewhere, and in no way influences the right of the pauper to relief."[1]

48. If settlement were abolished there would be a danger of the differentiation of treatment between old and new residents, adopted with a view to preventing people being attracted to the district for the advantages which a certain method of treatment may offer.

49. The truth is that the remedy lies largely, almost entirely, in proper and sufficient inquiry. This is indispensable. And in these cases there is, perhaps, an added incentive to thoroughness of investigation. In regard to new residents, inquiries would have to extend into the area from whence they came; and it is only reasonable to suppose that the officers of such an area would not so readily make inquiries for another authority, when no question of chargeability is involved, as they do now for purposes of settlement. But we conceive that in the future between all the Committees of Public Assistance there will be a regular system of local investigation, one district assisting another to complete its inquiries.

Expenses of Settlement and Removal.

50. Lastly, there is the argument that the law of settlement entails unnecessary expenditure of time, trouble and money, and causes needless litigation.

51. The expenses of removal and litigation amounted in 1905–6 to £21,530, and this did not include the salaries of the officers engaged partially or wholly in settlement business.[2] This is a very considerable item. In every Union such questions employ a large part of an officer's time, in many Unions an officer is employed solely for the purpose, and in large urban Unions more than one officer may be so employed. One witness, Chairman of the Birmingham Board of Guardians, states:—

> "The present system of removal and settlement is very antiquated, and needs to be thoroughly revised and to a large extent abolished. It is absurd to keep an expensive army of officials to move people from place to place throughout the Kingdom."[3]

52. A return as to settlement work in the Dewsbury Union shows that in 1905 191 cases were investigated, 42 reported to and accepted by other Unions, 32 ceased to be chargeable after the particulars were taken, and 28 were reported by other Unions and accepted by Dewsbury. The total cost for twelve months of cases that were accepted by other Unions, or that ceased chargeability by reason of the inquiries, was £661. The total cost of the cases accepted by Dewsbury, as reported by other unions, was £339. The annual cost (or saving) in favour of Dewsbury was £321—the difference being £18. The total expenses incurred each year in the investigation of settlement was £29. One official gives his time to settlement cases, and his salary should be set against the "saving."[4] We cannot generalise from these figures, but they indicate what is the actual cost of settlement work in a

[1] Mackay, "History of the Poor Law," p. 364. [2] Local Taxation Returns, 1905–6, Parts I. and IV. (H.C. 321 and 321–III. of 1907), pp. 78 and 56 respectively. [3] Turner, 43566 (9). [4] Brown, Vol. III., App. i., (C) 25122.

large industrial town in the West Riding. On the other hand, it may be argued that, but for this work, instead of 42 cases being accepted by other Unions, and 28 reported by other Unions and accepted by Dewsbury, Dewsbury would have been chargeable for the difference for at least fourteen cases of which it has now got rid. The grievance of cost, however, is generally admitted.

53. It appears that in the three Unions of Birmingham, Aston, and King's Norton five officers are entirely engaged in removal work.[1] A similar expense is avoided in Manchester and Liverpool, each of which towns also extends to three Unions, by an arrangement through which the several Unions in each town do not remove against each other (except in the case of lunatics).[2]

54. There remain the questions of time, trouble and litigation. That the time and trouble expended in settlement cases is very considerable is also admitted. Most witnesses are in favour of some further modification and simplification of the law of settlement. Of the nature of these modifications they did not speak with precision except in one or two instances; but it is fair to infer that all the objections to which we have alluded have their weight in this widespread conclusion. Litigation there is a general desire to prevent by the reference of all disputed cases to the final arbitrament of the Local Government Board.

Extension of powers of Local Government Board.

55. We feel, that a strong case has been made out for placing within the reach of Local Authorities and their officers the means of determining settlement, with less expenditure of time and money. The power which the Local Government Board already possess to determine the settlements of a pauper in any case where the Unions agree to submit a case to them, should, we think, be extended, and all questions connected with any dispute whether of fact or law as to settlement should be determined only by the Board, unless the Board consider that the question is one which ought to be submitted to a Court of Law. This proposal has been strongly advocated to us.[3]

Settlement and uniformity.

56. What the effect of the abolition of settlement would be on administration it is difficult to forecast with certainty. Some witnesses consider that greater uniformity would be the result. If people passed from less comfortable to more comfortable Unions, there might have to be a modification of standard in some of the larger urban workhouses, "in the dietary, for one thing, in order to make the conditions of workhouses really much on the same lines, as far as local conditions would admit."[4] Others argue that abolition would necessitate a greater uniformity, an uniformity greater than now prevails.[5] One witness thinks that in London, abolition of settlement would result in absolute uniformity. One witness, who would be disposed to make it easier for persons to obtain a settlement, suggests, that, while actual uniformity in workhouses is hardly possible, "some Guardians whose workhouses were popular might go to the opposite extreme and treat the people as badly as they possibly could."[6] Under proper inspection, and as the result of the one cause, abolition of settlement, we think that this could hardly happen, though it may be urged that if settlement were abolished there would be a danger of differentiation of treatment between old residents and newcomers, in order to avoid attracting people to the district for the advantages which a certain method of treatment offers. However, we do not propose entire abolition. We leave it for the future to prove whether, administered in County areas, Poor Law relief will still require the protection of "settlement," even in the modified form we suggest.

Abolition or modification of the Laws of Settlement.

57. The evidence taken as a whole suggests in our opinion one or other of the following alternatives. Either the law of settlement should be repealed, save and except in seaport towns, for which special Regulations may be required; or it should be very greatly modified, especially in view of the changes of Poor Law areas which we propose.

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[1] Fothergill, 43877–9. [2] Ball, 35467–8, 35587. [3] Brown, 25136–9; King, 25264 (9); Cleaver, 36081–4; Ford, 39826–7; Fothergill, 43825 (13*a*); Thompson, Vol. IV., App. CIII. (13); Cook, 74259–65; Sharman, 75202; Wilkes, 75345 (10); Wallace, 77007 (9), 77065. [4] Booker, 40893. [5] Cook, 74271–3; Willis-Bund, 76580; Millward, 18941, 18942. [6] Curtis, 29037.

58. To take the latter alternative first. The law of settlement might be modified by eliminating from it settlement by estate, apprenticeship, renting of tenements, and payment of parochial rates. There would then remain the simpler and more important conditions of settlement, birth, marriage, parentage, and residence. The period for settlement is now three years, and it appears to us that some lesser period should be substituted for it; and we suggest that, if settlement be not abolished, the period of settlement by residence be one year.

59. But the suggestions that we make in regard to the areas of Poor Law administration largely modify the whole position.

60. We have proposed that Counties and County Boroughs should be the areas for what we have termed "Public Assistance" in the future, an organisation of assistance in many ways different from that which now prevails, and that its expenditure should be charged to a County or Borough rate. Obviously, therefore, this area would for purposes of settlement and removal supersede the Union area; and it would thus reduce very greatly the number of cases in which questions of settlement would arise. But the point should be considered in detail.

61. In the case of County Boroughs which are in close proximity there might be considerable differences in regard to settlement cases. But, as we have seen, Unions in County Boroughs already tend to come to agreements by which, as between themselves, they practically set aside the law of settlement. In such cases a modified settlement such as we have suggested could hardly be inconvenient or oppressive, for in these circumstances the tendency of combination is towards the several Boards acting together in many ways or for one associated area, as in London, Liverpool and elsewhere; and the Central Authority could promote development in this direction.

62. There are, next, the cases which would occur as between a County and a neighbouring County Borough; and these cases might well cause trouble, as the rural population moves constantly towards the urban areas, settling outside the County Boroughs and within them. In these circumstances there would be, on the one side, the large County population, on the other the often larger population of the County Borough. As between these two areas and populations, there might be constant cases of difference, but the modified law of settlement which we suggest would prevent any migration for immediate relief in the, perhaps, better establishments of the County Borough.

63. There remains, lastly, the relation of County and County Borough areas to one another when they are not contiguous. If the largeness of the population in most of these areas be considered, it will, we think, be admitted that, in these instances as well as in the others which we have discussed, we have reached the conditions of extension, which the Royal Commissioners of 1832, contemplated and in which the largeness of the areas largely neutralises the purpose of the law of settlement.

64. For the abolition of settlement it cannot be denied that there are many strong reasons—the labour it would set free, the time it would save, the friction it would prevent, the hardships it would avoid; though we have shown that removal is not always a hardship, and that non-resident relief well administered may be a sufficient alternative.

65. Of the two courses, therefore, which lie before us, the repeal of the law of settlement or its simplification, we have, after much consideration, preferred the latter. If experience shows that repeal is the better plan, that course may be adopted later. But for the present we think that the modes of obtaining a settlement might be reduced to the four we have mentioned, viz., those of birth, parentage, marriage, and residence, and that a settlement by residence should be acquired by one year's residence in a County or County Borough. In the Unemployed Workmen Act a year's residence is required as the condition of eligibility for assistance; and we have received no complaints on that score. We think that this precedent might safely be followed in the larger province of Public Assistance generally.

Conclusions.

66. It has already been shown that the existing law retains eight forms of settlement: birth, parentage, marriage, estate apprenticeship, renting of tenement, payment of parochial rates and residence. We propose to reduce these to four, birth, parentage, marriage, and residence. Settlement by estate, apprenticeship, renting of tenements and payment of parochial rates we would abolish. On these terms settlements are comparatively seldom gained at the present time. The period of residence we would reduce from three years to one, making it the same as the period of irremovability. This would reduce considerably the labour involved in investigating settlement cases. It would also decrease the number of removals and the number of non-resident relief cases. We consider that the area for all purposes of settlement and removal should be the County or County Borough, as the case may be.

67. We propose that the Local Government Board should determine all cases of disputed settlement, unless the Board consider that the case should go to a Court of Law.

68. We shall deal separately with the difficulties of settlement and removal as affecting Scotland and Ireland, but we may here point out that we see nothing in the arrangement we propose for England which need interfere with any legislation securing reciprocity of removal as between the three countries. Removal between three divisions of United Kingdom.

Chapter 3.

RECOVERY OF COST OF RELIEF.

69. It is the duty of a man to maintain himself, his wife and family, and if, while able to do so by work or otherwise he fails to perform this duty, and as a result he or his wife or any of his family whom he is legally liable to maintain become chargeable, he is liable to punishment as an idle and disorderly person.[1] If, too, he runs away and his wife or child is or becomes chargeable, he is deemed a rogue and vagabond, and is liable to be punished accordingly.[2]

Law relating to recovery from property of pauper and of loan relief.

70. The cost of relief granted to a poor person may, under certain conditions, be recovered by the Guardians:—

(1) From the pauper himself.

(2) From the person liable for the support of pauper dependants; or

(3) From certain relatives of the pauper.

71. With regard to recovery from the pauper himself the law provides that if a pauper has money or valuable security for money the Guardians may appropriate a sum equivalent to the cost of the relief granted during the preceding twelve months, and, if the pauper dies, also the expenses of burial. The Guardians may also recover at common law from a pauper's estate the cost of his maintenance for a period of six years, *i.e.*, for an additional period of five years.[3] Moreover, it is within the power of the Guardians to stipulate that the cost of the relief given to any poor person above the age of twenty-one shall be considered as given on loan, and for repayment of relief so given wages may be attached, or the relief may be recovered in the County Court.[4]

72. In the case of relief to dependants, it is provided that all relief given to a wife or to a child not being blind or deaf and dumb, is considered as given to the husband or father as the case may be, and relief given to the children of a widow is considered as given to the widow. The cost of such relief may be recovered from the head of the family in the manner previously indicated and the relief may be given on loan.[5]

Desirability of recovering relief where possible.

73. The justice of these provisions cannot be questioned, for it is clearly reasonable that a person who has received assistance at the public expense for himself or his family should reimburse the ratepayers if, and when, he is in a position to do so. At the same time it would manifestly be improper and contrary to the public welfare to press for repayment in cases in which the recipient would thereby be compelled to deprive himself of the necessaries of life, or his family of adequate support. And we also feel that it would be unwise to exact repayment in cases in which it would prevent a man from insuring against such contingencies as old age, sickness, etc., for manifestly, if these be not provided for, the man will again become chargeable when they overtake him. It may be that these considerations weigh with some Guardians as the provisions with regard to relief upon loan are seldom adopted, and when advantage is taken of them the amount recovered is only small.[6] But it seems more probable that the failure to utilise the provisions is chiefly due to the procedure involved.[7] One essential to recovery of loan relief is that the recipient should have been informed, at the time of receiving the relief, that it was granted on loan, and even when this formality has been complied with the procedure before the County Court involves so much inquiry and delay, and the results are so uncertain, that the Guardians are reluctant to put the machinery in motion.[8]

Procedure for recovery of loan relief.

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[1] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, Sec. 3. [2] *Ibid.*, Sec. 4. [3] Adrian, 110–11, 152, 751–4, 781–5. [4] Adrian, 109, 755–7, 913, 1082–92. [5] Adrian, 101, 105. [6] Preston Thomas, 4296. Thurnall, 15789. Gray, 52195. [7] Cutter, 19201. Burnell, 68091 (10), 68147. [8] Baldwyn Fleming, 9505. Preston Thomas, 12463, 12500. Brown, 25080.

74. Mr. F. Morris, who is a member of the Marylebone Board of Guardians, says :—

> "The recovery of loans has always been a difficulty. We have attempted to recover amounts, but the difficulty is that unless we can prove earnings, and unless we can prove position, it is hopeless." [1]

75. And Mr. H. A. Craig, the superintendent relieving officer for St. Pancras, states :—

> "We grant very little relief by way of loan. We should have to recover through the county court, of course, and that is always a troublesome process and a difficult process too. . . . If you get an order, you are still a long time in recovering it, and the Guardians feel naturally that it is hardly worth doing. . . . It is an expensive process too." [2]

76. We have also received representations from several Boards of Guardians urging that the recovery of loan relief should be facilitated.

Variations in practice as to relief on loan.

77. As a result of these difficulties there is great variation in the practice followed in different Unions. Mr. Baldwyn Fleming put in a table showing the amounts recovered on account of loan relief in the fifty-four Unions in his district, which extends into Dorsetshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire. In the year ended Lady-Day, 1905, only ten of the Unions recovered anything, and the amounts received in nine of these were negligible, for out of a total of £443 recovered in the district £373 was received by Portsmouth.[3] Mr. Bircham reports that hardly anything is given on loan in Wales and Monmouthshire, though at Swansea the Guardians recently resolved that all relief should be given on loan.[4] Mr. H. G. Solomon, who is on the Swansea Board of Guardians, states, however, that at any rate in the case of medical relief, recovery has not been effected in many instances, but that the action of the Guardians has reduced the number of applicants for medical relief.[5]

78. In Bristol and Bradfield all relief, both indoor and outdoor, is given on loan, and a note to that effect is printed on every workhouse admission note and out-relief ticket given by the relieving officers. In Halifax and Skipton all out-relief is granted on loan where there is any prospect of recovery. In some Unions rules have been framed prohibiting the granting of relief in certain classes of cases, except upon loan. Thus, at Merthyr Tydfil the regulations prescribe that all relief to able-bodied persons be by way of loan, and in kind only, and that in all cases, when not prevented by illness, the applicant is to sign an undertaking to repay the relief advanced. Relief to the wives and families of sailors, soldiers, and militiamen, and midwifery orders where the number of dependent children is less than four, and the father is able-bodied, are also to be given on loan. In the Mitford and Launditch Union all orders for medical attendance are granted in the first instance by way of loan, the applicant being required to repay 10s. for each midwifery case, and 5s. for each other case. In the Parish of Poplar Borough the Relief Committees are recommended to grant by way of loan such relief as may be given to married women whose husbands are in prison or have deserted them, and in cases of interment orders, midwifery orders, and medical necessaries. In the Bradfield Union all medical orders have, since 1872, been granted in the first instance on loan, and the fact is printed in red across the orders.

> "The result of this system has been that the people have largely joined the medical officers' clubs, the fees for which are usually 4d. per month for adults, and 2d. or less for children (not much more than the price of one pint of beer per week), for a man, his wife, and two children, and the medical orders have been reduced from 700 per annum to fifty-eight in 1905, thus saving hundreds every year from the curse of pauperism, to which free medical relief is the open door in the widest sense."

79. Where inquiries were made in the Unions we have visited it was generally found that very little, if any, relief was given on loan.[6] In one Union, however, it was reported that a good deal of relief was so given [7] and in another that the Guardians had passed a resolution some years ago to the effect that all relief should be given on loan. As at Swansea, where a similar resolution was passed, little appears to be recovered.[8]

Extended application of system of loan relief.

80. The full effect of loan relief as a deterrent cannot be accurately measured by the statistical results. The amount actually recovered in any Union clearly gives no indication of the number of well-to-do persons who, owing to the Guardians' policy, may have been deterred from applying for relief. But the large proportion of Unions in which

[1] Morris, 17090. [2] Craig, 19688–90. [3] Fleming, Vol. I., App. xix. (E). [4] Bircham, 5090.
[5] Solomon, 50489. *Vide also* Young, 69537 (4). [6] Visits, Urban 2 C. and E., 15, 22A. [7] Visits, Urban 51.
[8] Visits, Miscell. 108 II.

nothing whatever is recovered from loan relief, as shown by the table put in by Mr. Baldwyn Fleming, seems to suggest that much more might be done in this direction to relieve the financial burden, either by actual recoupment or by the influence brought to bear upon prospective applicants. Mr. Fleming is of the same opinion.[1] It is not probable that a person really in need of relief will be deterred from applying by the knowledge that he will be called upon to repay the value of the relief should he be in a position to do so at some future date. If the case be genuine, the desire to repay will be all the stronger, and if it be fictitious deterrence can do no harm. But it is undesirable and impolitic that the poorest classes, when in real need of relief, should be placed in fear of harassing actions in the future. We think, therefore, that, whilst some simplification of the procedure for recovery of loan relief is desirable, the future Poor Law Authorities should exercise their powers in this respect with discretion, but with firmness where the ability to repay is undoubted, having regard to the man's obligations to his family and to the provision, which we think it is incumbent upon him to make, for sickness, old age, etc.

Simplification of procedure.

Law relating to recovery from relatives.

81. The repayment of relief by relatives is provided for by the Poor Relief Act of 1601, which enacted that :—

> "The father and grandfather, and the mother and grandmother, and the children of every poor, old, blind, lame and impotent person, or other poor person not able to work, being of a sufficient ability, shall, at their own charges, relieve and maintain every such poor person in that manner, and according to that rate as by the justices . . . shall be assessed." [2]

And the Guardians have power to obtain the needful orders. Orders can be made only during the time the person is chargeable. It will be observed that the provision does not extend to the relief of the able-bodied, nor does it attach any liability to brothers, sisters, or grandchildren.[3] It was recently held that a married woman having separate estate was not liable for the support of her parents, but an Act has been passed in the present year (1908) to alter the law in this respect.[4]

82. If a married woman requires relief without her husband and becomes chargeable, the Guardians may obtain an order of Justices requiring the husband to contribute towards her maintenance.[5] On the other hand when the husband becomes chargeable and the wife has separate property, the Justices may, upon the application of the Guardians, make an order upon her to contribute to the maintenance of her husband.[6]

Encouragement of filial responsibility.

83. It is eminently desirable that the spirit of filial responsibility should be fostered and upheld as much as possible. However readily the moral obligations of children may be accepted by the majority of the population, there can be no objection to giving to those obligations the force of law if it be found necessary to enforce them in a minority of cases. The tenor of our evidence upon the question is, therefore, of much interest, and we regret to find that many witnesses dwell upon the disinclination of relatives to assist one another, and especially of children to maintain and nurse their parents. Mr. W. H. Peters, one of the relieving officers for the Greenwich Union, says :—

Disinclination of relatives to contribute.

> "My general observation is that as far as I can remember in many cases—I might almost say in most cases—the children of the people that come to me would, if they possibly could get out of it, avoid contributing anything towards the support of their parents." [7]

84. And Mr. T. O. Williams, Chairman of the Aston Board of Guardians, states that :—

> "Often at the relief committees you find sons in receipt of good wages endeavouring to evade contributing towards the support of an aged father and mother, or either, and in the case of lunatics the relatives will resort to any subterfuge to avoid paying a fair sum towards the support of a relative for whom they are liable." [8]

85. Moreover, we learn that the indifference of children to the welfare of their parents tends to grow. Mr. Bagenal says :—

> "I have noticed that there is a growing disinclination on the part of sons and daughters to help in contributing to the maintenance of their parents. . . . I think Yorkshire is almost the worst place there is in that respect; they are growing exceedingly lax in that way." [9]

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[1] Fleming, 9390. [2] Adrian, 106. [3] Adrian, 786–93, 1225–6, 1433–4. [4] 8 Edw. VII., c. 27. [5] 31 & 32 Vict., c. 122, Sec. 33. [6] 45 & 46 Vict., c. 75, Sec. 20. [7] Peters, 19839. [8] Williams, 45464 (16). *Vide also* Court, 6179. Briant, 14991. Kerwin, 18280. Henniker, 68011. Batchelor, 68973. Pearson, 72332. Visits, Urban 25 A., 43 A. [9] Bagenal, 7371.

86. Mr. G. B. ffolkes, Chairman of the Freebridge Lynn Board of Guardians, says :—

> "With regard to the poorer classes there is not the same disposition to assist one another that there was years ago, and the younger generation have not the inclination to support their aged relatives, or take the same interest in them as formerly. It is a difficult matter to get them to contribute towards the maintenance of their relatives, even in the case of parents. Rarely do they visit relatives in the workhouses, and when information has been sent to them of the serious illness of a near relative in the workhouse, very often no notice of it is taken, or possibly a letter is sent saying that they are not able to visit them." [1]

87. In this connection attention may also be drawn to the peculiarly painful evidence of Dr. F. L. Pochin, District Medical Officer of the Walsingham Union :—

> "Would you have any objection to my rather emphasising the difficulties with regard to the nursing in my own neighbourhood? In my neighbourhood, and I think it is the case all over the Walsingham Union, you cannot get the poor people to help their neighbours. They will not do it. In London, one is often struck by the way in which the poorest people do help one another. There is nothing of that kind at all in my neighbourhood; nothing. An example of that is this: I have had people refuse to nurse their own children without being paid for it. A mother left her daughter with a child three days old, and went right away out of the district, miles away, because she was not paid for nursing her." [2]

88. In his Interim Report of Inquiry into the effect of outdoor relief on wages and the conditions of employment in certain rural Unions in the Counties of Suffolk and Cambridge, Mr. Jones concludes that the obligation to support aged parents is not keenly felt, but that the cause is not so much want of affection as an erroneous conception of the object of poor relief, which appears to some as a privilege to which they are entitled.

> "Their minds are adjusted to this view of it; they do not feel pauperised in any bad sense." [3]

Reasons for decrease of filial responsibility.

89. Possible explanations of this reluctance of children to succour their parents have been given by one or two witnesses. Mr. Jenner Fust attributes it, to some extent, to the greater comfort of the workhouses, and considers that children have not the same objection as formerly to their parents going into those institutions.[4] Other witnesses think that slackness of trade and diminished earnings are a contributing cause.[5] There can be no doubt that the spending power of the working classes would have an important bearing upon the question, but taken as a whole any diminution in their spending power due to slackness of trade would be merely transient. The greater comfort of the workhouses is probably a more important factor, and with this subject we have dealt in a previous chapter.

Views of Royal Commission of 1832.

90. The Royal Commission of 1832 considered the question, but made no decided recommendation. They write :—

> "It appears from the whole Evidence, that the clause of the 43rd Eliz., which directs the parents and children of the impotent to be assessed for their support, is very seldom enforced. In any ordinary state of society, we much doubt the wisdom of such an enactment. The duty of supporting parents and children, in old age, or infirmity, is so strongly enforced by our natural feelings, that it is often well performed, even among savages, and almost always so in a nation deserving the name of civilised. We believe that England is the only European country in which it is neglected. To add the sanction of the law in countries where that of nature is found sufficient, to make that compulsory which would otherwise be voluntary, cannot be necessary; and if unnecessary, must be mischievous. But if the deficiencies of parental and filial affection are to be supplied by the parish, and the natural motives to the exercise of those virtues are thus to be withdrawn, it may be proper to endeavour to replace them, however imperfectly, by artificial stimulants, and to make fines, distress warrants, or imprisonment act as substitutes for gratitude and love. The attempt, however, is scarcely ever made." [6]

Variation in practice.

91. In view of the evidence quoted above it cannot now be said, whatever the circumstances prevailing in 1834, that compulsion is unnecessary. But the present practice of Boards of Guardians as to enforcing the legal liability of children to maintain their parents when they are in a position to do so varies very much. In some Unions

[1] ffolkes, 75247 (12). *Vide also* Wethered, 5408, 5494, Vol. App. xi. (116). Jenner Fust, 11133, 11487. Morris, 16999. Blackshaw, 41411. Fawkes, 43889 (28). Dodd, 47191 (13, 34*a*), 47223. Heale, 69047 (8, 25) 69145. Mee, Vol. IV., App. lxxxviii.(63–4). [2] Pochin, 74965–7. [3] Report into Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and Conditions of Employment in Certain Rural Unions, Mr. Jones, p. 26. [4] Jenner Fust, 11134. *Vide also* Heale, 69148. [5] Quelch, p. 35. Fawkes, Stat. 28. [6] Report of Poor Law Commission of 1832 [Cd. 2728] 1905, p. 43.

it is only exceptionally that even sons are asked to contribute towards the support of their parents,[1] while in others all the children, including married daughters, and sometimes grandchildren, are expected to help, according to their means. In rural districts as we have seen, it is quite usual to give relief to old people who have sons living with them in regular work. We have found this practice obtaining in North and South Wales, and in both the Eastern and Western Counties of England.

92. In St. Pancras all liable relatives are provided by the relieving officers with a form for their written statement of particulars of their position, children, rent, income, etc., and the relatives are asked to attend before the Committee.[2] A somewhat similar system is adopted in Bermondsey.[3] In the Langport Union of Somersetshire it is reported that:—

> "When relatives who are legally liable to contribute are discovered they are (provided it appears to the Guardians that they are in a position to do so) asked in the first place to sign an agreement to contribute a sum mutually agreed upon, failing which a magisterial order is applied for. The collection of these contributions is far more general than it used to be."[4]

93. In several other Unions from which evidence has been received sons are required to contribute and in some cases to appear before the Guardians personally.[5]

94. The Swansea Board of Guardians have formed a Committee known as the "Ability of Relatives" Committee, and Mr. H. G. Solomon, who is a Member of the Board, describes the procedure thus:—

> "The relief committees consider the individual cases of the applications that are made to them, and refer any cases where there are means to a committee which has been called the ability of relatives committee. They consider what relatives there are able to pay, and have a certificate of wages from the employers of the sons, and see if, in their opinion, the sons are able to repay part or all of the relief which the relief committee has ordered in the case of the parents. The sons are summoned to appear before this committee as a preliminary step, and if they do appear, or volunteer to pay the Guardians the sum which the Ability of Relatives Committee assess them at, no further proceedings are taken, and the warrant officer collects every week from the sons the amount they have voluntarily agreed to repay to the Guardians. Failing that, the board would authorise proceedings to be taken for the recovery of those sums."[6]

95. Some interesting statistics were put in by Mr. F. W. Mee, Clerk to the Hunslet Guardians, from which it will be seen that this Board deals actively with the question of both liable and non-liable relatives, and by assuming an authority which is not always maintainable in law succeed in obtaining contributions from sons and other relatives in a large proportion of cases:—

> "The following figures show our dealings with new cases of liable relatives of paupers during the year ended Michaelmas, 1906:—
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Number of separate cases dealt with | 93 |
> | Number of relatives dealt with | 185 |
> | Sons ordered to pay whole cost | 1 |
> | Sons ordered to pay part cost | 48 |
> | Sons excused payment | 25 |
> | Sons ordered to keep parents | 45 |
> | Sons ordered to pay parents direct | 53 |
> | Grandfather ordered to repay | 1 |
> | Other relatives ordered to contribute | 12 |
>
> "In addition to these cases numerous others arose in which a notice from the relieving officer was sufficient to bring sons to their senses without the cases coming before the Guardians.
>
> "Over half the recorded cases were disposed of without the parents becoming paupers by a show of apparent authority."[7]

Difficulty in obtaining information.

96. There is often much difficulty in ascertaining whether applicants have relatives able to contribute to their support, and the applicants themselves not infrequently give incorrect information or no information at all.[8] In some Unions it is the practice to refuse outdoor relief in such cases, and this sometimes leads to the withdrawal of the application or to an offer to contribute.[9] We see great advantage in the provisions contained in Section

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[1] Visits, Urban 43 A. [2] Craig, 19466 (8). 19635. [3] Dyson, 20339. [4] Lang. Stat. 13. [5] Briant 15090. Morris, 16732. Kendrick, 22504. Jones, 49848. Pearson, 72331. Visits, Urban 14, 15, 17, G. 20, 25 A., 40 A. [6] Solomon, 50535. [7] Mee, Vol. IV., App. lxxviii. (65–7). [8] Wilkes, 75346 (9), Thoburn, 35693 (50). Peters 19757. Cooper, 36845–8. Ford, 39776 (16). But *vide* Briant, 14992. Wright, 40042–4.

70 of the Poor Law (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1845, which gives to the Poor Law Authorities power to require an applicant to answer on oath all questions regarding his case which may be put to him before any Justice of the Peace or Magistrate.

Failure to recover amounts ordered.

97. In a good many cases the amounts ordered to be contributed by sons are not recovered. Mr. Preston-Thomas says :—

> "Occasionally a son is ordered to pay, perhaps. 1s. a week towards the out-relief of his father, he pays for a little time and then he falls into arrear, the debt accumulates and accumulates and finally it is often wiped off."

Publication of amounts in arrear.

98. Mr. Preston-Thomas also states that in some Unions the Guardians publish statements showing exactly the amounts in arrear, and that this action has had a salutary effect.[2]

Collection of repayments.

99. The collection of the amounts repayable by relatives is in some of the larger Unions placed in the hands of a special officer, but in the large majority of Unions the relieving officers are appointed as collectors and receive a percentage, generally 10 per cent.. upon the amount collected.[3] This arrangement is open to obvious objection.

Amounts recovered.

100. In the Table previously mentioned which was put in by Mr. Baldwyn Fleming, the amounts recovered from relatives in each Union in his district are given for the years 1903–4 and 1904–5. In every Union something was recovered, and the totals were £17,633 in 1903–4, and £18,824 in 1904–5.[4] The amounts recovered in other Unions have also been mentioned by witnesses.[5]

Larger amounts recovered in respect of out-relief.

101. In Lambeth, £5,850 was recovered in 1905, as compared with only £3,263 in 1896.[6] Some interesting particulars were also put in by Mr. F. T. James, Clerk to the Merthyr Tydfil Guardians, showing that the amounts recovered in that Union had averaged about £2,500 during the three years ended Michaelmas, 1906. The amounts recovered in respect of outdoor relief and of indoor relief are distinguished, and it appears that whilst £1,600 was collected in respect of outdoor relief only £400 or £500 was in respect of indoor relief. The remainder was chiefly in respect to lunacy cases.[7] The greater desire of the Guardians to obtain repayment in respect of outdoor relief was referred to by Mr. Davy, who thought that very often it does not occur to them to ask for repayment for indoor cases.[8] Mr. Lockwood states, however, that a contribution is made for inmates of the infirmaries in a good many cases.[9]

Increase in amount of repayments.

102. Some witnesses have stated that they thought there had recently been an improvement in regard to the amounts recovered,[10] and this would appear to be the case for the total amount received from relatives and property of paupers in England and Wales, including repayments of relief on loan, amounted to £211,061, or 2·5 per cent. of the total poor relief expenditure, in the year 1888–9, and to £442,355, or 3·0 per cent. of the expenditure, in 1905–6.[11] It should be mentioned, however, in connection with these figures and those previously given that a large proportion of the repayments are in respect of pauper lunatics. In the total practically one-half was recovered in respect of lunacy cases, in regard to the treatment of which there are only the alternatives of the expensive private houses, County Lunatic Asylums, and the pauper institutions.[12] A large number of persons who are able to pay moderate sums are thus compelled to send their relatives, through the Poor Law, to the County and Borough Asylums and to repay the Guardians the whole or a proportion of the cost. It may be here mentioned, however, that the Guardians receive a grant of 4s. a week in respect of each pauper lunatic maintained in an asylum, registered hospital, or licensed house for whom the net charge upon the Guardians amounts to or exceeds 4s. a week. If the net cost be less than 4s. no grant is obtained. Consequently, unless the full maintenance charges are repaid,

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[1] Preston-Thomas, 4296, 12465. *Vide also* Kerwin, 18279. Phillips, 71016. Hood, 71674. [2] Preston-Thomas, 12466–8. [3] Briant, 15236. Phillips, 71017–20. Wilkes, 75529–39. [4] Fleming, 9347, Vol. I., App. xix. (E), [5] Cutter, 19206. Thomas, 50238. Piggott, 75924. Louch, Vol. VII., App. lvii, (12). Visits, Urban 25B., 51B. [6] Thurnall, 15785. [7] James, 48395, and App. No. I. (F). [8] Davy, 3001. [9] Lockwood, 4076. [10] Preston-Thomas, 4296. Price, 67743 (15). Lang, Vol. VII., App. lvi. (13). [11] Local Taxation Returns, 1888–9, Part I. (H.C. 196 of 1890), p. v.; and 1905–6, Parts I. and IV. (H.C. 321 and 321—III. of 1907), pp. 78 and 56 respectively. [12] Fleming, 9347.

it is to the interest of the Guardians not to press for a larger repayment than will leave the net cost at 4s. a week, and in this way relatives well able to pay are sometimes excused from the repayment of a portion of the maintenance charges.

Variation in proportion of relief recovered.

103. Although it has been shown that amounts are recovered from relatives in most Unions, we are conscious from observations made during our visits that the degree in which contributions are enforced varies considerably. So far as statistics are able to prove this we may refer again to Mr. Baldwyn Fleming's Table from which it is found that whilst in one Union less than 1 per cent. of the poor relief expenditure was recovered from relatives in another the percentage amounted to over 8 per cent. In Portsmouth, £4,247, or 5·8 per cent. of the expenditure, was recovered from relatives or the paupers themselves, in Southampton only £761, or 1·5 per cent.

No effort made to obtain repayments in some Unions.

104. In Northampton no effort appears to be made to recover from relatives. The Rev. W. E. Chadwick, vicar of St. Giles, Northampton, says :—

> "In Northampton (I can speak personally for my own parish I do not know of a single case in which there is any repayment to the Guardians from children. If the Guardians give out-relief there is no real effort to make the grown-up sons and daughters who might be able to pay, pay something back.
>
> "The enforcing of the family liability is very rare?—Very rare indeed. I think there have been in two years six cases brought into court, and all have been discharged except one."[1]

105. In another Union the election placard issued by four representatives of Friendly Societies, contained as the first item in the programme :—

> "Adequate outdoor relief in every deserving case. Relatives not to be called upon to contribute to such relief."[2]

Desirability of uniformity in enforcement of law.

106. It is difficult to establish any direct connection between the disinclination of children to maintain their parents and the frequent failure of the Guardians to enforce filial responsibility; but it is, perhaps, still more difficult to believe that there is no connection. We think that the want of uniformity in practice is largely responsible both for the neglect of filial duties, and for the resentment felt towards any attempt to enforce them. If the law were regularly enforced as a matter of course, the attempt to evade it and the consequent friction would be diminished.

107. Mr. W. S. Price, Clerk to the Guardians for the Wellington Union of Somersetshire, says :—

> "There is little doubt that the practice of the Guardians with regard to relatives of paupers being generally known, in many cases children undertake the maintenance of their parents without allowing them to apply for relief."[3]

Persons relieved owing to Disagreements amongst children.

108. A considerable number of cases are driven to apply for Poor Law relief because of disagreement amongst the children as to the amount of their contributions and in such cases the refusal of out-relief becomes ineffective as a means of coercion.[4] It has been suggested to us in connection with such cases :—

> "That aged and infirm persons eligible for outdoor relief should be empowered to take legal proceedings against their relatives for support, without applying to a Board of Guardians."[5]

The witness quoted in support of this suggestion the case of an old woman with eight sons, whose only reason for not maintaining her was disagreement among themselves.[6]

109. Mr. H. A. Craig, the superintendent relieving officer for St. Pancras, says that in that parish there have been during the last three years 150 cases where children, have refused to maintain their parents and the old people have had to apply to the Guardians in consequence.[7] And Mr. J. T. Thompson, president of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, estimates that in the Metropolitan area there are from

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[1] Chadwick, 47024-5, *also* 47085. [2] Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv., (J). [3] Price, 67743 (16). [4] Bagenal, 7316. Craig, 19466 (31). Bircham, Vol. I., App. x. (A) (42). [5] Peters, 19734 (4). [6] Peters, Vol. II., App. viii. (B). [7] Craig, 19557.

800 to 1,000 cases per annum of aged and needy persons who would not need to come to the Poor Law if they had any means of making their liable relatives support them without seeking aid of the Poor Law.[1]

Question of poor persons proceeding against relations without intervention of Guardians.

110. At present, as we have already pointed out, the Guardians of the Poor, on a person becoming chargeable, may take proceedings to recover the cost of his maintenance from relations within the terms of affinity set down in 43 Eliz., c. 2, Sec. 6, who "being of sufficient ability, shall at their own charges relieve and maintain every such poor person." It is suggested that in the case of relations coming within the terms of this Section, individuals aggrieved by not being wholly or in part maintained by such relations, should have a statutory right to proceed against them on their own behalf. It is affirmed that in many cases the question of maintenance could be more suitably dealt with by a direct appeal to court, without the intervention of the Board of Guardians, for in these cases the applicants are pauperised quite unnecessarily, as the relations are in a position to assist, and would do so if they were ordered by the court to do so. We recommend that in any revision of the Poor Laws this suggestion be fully considered with a view to the amendment of the laws in this sense.

Removal of limitation of period during which Guardians may obtain orders.

111. Whilst suggesting that poor persons should have power themselves to proceed against liable relatives for their support, we do not wish to diminish the powers of the Authorities in regard to recovery from relatives. Indeed, we think that greater powers should be conferred upon them by the removal of the limitation of the period during which the Guardians may obtain orders. It will be remembered that orders are at present only obtainable during the chargeability of the poor person, and we see no reason why the Public Assistance Authorities should not have power to take proceedings against liable relatives before the applicant becomes actually chargeable, and to recover from such relatives, after the poor person has ceased to be chargeable, the value of the relief given. This amendment of the law would, we think, result in many persons being maintained by their relatives without pauperisation.

Liability to support grandparents.

112. We may also say here that we think the liability of children to support their grandparents should be established. Although the reciprocal liability exists, it has been held that the provisions of the Act of Eliz. do not attach any liability to grandchildren, and this anomaly should, we think, be removed.

Procedure for recovery from relatives.

113. Reasons given for the failure of the Guardians to take action for the recovery of relief from relatives are that the procedure gives much trouble, and that the action may be unsuccessful.[2] The procedure before the Magistrates is not so tedious as the procedure in the County Court, but nevertheless it involves considerable trouble and delay. Mr. H. I. Cooper, Clerk to the Bolton Guardians, pointed out that :—

> "Under the existing law, sums due to Boards of Guardians from relatives of paupers in respect of the maintenance of such paupers are to be recovered as civil debts. The following is the process which has to be gone through at the County Petty Sessions Court in the Bolton Union :—
>
> (1) Summons and order on liable relatives.
>
> (2) Upon non-payment, summons for arrears and order for payment of arrears.
>
> (3) Upon disobedience of the order for payment of arrears, application to be made to court for distress warrant.
>
> (4) In case there are no effects to distrain upon, another summons is necessary, calling upon the defendant to show cause why he should not be committed to prison.
>
> (5) Upon defendant appearing, the onus of proof that the defendant has had means wherewith to pay is upon the Guardians, and it is very difficult to prove in some cases.
>
> "These proceedings are cumbersome and expensive ; often the relatives of paupers are without goods on which to distrain." [3]

114. As with regard to the procedure for the recovery of loan relief, we think that some simplification should be effected in the process applicable to recovery from relatives. There is some difference between the procedure for recovery of money due under contribution orders made upon relatives and the procedure under Bastardy Orders. Money due under an order of Justices made upon a person for the maintenance of a relative under the Poor Relief Act, 1601 (43 Eliz., c. 2, Sec. 7), is recoverable before a Court of Summary

[1] Thompson, 22535 (2), 22566, 22903. [2] Court, 6176, 6221. [3] Cooper, 36692 (14-15).

Jurisdiction as a civil debt, and not as a penalty, so that the provisions of Sec. 35 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, apply, and an order of Justices for the payment of money so due cannot be enforced by imprisonment in default of distress, unless it is proved that the person in default has since the date of the order had the means to pay the sum in respect of which he has made default. Sums due under an Order in Bastardy are enforceable by criminal process, and not as civil debts. That is to say, a man failing to comply with an Order in Bastardy may be apprehended and in default of sufficient distress, be committed to prison without reference to the question of his ability to pay. If the latter procedure be considered too drastic to apply to the recovery of money due on contribution orders made upon relatives, we think that the present procedure should at least be amended by requiring proof of inability to pay from the relative instead of ability to pay from the Authorities.

Reasons suggested for laxness in enforcement of law.

115. Amongst other reasons which have also been given for the reluctance of Guardians to recover from relatives are :—

(1) That the strict application of the law in rural areas would have the effect of driving the young men to the towns [1]; and

(2) That, in the case of medical relief, it is difficult to attach a value.

116. To the first of these reasons, to which reference is also made in Mr. Jones' Report on Suffolk and Cambridge, we do not attach much importance. Removal from the district does not relieve a man of his liability, and although a few cases may have occurred where responsibility has thus been evaded, it is improbable that the enforcement of the law will operate in this direction to any great extent. It is the plain duty of the Guardians to enforce the fulfilment of the obligation which the law imposes ; and we think that, to prevent a failure of justice, in these and other cases resort should be had to the assistance of other local poor relief authorities for making inquiries as well as of the police and other agencies. In the case of poor relief authorities the obligation to assist should be imposed upon them by Statute. These authorities should not be isolated bodies each working and investigating separately, but associated bodies each giving assistance to others in carrying out common duties. The second question is fully discussed in the chapter on Medical Relief.

Influence of Metropolitan Common Poor Fund on question.

117. Reference may also be here made to a financial arrangement which has operated against the enforcement of the law in London. In claiming from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund the sum of 5d. per head per day for each indoor pauper the Guardians are required to set against their claim any sums received from relatives in respect of such paupers, up to the amount charged against the fund. Consequently each Union does not obtain the benefit of the sums it recovers, except to the extent to which in any case the repayment may exceed 5d. a day.[3] This difficulty would disappear under the scheme for the formation of a County Authority for London, which we advocate in a later Chapter.

More might be recovered from relatives.

118. That more might be done in the way of recovering contributions from liable relatives is the opinion of many witnesses.[4] We think this is clear and that the new Poor Law Authorities should pursue this policy uniformly and with firmness and discretion.

119. As an alternative to proceeding against persons for the support of their relatives the assistance is sometimes offered in the less attractive form of indoor relief, or is occasionally reduced in amount. Whilst the offer of the workhouse is a perfectly legitimate method of inducing relatives to contribute, we should deprecate any attempt to accomplish this end by reducing the amount of out-relief given below what is required to meet the needs of the case. If the person relieved be living with the relatives who, it is thought, should assist, it is obvious that the amount of the relief which would otherwise be granted should be reduced to the extent to which it is considered the relatives should assist, for it would be ridiculous to grant a larger amount and then to call upon the relatives to repay part of it. But where the recipient of relief is not living with relatives, adequate relief

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[1] Court, 6174, Vol. I., App. xiii. (14). Burges, 72166. Wood, Vol. VII., App. ccxii. (3). [2] Davy, 2479. [3] Downes, 23087. Mott, 14766. Briant, 14922. [4] Court, 6430. Herbert, 8446–7. Fleming, 9390. Williams, 45464 (15). Childe, 71062 (3). Mahomed, 76132. Reynolds, Vol. VII., App. cxlvi., 25–7.

should be granted whether the effort to recover from the relatives be successful or not. These, in the main, were the views taken on these points by the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, to paragraphs 155 and 156 of whose Report we may refer.[1]

120. In the case of relations who are not legally liable the Guardians frequently not only neglect, but actually refuse, to recognise any responsibility at all;[2] with the consequence that much relief is given into households of which the aggregate income of the members places them far beyond the position of want:— Recovery from non-liable relatives.

> "Relief is given almost irrespective of income in the case of old people living with relatives not legally liable. This statement applies in practice with slightly varying degree, to the whole of the Unions in . . . which I visited."[3]

121. On the other hand, it appears that in some Unions a rule has been adopted which prohibits the granting of out-relief to persons residing with relatives where the united income of the family is sufficient for the support of all, whether such relatives are legally liable to maintain them or not. The rule is not strictly adhered to, however, for there is much difference of opinion amongst Guardians as to the propriety of the policy.[4]

122. We thoroughly endorse the principle that relatives, other than liable relatives, should assist wherever possible. The names of such persons should be carefully entered; and they should be approached as friendly assistants in the relief of their relatives, asked to co-operate with the local authority in the fulfilment of a personal duty. Sometimes it may be found best to leave the care of particular cases to voluntary assistance, which, acting on other lines, may be able to obtain the help of relatives, employers and friends for persons in distress who have applied for public relief.[5] The attitude of the Poor Law Authorities towards non-liable relatives should, however, be governed by the limitations we have indicated regarding recovery from relatives legally liable.

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[1] Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor [Cd. 7684], 1895, Pars. 155-6. [2] Ball, 35566–9. Skivington, 36501–4. [3] Visits: Urban 96. [4] Stableforth, 51369. Crowther, Vol. IV., App. lxiii. 3). [5] Briant, 15282. Peters, 19986. Jones, 49848–52. Court, 6627. Preston-Thomas, 12421. Foster, 6428–39. But *Vide* Briant, 14988–92.

Chapter 4.

BASTARDY.

(A) *Maintenance Orders.*

123. Under the Bastardy Laws before 1834, any man became the putative father of an illegitimate child on the uncorroborated oath of the mother. The putative father was then liable to imprisonment in default of maintaining the child and the amount of any maintenance order made by the Magistrate against the putative father was paid by the parish to the mother, quite irrespective of whether the putative father in fact made any payment at all. On the other hand, the mother herself was liable to a year's imprisonment for each bastard child who became chargeable to the parish. These laws had been productive of so much immorality and injustice that the Royal Commission of 1832 recommended that they should be totally abolished and that the whole burden of an illegitimate child's maintenance should be thrown in the first instance upon the mother, or, if she married, upon her husband.[1] The Poor Law Act of 1834 gave effect in the main to these proposals, but, during the passage of the Bill through Parliament, the Government accepted an amendment enabling the parish to recover from the putative father the cost of relieving an illegitimate child, provided that the evidence of the mother as to the paternity of the child was corroborated in some material particular. To this extent, therefore, the recommendations of the Royal Commission were modified.[2]

124. The only Sections of the Act of 1834 dealing with bastardy which are still in force, are Section 57, which makes a man liable for the maintenance of the children of the woman he marries, whether those children are legitimate or illegitimate, and Section 71, which makes an unmarried woman liable for her children till the age of sixteen. In 1844 an important change was made in the law: heretofore, from Elizabeth's time downwards, the sole object avowed by the Statutes regarding affiliation was indemnity of the parish for the charge of supporting the child. The new Act departed entirely from this principle; in it, redress to the woman was the object, it being now "admitted that the mother of the bastard, not the parish, is the party by whom redress is to be sought from the putative father, and the means placed at her disposal are the cheapest and most accessible known to the laws of this country," a proceeding in Petty Sessions. All pre-existing powers of the parish, therefore, for obtaining orders on putative fathers for the maintenance of bastard children were abrogated.[3]

125. It was evident, however, that this made no change in the duty of Guardians towards mothers and bastards: they were, like other persons, entitled to relief when destitute—the payment made by the putative father being, of course, considered among the "means" of such paupers.

Existing Statute Law as to Bastardy.

126. The existing Statute law on the subject of bastardy is contained in more recent enactments. "The effect of the more material of these provisions is as follows: Any single woman with child or delivered of a bastard may, either before the birth or at any time within twelve months from the birth of a child, or at any time thereafter on proof that the putative father has within the twelve months next after the birth paid money for the maintenance of the child, or at any time within twelve months next after the return to England of the putative father on proof that he ceased to reside in England within the twelve months next after the birth, make application to a Justice for a summons against the putative father. If the application is made before the birth

[1] Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832 [Cd. 2728], 1905, pp. 166, 346. [2] Adrian, 419.
[3] Smart, Mem. 78.

the woman must make a deposition on oath stating who is the father. The Justice shall issue his summons requiring the putative father to appear at a Petty Session (35 & 36 Vic. c. 65, Sec. 3). Another form of application is permissible. This application is authorised by the 36 Vic., c. 9, Sec. 5. It is made by the Guardians, and it can only be made after the birth of the child, and after the child becomes chargeable. Where the Guardians apply, their application must be made to two Justices, and thereupon the Justices may summon the putative father to appear before any two Justices to show cause why an order should not be made upon him to contribute towards the relief of the child."[1] "With regard to the other kind of application, that of the Guardians, it is to be observed that the foundation for this is the actual chargeability of the child. Hence there may be a difficulty in making the putative father contributory in the event of the cessation of chargeability, unless within the prescribed time the woman has also availed herself of her right to apply."[2]

Procedure.

127. "At the hearing, in cases where the application is made by the mother after the birth of the child, the Justices, on the appearance of the person summoned, or on proof of due service of the summons, are to hear the evidence of the woman, and such other evidence as she may produce, and also any evidence on behalf of the putative father; and if the evidence of the mother be corroborated in some material particular by other evidence, to the satisfaction of the Justices, they may adjudge the man to be the putative father of the bastard child. The proceeding at the hearing on the application of the Guardians is, up to this point, essentially similar."[3]

The Order.

128. "The order on the application of a woman takes various forms according to the varying circumstances of cases. The cases are these:—

(1) Where the application was made before the birth of the child and the child is alive.

(2) Where the application was made before the birth of the child and the child has been born and is dead.

(3) Where the application is made after the birth of the child and the child is alive; and

(4) Where the application is made after the birth of the child and the child is dead.

129. If the Justices adjudge the man to be the putative father of the child, they may also, if they see fit, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, proceed to make an order on the putative father according to the exigencies of the cases above enumerated. Thus the order may direct payment to the mother or to any person appointed to have the custody of the child (that is, where the mother is of unsound mind or a prisoner) of a weekly sum not exceeding 5s. for the maintenance and education of the child; also:—

(*a*) The expenses incidental to the birth of the child.

(*b*) The funeral expenses of the child, if it has died before the making of the order.

(*c*) The costs incurred in obtaining the order; and where the application is made before the birth or within two months after the birth the weekly sum may, i the Justices think fit, be calculated from the birth (35 & 36 Vic., c. 65, Sec. 4).[4]

130. "Where the application is made by the Guardians under Section 5 of the Bastardy Laws Amendment Act, 1873, the order may direct the putative father to pay to the Guardians or one of their officers such sum weekly or otherwise towards the relief of the child during such time as the child shall continue or afterwards be chargeable as shall appear to them to be proper. Any payment will be recoverable by the officer appointed to receive it. Procedure in regard to and under the order is subject to the important conditions set out in the form of provisoes to Sec. 5 of the Act of 1873. The provisoes are as follows:—

'(1) That no payments shall be recoverable under such order except in respect of the time during which the child is actually in receipt of relief.

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[1] Adrian, 420. [2] Adrian, 421. [3] Adrian, 423. [4] Adrian, 425.

(2) That an order under this Section shall not be made and if made shall cease except for the recovery of arrears when the mother of the child has obtained an order. . . .

(3) That nothing in this Section shall be deemed to relieve the mother of a bastard child from her liability to maintain such child.

(4) That any person upon whom an order is made under this Section shall have the same right of appeal against such order as in the case of an order obtained on the application of the mother.

(5) That if after an order has been made under this Section the mother should apply for an order . . . the order made under this section shall be *primâ facie* evidence that the man upon whom the order is made is the father of the child.' (36 Vic., c. 9, Sec. 5.)"

131. "With reference to the second proviso it is to be observed that, in the event of the child being no longer chargeable, the order obtained by the Guardians will not authorise the mother to obtain payment from the putative father. For this she will need a fresh order, and this must be obtained on her own application. This apparently she may obtain during the currency of the order obtained by the Guardians. But her application must be made within the time allowed to her apart from the proceedings of the Guardians.'"[1]

132. We have received important evidence to the effect that procedure under the law as it now stands is uncertain and difficult, and that the power of the Guardians needs enlarging. The following extracts from the evidence show the gravity of the position.

133. Mr. Joseph Brown, the President of the Poor Law Unions in England and Wales was asked if anything was done if a man absconded. He replied :—

> "Nothing is done. I should think perhaps only in one out of every three cases are we able to obtain the order."[2]

134. And his colleague, Mr. King, who had been Chairman of the Wallingford Board since 1874, said :—

> "In my opinion power should be given to boards to obtain an order from the putative father of a bastard child for contribution towards the maintenance of the mother independently of the child, during her chargeability. As the matter now stands, the mother is often chargeable three or four months before and after the birth of her child. If she leaves, say, within one month of the child's birth, the guardians have in practice no remedy, as in present circumstances, they can only recover the cost of the child's maintenance, which, if breast-fed, is practically nil. Moreover, no order can be applied for by a board till after birth, and this practically gives no time to procure one, so that there is to all intents and purposes no remedy against the father in the very large majority of cases which come to the union infirmary."[3]

135. A witness from West Ham, says :—

> "Very large numbers of single women are admitted to the workhouse in a pregnant condition, and these come under the notice of the special committee consisting of the lady members of the Board and are in turn seen by me with a view to taking steps to compel the putative fathers to contribute towards the maintenance of the children."
>
> "During the three years ended 31st December, 1905, forty-two such cases were settled in favour of the mothers, either by orders made by the justices at petty sessions, or by properly attested agreements ; but many young women prefer to leave the workhouse as soon as possible after confinement, consequently, proceedings in the larger number of cases have not been taken."[4]

136. Another representation frequently made to us is that an order obtained on the application of the Guardians, which at present lapses on the mother ceasing to be chargeable, should *ipso facto* be renewed on the mother again becoming chargeable.

137. The most important suggestions for reform received by us are the following :—

(1) That an order once obtained, either by the mother or the Guardians, shall be available by whichever party is maintaining the child, and that where the order has been obtained by the mother, the Guardians, if maintaining the child, be empowered to apply for an increase in the amount of the allowance.

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[1] Adrian, 427. [2] Brown, 24843. [3] King, 25264 (6c). [4] Rusbridge, 20418 (10).

(2) That an order may be obtainable without the evidence of the mother, when through death, insanity, or other sufficient causes her evidence cannot be obtained.[1]

(3) That an order once obtained should remain in force until the child reaches the age mentioned in the order, whether the mother lives or not.[2]

(4) That a putative father should be liable for the maintenance of the mother during her chargeability.[3]

138. With regard to the first point we are advised that, under Sec. 7 of the Act of 1872, payment can be recovered by the Guardians under an order obtained by the mother. We think that the wording of the Act is not clear on this point, and that it should be expressly stated that an order once obtained, either by the mother or the Guardians, shall be available by whichever party is maintaining the child, and that, where the order has been obtained by the mother, the Guardians, if maintaining the child, shall be empowered to apply for an increase in the amount of the allowance.[4]

139. With regard to the second point, we cannot recommend that an order should be obtainable without the evidence of the mother; but we recommend that action for recovery of expenses of chargeability be brought against the alleged putative father by the Guardians immediately on the birth of the child, according to the evidence obtained by them, irrespective of the fact whether the mother is then able at once to give evidence or not; and that, if the mother is then unable to give evidence on account of her state of health, the man should be bound over to appear at a later date.

140. With regard to the case in which the mother dies before the child reaches the age mentioned in the order, some provision is already made in the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1844. "After the death of such mother, or if such mother be incapacitated as aforesaid, so often as any bastard child for whose maintenance such order of Petty Sessions has been made becomes chargeable to any parish or Union by the neglect of the putative father to make the payments due . . . then it shall be lawful for the Board to make such applications for the enforcement of the order as might have been made by the mother."[5] It is to be noted that the chargeability to the parish must be due definitely to the "neglect of the putative father." We think that this should be amended, and that, under whatever circumstances the child becomes chargeable, the chargeability of the father should remain and be enforced, with—as we have said—the enforcement of a larger payment if necessary.

141. The fourth point is insufficiently met by the present law, under which a mother (but not the Guardians) can obtain the expenses incidental to the birth of her child.[6] It is, however, entirely discretionary in the Justices to give them incidental expenses. (Stones's Justices Manual, p. 153.) We recommend that the putative father be chargeable for the maintenance of the mother of his child from the date of the mother's admission to relief, and for the child after birth; and that, immediately on the mother's admission, inquiry on behalf of the Local Authority be made in regard to the paternity of the child. If the cases be numerous these inquiries should be made by a special officer suitable for the work; but the interrogation of the mother should be by a woman.

142. In the previous Chapter we referred to the procedure for enforcing payment of arrears under the Bastardy Acts. That procedure, when the order has been made on the mother's application, is as follows:—

> "What is the procedure for enforcing payments under orders made on the mother's application?—Provision is made for enforcing payment of arrears under such an order by empowering justice by warrant to cause the putative father to be brought before any two justices, and, "in case such putative father neglect or refuse to make payment of the sums due from him under such order, or since any commitment for disobedience to such order as hereinafter provided, together with the costs attending such warrant, apprehension, and bringing up of such putative father, such two justices may, by warrant under their hands and seals, direct the sum so appearing to be

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[1] Brown, 24741 (17). [2] King, 25264 (6 c). [3] *Vide* Recommendations from Boards of Guardians in the Appendix. [4] Curtis & Battersby, 28796 (17). [5] 7 & 8 Vic., cap. 101, sec. 7. [6] Bastardy Law Amendment Acts, 1872. Sec. 4.

due, together with such costs, to be recovered by distress . . . . and may order such putative father to be detained and kept in safe custody until return can be conveniently made to such warrant of distress, unless he give sufficient security by way of recognisance or otherwise to the satisfaction of such justices for his appearance before two justices on the day which may be appointed for the return of such warrant of distress." If no sufficient distress can be had, any two justices may commit the putative father to gaol for a term not exceeding three months unless the sum and cost be sooner paid (35 & 36 Vic., c. 65, Sec. 4). With regard to the amendments which the legislation of 1872 and 1873 effected in the law, it may be noted that any reasonable sum may be ordered to be paid as incidental to the birth of the child and of its funeral; and the recovery of the weekly sums is not limited to a particular arrear; payments may be directed to continue until the child reaches sixteen years of age. Where an order has been made on the application of the mother, and the child has become chargeable after the death of the mother, the guardians are empowered to make any such application for the enforcement of the order as the mother might have made if alive (7 & 8 Vic., c. 101, Sec. 7). Also during the lifetime of the mother in a case where an order has been made on her application, and where the child has become chargeable, two justices may appoint some relieving officer or other officer of the Poor Law Union to receive, on account of the Poor Law Union, such proportion of the payments then due or becoming due as may accrue during the period for which the child is chargeable (35 & 36 Vic., c. 65. Sec. 7).[1]

143. It has been represented to us that in a large number of cases this procedure fails, and that the man escapes payment by the simple expedient of removing to another place. We think that this difficulty will be very largely met by the recommendations made by us in the last Chapter, that the Poor Law and other authorities, both in the same and in different districts, be required to co-operate in enforcing the law. It is also desirable that fathers against whom affiliation orders are made should be required to report to the Court changes in address.

144. There is a minor point of procedure in connection with bastardy orders which we consider deserves attention. It has been strongly alleged to us that the practice of making orders against putative fathers in terms necessitating direct payment by the man to the woman, is productive of undesirable results, and sometimes tends to increase bastardy. It is not right that the terms of a legal order should serve as a pretext for periodical visits by a man to the woman he has seduced, and the position is even worse when, through failure of the payments, the woman is induced to frequent the man's house with a view to obtaining her money.

145. Miss Hogg, secretary of the Southwark Diocesan Association for the Care of Friendless Girls, says :—

"I have no hesitation in stating that when payments are made direct from the father to the mother the effect is so detrimental that so far as the influence of this Association is concerned the law is practically a dead letter."[2]

146. Miss Newill, president of the Birmingham Association for Rescue Training of Young Women, says :—

"The great aim of all rescue workers is to sever all connection between the putative father and the mother of an illegitimate child. For very obvious reasons the man should never be allowed to pay directly to the woman. At present no one but the mother is legally authorised to receive it. By threats or persuasions the man when paying directly has every opportunity to induce the woman either to return to him or relinquish her claim upon him."[3]

147. Miss Hall, honorary secretary of the outdoor rescue work department of the Church Army, says :—

"If, on the application of a solicitor acting on behalf of some rescue association or of the mother herself, an affiliation order is granted, payment is required to be made direct by the father of the child to the mother. But the great aim of the rescue worker is to break off all connection between the father and the mother. A weekly payment on a magistrates' order involves constant meetings which not only prevent the mother settling down in a respectable way of life, but most undesirable results almost inevitably ensue. Either she has to hang about on pay day at the shop where he works (and it very soon becomes well known why she is there), or she has to haunt his home or the place where he lodges; with the result that her shame is blazoned abroad and she becomes at least the centre of a degraded notoriety. If, as is often the case, the father regains his hold upon her, he works upon her affections, and not infrequently drags her down again, with the result that Boards of Guardians are apt to regard her as an altogether depraved woman, when the blame, as a matter of justice, should be laid on other shoulders."[4]

148. We think, therefore, that bastardy orders should invariably be made payable through the agency of some person other than the mother of the illegitimate child.

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[1] Adrian, 426. [2] Hogg, Vol. XI., App. (2). [3] Newill, Vol. XI., App. (2). [4] Hall, Vol. XI., App. (2).

We make this recommendation both in the interests of morality and of the ratepayers, who are so frequently called upon to support many bastard children of a single mother. As regards cases which involve no chargeability upon the rates, the Justices should be required, where the circumstances are favourable, to appoint an agent through whom the payments to the mother would be made.

(B) *Treatment of Unmarried Mothers.*

149. There is perhaps no more difficult problem in Poor Law administration than the treatment of unmarried mothers, and none in which discriminating methods might have greater results. The need for introducing a different system from the present has made itself universally felt amongst Poor Law workers, and there are certain points upon which our evidence is practically unanimous.

150. A very large proportion of the births which take place in the workhouse are illegitimate. Mr. Lockwood gives the numbers of legitimate and illegitimate respectively for six months in seven London workhouses, and the totals are 145 legitimate and 245 illegitimate.[1] Mr. Kendrick states that all the births in the Stone (Staffs.) workhouse the previous year were illegitimate.[2] Mr. Tarrant states that:—

> "During the past five years there have been 229 births in this institution, and 177, or 77·2 per cent., of these have been illegitimate children, the mothers of whom for the most part are mentally weak, and in many cases approaching the imbecile."[3]

Mr. H. Senior says:—

> "Out of forty-five pregnant cases during the years 1905 and 1906 thirty-one were single women."[4]

Mr. H. Cooper says:—

> "In the workhouse of this union there are a great many illegitimate children born—children of young single women who go to the workhouse for the purpose of confinement. During the year ended June, 1906, there were thirty-two births in the workhouse, of which eight children only were legitimate and twenty-four illegitimate."[5]

151. Some witnesses have felt strongly the fact that to many of these women there is nothing deterrent about the workhouse, and that they are able to obtain there treatment which is far superior to that within reach of the independent labourer's wife. The Rev. J. R. James says:—

> "There is no doubt but that a premium is put upon illegitimacy by the ease with which the mothers of illegitimate children are admitted to the lying-in wards. I know of one such ward where during seven years seven different women have been confined of from three to five children by different fathers, and to these same wards it is very difficult for married women whose husbands earn a bare living wage to gain admission, in addition to the fact of the demoralisation which follows upon association with the regular inmates. The girl who comes to be delivered of her illegitimate child finds that there are numbers of others in the same case as herself, and feels no shame in returning in like case again."[6]

152. The fundamental mistake hitherto has lain in the tacit assumption that all unmarried mothers coming into the workhouse belong to the same class, and are to be dealt with on the same lines. It has become clear to us that in future we must distinguish between at least three classes: the feeble-minded or irresponsible, the young mothers who are responsible but have fallen for the first time, and the women who have no desire to lead a respectable life.

153. With regard to the first class, the feeble minded, their case is fully dealt with in the Report of the Commission on Feeble-minded. If, as we hope, the recommendations of that Commission are carried into effect, a system of control over the feeble-minded will be initiated which will put an end to one of the most prolific sources of pauperism, and free the Poor Law administrator from one of his greatest difficulties.

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[1] Lockwood, 14017. [2] Kendrick, 22394. [3] Tarrant, Vol. IV., App. cii. (12). [4] Senior Vol. IV., App. xcvi. (9). [5] Cooper, 36693 (6). [6] James, 23566 (8). *Vide also* Vol. V. App. cxi. (56-7).

Meanwhile, we think that as a provisional measure, the Poor Law Authorities should be given power to detain feeble-minded mothers of illegitimate children who come under their care.

154. With regard to the second class, the young mothers who come into the workhouse for their first confinement, there is also great need for reform. Many of these are young girls, greatly to be pitied, who have been much sinned against, and who with proper encouragement and help may be restored to a useful and happy life. We cannot condemn too strongly the present system by which their sojourn in the workhouse becomes too often the introduction to a life of permanent degradation. We attach great importance to the evidence on this point of Miss Stansfeld, who inspects the maternity wards in the Metropolitan District for the Local Government Board. She says :—

> "The experience I have gained impresses upon me the duty of representing to the Royal Commission that, for social reasons, I am of opinion that provision should be made for securing separate treatment for the large class which consists of young unmarried women who come into the maternity wards for the first time. A great deal has been said in favour of the classification of the aged poor and the withdrawal of children from workhouses and infirmaries, but nowhere is classification more needed than in the maternity wards. The unavoidable and close intercourse between the young girl, who often enters upon motherhood comparatively innocent, and the older woman who is lost to all sense of shame and who returns again and again to the maternity ward for the birth of her illegitimate children, constitutes a grave danger. Too often the older woman invites the friendless girl to share her home on leaving and so leads her on to further ruin. A young girl comes from the country to seek her fortune as a servant in London, she is led astray, and, not daring to return to her friends, she applies in her lonely despair to the workhouse maternity ward. Now while I feel sure that the matron and the nurses make every endeavour to shield and to help such a patient (and as a class they are easily distinguishable) it is impossible to avoid contact and conversation with the older women."[1]

155. In London, and probably elsewhere, a large proportion of these young girls have been domestic servants, and Miss Stansfeld assents to the suggestion that this indicates very great carelessness on the part of their mistresses. It also means :—

> "That there are a great many country girls who come up to London quite ignorant of London ways and London's temptations ; they are unprotected and unguarded, and they are thus led astray."[2]

156. In many places, and more especially in the Metropolis, great efforts are being made on behalf of these girls, to give them a fresh start. Miss Stansfeld says of such work that :—

> "It is very much on the increase. I think the amount of voluntary work which is now being done in the maternity wards of the Metropolis is wonderful. I do not think that I remember any one single instance, when asking a girl whether she would receive help on leaving, of her saying No ; and I nearly always ask that question."[3]

157. Those of our witnesses who have experience in work of this kind are generally agreed that it cannot be made really effective under present conditions. Miss Newill, speaking of a committee working in connection with the Birmingham Workhouse, says :

> "The result has been most encouraging, but the committee have felt that for some long time their work has been very sadly handicapped for the want of a home to which these young girls might be sent, instead of mixing for long periods of time—as many often have to do—with the degraded and vicious women who haunt our workhouses all over the country. We believe that the list of these women which now appears to be so large would be wonderfully decreased in the future if we could only rescue all our young unmarried mothers and help them to regain their footing. The moral atmosphere of a workhouse is such that no young girl should be introduced into it if we have any hope or wish to reclaim her."[4]

158. The opinion expressed by this witness is confirmed by the evidence we have received from Bethnal Green, where it has been found possible to separate these "first cases" from the others. The matron says :

> "These women are specially looked after by the midwife and not allowed to come in contact with undesirable women. Each woman is brought before the Ladies Committee, and she is visited by a member, and everything is done to reclaim her. Some of them are sent to homes, others to domestic service. Homes are found for their babies. The girls, if they earn sufficient money, pay 5s. a week, but if at first they cannot earn enough it is made up by the Ladies' Committee. I am glad to be able to state that, during the nine years I have been matron here, I have only known two of these girls return to have their second child."[5]

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[1] Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi. (14). [2] Stansfeld, 14564. [3] *Ibid.*, 14240. [4] Newill, 44920 (4).
[5] Bushell, Vol. II., App. xv. (D).

159. The good results of this system in diminishing the number of cases are seen in the fact that, during the six months already referred to, there were only ten illegitimate births in the Bethnal Green Workhouse, as against seventeen legitimate.[1]

160. Unfortunately, it is not found possible in most workhouses to find accommodation for these cases apart from others. Mr. Briant says:

> "I feel very strongly that there ought to be some means of dealing with them outside, or when they come in, of not mixing them with the other women who have been in, unfortunately, in many cases, several times. That is a very serious blot practically on the administration. With our present workhouse it is very difficult to do otherwise, but I think something should be done to remedy that; it is a crying evil, to my mind."[2]

161. The Hampstead Board has met the difficulty by referring such of these cases as are willing to the Maternity Committee of the Hampstead Charity Organisation Society. Provision is made for them by this committee in voluntary homes, without their being brought before the Board and entering the workhouse. They are subsequently looked after and enabled to make a fresh start.[3]

162. Many witnesses are of opinion that these cases can best be dealt with in separate homes, preferably by voluntary charity, and in any case quite apart from the workhouse. Miss Stansfeld recommends that such a home should be established in connection with the Poor Law:—

> "I would, therefore, venture to recommend that some means should be devised for London generally by which the exclusion of the younger women (*primiparæ*) could be secured. I should venture to suggest the establishment of a special maternity home, with laundries and workrooms attached, to which the various boards of guardians might send such cases for employment before the birth of the child and for those important months afterwards which offer such valuable opportunities for the development of the instinct of motherhood—that instinct which constitutes so great a support to the young and impressionable woman. To such a Home I would also recommend that married women of really good character might, if they wished, be admitted."[4]

At the Liverpool Workhouse:

> "Every unmarried woman who enters such a ward for the first time is given the chance of going to a home with her baby."[5]

Miss Newill says:

> "We would urge that a sufficient number of homes should be started by charitable agencies all over the country to which guardians should subscribe and after due consideration, send suitable cases and maintain them in the home for the requisite period."[6]

163. We are strongly of opinion that these recommendations should be carried out in so far that all first cases should be dealt with in institutions apart from the workhouse. Where suitable voluntary homes are available, it would be well that these should be utilised; and the Authorities should directly endeavour to promote their establishment as certified voluntary homes to which patients may be admitted direct on the order of the Public Assistance Committee, subject to their making such payments as may be agreed for the maintenance and care of the individual case. Failing these, the Poor Law Authorities should institute homes of their own. But in either case we think that the services of charitable workers should be enlisted to watch over the girls on their first return to the world.

164. A large number of witnesses have urged that even these first cases should be detained for a short period after child-birth, partly in order that they may be fully restored to health, and partly in the interests of the child. Miss Zanetti, Inspector under the Infant Life Protection Act to the Chorlton Board of Guardians, says:

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[1] Lockwood, 14017. [2] Briant, 15374. [3] Stansfeld, Vol. I., App. xxvi. (B). [4] *Ibid.* App. xxvi., (a) (15). [5] Thorburn, 35692 (15). [6] Newill, 44920 (5). *Vide also* Thurnall, 15718, Lloyd, 70511 (9b). MacNaughton-Jones, 72976 (4), 73078.

"I think that the detention of unmarried mothers of babies born in workhouses would, if feasible, have an important effect on the infantile death-rate. The mother herself would derive great benefit from good food and lodging for a few months after her confinement, and the child nursed by its mother during that time would have a better chance of healthy life than if brought up on artificial food and left to the care of a baby farmer." [1]

165. We think that, if the young mothers were cared for under better conditions than at present, and were given the option of remaining when no better arrangement could be made, it would probably be unnecessary to exercise any power of detention. Experience shows that some simple expedient, such as the provision of an outfit for service, at the end say of three or six months, induces these young women to remain without powers of detention. In any case we think it undesirable to lay down any hard-and-fast rule, and prefer to leave it to the discretion of those undertaking the work to deal with each case according to the varying circumstances. We also desire to express the strong hope that those who are in charge of the homes, as well as the charitable workers, will impress on the girl mothers the duty of nursing their babies, and the advantages of that course both to the mothers themselves, and to the babies. During the nursing period there is strongly developed and intensified that maternal love which becomes in the case of the unmarried mother, a powerful factor in her moral reformation, and in her restoration to a respectable and independent life. This love also provides the mother with an unfailing motive to make every effort to contribute to the support of her child; and the human tie thus maintained is an excellent safeguard against a moral relapse.

166. It is different when we come to consider the more depraved women who habitually make a convenience of the workhouse. We hope that the numbers of these will be very largely diminished as they gradually cease to be recruited from the two previous classes; meanwhile, we have to meet a strong and indignant feeling on the part of local administrators that such women cannot continue to be encouraged in their immoral lives at the expense of the ratepayers. The remedy almost universally proposed to us is that of detention for a longer or shorter period.[2] At present there is no check upon the number of times they may come into the workhouse for their confinement, and their children for the most part become a permanent charge upon the rates. We think that these cases should be dealt with on lines similar to those adopted for "in-and-out" cases. The fact that they make a habit of throwing themselves constantly upon the rates constitutes a sufficient justification for affording relief only under strict conditions. After recovery from confinement they should, we think, be sent to some suitable institution, where they should be detained and taught, if possible, to earn a living. Their detention should be on an order of Justices, and should be probationary, and until it was judged that they were prepared to lead respectable lives. If they were fit to nurse their babies, these should be left with them while infants.

167. To sum up: we urge that careful discrimination should be exercised in dealing with the unmarried mothers who apply for relief. For the feeble-minded we recommend complete control on the lines laid down by the Royal Commission on Feeble-Minded. For young mothers coming for the first time we recommend treatment in special homes, voluntary where possible; and we urge that the services of voluntary workers should be enlisted for their after-care. We recommend that there should be a Women's Committee connected with every Public Assistance Committee, consisting of members of that Committee and of other voluntary helpers, to advise in regard to all maternity cases; and that members of the Women's Committee, or others suitable for the work shall keep in communication with mothers leaving the homes for the purpose of befriending them and their children. For depraved women we recommend that the Local Authorities should have power to arrange for their detention in suitable Institutions. Should these recommendations be carried into effect, we confidently anticipate a great diminution in the numbers of the latter class, and also in the numbers of illegitimate and degenerate children who are born only for an early death or to become a lasting burden upon the community.

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[1] Zanetti, Vol. IV., App. li. (23). *Vide also* Hill, Vol. IV., App. xl. (7), Wethered, 5382. White, 26407 (35), 26735. Cook, 74127 (13). Copeman, 74414 (12). [2] Millward, 18959. Kendrick, 22227. Blossom, 42883. Hill, Vol. IV., App. xl. (8). Hadfield, Vol. IV., App. lxxiv. (15 c.). Brown, 50029, Burnell, 68119. Buckingham, 68419. Wethered, 5382. Heale, 69045 (14). Cook, 74127 (13), 74210. Copeman, 74414 (12), 74521. Mahomed, 76222, etc., etc.

Chapter 5.

VAGRANCY.

168. We have seen that the Royal Commission had, in 1834, recommended that the Central Board should be "empowered and directed to frame and enforce Regulations" as to the relief of vagrants.[1] It was anticipated that the burden of vagrancy would be lifted if the relief were "such as only the destitute would accept"; but the Commissioners expressed their assured belief that this result could be effected only if the system were general. Their prescience has been justified in the sequel.

169. No special reference to vagrants was made in the Act of 1834; presumably, it was considered that the general powers conferred by that Act would suffice, and in the Third Report of the Poor Law Commissioners are details of Regulations sanctioned by them for "the Relief of Casual and Mendicant Paupers" in the Hatfield Union.[2] These Regulations empowered every ratepayer, and any parochial or Union officer, to give a ticket recommending relief to be given in the workhouse to "any person who shall by words or signs intimate that he or she is in a state of destitution, has no means to get his or her living by (Stat. of 43 Eliz., c. 2) or who shall use no ordinary or daily trade of life." The master was to admit the person in accordance with ordinary regulations of the workhouse, and then "if he or she be able-bodied or partially disabled" the casual thus admitted was to "be set on such work as may be provided for the able-bodied or for the partially disabled." After the performance of this task, which was to be "proportioned to his or her capacity," he was to receive the same diet and be subject to the same discipline as the other paupers in the workhouse. Provision was also made for notification to the Clerk and for the directions of the Guardians at their next meeting as to the continuance of the relief or the removal of the casual to his or her place of settlement. A set form was provided for the examination of the casual by the master, the result of which was open to the inspection of the ratepayers, and special stress is laid on the importance of due investigation of each case. The relieving officer was further authorised in certain cases to "suspend the performance of his other duties," and to deal with a "common vagrant" in accordance with the Act for the Punishment of Idle and Disorderly Persons and Rogues and Vagabonds"[3] before the Magistrate. Finally, the ratepayers were notified that "every penny given to mendicants operates as a bounty on filth and imposture, and an inducement to bring up poor children in miserable and wicked courses."

170. It was anticipated from a short experience of this plan that "with strict attention, and when it becomes generally known, there will not be a beggar to be seen throughout the Union."[4]

171. It appears that a similar plan was adopted in other Unions, and in an application from the Spalding Guardians for the appropriation of one of the outhouses in the men's yard at the new poorhouse for the nightly reception of vagrants may be found the germ of the present casual ward.[5] The vagrant was to receive a supper and breakfast of bread and water, but the latter meal, and also his discharge, was dependent on a task of two hours on the corn mill. An Assistant-Commissioner, reporting on this proposal said:—

> "Every workhouse ought to be provided with two rooms and straw beds for vagrants. A mill handle should be adjacent on the men's side. At Coventry, we reduced an expenditure upon vagrants from many hundreds to a mere nothing."

But the provision of casual wards for destitute wayfarers not belonging to the district was a duty which had not been contemplated by the framers of the Act of 1834.[6] Difficulties soon arose and foremost of these was the fact that, until the law was amended in 1848[7], inmates who had no settlement were maintained at the cost of the parish in which the workhouse happened to be.

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[1] Report, of Poor Law Commission, 1832. [Cd. 2728], 1905, p. 340. [2] Third Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 546–1, 1837, App. A. No. x., p. 80. [3] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83. [4] Third Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 546–1, 1837. Report from the master to the Marquis of Salisbury, p. 82. [5] *Ibid.*, pp. 82–3. [6] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852], 1906 p. 9. [7] 11 & 12 Vict., 110, Sec. 1.

172. The position was especially acute in the Metropolis, where destitute persons found in the street by the police were refused relief on the ground that they belonged to distant parishes.[1]

173. In their reply to a representation from the police authorities the Poor Law Commissioners affirmed their confidence in the sufficiency of the existing policy and the extension of workhouse accommodation, but they say:—

> "That which the Commissioners are most anxious to have made known is, that the relief of actual destitution in cases of emergency should always precede the investigation of any question as to ts cause, or as to the liability of any other parties than the parish to contribute to it."

174. In a Circular Letter to the Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis the Commissioners requested that their correspondence with the police may "be read by the Clerk to the relieving officers and master of the work-house in the presence of the Guardians," and arrangements for task-work, with regulations on the lines of those adopted at Hatfield, were recommended.[2]

175. In 1839 a further Circular threatened with dismissal any officer who neglected his primary duty of relieving any case of urgent casual destitution.[3]

"Serious notice" had to be taken of the "reprehensible practice on the part of certain parish officers of bribing or otherwise inducing casual paupers (who from sickness or other accidental causes have appeared likely to become burdensome) to quit the parish."[4]

176. Thenceforward was issued a series of Circulars and Orders directly dealing with the vagrant.[5]

177. The vagrant has been termed "an accidental result of the law of settlement"[6] and in their 8th Report the Commissioners deal at length with the question of settlement:—

> "Although the right to relief in so far as it exists by virtue of the 43rd of Elizabeth was long anterior to the present law of settlement, it yet seems probable that after the statute of Charles II. had established the present system of settlement, some such local claim was considered necessary for conferring a right to relief. At least, in Rex *v.* Inhabitants of Eastbourne it was stated . . . 'that Lord Holt had held he did not know that a foreigner had a right to be maintained in any place to which he came, but that they might let him starve,' upon which Lord Ellenborough, Chief Justice, said, . . . in giving judgment, 'the law of humanity which is anterior to all positive laws obliges us to afford them relief to save them from starving; and those laws (*i.e.*, of settlement) were only passed to fix the obligation more certainly, and point out distinctly in what manner it should be borne.' . . . Since the judgment in Rex *v.* Inhabitants of Eastbourne there is, it appears to us, no doubt that persons in a state of destitution are entitled to relief wherever they may be, independently of any previous residence and of any settlement or pretence to settlement."*[7]

4 B. and A. 103.

178. By an Act of 1842[8] Guardians generally were enabled to prescribe a task of work in return for food and lodging, and were given a limited power of detention; refusal to perform the task, as also wilful injury or destruction of his own clothes or of the property of the Guardians, were to be deemed offences within the meaning of the Vagrancy Act, 1824. Another Poor Law Act of 1844[9] still in force authorised the formation of districts for providing "asylums" for the houseless poor in London and in five other large towns.

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* Nevertheless, the Commissioners found it necessary to recur to the subject in their Twelfth Report 1846, and to insist that it was not the *law* but the *practice* which they had sought to alter, p. 12, folio.

[1] Fourth Report Poor Law Commissioners, 147, 1838, App. (A), p. 98. [2] Fifth Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 78, 1839, p. 52. [3] Sixth Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 245, 1840. p. 59. [4] Fifth Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 78, 1839, p. 51. [5] The first Order (August 6th, 1841) of the kind, addressed to certain parishes of the City of Westminster "ordered and directed under the powers and authority of the Act of 1834," the admission to the workhouse of those parishes of "any person who may apply for relief under circumstances of sudden or urgent necessity." [6] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852], 1906, p. 9. [7] Eight Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 389, 1842, p. 14. [8] 5 & 6 Vict., Cap. 57, Sec. 5. [9] 7 & 8 Vict., Cap. 101, Sec. 41.

179. Voluminous evidence was taken by a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1846 on a scheme which had been proposed by the Commissioners for the formation of districts in the Metropolis. The scheme was opposed and eventually abandoned.

180. Meanwhile vagrancy had increased generally and to an alarming extent. To some extent the increase was attributable to the policy of the Commissioners, or perhaps to the manner of its application by the Local Authorities. A notable and instructive instance of this occurred at the workhouse of St. Saviour's Union in 1842 :—

> "A boy to whom admission had been refused by the porter was taken before a police magistrate. An inquiry into the porter's conduct followed. . . . The board of guardians were directed to admonish the porter . . . and the practice forthwith commenced of giving relief to all persons representing themselves to be vagrants. The number of applicants increased with wonderful rapidity. In the week before this mistaken system began 549 vagrants were relieved ; in the next week, 1,279 ; then 2,026 ; then 2,947 ; then 4,281 ; and in the last week, 3,883 ; making in five weeks, 14,416 cases. . . . Such a concourse of clamorous applicants frequently rendered the presence of the police necessary ; inquiry into individual cases was impossible, and there is no doubt that much imposition was successfully practised." The guardians then established a stone-yard, and resolved to exact work for all relief afforded to such vagrants as were able to work. The weekly numbers for the next three weeks were 303, 243, and 230, a total of 776 for three weeks after the offer of stone-breaking, against 11,111 for the three weeks preceding that offer.[1]

181. But other causes were in operation ; the great expansion of railway construction and industrial development coincided with a period of famine and fever in Ireland to swell alike the mass of vagrant misery and mendicancy and the stream of migrant labour.[2] And the mobility of labour had been increased by the abolition of settlement by hiring and service and many of the other consequences of the Poor Law Amendment Act.

182. In 1848 vagrancy was one of the first questions dealt with by the new Poor Law Board. A special Report made in that year testified to the increased numbers of the vagrants, their idleness and the part they played in the spread of fever and other diseases, as well as to the deficiencies of many vagrant wards. The want of uniform treatment was felt by the Inspectors, and the Report included a recommendation that the vagrant should be entirely transferred to the police. A Minute of the Poor Law Board was issued urging upon Guardians discriminate and uniform action, the refusal of relief to able-bodied men not actually destitute, and the employment of the police as assistant relieving officers for vagrants. A further recommendation was that passes should be given to persons actually in search of work.[3]

183. The vagrant appears to be always sensitive to Circulars from headquarters, and the Board were gratified to observe that the number relieved fell from 13,714 on July 1st, 1848, to 5,662 and 2,954 on the corresponding days in 1849 and 1850 respectively.[4] Unfortunately this desirable effect is also evanescent, and from 1857 onwards the vagrant again continued to occupy the attention of the Central Authority and of the Legislature.

184. The Houseless Poor Acts of 1864–5, supplemented by the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867, required the Guardians to provide casual wards to the satisfaction of the Central Authority, and the cost of these and the expenses in connection with vagrants were to be repaid to the Guardians by the Metropolitan Board of Works, and became eventually a charge on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

185. At the same time special attention was given to vagrancy elsewhere throughout the country. A Parliamentary Report in 1866[5] showed the general absence of uniformity in the treatment of the vagrant class and the insufficiency of the accommodation provided for them. In the County of Essex alone was the system of passes to work-seekers (*see* above) in operation, and it is noteworthy that in that County " vagrancy

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[1] Tenth Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 560, 1844, p. 7. [2] Fourteenth Annual Report, 960, 1848, p. 4. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6, and App. 22, etc. [4] Second Annual Report Poor Law Board, 1142, 1850, p. 6. [5] Reports on Vagrancy made to the President of the Poor Law Board by Poor Law Inspectors, 1866.

had been practically abolished by the energy of the chief constable."[1] The Report furnishes picturesque details of the degraded and criminal types using the casual wards as a convenience or a rendezvous. Here are some notices copied from writings on the walls :—

> "Saucy Harry and his moll will be at Chester to eat their Christmas dinner, when they hope Saucer and the fraternity will meet them at the union.—November 14th, 1865."
>
> "The Governor of Chester Castle orders all subalterns to meet at Stourbridge."
>
> "If rag-tailed Soph stays here, come on to Stafford."
>
> "Harry Heenan was here, hafter beeing off of the rope twelve months."[2]

186. In 1871 the Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act required the Guardians of every Union to provide such proper casual wards as the Poor Law Board considered to be necessary; it made provision for the detention of casuals, and empowered the Central Authority to prescribe Regulations for their employment, dietary and discipline.

187. As usual these measures were followed by a temporary fall in the number of vagrants relieved by the Poor Law. But by 1881 the numbers had again risen to 6,215, and in 1882 another Casual Poor Act was passed extending the period of detention in the case of persons admitted to a casual ward of the same Union more than once in a month. For this purpose the Metropolis was to be deemed to be one Union, and for the purpose of identification officers appointed by the Local Government Board were frequently to visit the wards in London.

188. By a General Order dated December 18th, 1882, the Local Government Board prescribed the Regulations for casual paupers which, with a few minor modifications, are those now in force.

189. Admission to a casual ward, except in case of sudden or urgent necessity, is by order of a relieving officer*; it is directed to be after 4 p.m. in winter, and 6 p.m. in summer: vagrants are to be searched and money or other articles to be taken from them—the latter being restored on discharge. The vagrant is to be bathed, necessary garments supplied to him and his own clothes dried and disinfected if necessary. An admission and discharge book is to be kept, and particulars of any refusal of admission must be recorded and laid before the Guardians. The casual is not entitled to his discharge, which is subject to the performance of a task, before nine o'clock a.m. of the second day following his admission, or, in the case of a previous admission during a month, before the morning of the fourth day, Sunday being excluded from the computation.

190. In 1892, another General Order conferred upon any casual seeking work the right to discharge at 5.30 in summer or 6.30 in winter on the second morning after his admission. In 1897, an improved diet—including milk—was prescribed for the children.

191. But provisoes to the Orders enabling the Guardians or the officers to dispense with the provisions for detention, and the alternative dietaries and tasks of work prescribed by the Orders themselves, have occasioned an unfortunate diversity in practice.

192. In 1888, proposals were made before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Poor Relief for the abolition of casual wards, but the Committee decided that the vagrant could not be dealt with otherwise than as a separate class, so that it would always be necessary to maintain a separate department of the workhouse for his reception.

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* In the Metropolis a person brought by a constable is to be admitted "if there be room."

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 31. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 62, etc.

193. In 1895, the vagrancy statistics were nearly double those of 1885, and strong representations were made to the Government. Another Circular exhorting Guardians to uniformity of treatment and to the exercise of their existing legal powers was issued in 1896, and was followed by the usual responsive decrease of numbers. But with the close of the South African War and the approach of a period of trade depression the numbers again rose, and in 1904 passed all former records. The general agitation throughout the country led to the appointment by Mr. Long of a Departmental Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Lloyd Wharton, which reported in February 1906.

194. The Committee distinguished four types of vagrants resorting at one time or another to the casual ward.

(1) The *bona fide* working man, travelling in search of employment—less than 3 per cent. of the total in the opinion of competent observers. "In times of trade-depression there is," the Committee say, "no doubt a larger number of working men on tramp, but it seems clear that as a rule the vagrant who is *bona fide* in search of work is extremely rare."[1]

(2) Men willing to undertake casual labour for a short time, but unwilling or unfit for continued work: the first to lose employment and the last to regain it as trade falls or rises. Drink, idleness, incapacity, and physical disability play their part; and for this class "once on the road, always on the road," has come to be a proverb.[1]

(3) The habitual vagrant and the mendicant.[2]

(4) Old and infirm persons "wandering to their own hurt," crawling from ward to ward, entering the workhouse infirmary only when compelled to do so, living by begging and a constant trouble to police and Magistrate. For this class, the Committee thought that some power of compulsory removal to a suitable institution for care and treatment is needed.[3]

195. The number of female vagrants using the casual wards is comparatively small,[4] and the proportion of vagrant children has been greatly exaggerated.[5] The actual numbers, so far as these can be ascertained will be considered presently.

196. The majority of vagrants are men in the able-bodied period of life, and about 70 per cent. of the vagrants of both sexes relieved in casual wards on January 1st, 1905, were between thirty-five and sixty-five years of age; 23 per cent. were from sixteen to thirty-five, and 5 per cent. were over sixty-five.* In summer, the proportion of persons over sixty-five rises to 8 or 9 per cent., and there is some increase in the proportion of women and children during that season.[6] Attempts have been made to ascertain the numbers of army reservists, discharged soldiers and militiamen resorting to the casual ward. On the night of May 8th, 1896, 24 per cent. of the men relieved represented themselves as of this class, but only about 5 per cent. were able to substantiate the claim. Another Return for December 20th, 1897, gave similar but rather lower proportions.[7]

197. The Royal Commission on the Care of the Feeble-minded do not find any excess of mentally defective persons among the vagrant class: indeed "the general opinion seemed to be that their wits had been sharpened by hardship and experience."[8] There may, however, be a "considerable population" of discharged mentally defective prisoners wandering to and from prisons, workhouses, casual wards and shelters,

* Of 5,579 casuals relieved on January 1st, 1900, only forty-eight men and nineteen women were reported to be over seventy years of age.

[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, p. 24. [2] *Ibid*, pp, 25–6. [3] *Ibid*., pp. 25, 106. [4] *Ibid*., p. 111. [5] *Ibid*., 113. [6] *Ibid*., App. V. [7] Parliamentary Returns, No. 89 of 1897, and No. 332 of 1898. [8] Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded [Cd. 4202], 1908, p. 132.

and to control these the Commission recommend "systematic notification, identification . . . and control, by which they could be detained and made to labour according to their ability.[1]

198. Vagrants as a class are not ill-fed, they are much better clad than formerly, and those who frequent the casual wards have reached a higher standard of cleanliness. But in other respects there is little change for the better. "The modern tramp as a rule lives an unsocial and wretched sort of existence. He has no object in life, and his very contentment with his miserable surroundings renders any improvement in his condition practically hopeless."[2] It is indeed his low standard of comfort which has occasioned the treatment of the homeless man as a class apart from the ordinary indoor poor, and which stands in the way of any attempt to relax the rigour of that treatment.

199. It is in recognition of the evil arising from facilities for this low standard of miserable existence that the Committee recommend the provision of effective supervision and control over charitable shelters and free-food distributions. They adduce abundant evidence of the demoralising effect of these shelters, "the maintenance of which as at present conducted and the free distribution of food to all comers simply perpetuate the evil conditions and in no way remedy the disease—debarring the deserving and enabling the idle to continue in their aimless life."[3]

200. They advise, that such shelters should be licensed and regulated by the local authority of the district;[4] that the licences of these and of common lodging-houses generally should be subject to annual renewal; that the public distribution of free food should be under similar control; that the consent of the local authority should be required to the use of any building for the purpose; and that it should be open to the authority to withdraw their consent if at any time this should seem necessary in the interests of the community.[5]

201. The Committee recommend that "sleeping out" should be an offence whenever it takes place in buildings or on enclosed premises (*e.g.*, the staircases of tenement houses), or is a danger or nuisance to the public.

202. For sixty years past Returns have been obtained of the number of vagrants relieved in the casual wards of England and Wales on January 1st and July 1st in each year. In July, 1848, the number * was 13,714; in January, 1860, it had fallen to 1,542; in January, 1908, it was 17,083. The intervening period from 1860 to 1908 is occupied by waves of which the years 1869 (7,020), 1881 (6,215), 1889 (7,058), 1898 (13,563) mark the crests, while the troughs find their lowest points in 1875 (2,235), 1885 (4,866), 1891 (5,552), 1900 (9,841). The figures in brackets denote the count of each year.

203. About 1890 it was found that the *day* count of casuals did not give an accurate return of the actual numbers, vagrants breakfasting in one Union and supping in another being counted twice. Since that date a Return of those relieved on the *night* of January 1st or July 1st has also been published. The night count shows that the numbers have risen from 4,960 in 1891, to 10,436 — the highest record—on January 1st, 1908. Since 1904 weekly counts have also been made, and from these it would appear that the maximum numbers of vagrants relieved in casual wards may be in the autumn months—but possibly in association with the movements of hop-pickers, etc., and not wholly in consequence of an increase in the number of habitual vagrants resorting to the wards at that time. Both in 1904 and 1905 there was also a rise from January throughout the spring until June, followed by a rapid and remarkable fall of about 50 per cent. to the middle of July, and then a rise as rapid as the fall.[6]

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* Incomplete, as not all Poor Law Authorities then made returns.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 133. [2] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852], 1906, p. 26. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 96. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 98. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 88. [6] *Ibid.*, App. V. and VI.

204. In point of distribution through the country vagrancy is found to cling to the Metropolis and its neighbourhood, and to the manufacturing and coal or iron-mining districts; it follows also the track of the navvy when any new works of importance are in progress.[1]

205. The burden and annoyance of vagrancy and the spread of disease by tramps press hardly on the rural Unions through which the main tramp-routes pass.

206. The casual pauper* is but an incident of vagrancy; and vagrancy, at one time swelling, at another shrinking in volume, merges into a shifting and shiftless fringe of the population in such a way as to elude definition. Gypsies, hawkers and pedlars are often, but, as the Departmental Committee think, not properly, included in the term. And the same observation applies to hop-pickers and fruit-pickers, although these at certain seasons freely use the casual wards.[2]

207. One witness spoke favourably of the definitions of the German penal code as effective in the practical management of vagrancy:—

> "Anyone may be punished by imprisonment (1) Who goes about as a vagrant; (2) who gives way to gambling, drink, or idleness, and thus reduces himself to a state in which he has to apply to the authorities for means for the maintenance of himself and of those dependent upon him; or (3) who receives public poor relief, but from unwillingness to labour refuses to do work which the authorities have provided and for which he has sufficient strength; or (4) who after the loss of his place, within a period fixed by the authorities has not found another situation, and cannot show that he has used all diligence to find it; or (5) who, although he can maintain those for whose support he is liable and in spite of being called upon by the authorities to do so, fails to fulfil his obligations, and is thereby reduced to apply to the authorities for means to maintain them.[3]

These definitions go beyond the description of a "vagrant" as "a person with no settled home and no visible means of subsistence."[4]

208. Taking the latter definition, the Committee after a detailed consideration of the results of various censuses and of the estimates of competent authorities, concluded that the number "probably reaches at times of trade depression as high a total as 70,000, while in times of industrial activity (as in 1900) it might not exceed 30,000 or 40,000. Between these limits the number varies, affected by the conditions of trade, weather, and economic causes." The "habitual vagrant" is unaffected by trade conditions further than that by each period of depression his ranks are permanently and increasingly recruited. No definite figures of this class are available, but the Committee were "inclined to think that the numbers would not exceed 20,000 to 30,000." We fear that the later counts of casual pauperism indicate a serious and continued increase of habitual vagrancy.

209. A Return[5] obtained from the Prison Commissioners showed that in February, 1905, more than one-fourth of the total prison population were, in the opinion of the authorities, persons of the vagrant class. The class, as a whole, is not addicted to the worst forms of crime, but minor offences are very common. "Cases of assaults by tramps on the highways frequently occur, and there is no doubt that in certain districts the tramp is a source of terror to women and children."[6]

210. The conclusions of the Committee were that the present system neither repels nor reforms the vagrant; and that uniformity of administration, which is an indispensable condition of success, is impossible under the "600 independent authorities who are actuated by no common principle except the desire to get rid of the vagrant as cheaply as possible."[7]

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* The Act of 1871 defines a "casual" as "any destitute wayfarer or wanderer applying for or receiving relief."

[1] Report Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, pp. 18, 25. [2] *Ibid.*, [Cd. 2825] 1906, pp. 24 and 109, etc. [3] German Penal Code (Strafgezetsbuch), Sections 61 and 62. [4] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2825] 1906, p. 22. [5] *Ibid.*, App. VII. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 25. [7] *Ibid.*, pp. 32, etc.

211. Nor apparently could poor Unions, the workhouses of which happen to be on main roads much frequented by vagrants, be expected to willingly incur the heavy expenditure which proper control may entail in buildings and in staff.

> "We are forced to the conclusion," say the Committee, "that an essential condition of any reform . . . is an extension of the area of chargeability and management, and the substitution for the guardians of some other authority who will administer the law on uniform lines, and be subject to central control." [1] *

212. They accordingly recommend the substitution of the police authority as the body responsible for the control of vagrants, for their local relief, and for the management of casual wards.

213. Other suggestions had been made to the Committee, such as the combination of Unions within a County, or a system of co-operation between the police and the Poor Law with an Exchequer grant for efficiency, to be paid on the certificate of the chief constable. But on consideration these were rejected as presenting grave difficulties or being open to objection.

214. There is, they think, strong ground for making over to the police rather than to a relief authority the control of vagrancy.

215. The Committee show that only a small proportion of actual vagrancy at a given time is represented by the number of casual paupers. They remark that the care of the vagrant "may, in fact, be regarded rather as an excrescence on the Poor Law than as an integral part of the system"; [2] and that from early times the regulation of houseless persons has, in England, been regarded as a duty of police. They recommend therefore that the tramp should be put under the police, "because it is mainly *qua* vagrant and not *qua* pauper that he has to be treated." [3]

216. The Committee point out that the work is akin to much that already is discharged by the police in their control of the community, such as the regulation of traffic, provision of assistance in street accidents, granting of pedlars' licences, impounding of stray cattle, and they observe that in thirty-six Counties the police already act as assistant relieving officers for vagrants, and that orders for admission to the casual wards are obtained from them.

217. To the objection that the proposal would take the police away from other duties the Committee reply that they do not contemplate that any great burden should be placed on the active members of the force; that in many cases the existing staff of the casual wards could continue their duties under the police; and that as vacancies occur it would probably be convenient to appoint retired constables. [4]

218. The possibilities of utilising existing casual wards and of arranging for supplies from the adjoining workhouse when the casual ward is not a separate establishment, were carefully gone into by the Committee; they concluded that such arrangements and the other details connected with the transfer and administration of the buildings were quite practicable, and they believed that in comparatively few cases would entirely new buildings be needed. They also considered that, in many cases, superfluous casual wards could be closed, and that the usual provision should be made for any permanent officer who might lose office under the scheme.

219. The Committee propose the adoption of the standing joint committee as the Local Authority in Counties, or the watch committee in police Boroughs. They consider that these bodies would by reason of their existing composition and functions be specially qualified to deal with the matter, and that there would thus be in each County a body specially interested in vagrancy as a whole.

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* The Committee devote a chapter to a consideration of the lavish expenditure on modern casual wards which had come under their notice. They express "a strong opinion that means should be adopted to protect the ratepayer from any expenditure which is not really necessary for the object in view," pp. 86–7.

1 Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, p. 33. 2 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
3 *Ibid.*, Preston-Thomas, *Q.* 625. 4 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

220. The Metropolis presented a difficulty because within the Metropolitan Police area* the Secretary of State is the statutory police authority, and there is no standing joint committee, the force being governed by the Commissioner appointed by the Crown.[1]

221. Holding that their scheme is "essentially an affair of police," and that in London the police side of the question is of special importance, the Committee after considering a number of alternatives, conclude that the control of the casual wards should be given to the Metropolitan Police within their area. But to meet the difficulty involved by the position of the Secretary of State as police authority, they propose that "the Metropolitan Police for the purpose of the management of the casual wards should be placed practically in the same position as the standing joint committees in the rest of the country, leaving the Secretary of State the same power of control as he exercises elsewhere";[2] and that the City of London Police should manage the wards belonging to their own area.

222. The transfer of the casual wards from the Poor Law to the police implies a coincident assignment of central authority from the Local Government Board to the Home Office.[3] The Committee recommend that the issue of the Secretary of State's certificate of efficiency should be made conditional on satisfactory arrangements respecting vagrancy within the area of the police authority to which the certificate is granted. By this they hope that a powerful inducement to uniformity and efficiency would lie ready to hand.[4]

223. The Committee next address themselves to a consideration of the assistance which may properly be given to *bona fide* work-seekers. They propose that the police should be empowered to issue a way-ticket to a man who can satisfy them that he has recently worked at some employment (other than a casual job), and that he has reasonable expectation of work at a certain place or other good reason for desiring to go there. They further propose that the way-ticket should bear on it proofs of identity; that it should be limited to a certain period, say one month; that it should be so framed as to form a record of the man's journey; that it should entitle the bearer, on application at the casual ward, to a night's lodging, supper, and breakfast; and that after doing two hours' work the man should be free to depart.[5]

224. It appears that the object of the small task is to maintain a spirit of independence in rendering something in return for the lodging, and partly also to check abuse. The Committee are of opinion that the way-ticket man should generally have somewhat better treatment than the ordinary vagrants and should be kept apart from them as far as possible.[6] Details of dietary are given in the Report and arrangements for a mid-day meal *en route* are proposed, both for the ticket-holder and for the ordinary vagrant.[7]

225. The Committee express the hope that the sufficient provision made for *bona fide* wayfarers would tend to check the indiscriminate charity which is "the main support of vagrancy."[8]§

226. For the habitual vagrant the Committee contemplate the enforcement of a task and a detention of two nights at least in the casual wards. But they are strongly of opinion that the women and children should be received temporarily into the workhouse,† and not into the casual wards;[9] and they were confirmed in their

* This includes the Counties of London (except the City) and Middlesex, and a number of parishes in Surrey, Kent, Essex and Herts, which are wholly or partly within fifteen miles of Charing Cross.

§ The scheme of the Committee generally resembles the system of Inter-Cantonal Union of Switzerland. The Union is a voluntary society, but the police are actively associated with the working of the system and some of the *Herbergen* (relief stations) are at police stations. (Report of Departmental Committee, *Q.* 8285.)

† Of 10,436 persons relieved in casual wards on the night of January 1st, 1908, only 986 were women, and 178 children. Of the children, nearly one-half on average are over seven years of age, and rather more than one-third are between two and seven years. (Report, App. v., and Returns of Pauperism, January 1st, 1908.)

[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, p. 38. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40. [3] County and Borough Police Act, 1856, Sec. 16, amended by the Local Government Act, 1888, Secs. 24–5. [4] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, p. 40. [5] *Ibid.*, pp. 48–9. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 49. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 49 and Chapter VIII. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 104. [9] *Ibid.*, pp. 112–2.

opinion of the advantages of this arrangement by the evidence which they received as to unsatisfactory treatment of female casuals.

227. They are disposed to think that the question of female vagrancy is comparatively unimportant; and that with the removal of the men from the roads would follow the speedy disappearance of the tramping women and children.[1]

228. The law as to vagrants rests on the Vagrancy Act (1824)[2] as amended and extended by subsequent enactments. Three classes of persons may be thus dealt with :—

(1) Idle and disorderly.

(2) Rogues and vagabonds

(3) Incorrigible rogues.

(Idle and disorderly).

Under Class (1) are included :—

(*a*) "Every person being able wholly or in part to maintain himself or herself, or his or her family by work or by other means, and wilfully refusing or neglecting to do so by which refusal or neglect he or she (etc.) shall have become chargeable——"[3]

(*b*) Persons having been legally removed but returning and becoming chargeable.[3]

(*c*) Workhouse inmates refusing or neglecting to perform a prescribed task, or destroying their clothes, or damaging the property of the Guardians.[4]

(*d*) A similar provision for persons relieved out of the workhouse.[5]

(*e*) Persons applying for relief and not disclosing money or property in their possession.[6]

(*f*) Paupers: absconding from casual ward, workhouse or asylum during legal detention; refusing to do work or observe regulations while inmates of such institutions; wilfully giving false name or making false statement to obtain relief. (Certain officers of a workhouse or casual ward are empowered to take offenders before a Justice without summons or warrant, and upon conviction to convey them to gaol.)[7]

(*g*) Unlicensed pedlars, also mendicants and prostitutes under certain conditions.[8]

(Rogues and vagabonds).

Under Class (2) :—

(*a*) Paupers repeating any of the offences enumerated above (*f*), or any person on a second conviction as "idle and disorderly."[9]

(*b*) Men deserting their families, and so leaving them chargeable.[10]

(*c*) Mendicants exposing wounds or deformities; also persons gathering alms under false pretences.[11]

(*d*) Certain offenders against decency or morality.[12]

(*e*) Fortune-tellers, persons gaming or betting in certain places or concerned with lotteries.[13]

(*f*) Persons found in enclosed premises, etc., or frequenting certain places for an unlawful purpose, or in possession of house-breaking tools or armed with felonious intent.[14]

(*g*) Deserters from the Navy.[15]

(*h*) Immigrants or aliens guilty of an offence under the Aliens Act.[16]

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[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, p. 112. [2] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83. [3] *Ibid.*, Sec. 3, 12 & 13 Vict., c. 103, Sec. 3. *Ibid.*, and 7 & 8. Vict., c. 101, Sec. 55, and 28 & 29 Vict., c. 79, Sec. 7. [4] 5 & 6 Vict., c. 57, Sec. 5. [5] 29 & 30 Vict., c. 113, Sec. 15. [6] 11 & 12 Vict., c. 110, Sec. 10. [7] 34 & 35 Vict., c. 108, Secs. 7 and 8. 39 & 40 Vict., c. 61, Sec. 44. 45 & 46 Vict., cs. 36, Secs. 4–5. [8] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, Sec. 3. 34 & 35 Vict., c. 96, Sec. 13. 4 Edw. VII., c. 15, Sec. 2. [9] 34 & 35 Vict., c. 108, Sec. 7. 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, Sec. 4. [10] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, Sec. 4. [11] *Ibid.* [12] *Ibid.*, and 1 & 2 Vict., c. 38, Sec. 2; 61 & 62 Vict., c. 39, Sec. 1. [13] *Ibid.*, and 36 & 37 Vict., c. 38, Sec. 3, and various statutes of Geo. III., and IV. [14] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83 Sec. 4. 34 & 35 Vict., c. 112, Sec. 7, 54 & 55 Vict, c. 69 Sec. 6. [15] 10 & 11 Vict., c. 62, Sec. 10. [16] 5 Edw. VII., c. 13, Sec. 7 (1).

Under Class (3):—

(*a*) Persons previously convicted as rogues and vagabonds.[1] (Incorrigible rogues)

(*b*) Escaping from legal confinement before expiration of a term of sentence under the Vagrancy Act.[1]

229. It will be seen that the operation of the Vagrancy Act is by no means confined to the ordinary vagrant; it includes the pauper class generally and it extends to large sections of the criminal population, and it has been applied to quite miscellaneous offences.

230. The scale of punishments under the Vagrancy Act is as carefully graduated as the offences. "Idle and disorderly" persons on summary conviction before a single Justice may be imprisoned for not exceeding fourteen days with hard labour, or before a petty sessional court the term may be extended to one month. "Rogues and vagabonds" similarly may be imprisoned for not more than fourteen days on conviction before a Justice or for three months by Petty Sessions.

231. The foregoing may appeal to Quarter Sessions. The "incorrigible rogue" can only be finally dealt with by those Sessions; but any Justice or Petty Sessions may commit him to prison with hard labour to await Quarter Sessions, where he may be sentenced to further imprisonment for not more than one year with hard labour.[2] Male offenders may be whipped.[3]

232. The great majority of sentences under this Act are for fourteen days or less, and the Committee report that it is impossible from any practicable point of view to defend these short sentences, which neither deter nor reform.[4]

233. Some of the Committee's witnesses held that minimum sentences in the case of vagrants should be laid down by Statute, but it was felt by others that there would be considerable objection to taking away the discretionary power of the Magistrates. The Committee urge that, in any case where a Magistrate deems it expedient to give a sentence of less than fourteen days, the sentence should be for one day only, which means that on the rising of the Court the prisoner would be discharged.

234. But this nominal sentence would be a conviction and would be recorded, and the Committee suggest that, on a second or third conviction, the habitual vagrant should be dealt with by a long term of detention.

235. Hitherto the difficulty of identification has proved a great obstacle in dealing with this class of offender; but this, the Committee think, could now be overcome by a system of finger-print records.[5]

236. The Committee recommend that "means should be provided to allow of the habitual vagrant being dealt with otherwise than under the Vagrancy Act, and that as far as possible he should be treated not as a criminal, but as a person requiring detention on account of his mode of life." They suggest that the class should be defined by Statute and include any person who has on three or more occasions been convicted of such offences as begging, refusing to perform a task of work, or failing to maintain himself. The Committee also point out that under this head would come with much advantage many of the class of workhouse inmates known as "ins-and-outs."

237. The Committee consider that this prolonged detention should as far as possible be carried out in a "labour-colony," and that, although Government institutions will eventually be necessary for the more difficult cases, it would be best in the first instance to trust to the enterprise of voluntary associations or of individual philanthropy or of local authorities under strict supervision by the State, and assisted from the rates or the National Exchequer.[6]

238. The Committee commend the general lines of a Bill introduced by Sir John Gorst in 1904 and modelled on the Inebriates Act of 1898 which provided for the

[1] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, Sec. 5. [2] 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, Sec. 14. [3] *Ibid.*, Sec. 10. [4] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, pp. 51, etc. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 60. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 74, etc.

certification and regulation of such places of compulsory detention by the Secretary of State and for financial aid from the rates or from the Exchequer.

239. The Committee suggest that the period of detention should be from six months to three years and that there should be power to obtain discharge by good conduct and by small earnings. The Committee also attach great importance to the dietary as a means of encouraging or inducing the colonist to work. They found that, in some established labour colonies, the unearned allowance of food was lavish and costly, and that the system under which it was given instead of stimulating the man's energies tended to sap them.

240. They propose therefore that the allowance to each colonist should, with certain safeguards, be simply sufficient for subsistence, but it would be open to every man to supplement this by means of work and good conduct. Apart from the reception of women into a workhouse the Committee do not propose that their treatment should materially differ from that of men. Some provision should, they think, be made for female labour colonies, but it is not anticipated that many women would need to be so dealt with.

241. As regards children, the Committee recommend that, where the parent or guardian of a child is dealt with as a habitual vagrant, the Court should be empowered to send the child to an industrial school or to a place of safety, and that Section 14 of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866, should be so amended as to remove doubts of its application to vagrant children.

242. Under the Poor Law Act, 1899, Guardians are empowered to assume parental rights under specified conditions. This was commended to the Committee by an experienced witness as the most successful method of dealing with vagrant children.[1] The Committee endorsed its desirability inasmuch as it affords alternative ways of dealing with individual cases. But the law of settlement has, it appears, been an obstacle, as Guardians have hesitated to assume the cost of children not belonging to their Union. It had been suggested that the County should contribute, but the Committee were "not prepared to suggest that the charge should be thrown on the County in every case where the Guardians adopt a vagrant child."[2] Action may also be taken in the interest of vagrants' children under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1904. The Committee found that much useful work has been done in co-operation with the Poor Law officials by the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children under this Statute, but that difficulty has been found in practice because it is necessary to prove an overt act of cruelty, and because the Society are not able to assume control of a child unless they undertake the cost of maintenance.

243. The Committee also found that difficulties have arisen in regard to the provisions of the Elementary Education Acts applicable to children of this class, and that if these were acted on ample means would be available for assuming control of vagrant children who are not receiving proper education.[3]

244. Since the Report of the Departmental Committee upon Vagrancy has been published and its recommendations known, some objections have been raised to the proposal to entrust the regulation of the vagrant class to the police authorities. The proposal is one which has been made more than once since 1834 by experienced officials who have inquired into the matter, and one of the grounds upon which it is advocated is that the casual pauper is but an incident and a fragment of vagrancy. His exiguous relief, it is urged, is a small matter in the regulation of the multitude of which he is a part, and, as the purpose of the police is the preservation and enforcement of order, it has been commonly recognised from early times that the control of the vagrant is a part of the prevention of crime not less important than its detection.

245. It is further contended by the Committee that there would be no need for the withdrawal of the police from their other duties, for it was contemplated by those making the Report that an auxiliary organisation and the employment of superannuated constables should be authorised, as well as an extension of the arrangement by which certain Poor Law officials are at present invested with police powers in special circumstances. The Committee were further of opinion that there would not be any insuperable difficulty in arranging for a sufficient separation of buildings and of administration where the casual wards are contiguous to a workhouse.

[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, *Q.* 11010. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

246. To the objections raised against the proposal that the police should control the male tramps in the casual wards while the women and children are relieved in the workhouse, the Committee's reply would be that there may be distinct advantage in a separation which is in any case one of clear definition. The number of women and children to be found sleeping in the casual wards is small compared with the number seen upon the roads. The inference therefore is that the women and children sleep elsewhere, and this theory is confirmed by the counts which from time to time have been made of the vagrant population as a whole. These counts show a far larger proportion of women and children than is found in the Poor Law Returns.[1] It is therefore contended that the complete dissociation of the women and children from the casual ward will tend to further disperse the remnant of women and children who resort to them.

247. The main recommendations of the Vagrancy Committee involving police control are in fact co-ordinate parts of a scheme for the elimination of the undeserving vagrant. They are associated with a way-ticket which is intended as a passport and safeguard for the bona fide worker, and which derives its authoritive value from, and in its regulation depends upon, a police system. The powers which must necessarily underlie a compulsory detention are to be entrusted to the Department of State responsible for the enforcement of order and of the penal institutions of the State, as being the only authority capable of adequately carrying out such functions.

248. We did not ourselves give special attention to the subject of Vagrancy in view of the fact that it had been inquired into so recently by the Departmental Committee whose Report we have summarised in the preceding paragraphs.

249. We shall not, therefore, attempt to revise the Committee's conclusions, with which, indeed, many of us are in agreement. But on the other hand, we feel that some of our own proposals, such for instance as that for the enlargement of the Poor Law area and for the granting of passes to workmen by the Labour Exchange, will, if adopted, alter the situation as it existed at the date of the Departmental Committee's Report.

250. We therefore merely set out the recommendations arrived at by the Committee, and express the opinion that, in taking any action upon them, Your Majesty's Government should carefully consider the effect of our proposals for the re-organisation of the Poor Law system.

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[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy [Cd. 2852] 1906, pp. 20, 21.

Chapter 6.

STOCK-TAKING AND WORKHOUSE ACCOUNTS.

251. The question of workhouse accounts is one which should be dealt with in the reorganisation of Poor Law administration generally.

252. With the greater specialisation of institutional treatment the books and forms should be adapted to the particular type of institution. We desire the responsible heads of the institutions of the future to devote their time and energies to the more important questions of internal management, the individual care of inmates, etc. It will, therefore, be necessary in our opinion that the system of accounts should be reconsidered.

253. A Departmental Committee was appointed in May, 1901, to inquire into the question. The Committee made an exhaustive inquiry, and came to the conclusion that the system could be considerably simplified.[1] On any revision, the question of stock-taking should not be overlooked; the present methods are open to serious objection. Except in a few cases in which a stocktaker has been appointed, the duty devolves upon the visiting committee of the workhouse or institution. Whilst the duty of stock-taking may in many cases have been carefully and punctually performed, we think that in future this duty should be performed by a paid stocktaker appointed by the Public Assistance Authority in each area.

254. The Orders which have been issued by the Local Government Board in the case of Willesden Board of Guardians and others, make it the duty of the stocktaker to compare the stores with the book entries of the quantities of stock in store at the date of taking stock and to certify accordingly; on the other hand the Departmental Committee object to this, and consider that such a certificate could be given only by a person capable of examining all the books and vouchers, and they think that the stocktaker should be restricted to a statement of the stock found by him to be in store at the time.[2]

255. We believe that such a restriction might leave the way open to fraudulent practices.

256. Persons fully capable of undertaking the double duty of taking stock and checking the necessary books should not be difficult to find. We recommend their appointment, but the appointment should not take away the responsibility of the Public Assistance Authority for the proper oversight of all stores and the keeping of books.

257. We suggest that the keeping of accounts should be simplified as far as possible, and the number of books and forms reduced to a minimum consistent with sufficient safeguards to prevent or detect fraud and to prevent laxity of method.

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[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Workhouse Accounts [Cd. 1440] 1903, p. lii. [2] *Ibid.*, App. iv., pp. 60–1.

Chapter 7.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND INEBRIETY.

258. As the evidence has shown, the immediate cause of destitution in many cases is drink. When application for relief is made, a habit of drinking has often been already formed; and it is too late to do more than maintain the applicant, who can leave the workhouse with the usual notice and often returns the worse for a debauch. We have made recommendations elsewhere in regard to "Ins-and-Outs," amongst whom many of this character would be found; but we are not content to leave the question without some more precise suggestions. Where the cause of distress appears definitely to be drink, we think that the case should be specially investigated and noted and the applicant examined medically and otherwise, and proper action taken.

259. Little use can be made of the voluntary provisions of the Habitual Drunkards Act of 1879.[1] But the Inebriates Act of 1898 contains valuable provisions, which might, we think, be turned to account and extended. This Act provides that a person may be sentenced to be detained for a period not exceeding three years in a State inebriate reformatory or any certified inebriate reformatory, subject to the managers being willing to admit him, on his being convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment or penal servitude, if the court is satisfied that the offence was committed under the influence of drink, or that drunkenness was a contributing cause of the offence, and the offender admits that he is, or is found by the jury to be, an habitual drunkard.[2]

260. In a Schedule to the Act is entered a list of offences, and any person who commits any of these offences, and who within the twelve months preceding the date of the commission of the offence has been convicted summarily at least three times of any such offence, and who is an habitual drunkard, is liable on conviction by indictment, or, if he consents to be dealt with summarily, on summary conviction, to be detained for a term not exceeding three years in any certified inebriate reformatory.

261. There are thus for these offenders two kinds of institutions—the State inebriate reformatories, for "troublesome, refractory and violent" inmates, and certified inebriate reformatories, which remain institutions of the more normal reformatory type. And besides the procedure by indictment there is the simple procedure available under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts. But apart from the policy and requirements of the Inebriates Act, cases of "criminal inebriety" are constantly brought before the magistrates. These are cases of attempted suicide, wounding, assault, malicious damage and other similar offences, brought before justices sitting in summary jurisdiction courts, which are dealt with by short terms of imprisonment or are handed over to friends. It is most probable that among these are many persons who subsequently become paupers, and are often for a long time maintained by the rates.

262. There is thus provision for the more extreme and less remediable cases of inebriety, but for other and presumably earlier and more remediable cases there is only as a rule the short sentence.

263. The weekly cost of an inmate in a certified reformatory may be taken at from 10s. to 12s.[3] The weekly cost of an indoor pauper is about 10s.[4] If the lower figure be taken, the difference of cost is not great between the inebriate and the pauper. On the other hand, we have the fact that the persons

[1] Report of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded [Cd. 4202], 1908, p. 133. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 133–4. Stone's Justices' Manual (1905), p. 257. [3] Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1907 [Cd. 4342], p. 8. [4] Thirty-sixth Annual Report Local Government Board [Cd. 3655], 1907, p. cxlviii.

whose drinking habits are least settled and unalterable receive short sentences and disappear, in no way bettered but left to drift into crime and pauperism. These two facts suggest: (1) that the evil might be dealt with at an earlier stage, if the law allowed it; and (2) that at that stage the cost of maintenance in suitable institutions would not be more expensive, or only slightly more expensive, than maintenance in a workhouse. But unless the ground for intervention at the earlier stage be strong and such as could fairly be dealt with in a court of law, it is hardly possible to base any administrative proposal upon it.

264. Socially, the ground for intervention—a ground which appears to us to be sufficient—is that the inebriate is reducing himself and his family to such straits that he will have to apply to the poor relief authorities for maintenance. There seems to be no reason why this should not be made an offence. Whether the cause of the intemperance be in part physical, or not, the result affects most seriously the community at large. Not only does the delinquent deprive his family of his services, but he weakens and degrades it, and he injures the community as well by imposing on it a large expenditure and by failing to fulfil his duty towards it. It may be asserted that the system of treatment is only partially curative. That may be so, and still it may be advantageous. Like other branches of medical social work it has to be carried out in a large measure experimentally and in the future there may be many alterations in the conditions of treatment. But to leave the problem unconsidered is the greater evil.

NOTE.—The above paragraphs were written before the publication of the Repor of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of the law relating to inebriates and to their detention in reformatories and retreats.[1]

The definition recommended by the Departmental Committee includes (see Recommendation II.) the class of cases to which we refer. It is as follows :—

> "An inebriate is a person who habitually takes or uses any intoxicating thing or things, and while under the influence of such thing or things, or in consequence of the effects thereof is
>
> (*a*) Dangerous to himself or others; or
>
> (*b*) A cause of harm or serious annoyance to his family or others; or
>
> (*c*) Incapable of managing himself or his affairs, or of ordinary proper conduct."[2]

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[1] (Cd. 4438, 1908). [2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Chapter 8.

COMPOUNDING FOR RATES.

265. Our attention has been directed by many witnesses to the system under which rates are now collected, a system which must be carefully considered in reviewing Poor Law administration. Speaking generally occupiers of rateable properties are alone liable for the payment of rates; but under the system popularly known as that of "compounding" the owner of small property may be rated instead of the occupier, either by agreement or by compulsory order of the local authority.[1]

266. The law on this subject is, in regard to the rate for the relief of the poor, contained in Sections 3 and 4 of the Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act, 1869, which are as follows:—

> (iii.) In case the rateable value of any hereditament does not exceed twenty pounds, if the hereditament is situate in the Metropolis, or thirteen pounds if situate in any parish wholly or partly within the Borough of Liverpool, or ten pounds if situate in any parish wholly or partly within the City of Manchester or the Borough of Birmingham, or eight pounds if situate elsewhere, and the owner of such hereditament is willing to enter into an agreement in writing with the overseers to become liable to them for the poor rates assessed in respect of such hereditament for any term not being less than one year from the date of such agreement, and to pay the poor rates whether the hereditament is occupied or not, the overseers may, subject, nevertheless, to the control of the vestry, agree with the owner to receive the rates from him, and to allow to him a commission not exceeding 25 per cent. on the amount thereof.
>
> (iv.) The vestry of any parish may, from time to time, order that the owners of all rateable hereditaments to which Section 3 of this Act extends, situate within such parish shall be rated to the poor rate in respect of such rateable hereditaments, instead of the occupiers, on all rates made after the date of such order and thereupon, and so long as, such order shall be in force the following enactments shall have effect:—
>
> (1) The overseers shall rate the owners instead of the occupiers, and shall allow to them an abatement or deduction of 15 per centum from the amount of the rate.
>
> (2) If the owner of one or more of such rateable hereditaments shall give notice to the overseers in writing that he is willing to be rated for any term not being less than one year, in respect of all such rateable hereditaments of which he is the owner, whether the same be occupied or not, the overseers shall rate such owner accordingly, and allow to him a further abatement or deduction not exceeding 15 per centum from the amount of the rate during the time he is, so rated.
>
> (3) The vestry may by resolution rescind any such order after a day to be fixed by them, such day being not less than six months after the passing of such resolution, but the order shall continue in force with respect to all rates made before the date on which the resolution takes effect.
>
> Provided that this clause shall not be applicable to any rateable hereditament in which a dwelling-house shall not be included.

267. Now this system of compounding has on many occasions been the subject of discussion. It was abolished by Parliament in 1867; it was re-established in 1869 because of the difficulties which the Local Authorities encountered when they attempted to collect the rates directly from small occupiers. We have not had access to any evidence other than that contained in the debates in Parliament which led to this significant fluctuation of opinion. We may, however, be permitted to observe that in administrative questions it is practically impossible even for Parliament to force on unwilling Local Authorities a system which they regard as administratively unworkable; but it should not be forgotten that forty years ago the machinery of local self-government was, comparatively speaking, undeveloped, and in some districts the working of this machinery was in the hands of a type of administrator very different from those who occupy similar positions to-day. Churchwardens and Overseers were the rating authority; they were appointed for the most part by the Easter Vestry; the rates are now made by the Overseers only, who are appointed by other bodies.

[1] Final Report Royal Commission on Local Taxation, Chapter XII.

But whatever changes have been introduced, the compounding system ever since has been and still is condemned on the ground that those who have the right to vote for the election or to become members of Boards of Guardians, entrusted with the raising and expenditure of money derived from the rates, should be directly rated and pay rates themselves. In this judgment many witnesses[1] representative of various shades of political opinion have concurred and have endorsed the opinion of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation who, although they pointed out the great practical difficulties of abolishing compounding held that it was most desirable that all classes of the community should, as far as possible, be made liable to personal payment of rates, in order that they might appreciate directly the effect of competent or incompetent, economical or extravagant, administration. The occupier of compounded property has, under the present system, no means of knowing what proportion of his rent is due to the demands of the rating authority. If the rate rises he may have his rent raised, but if it falls he does not necessarily obtain any reduction.[2] It is generally argued that the evil results of this system apply only to the poorest classes in the community; but as a matter of fact owing to the erection of what are popularly called "flats" occupiers paying an inclusive rent amounting in some cases to £400 or £500 a year have little cognizance during their tenancy of a rise or fall in the rates.[3]

268. There is, however, no reason to labour this aspect of the question. As far as the principle is concerned, few would be found to support the compounding system. It contravenes the whole theory on which the democratic form of government has been set up. On the other hand, it is urged that the practical difficulties of collecting and enforcing payment of rates from the large number of weekly tenants who, in urban areas, frequently move from one tenement to another, are insuperable. It should not, however, be forgotten, that as a rule these tenants move to a fresh tenement in the near neighbourhood, and that although the number of removals is large, in very many cases accommodation is found in the same rating area. The conclusion in regard to compounding at which the Royal Commission on Local Taxation arrived was based on the consideration of these difficulties; but the recommendation, it would appear, was founded on the evidence of officials directly concerned with the collection of rates.[4] Now while we attach full weight to the conclusions of local administrators of great experience, we venture to suggest that public servants familiar with present methods of collection may be disposed to over-estimate the difficulties involved in any change of system. At the same time we have to report that official witnesses have pressed on us their opinion that any radical change in the method of collection would be a matter of very serious difficulty.[5] The Local Taxation Commission recommended that compounding should be permitted where the rateable value of the hereditaments does not exceed £10 in localities other than London and Liverpool. The effect of this proposal would be to increase the number of hereditaments to which "compounding" might be applied in all places except London, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham.[6]

269. Assuming that in principle it is desirable to abolish compounding we proceed to consider whether any practicable scheme has been laid before us. We have evidence from the Metropolitan Rate Collectors' Association[7] to the effect that the abolition of compounding would result in a considerable increase in the total rates collected, but that if direct application to the occupiers were the established system, loss from empties, increased cost of collection and irrecoverables would be greater than the allowance made for compounding. But seeing how large the compounding allowance is not only in London but in other parts of the country, we question whether this forecast would be borne out by experience. Another consideration must be weighed. Local Authorities when estimating their financial requirements and framing their budgets require to know the amount which the precept will produce, otherwise they will be driven to make "speculative precepts," in order to compensate for the losses entailed by direct collection. We are, however, of opinion that if the compounding system were gradually abolished this difficulty would prove much less than is anticipated. With a certain class of tenant in

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[1] C. H. Wilson, Stat. 27. Crowder, 175451; Kemp, 46863; Dodd, 48131; Mee, Stat. 85; Young, 69722; Wilkes, 75446; Moody, 72082, etc.; Local Taxation Commission Report, p. 51; Crouch, App. xxxiii., Vol. IX., p. 813. [2] Sharpe, 17334, [3] Lockwood, 14037, 14136. [4] Local Taxation Commission, Minutes of Evidence, Vol. I., 1755–63, 4017, 6878. [5] Thomas, 50156; Clarke, Vol. IX., App. xxv.; Tagg, Vol. IX., App. xxix.; Potter, Vol. IX., App. xxvi.; Potts, Vol. IX., App, xxvii. [6] Final Report p. 52. [7] Roberts, 93504 (7).

our judgment no evil results would follow. This opinion is based, as we have said, on the recommendation of the Local Taxation Commission, and is supported by witnesses, such as Mr. F. B. Crouch,[1] the Secretary of the Peabody Donation Fund. Miss Constance Bartlett, and Mr. J. T. Baker, the senior rate collector for the Borough of Islington, who possess intimate knowledge of the financial difficulties of those inhabiting tenements of low rateable value. Mr. Crouch informed us that in one of the Metropolitan Boroughs an attempt was made by the Local Authority to reduce the compounding allowance. This proposal was resisted by a combination of property owners. The authorities decided to abolish the compounding system in certain selected districts; in consequence of this on two of the Peabody estates accommodating 366 tenants, rates have been paid direct by the occupiers to the collectors appointed by the rating authority for more than five years. These tenants earn but small incomes, and no special arrangement as to collection has been made by the rating authority, but we are informed the arrangement has been for the advantage of the Municipal Authorities, and the tenants have not suffered. In several properties in the Metropolis, as we are told by Miss Bartlett,[2] an interesting experiment has been made in order to prove whether it is possible to get rid of the compounding system. The tenements in question are separately rated, and the tenants have paid direct with satisfactory results. In other groups of houses the rates are collected weekly with the rents, the former rising and falling with the amount levied, special rent books being now published containing scales showing amounts payable under various assessments and various rates. The result has been what might have been expected. The tenants take an intelligent interest in local administration; they take advantage of their privilege as direct ratepayers, not only to grumble at the amounts required, but they are on the alert to get full value for their money as regards street cleansing and the like. They realise that if the administration becomes slack they are the sufferers. If rates rise they have to pay their share, and even a small increase has a disturbing influence on the family budget. If the rates, owing to the watchfulness and efficiency of their representatives and the officials diminish, they get a direct and immediate advantage. They realise what too many forget, viz., that no small proportion of the burden which results from increased municipal expenditure falls heavily on the class least able to bear it, and that when rates rise by reason of a progressive increase in loan charges spread over a period of years, no relief can be anticipated. In other words, the increase in rates is the result of increased loan charge. We should travel far beyond our terms of reference were we to attempt a description of the serious burden laid on the poorer class of the community by extravagant or inefficient administration. And as need hardly be stated, owing to the increase in rates, rents and the cost of all commodities rise. The tenants, as we have been informed, have to rest satisfied with less adequate accommodation than they would rightly desire, for they cannot afford to take an extra room if such be needed.

270. We must also allude to the evidence which has been submitted to us by Mr. J. T. Baker,[3] the senior rate collector of the Metropolitan borough of Islington. The rateable value of this borough is £1,945,113; its population, 334,991; and its rateable value, therefore, amounts to £5·68 per head of population, thus showing that within its borders are contained a considerable amount of small property. The compounding system was abolished some years ago, and the change has resulted in a large saving to the ratepayers. Thus, according to a statement for the quarter ending Michaelmas, 1907, the loss on irrecoverables, etc., throughout the whole district amounted only to 8s. 4½d. per £100.*

271. Now, in principle we are of opinion that the compounding system should be abolished wherever practicable, and that, as far as possible, rates should be collected weekly, monthly or quarterly, as are rents. Collectors, either men or women, should be appointed at a small fixed salary, and a commission on collection. In this connection we desire to point out that in the last forty years a vast system of industrial insurance for funeral benefit and other purposes has spread over the whole country. Premiums are collected weekly in very small sums, which, in the aggregate, reach large amounts by collectors calling weekly on the occupiers of property of very low rateable value; and the system, from a commercial point of view, is eminently satisfactory. If, as a commercial undertaking, a weekly collection of small premiums is remunerative to the collectors, and provides the poorer classes with a method of insurance of which they approve, it can scarcely be affirmed that if a similar method were adopted in regard to the collection of rates, satisfactory results would not be obtained. There is little doubt

* It should perhaps be observed that, in consequence of an understanding between owner and occupier, the rates were paid in many cases by the former, but without commission or other allowance. The demand note, was, however, served on the occupier, and the arrangement in question did not affect his liability to the Borough Council.

[1] Vol. IX., App. xxxiii.; Bartlett, Vol. IX., App. xxiv.; Baer, Vol. IX., App. xxiii. [2] Vol. IX., App. xxiv. [3] Vol. IX., App. xxiii.

but that the abolition of compounding gradually introduced would rsult in direct saving to the community as a whole, and to those who now pay weekly their rates with their rents. There would also result an increased interest in the administration of local affairs. But it would be impossible to carry into effect so radical a change, unless the rating authorities were so convinced of its desirability that they would resolutely enforce any changes in administration which the new method might involve. No doubt in certain districts the system would have to be introduced experimentally, but, as far as the local government of the Metropolis is concerned (and in a less degree this consideration applies to the country as a whole), a democratic system cannot be satisfactorily administered unless those who control policy are directly responsible for the expenditure involved.

272. A survey of the evidence upon this subject submitted to the Local Taxation Commission as well as to ourselves has convinced us of the desirability of the direct payment of rates by those who elect Local Authorities; and although we are well aware of the difficulties which would prevent a sudden abolition of the compounding system, we are fully persuaded that it should be reduced to the lowest possible limit. This would involve more careful and detailed arrangements for the direct collection of rates; but in the long run the community would benefit not only from less extravagant administration, but from a more active and intelligent interest in local self-government on the part of the electorate. If this policy were pursued, it might also be found desirable to modify the provisions of the Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act of 1869, in the direction of reducing the limit of rateable value for compounding purposes.

Chapter 9.

CONSTRUCTIVE RELIEF IN THE CASE OF THE AFFLICTED.

Constructive pauperism.

273. There is, so far as we know, no express definition of a pauper. Generally it may be said, however, that a pauper is a person maintained wholly or in part by any Union at the cost of the Poor Rate. But it may be pointed out that, in the case of relief given to a dependent, the Law regards as a pauper the husband or parent liable for the support of the dependant, although such husband or parent may not be maintained wholly or in part by any Union at the cost of the Poor Rate.

274. This enactment is contained in Sec. 56 of 4 & 5 Will. IV., c. 76, which runs :—

> "All relief given to or on account of the wife, or to or on account of any child or children under the age of sixteen, not being blind or deaf and dumb, shall be considered as given to the husband of such wife or to the father of such child or children, as the case may be, and any relief given to or on account of any child or children under the age of sixteen of any widow shall be considered as given to such widow."

Extension of rule of constructive pauperism.

275. It will be observed that exceptions are made to the rule of constructive relief in the case of the blind or deaf and dumb. We see no reason why the exceptions should be limited to those classes, for there are other forms of affliction which cannot be prevented. It was suggested to us by Mr. R. J. Curtis, Clerk to the Guardians of the King's Norton Union, that "no electoral disability should attach to the father or mother of any person maintained out of the rates (either wholly or partially) in an asylum, or a registered institution for the care and control of epileptics and feeble-minded persons,"[1] and not only do we agree with this suggestion but we also think that the exceptions should be extended to include the following classes of the afflicted, viz., the mentally defective, epileptic, lame, deformed, and crippled, provided that the assistance rendered from public funds to or on account of the afflicted wife or child is occasioned by such infirmity.

[1] Vol. IV. App. cxxiii. 13 (*d*).

Chapter 10.

THE COMPILATION OF THE STATISTICS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.

Necessity of adequate statistics.

276. A well-considered system of statistics is an essential of efficient administrative control. We need not dwell upon the importance of obtaining adequate statistical information on the multitude of questions which will confront the future Authorities. The effect, both as to numbers and cost, of the different forms of administration, the progress made from time to time in the country as a whole and in different districts, the nature of the distress calling for public assistance and the best methods of dealing with it, are questions, *inter alia*, upon which statistics can furnish most valuable information, and such statistics should be in the hands not only of the Local Authorities but also of the Central Department, of Parliament, and of the public generally.

277. The statistics of pauperism have been much improved in recent years, and a great deal more statistical information on the subject is now presented to Parliament than formerly. There is room, however, for development in the present scheme, and if effect be given to the far-reaching suggestions we make in regard to the administration of the Law it is obvious that modifications will be required in the statistical forms and methods employed.

Present system of collecting tatistics.

278. In the compilation of the statistics of persons relieved it has always been the practice of the Central Department to call for tabulated Returns in a prescribed form from the Clerks to the Boards of Guardians. These Returns are made up from various sources, *e.g.*, the Indoor and Outdoor Relief Lists, and the Medical Relief Register, and there is reason to suppose that the Returns are not always made up upon generally uniform lines. Some development has recently taken place in the instructions issued to the Poor Law Authorities in regard to the method of compiling the Returns, but these instructions have in the past been too meagre and are still capable of considerable expansion if the Local Authorities continue to render their Returns in the condensed form now in use.

Proposed system of collecting statistics for half-yearly and annual returns.

279. It has been suggested elsewhere in this Report that case-papers should be brought into use throughout England and Wales. They are now used with great advantage in a large number of Unions, and, under the scheme of Authorities we propose, their adoption universally will be essential if the Public Assistance Authorities are to supervise effectively the work of the Public Assistance Committees. Moreover, with a carefully arranged system of case-papers the existing books might be simplified. If, then, case-papers are adopted we suggest that the form should be prescribed by the Local Government Board, though it should be permissible for the Public Assistance Authority to amplify the form in any way it thought fit, and that the case-paper should form the foundation of the statistical records of persons assisted. We have printed in Part XIX. of the Statistical Appendix a specimen case-paper which would contain the necessary data for the compilation of the future statistics.

280. It has been suggested that, this system of case-papers having been established, the original tabulation of the particulars of the persons assisted should be transferred from the Local Authorities to the Central Department. Under this system the Public Assistance Committee, under whose care the case-papers would be, would prepare copies of so much of the case-papers as would be required by the Local Government Board for statistical purposes. We print in Part XIX. of the Statistical Appendix a specimen form for the statistical Return which would be rendered to the Central Authority half-yearly. These Returns would be filled in from the case-papers, and would contain all the necessary details of each case. They would be transmitted through the Public Assistance Authorities to the Local Government Board, and the information they contained would there be tabulated in whatever form might be found necessary. The Local Government Board would, no doubt, require additional staff for the purpose, but it is suggested that the necessary expenditure would be justified by the greater accuracy and intelligence with which the Returns would be prepared. The persons assisted must be classified and cross-classified statistically, and such work, it is urged, can only be done efficiently by clerks trained for the purpose. It is also urged that it would be impossible for every

Public Assistance Committee, or even every Public Assistance Authority, to employ a special staff of this nature. The suggestion thus made would simplify considerably the work of the Public Assistance officials, who would thus be enabled to devote more time to their administrative duties, for the clerical work involved in making copies of the prescribed portions of the case-papers would require no more labour than is now involved in the present system of statistical Returns. And further, as the work could be performed without special training, it might, under supervision, become the duty of the junior clerks.

Advantages of proposed system.

281. The Census of persons in receipt of relief on March 31st, 1906, which we obtained for the purposes of our inquiry, was carried out on these lines. Each Board of Guardians furnished a Return giving certain particulars of every person in receipt of relief, and the Returns were then tabulated by our staff. The novelty of the Return probably gave the Poor Law officials more trouble than would be involved in furnishing a Return the details of which were settled on permanent lines. But the examination of the Returns received by us clearly showed that there was a great lack of uniformity in the method of recording the details required for statistical purposes. It is not always possible to detect this divergence of practice in summarised Returns such as are now furnished to the Local Government Board half-yearly, and it is contended that uniformity would be greatly promoted by the adoption of the system of central tabulation. We may here refer to an omission in the half-yearly Returns which has recently been brought to light by the Local Government Board. Where indoor relief is given to a dependant, the head of the family should be treated as receiving constructive relief, but in the half-yearly Return for January 1st, 1908, it is stated that:—

> "There is ground for the belief that these persons have not usually been included in the Returns, as the rules relating to the Outdoor Relief lists, under which the heads of families have been included in those lists, have not expressly required any similar record to be kept for cases of Indoor Relief. . . . The total number thus excluded is slightly over 5,000."

With central tabulation such an omission as this would have been discovered at once.

282. Under the system thus outlined, the preparation of special Returns would often be effected with less delay and labour than at present. Any special Return now required must be obtained by the issue of a special Circular to the Local Authorities, whose officials must be detached from their ordinary duties to furnish the material, or must compile the Return during extra official hours. The system sometimes leads to friction between the Central and Local Authorities and demands for payment for the extra work performed are often made by the local officials. To a large extent these difficulties would be removed under the plan proposed. Again, it may sometimes occur that the results of a statistical Return suggest further lines of inquiry of great importance, which could hardly have been foreseen at the outset. Unless separate details of the persons relieved are in the possession of the Central Department the further prosecution of the inquiry can only be effected by the issue of a new Circular involving much labour to the Local Authorities.

Alternative system of collection.

283. This suggestion, would, however, we are informed, impose so heavy a burden upon the Central Authority that we pass it by and turn to another proposal. We would suggest that the Director of Public Assistance in each Public Assistance area of sufficient size should have a statistical officer whose duty it should be to prepare the Returns for transmission to the Local Government Board. This office might be combined with that of accountant. The Assistance Officer of each Public Assistance Committee would prepare a Return for the required dates, and these Returns would be sent to the Director of the Public Assistance Authority, who would summarise them and send the results, with all information and Returns required, to the Local Government Board.

Dates of half-yearly returns. Proposed return of periods and occasions of relief.

284. The detailed counts should, we think, continue to be taken on the dates which have now been adopted for a long series of years. Arguments might be advanced for altering the date of the January count, for January 1st seldom marks the highest point of pauperism for the season, but we do not think that this is an adequate reason for breaking the continuity of the existing statistics. We suggest, however, that a new Return should be prepared at regular intervals on the lines of the Special Return obtained for us by the Local Government Board, showing the aggregate period and

occasions of relief granted to each person during the year ended September 30th, 1907. Reference has been made to the results of this Return in Part II. of this Report, and we attach the greatest importance to the facts whch have been elicited. They have thrown a new light on many questions coming within the terms of our reference and have confirmed our views regarding the great part which organised charity might successfully and profitably play in the assistance of "first cases." The principal details which should be obtained in this Return are the periods and recurrence of relief, but it is important to distinguish in the classification between Institutional Relief and Outdoor Relief, as well as between persons of various ages, in perhaps three or four groups. Experience would show whether anything more than this was desirable. Under a system of central tabulation the details might be recorded, and forwarded to the Local Government Board at such periods as might be prescribed in the form attached to the specimen of the "Statistical Return" printed in Part XIX. of the Statistical Appendix.

Dates of half-yearly returns. Proposed return of periods and occasions of relief.

The unit of the statistics of pauperism.

285. In the compilation of all statistics it is of the first importance that the unit should be carefully defined. In the majority of cases no difficulty arises in regard to the unit, but the question of constructive relief has produced some uncertainty in the statistics of the past, for some of the Poor Law officials do not appear to have understood the system. We would suggest, therefore, that a person should be considered to be in receipt of public assistance when he or any dependant of his, subject to the exceptions we propose to the rule of constructive relief,* or, being a dependant, when he or the head of the family receives money, kind, or medical attention at the cost of public funds, notwithstanding that the whole or part of such cost may be repaid by the person assisted or by relatives or others, and that the Local Government Board should bring this rule to the notice of all the Local Authorities concerned.

286. Separate statistics should be obtained of the cases involving constructive pauperism both as to the persons actually relieved and the persons only constructively relieved, as well as of the exceptions to the rule, such exceptions being classified according to the various classes of the afflicted. The necessity for separate statistics of constructive pauperism will be apparent when it is pointed out that an able-bodied father of a child receiving no relief other than medical treatment is recorded in the statistics as an able-bodied man in receipt of outdoor relief, although he may be at work and in all other respects supporting a large family.

Classification by physical condition. Constructive Pauperism.

287. One of the most difficult questions in connection with the statistics of persons relieved is that of classification by physical condition. Under the present system the "able-bodied" are distinguished from those 'not able-bodied," but no definition is given of these terms and the resulting statistics are acknowledged to be unreliable.

288. Reference is made in the Memorandum on the Census of Paupers printed in Part II. of the Statistical Appendix to the anomalies produced by the classification, and we need not here say more than that we think terms should be used to which some standard of capability can be applied. We suggest the terms "ordinarily able to work" and "not ordinarily able to work," and, if the definition of "able to work" be ability to perform (1) light, (2) moderate, or (3) hard work of a suitable character within an Institution, a practical standard might be established.

289. The term "able-bodied" involves medical questions, and its use has in a large number of unions, resulted in the classification following the medical officer's classification for dietary purposes. On the other hand, the term "able to work" is one which does not involve so much difficulty, and it is within the power of any experienced administrator to determine whether a person is able to perform the work by which he is accustomed to earn his living, or work to which unskilled hands in an Institution might be put.

290. The class "ordinarily able to work" should, however, be subdivided in order to distinguish those able to work on the date of the Return from those ordinarily able to work, but who are temporarily incapacitated on the date of the Return. There is an analogy for this distinction in the existing classification, and the separate statistics should, we think, be continued, as they will give the actual number of persons who are apparently in want of employment and for whom

* *See* Chapter 9.

the special Institutions for dealing with those able to work will be required. Finally, we suggest that under each class those on the Medical Relief Lists should be distinguished from those who are not on those lists. The distinction of those under medical treatment from other persons has hitherto only been applied to the able-bodied, but we see no reason why it should not be applied to all classes, thus giving statistics of some value from the medical standpoint, and in considering the causes of pauperism.

Classification of wives according to physical condition.

291. In connection with the classification thus suggested, we may draw attention to two points requiring consideration in the present system. The first has reference to the classification of wives of men in receipt of outdoor relief, who for a long series of years have been classed according to the physical condition of their husbands, though the Local Government Board has recently obtained the numbers of those who were themselves able-bodied. We think the latter course is preferable, and that, in the new statistics it should supersede the older method. The second point relates to the classification of persons in separate Infirmaries. There is some difficulty in correctly classifying such persons, owing to the form of the Relief Lists for those Institutions. In several of the separate Infirmaries the inmates have all been classed as not able-bodied, although many were only temporarily disabled. The classification we have suggested should, we think, be embodied in the Relief Lists for these Institutions when such of the patients as were not permanently disabled would fall into the class of those ordinarily able to work, but who are not able to work at the date of the Return, and are on the Medical Relief List. The correct classification would then be returned to the Local Government Board.

Classification of persons in separate infirmaries.

292. The classification according to physical condition would then be as follows:—

PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO PHYSICAL CONDITION, IN TABULAR FORM.

—	Ordinarily able to work.			Not Ordinarily able to work.	
	Able to work at date of Return.*		On Medical Relief List and not able to work at date of Return.	Not on Medical Relief List.	On Medical Relief List.
	Not on Medical Relief List.	On Medical Relief List.			
Males					
Females					

* The *grade* of work should be recorded by filling in these columns with the letter H.M. or L. (for Hard: Moderate: or Light work) as the case might be.

293. It will be observed that the classification provides for those able to work on the date of the Return but who are on the medical relief list. There is some doubt as to the correct classification of such persons in the existing scheme, and not only would this difficulty be removed, but we should also obtain complete totals of those under medical treatment, and of those able to work at the moment.

Statistics of medical relief only.

294. Some difficulty arises in regard to the reckoning for the day counts, of persons in receipt of medical relief only. It is often doubtful whether a person who has received medical attention will again call upon the Medical Officer, who must consequently be in doubt whether the persons should be counted as in receipt of assistance on any given day. In Part II. the Statistical Appendix it is shown that a great many different systems are in force, and we think that, in order to secure uniformity in this respect, some guidance should be given to the Local Authorities. We suggest that the Local Government Board should lay down the rule that the persons counted should be those patients who were dealt with during the week preceding the date of the Return.

Further development of medical statistics

295. The medical statistics of persons in receipt of public assistance should, however, be further developed. Reference has been made to a special Return on the subject which we obtained in 1907 from certain unions, showing the numbers under

medical treatment by the Poor Law Officers on a certain day, and the nature of the diseases from which the persons were suffering, and we recommend that details similar to those obtained in that Return should in future be rendered yearly. The diseases specified in the Return of 1907 might be usefully extended. It would be essential to the preparation of such statistics that a system of medical case-papers for indoor cases (similar to that recommended by the Workhouse Accounts Committee), and a more comprehensive Medical Relief Register for outdoor cases should be inaugurated.

296. Two matters to which we would specially draw attetion in connection with medical statistics are the desirability of obtaining statistics :—

(1) Of the average stay of patients in the Infirmaries of the Local Authorities ; and

(2) Of all births and deaths in the Institutions of those Authorities.

Such statistics would be of great value from the administrative standpoint, and should, we think, be obtained without further delay. We need not indicate the details to be included in the Returns, the precise form of which should be considered by the Local Government Board.

Age statistics of persons relieved.

297. Another statistical question which appears to require attention is that of the ages of persons in receipt of relief. Age statistics have only been collected at irregular intervals in the past, and nearly all the Returns differ in form. Consequently, comparisons of the age statistics we obtained from the Census of 31st March, 1906, with others, could only be made with difficulty, and the utility of the statistics was thus limited. The value of all statistics is greatly enhanced when comparisons with former periods are available, and, in view of the great importance of age statistics for this large section of the population, we think that the ages of persons relieved should be regularly tabulated on uniform lines.

298. In considering the causes of pauperism, such information is invaluable. To what extent is pauperism a question of old age, of the displacement by younger persons of those who have passed the prime of life but are still able to work, or of inability to obtain work by young persons with health and vigour ? In determining the causes the remedies are indicated. In proportion to the magnitude of the different classes so must attention be concentrated on the remedies with a view to their perfection. Administratively, the information is also of great importance. If district be compared with district in regard to the burden of pauperism or to the effect of administration, false conclusions will inevitably be drawn in the absence of information as to ages. For instance, uncorrected for age distribution the rate of pauperism in London is lower than in the rural groups of Unions, but the corrected rate for London is considerably in excess of the rates for all the other six groups in which we have arranged the extra-Metropolitan Unions.

Combination of age statistics with other statistical data.

299. Of secondary importance is the question of the combination of age statistics with other statistical facts. In the Census of Paupers of 31st March, 1906, ages were tabulated in conjunction with :—

(1) Physical condition, etc. ;

(2) Method of Relief ;

and these two classifications were also combined. From the results it was possible to say (1) how many persons of specified ages were able-bodied, etc. It was possible to show (2) the number of persons of specified ages in receipt of each form of relief. And it was possible to indicate (3) the number of the able-bodied, etc., in receipt of each form of relief.

300. Taking the first combination, viz., age with physical condition, the questions to which it furnishes answers are :—To what extent are those able to work made up of persons just past the prime of life who may have been displaced from their employment by younger men, and what tendency in this respect is observable over

a period? Of whom do the class of persons described as "not able-bodied" consist? Are they all old people, or are they to an appreciable extent persons of middle age or younger who are permanently incapacitated? Still more important perhaps are age statistics of sickness. The sickness returns obtained by the Commission have shown the great extent to which persons under fifty receive the benefits of the infirmary accommodation in London and other urban areas, and although administrators of the Poor Law were more or less conscious of that fact, it had hardly been proved statistically.

301. By means of the second combination, that of age with form of relief, many facts of importance may be ascertained. For instance, how far are persons of pension age in Poor Law Institutions? And in regard to children what proportion of those in workhouses are infants and what proportion are of school age? At what ages do indoor and outdoor children respectively drop out of the lists, and, presumably, go to work?

302. The third combination, that of physical condition with method of relief is not so important, but in obtaining the other two combinations this is obtained automatically. The physical condition of indoor and outdoor paupers respectively is, of course, obtained at the present time.

303. As the Institutions of the Public Assistance Authority would be very different from those of the present Poor Law Authorities we do not suggest a list for separate enumeration. The list at present in use (*see* the Memorandum on Census of Paupers in Part II. of the Statistical Appendix, or the Half-Yearly Returns) is perhaps more detailed than is necessary for the purposes of age statistics.

304. Apart from the combinations thus dealt with, age statistics are useful in connection with special classes, *e.g.*, widows with children, casuals, insane, mothers of illegitimate children, etc. etc. And age statistics would be useful in any further analysis of the persons relieved for very short periods, or on a great many different occasions.

305. If the present system of collecting the statistical material were continued it would be necessary to indicate upon the blank forms issued to the Public Assistance Authorities the particular combination of ages and other statistical data required. On the other hand, under a system of central tabulation, the question need not be settled until the commencement of the tabulation in the offices of the Local Government Board, and if at a later date it appeared that further details were desirable the information could be obtained without the issue of a new circular to the Public Assistance Authorities.

Statistics of occupations of persons relieved.

306. It will be observed that, under a system of central tabulation, provision could be made in the "Statistical Return" (See Part XIX. of the Statistical Appendix) for a record of the "usual occupations" of persons assisted. Questions will sometimes arise regarding the social position of those persons assisted who are able to work, and the records of occupations would thus be furnished to the Local Government Board, where they would be available if required. By the term "usual occupation" we wish to denote the calling which the person has habitually followed and not any chance occupation by which he may have gained a living just previous to the receipt of relief. Such chance occupations would not represent the term "industrial conditions."

Statistics of children in receipt of relief.

307. There appears to be a difference of practice in regard to the reckoning of children under sixteen years of age of persons in receipt of outdoor relief. In some Unions the children are struck off the lists and the allowance in respect of them is stopped at fourteen years of age with the object of inducing the parents to find work for them. In other Unions the children are not struck off the Lists until they have actually found work; and in others they are retained on the Lists until sixteen years of age whether at work or not. Bearing in mind the difficulty of determining the amount of the earnings which would constitute self-support in the case of a child living with his or her parents, we think it would be desirable that all children under sixteen years of age of parents in receipt of relief should

be counted whether the children are earning or not. Children adopted by the guardians should not be counted after they have reached the age of sixteen, unless they continue to be dependent.

308. We would also recommend:—

Other recommendations.

(1) That the present classification by "families" or "cases" should be continued, and be supplementary to the classification of individuals according to their industrial ability and physical condition.

(2) That there should be a further classification of individuals under the heads of:—

(*a*) Indoor paupers; (*b*) Outdoor paupers, and (*c*) Boarded-out paupers;

and that, subject to reconsideration when the scheme we recommend is put into force, the present classification by Institutions should be continued.

(3) That statistics should be obtained of the number of deserted wives and children.

(4) That for the purpose of the half-yearly Returns the numbers relieved at midnight on the date selected be recorded instead of those relieved on a given day. By this means persons who received both indoor and outdoor relief on the date of the return would no longer be counted twice over.

Cost of various classes, and of various methods of relief.

309. In regard to the relation of finance to statistics we think it eminently desirable that periodical Returns should be obtained of the cost per head (in the case of annual expenditure) or per unit of accommodation (in the case of capital expenditure) of various classes of persons relieved and of the various methods of relief. Returns of this nature have been obtained from time to time, of which we may mention the Return included in Dr. Downes' evidence before the Commission relating to the cost of the Separate Infirmaries and Sick Asylums in the Metropolitan District;[1] the Return attached to Dr. Macnamara's Report on "Children under the Poor Law" showing the cost of Poor Law Schools and Cottage and Scattered Homes in the same district;[2] a Return showing the weekly cost of the maintenance of paupers in the various workhouses in the same district; and a Return as to the numbers of, and cost of, relief to aged paupers in Homes for Aged Poor in England and Wales.[3] It is desirable that these Returns should be made up on uniform bases in order that comparisons may be made, so far as possible, between different institutions of the same class, and in order to compare the cost of each institution in different years. With a view to the establishment of this uniformity, not only for the purposes of the Returns suggested, but also for the purposes of the annual and half-yearly financial Returns, it would, we think, be desirable that the items of expenditure of Public Assistance Authorities should be classified and an Index prepared on the lines of the "Index of Classification" included in "The Uniform System of Hospital Accounts." That uniformity in the accounts can be obtained without such an Index seems highly improbable.

Period of Poor Law accounts.

310. We would also recommend that the accounts of the Public Assistance Authorities should, in all cases, be made up to 31st March and 30th September.

311. With regard to the statistics of unemployment we do not wish to add to the remarks we have made in Part VI. of this Report.*

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[1] Vol. II. of Evidence, Appendix xiii. (B). (Cd. 3899) pp. 22–25.

[2] "Children under the Poor Law" by Dr. T. J. Macnamara.

[3] Statistical Appendix, Part xiii.

* *See* Part VI., par. 473.

PART IX.

REVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROPOSED CHANGES.

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PART IX.

REVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROPOSED CHANGES.

In this Part we propose to give a general review of the existing conditions of Poor Law administration, and to enumerate the chief recommendations we propose to make.

(1). Leading Defects of the Poor Law System.

1. The preceding pages of this Report, and the voluminous evidence we have collected, will have laid bare the main defects in our present system of Poor Law administration. They may be briefly summarised under the following heads :—

(i) The inadequacy of existing Poor Law areas to meet the growing needs of administration.

(ii) The excessive size of many Boards of Guardians.

(iii) The absence of any general interest in Poor Law work and Poor Law elections, due in great part to the fact that Poor Law work stands in no organic relation to the rest of local government.

(iv) The lack of intelligent uniformity in the application of principles and in general administration.

(v) The want of proper investigation and discrimination in dealing with applicants.

(vi) The tendency in many Boards of Guardians to give outdoor relief without plan or purpose.

(vii) The unsuitability of the general workhouse as a test or deterrent for the able-bodied; the aggregation in it of all classes without sufficient classification; and the absence of any system of friendly and restorative help.

(viii) The lack of co-operation between Poor Law and charity.

(ix) The tendency of candidates to make lavish promises of out-relief and of Guardians to favour their constituents in its distribution.

(x) General failure to attract capable social workers and leading citizens.

(xi) The general rise in expenditure, not always accompanied by an increase of efficiency in administration.

(xii) The want of sufficient control and continuity of policy on the part of the Central Authority.

2. These defects have produced, notably in urban districts, a want of confidence in the local administration of the Poor Law. They have also been mainly the cause of the introduction of other forms of relief from public funds which are unaccompanied by such conditions as are imperatively necessary as safeguards.

Any reform to be effective must be thorough. We will now state what portion of the old system we propose to sweep away, what to retain, and the conditions necessary in order to create for the future a trustworthy and elastic administrative system of Public Assistance.

(2). Public Assistance.

3. It has been impressed upon us in the course of our enquiry that the name "Poor Law" has gathered about it associations of harshness, and still more of hopelessness, which we fear might seriously obstruct the reforms which we desire to see initiated. We are aware that a mere change of name will not prevent the old associations from recurring, if it does not represent an essential change in the spirit of the work. But in our criticism and recommendations we hope to show the way to a system of help which will be better expressed by the title of Public Assistance than by that of Poor Law.

We therefore recommend that the new Local Authority shall be known as the Public Assistance Authority, and that the Committees which will carry on its work locally shall be known as the Public Assistance Committees. The name is not intended to disguise the fact that those who come within the scope of the operations of the new authority are receiving help at the public expense; but it is intended to emphasise the importance of making that help of real assistance. We hope also that the change may make it easier for those directly engaged in administrating relief to build up new traditions, and to carry on their work with a higher aim before them.

(3). Description of those qualified for Public Assistance.

4. The principles dominating the spirit of the existing English Poor Law, so far as they determine the definition of those qualified for relief, seem to us both sound and humane. They contain a positive and a negative element; to relieve those who are qualified for public relief, and to discourage those who do not legitimately come within this category from becoming a public burden. The conditions under which relief is given ought to be prescribed, not by the applicant, but by the authority that relieves the applicant. We do not recommend any alteration of the law which would extend the qualification for relief to individuals not now entitled to it, or which would bring within the operation of assistance from public funds classes not now legally within its operation. The term "destitute" is now in use to describe those entitled to claim relief. Mr. Adrian, Legal Adviser to the Local Government Board, thus defined those who, in his judgment, come under the term "destitute":—

> "Destitution, when used to describe the condition of a person as a subject for relief, implies that he is, for the time being, without material resources (i.) directly available and (ii.) appropriate for satisfying his physical needs—(*a*) whether actually existing or (*b*) likely to arise immediately. By physical needs in this definition are meant such needs as must be satisfied (i.) in order to maintain life or (ii.) in order to obviate, mitigate, or remove causes endangering life, or likely to endanger life or impair health or bodily fitness for self-support."

We prefer the term "necessitous," for we believe that it more accurately describes those who are at present held to be qualified for relief. We recommend, therefore, that the term "necessitous" take the place of "destitute."

Those, however, who are now qualified for relief by coming within the definition of destitution, fall into many classes, and the treatment of each class, and of each individual within that class, should be governed by the conditions surrounding the class or the individual. Help, prevention, cure, and instruction, should each find its place within the processes at the disposal of the new authorities. Too much importance cannot be attached to the organisation to which the selection of the appropriate treatment is to be entrusted.

(4). Area of the Public Assistance Authority.*

5. As a preliminary to any scheme of public assistance it was necessary to form areas for administrative purposes. In doing so we have been guided by the experience of the past and by the needs of the present, and both, in our judgment, point to great changes.

We are fully conscious of the difficulties involved. In the matter of areas, public opinion is tenaciously conservative. The sentiment, based on associations and traditions, which unites those within an area and detaches them from those without it, is a force in local government which cannot be ignored. Consequently, it is wiser to take, if possible, areas well defined and familiar, and to attach to them new administrative functions, rather than to create a fresh area for each successive development.

The Royal Commissioners of 1832 found that the parish was almost universally the unit for Poor Law purposes. They were impressed with its inadequacy. They found in the great majority of cases no guarantee that a supply would be forthcoming of persons qualified for the difficult and delicate duties of administering relief. Even were such persons forthcoming, there was a complete lack of any healthy public opinion to support them. Continuity and uniformity, whether of policy or practice, were hardly to be hoped for; a proper classification was impossible.

* *Cf.* Part IV., Chapter 4.; also Part V., Chapter 2, pars 145 and 151.

True, this inadequacy of the parish had been realised by the statesmen of the eighteenth century, and they had fallen back on the magistracy to correct its shortcomings. In a sense, therefore, they endeavoured to make the county the area for administration, inasmuch as its government was vested in quarter sessions. The attempt proved a failure, partly because joint action on the part of magistrates was uncommon, at least in Poor Law matters, and individual magistrates were unequal to the strain put upon them; partly because the statesmen themselves had no real grasp of the problems involved.

The Commissioners in their Report recommended that a new area should be formed, half way between the parish and the county, viz., the union. It is now our duty to report that in our judgment, the union, as an area, is open to many of the same objections as attached to the parish at the date of the Report.

I.—We think that the number of areas is in itself a source of weakness in administration. There are 643 unions in England and Wales. They vary in size from Welwyn, with a population of 2,200, to West Ham, with a population of 580,000. Such variations are inconsistent with uniformity of administration. The difference again in the number of members of Boards of Guardians, as representing a varying number of parishes, is a disturbing factor. A reduction in the number of areas by their enlargement is essential to any reform.

II.—It was objected to the parish, as an area, that, in the great majority of cases, it was not large enough to guarantee a supply of persons qualified for the work of administration. The Royal Commissioners were sanguine that with a larger area this defect would be remedied, and experience has to some extent justified them. But the evidence we have received goes to show that often the policy of a Board of Guardians and its successful application have been due to the influence of an individual. Sometimes it has been a chairman, who set before himself a clear line of discrimination and decision and explained it so as to win the suffrages even of those who might on other grounds have been opposed to his views. Sometimes a similar deference has been paid to a clerk who, remaining in office while the *personnel* of the board was constantly changing, acquired authority and used it with good effect. Sometimes, again, a relieving officer who was devoted to his duty, and had experience of the people among whom he worked, was able, without presumption, to make acceptable suggestions in individual cases and in the general conduct of the business of relief. On such men as these and on the grouping of members round them in carrying out different branches of inspection and supervision, the goodness of the administration has depended. But of late years two important changes have taken place. First, the Act of 1894 has made it necessary for all those who are desirous of entering upon this form of public service to go through the "storm and stress" of public election. There is evidence to show that there is a growing reluctance to face this ordeal. And, second, the migration from the country districts is not confined to any one class, and it is increasingly difficult to find men who, by local associations or a sense of public duty, are qualified for the office of Guardian. With an enlarged area, the chances of securing men with the requisite insight and sympathy will be greater than now. Again, the scale of the work being larger and the work itself more important, it will be more attractive to capable men. We rely on these causes to bring about a rise in the standard of administration.

III.—The history of Poor Law administration since 1834 shows that the hopes of the Commissioners have not been realised. Boards of Guardians have wavered and vacillated in their application of principles. This failure to secure continuity has inflicted great hardship on the poor. Within certain limits the inhabitants of a union will adapt themselves to the policy of a board. But uncertainty as to that policy, and a doubt whether it will be consistently followed, year by year, or even week by week, is fatal to the formation of habits of foresight and thrift. We hope and believe that, with the larger area which we propose, this uncertainty will be very greatly reduced.

IV.—Another complaint against the present area is that it makes uniformity of treatment difficult to obtain. The complaint, indeed, is often made without regard to the special characteristics of poor relief. Of mechanical uniformity there is more than enough in Poor Law administration. The repetition of routine decisions, *e.g.*, the indiscriminate application of a scale of outdoor relief to case after case, without regard to individual differences, is the bane of administration. But true uniformity lies rather in the general acceptance of certain definite principles and their consistent application. Such principles are thorough enquiry, the consideration of each case in all its bearings with a view to ascertaining how it can best be treated, the granting of assistance at once appropriate and adequate, the securing of co-operation between all the various agencies of public assistance. We believe that one supervising authority acting over a large area will produce a uniformity of this kind.

V.—Again, we need but repeat in this connection what we have before urged, namely, that only with an enlarged area is it possible to secure that classification of institutions which is so necessary to-day. In the great majority of unions there is but one workhouse; and it is the practice of those unions to keep within that workhouse and its curtilage all those, with the exception of children, to whom institutional relief is given. They are kept there because there is no other available building or institution at the disposal of the Guardians. The Royal Commission of 1832, as has been stated more than once, attached great importance to classification; the old Poor Law unit, *i.e.*, the parish, was in their opinion too small and too poor for the purpose of classification; and one of the reasons for the extension of area which they advocated was the belief that it would facilitate classification. But the Commission also pointed out that, even in large workhouses, a proper classification was difficult and could be much better obtained in separate buildings than under one roof.* It may safely be asserted that the universal experience of the last eighty years endorses this opinion. A proper or thorough system of classification is very difficult, if not impossible in a workhouse through whose doors all classes of paupers pass. We advocate a change in this method of administration. Until the present areas are enlarged, no proper classification on uniform lines throughout the country can take place, but the substitution of a large area, within whose limits are several institutions, will at once place at the disposal of the new authority much of the necessary accommodation for carrying through and developing this most urgent reform.†

* Report of Poor Law Commission of Inquiry, 1834, pp. 306–7.

† The following table giving the available institutional accommodation respectively in London, in County Boroughs, and in Administrative Counties, as compared with the number of inmates receiving institutional relief, shows a very large surplus of accommodation over needs in the Administrative Counties, and a smaller surplus in the County Boroughs and London (*see* Statistical Appendix, Part IX.) .—

	Number of Unions.	Acreage.	Population (1901).	Number of Poor Law Institutions.	Accommodation		Number of Inmates on 31st March, 1906.
					According to Lists furnished by L.G.B. Inspectors.	According to Lists of Guardians and Paid Officers, 1908.	
London	31	74,817	4,536,429	144	78,336	78,293	72,483
				51	*40,797*	*40,748*	*37,860*
County Boroughs	85	2,323,664	12,725,306	174	102,476	100,964	87,062
				102	*84,809*	*83,135*	*72,919*
Administrative Counties ...	528	34,928,998	15,266,108	565	119,135	143,378	79,454
				529	*114,953*	*138,951*	*76,012*
England and Wales ...	644*	37,327,479	32,527,843	883	299,947	322,635	238,949
				682	*240,559*	*262,834*	*186,791*

The figures in italics denote the number of Workhouses, their accommodation, and number of inmates.

* The number of Unions in England and Wales was reduced to 643 in March, 1908

VI.—With an enlarged area we believe that it will be possible to improve the position and the prospects of the officials engaged in administration. Division of labour can be carried further, promotion can be made more common, the scale of salaries and pensions can be brought into accord with the scale of the work. We welcome the opportunity which this change will give for adequate recognition of a class of men whose services to the community have not always been valued, as our experience leads us to think that they deserve.

6. We have set out at some length our reasons for proposing an enlarged area, because we feel that, cogent as is each individual reason, the cumulative effect of the whole is irresistible.

We propose that in future the unit of administration shall be the County and the County Borough. In view of the strength of sentiment as regards areas, we have thought it better to adopt an existing area. We are well aware that objections may be made to it, but the fact that it is already recognised and familiar has had great weight with us.

7. The main objection urged against any enlargement of area, and the association under one authority of institutions distant from one another, is that some of the recipients of institutional relief may be so far away from their friends and relatives as to make visits to them difficult. We believe that any such inconvenience is greatly exaggerated. Communication has been so far facilitated and cheapened that the several parts of a county are now, for practical purposes, no more distant from one another than were the individual parishes of a union in 1834. Moreover, analysis of the inmates of a country workhouse shows that the greater proportion of the adults so relieved are infirm or old persons. We have recommended that the old shall in future be cared for in small homes, and these would be available in different parts of the county. For those needing special care, we think that the superior treatment offered in a county institution would far outweigh any inconvenience to relatives and friends. In pursuance of our proposals we would therefore lay down the following principles as governing the readjustment of areas:—

(*a*) That the area of the Public Assistance Authority shall be coterminous with the area of the county or county borough, and that no exception from this principle shall be permissible unless the Local Government Board is satisfied that such exception would, in each particular case, be in the best interests of administration.

(*b*) Any union area, which at present overlaps a county or county borough, shall be divided up so that each part of it will be attached for Public Assistance purposes to the county or county borough within the boundaries of which such part is at present situated.

(*c*) Any injustice or anomaly arising from this arrangement may be remedied subsequently by the ordinary procedure for altering county or county borough boundaries, supplemented, if necessary, by further powers to the Local Government Board.

(*d*) Financial adjustments necessitated by the partition of a union area shall be determined by agreement between the authorities concerned, and, failing agreement, by arbitration as under Section 62 of the Local Government Act, 1888.

8. It remains to determine the area of charge. The Royal Commissioners of 1832 found that under the 43rd Eliz. the area of charge was the parish. The changes which they proposed necessitated its enlargement, and by successive Acts of Parliament, the Union was gradually substituted for the parish. In view of the fresh changes which we suggest, we have been led to the conclusion that the area must be once more enlarged. If the classification of institutions which we propose is adopted, it will logically follow that the area of charge should coincide with the area of administration. It may well be that some new institutions will be required, and that some of the old can be dispensed with. But however that may be, it would

clearly be difficult or impossible for the new Authority to enforce a common standard of efficiency in the institutions in their area, unless the cost of maintaining such institutions was a charge common to the whole area. And with regard to out-relief, or, as we shall call it, home assistance, the same holds good. We anticipate that the Public Assistance Authority of the future will supervise the work of its Committees. If this supervision is to be thorough and effective, the Committees must be dependent upon the Authority for the necessary funds. We propose therefore that the cost of Public Assistance, so far as its incidence remains local, shall be borne by a County or County Borough rate.

(5). Division of Existing Poor Law Work.

9. The enlargement of the area will in itself be an administrative benefit in many ways; but it is only one item in the list of improvements we suggest in the existing machinery of the Poor Law. By increasing the size of each administrative unit, classification and specialised treatment, so far as institutional relief is concerned, will be facilitated. But a proper and discriminating classification can be successfully carried out only by a careful inquiry into the case of every applicant for relief, and this inquiry must be common to all applicants whether they receive ultimately outdoor or institutional relief or whether their claim is rejected. The treatment of all who apply should be individualised; that is to say, special inquiries should be made into the circumstances connected with the individual case; and the treatment should be governed by consistent principles. The construction of the machinery for this investigation requires close and careful consideration. The decisions arrived at upon individual cases, even although those who do this work may form but a fraction of the Board, initiate and govern the practice of the whole Board. This work is in one sense the most difficult and invidious that falls to the lot of the Guardians. A knowledge of the principles which should govern the distribution of public money,—kindliness, firmness, impartiality, an aptitude for discerning truth,—are required, and in addition the administrator should be familiar with the locality and with the needs and characteristics of its inhabitants.

10. Under a system of enlarged areas the work of Public Assistance would seem naturally to divide itself between:—

(1) A Local Authority for the central administration and control of Public Assistance within the enlarged area.

(2) Local committees for dealing with applications and for the investigation and supervision of cases and such other duties as may be delegated by the Local Authority.

Those who are best qualified to discharge the one service not infrequently have less aptitude for the other, and the two kinds of work are so different that both would be better done if thus distributed.

11. Devolution rather than division is the term which should be associated with the distribution of work which we propose. Where a public service affecting the whole community is placed under local supervision, it is generally found to be necessary, if good and uniform administration is to be secured, to combine unduly small areas until they attain a considerable and convenient size as an administrative unit. This has been done in connection with various services, and recently with education, but this process of enlargement, if it is to be really successful in combining effective supervision with a knowledge of local wants and peculiarities, should carry with it another change—the association of unpaid nominated persons of local experience and knowledge with the paid officials of the enlarged local authority. To these non-elected persons duties can be entrusted of investigation, inspection, and report, which should give the authority at headquarters of the enlarged area, the local information it requires, the trend of opinion in outlying districts, and an accurate measure of the wants and efficiency of the services locally rendered. As we have before shown, the principles dominating our system of poor relief, whether we regard the laws themselves or the orders and regulations issued in their explanation, are humane and sensible in their intention. The difficulty for centuries past of giving intelligent expression to this intention has been the want of an efficient and suitable local machinery. Instruments of high finish and fine temper are required, and under our present system

of popular election in small areas these are not easily found. Enlarged areas for relief purposes, if they are to confer real benefits in the shape of improved administration, carry with them as a necessary concomitant the recognition and utilisation of non-elected and nominated members for purely local and district work.

(6). Breaking up of the Poor Law.*

12. There was a scheme brought to our notice known as the "Breaking up of the Poor Law." Its ideas appear to be the foundation of the alternative proposals recommended by certain of our colleagues who dissent from our Report. Under this scheme the whole existing machinery of Poor Law administration would disappear with the abolition of the Guardians, and the work previously performed by them would be broken up into sections and transferred to existing Committees of County and County Borough Councils.

13. Though we have had the scheme fully before us, we do not propose to criticise it in detail. It seems clear to us that the idea upon which it is founded is faulty and unworkable. The question at issue is, whether the work of maintaining those members of the community who have lost their economic independence can be safely entrusted to authorities whose primary duty is something quite distinct—such as that of Education or Sanitation—or whether it is essential that there should be an authority devoting itself entirely to the work. We consider that the many and subtle problems associated with Public Assistance, especially when it is a family rather than an individual that requires rehabilitation, cannot be solved by the simple process of sending off each unit to a separate authority for maintenance and treatment. What is needed is a disinterested authority, practised in looking at all sides of a question, and able to call in skilled assistance. The specialist is too apt to see only what interests him in the first instance and to disregard wider issues.

Moreover, the existing educational and sanitary authorities ought not, in our judgment, to be converted into agencies for the distribution of relief; and the less their functions are associated with the idea of relief, the better will they perform the public work for which they were specially called into existence. To thrust upon these Authorities, while their work is still incomplete, the far more difficult and delicate duties of dealing with families which have already broken down, would be to court failure in both directions—that of prevention and that of cure.

14. There are further difficulties which would inevitably arise from this multiplication of agencies authorised to grant public relief. Whilst a combination of incompatible duties is imposed upon the Education and the Health Committees by the scheme, its operation in another direction is to dislocate and separate work which cannot be effectively discharged unless it is combined and under the control of one authority or committee. The functions of granting relief, and of the recovery of the cost either from the recipients or those legally liable for them, should be in the hands of one body and not divided between two or more organisations with separate staffs, and methods of investigation. Such a separation must result in a multiplication of inquiries and visitations, causing annoyance and waste of time and money. The same criticism applies to domiciliary and institutional relief. Being the two recognised methods of Public Assistance they should be utilised together as one system under one supervision. Their disconnection by being placed under two tribunals must lead to administrative inefficiency and confusion. Whilst a multiplication of authorities and organisations for the discharge of local duties is to be deprecated as tending to delay and friction, care must be taken not to run to the other extreme by the abolition of organisations specially qualified for a certain class of work and the transfer of such work to existing bodies who are not specially qualified for its discharge.

(7). Comparison of Foreign and British Methods of Administration.

15. Before coming to any conclusion as to the form which the organisation of Public Assistance should take, we were careful to make inquiry into the experience of other countries. We invited evidence from those best qualified to give it, and some of our members visited the Continent and reported to us on the working of different systems. We are greatly indebted to both these sources of information.

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* *Cf.* Part V., Chapter III., pars. 206-10

16. We found at the outset a sharp contrast between this country and others in the constitution of the bodies administering Public Assistance. Nowhere, save in our own country, is this duty placed in the hands of a body of men directly elected for the purpose. In most cases it is entrusted to a Committee appointed by the general administrative authority of the town, district, or place. It is thus regarded and treated as a branch of municipal government. Moreover, there is no special rate in aid of the poor, but grants are made for the purpose by the Municipal Authority on an annual estimate. By this means the relations between the department of Public Assistance and the other branches of the public service are made much closer than in this country. All form part of one great organisation, and all are maintained out of the same general fund.

17. Still more in contrast with our methods is the place and power of the official element. In many cases a paid and trained official presides over the local administrative body. In Paris, the Director is a member of a consultative committee of supervision. In Hamburg, he sits and votes on the Committee as Assessor to the President.

18. In the Colonies the work is mainly carried on by paid officials holding permanent office. These officials, both in Europe and in the Colonies, may be credited with expert knowledge upon the subject of relief. Many of them have been thoroughly trained and have risen to their position after having given proof of capacity. An expert knowledge may, therefore, be said in foreign systems to be at the head of local administration. In this country the reverse method largely prevails. The unpaid and elected element dominates the paid, or expert element. We do not in any way wish to decry the splendid service which has been, and is still being rendered to the public by the elected and unpaid members of local administration. When a man of ability, probity, and leisure can be found willing to give his continuous services gratuitously to the public to promote good government in his locality, his freedom from remuneration or official ties not infrequently gives him an authority and an influence in excess of that which any official could exercise. But a system of voluntary unpaid workers has its limits, and there are certain forms of work which are apt to strain the capacity of all but the ablest and most conscientious. The work of investigating and deciding upon the relative claims of applicants for public relief is of this character. The expert or official element ought in this class of work to have great weight. We would strongly recommend that, whenever an Assistance Committee sits and adjudicates upon claims, the official associated with that Committee should be in a position of greater authority and influence than the clerk or the relieving officer is now supposed to possess. What his authority and influence will be in any particular case must always depend in great measure on his personal qualities. We propose that definite guarantees of his efficiency shall be forthcoming, and that he shall be a man who by capacity and training is qualified to share and even to guide the deliberations of the body to which he is attached. We propose further to safeguard his independence by making him irremovable, save by or with the assent of the Central Authority, and to improve his position by throwing open to him a wider prospect of promotion.

19. There should be associated with each Public Assistance Committee, both in London and the provinces, an official of experience whose position towards such committee should, as regards decisions upon the claims of applicants for assistance, resemble that of an Inspector of the Poor in Scotland, whose duties, as defined by statute, are mentioned in the note below.* He should be designated the Superin-

* Section 55 of the Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845, which defines the duties of the Inspector of the Poor is as follows :—" The Inspector of the Poor in each parish or division of a parish for which he may be appointed, shall have the custody of, and be responsible for, all books, writings, accounts, and other documents whatsoever relating to the management or relief of the poor in such parish or division of a parish, and it shall be the duty of the said Inspector to inquire into and make himself acquainted with the particular circumstances of the case of each individual poor person receiving relief from the poor funds, and to keep a register of all such persons and of the sums paid to them, and of all persons who have applied for and been refused relief, and the grounds of refusal, and to visit and inspect personally at least twice in the year, or oftener if required by the [Parish Council] or [Local Government Board] at their places of residence, all the poor persons belonging to the parish or division of the parish in the receipt of parochial relief, provided that such poor persons be resident within five miles of any part of such parish or division of a parish, and to report to the [Parish Council] and to the [Local Government Board] upon all matters connected with the management of the poor, in conformity with the instructions which he may receive from the said Boards respectively, and to perform such other duties as the said Boards may direct, provided always, that in populous and extensive parishes or divisions of parishes the duties of inspecting and visiting the poor may be performed by assistant Inspectors or other competent persons, to be appointed and paid by the [Parish Council] for these duties, and for whose conduct and accuracy the Inspector of the Poor shall be responsible to the [Local Government Board]."

tendent of Public Assistance, and he would be responsible for all the Relieving Officers, or, as we propose to call them, Assistance Officers working within the area of the Committee. He should be a whole-time officer and the Assistance Officers referred to should stand to him in the position of assistants. He should attend all meetings of the Committee.

Similarly the Clerk to the new County or County Borough Authority, whom we propose to call the Director of Public Assistance, will have greater responsibilities than the average clerk to the Guardians of the present day. We have also made elsewhere* in our Report a number of important recommendations which should go far to maintain and increase the efficiency of Officers generally. There will thus be a Public Assistance Service of trained and competent officials to assist the new local authorities in their work.

Taking then the division of that work as above defined, we would designate the Local Authority entrusted with the central supervision and control in each new area as "the Public Assistance Authority" and the body discharging the local duties of hearing and deciding individual cases, as "the Public Assistance Committee."

(8). Duties and Powers of the Public Assistance Authority.

20. We now propose to define more carefully the duties each of the two bodies should be asked to undertake, their respective composition and the relative positions of the one to the other so far as finance, area, and authority are concerned.

We have separated the duties now performed by Boards of Guardians into two categories, and we propose to call into existence two bodies for the discharge of the two sets of functions, viz., Public Assistance Authorities and Public Assistance Committees. The powers and duties of the Public Assistance Authorities would, subject to the regulations and general control of the Local Government Board, be as follows:—

(*a*) To set up and supervise the Public Assistance Committees for investigating and deciding applications for Assistance, and for dealing with applicants in accordance with the regulations of the Local Government Board.

(*b*) To make rules and standing-orders for the guidance of the Public Assistance Committees.

(*c*) To dissolve any Public Assistance Committee subject to the assent of the Local Government Board.

(*d*) To organise, provide, and maintain the institutions necessary for the supply of sufficient and suitable Assistance within their area, or to combine with other Public Assistance Authorities for that purpose,† and to be responsible for all contracts and stocktaking.

(*e*) To provide for the cost of the administration of Public Assistance within their area, and, generally, to undertake financial responsibility for such administration.

(*f*) To appoint and allocate to the Public Assistance Committees such officers as are necessary for their work.

The expenditure which each Public Assistance Authority determines to be required for the administration of public assistance within its area, should, in the case of a County, be paid out of the County fund in the same way as the expenditure of a Standing Joint Committee is payable under Section 30 of the Local Government Act, 1888, and it should be the duty of the County Council to provide for such payment accordingly.

Similarly in the case of a County Borough, the expenditure should be made payable by the Town Council out of the Borough fund.

Any loan required would be raised by the Council of the County or County Borough as the case may be.

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* *Cf.* Part IX., par. 69, and Part IV., Chapter 3.

† It is understood that the Local Government Board shall have power to compel two or more Public Assistance Authorities to combine in any case where sufficient and suitable relief cannot otherwise be provided.

(9). Constitution of the Public Assistance Authority.

21. We now approach the most difficult part of our proposed reconstruction, namely, the constitution of the Public Assistance Authority. The simplest method would be that of direct election by the existing County Council and Borough Council electorates. But direct election for Poor Law purposes, as our evidence over and over again shows, has brought in its wake, whether the elected body be the old Vestry or the more modern Board of Guardians, unmistakable evils which in our judgment ought not to be perpetuated. We cannot recommend this method of selection. Going to the other extreme, namely, that of direct appointment, it has been suggested to us that a local authority, composed of a limited number of Commissioners appointed by the county council and the Government in the ratio of three to one for a fixed period, would, for all purposes of administration, best discharge the duties we propose to assign to the Public Assistance Authority. We are not prepared to contest this assertion. A body so constituted, if composed of capable men would, being free from outside pressure, in all probability discharge the work of Public Assistance better than any elected body. But we hesitate to put this suggestion forward as an authoritative proposal. The difficulties of selection, and of fixing the tenure constitute together obstacles of a most serious character to the realisation of such an idea, and it is difficult to believe that local authorities would consent to power being given to a body of this kind to spend funds derived from local rates.

22. Rejecting these two proposals, there remains the creation of a Statutory Committee of the County Council and County Borough Council, to whom the existing work of the Guardians might be given. We are well acquainted with the objections to this proposal. It is alleged that the County Councils are overworked; that they have no aptitude or inclination for this kind of work; that all power would ultimately slip into the hands of the permanent officials in their employ. But if the alternative is a second elected body with power to rate the whole county, the finance and credit of the county would be prejudicially affected by this duplicated spending power. In proposing the creation of a Statutory Committee of the County Councils and County Borough Councils, it is very desirable that the change should not break continuity of administration, and we hope that Guardians of ability and experience will not be dissociated from future participation in the work with which they are already well acquainted. Accordingly we recommend that one half of the members of the new Statutory Committee shall consist of persons of experience in Public Assistance and cognate work.

23. As regards the constitution of the Public Assistance Authority then, we propose:—

(*a*) That the Public Assistance Authority shall be a Statutory Committee of the County or County Borough Council constituted as follows:—

(i) One-half of the members to be appointed by the council of the County or County Borough, and the persons so appointed may be persons who are members of the council.

(ii) The other half of the members to be appointed by the council from outside their number, and to consist of persons experienced in the local administration of public assistance or other cognate work.

(iii) The actual number of members of the Public Assistance Authority, in each case and from time to time, to be determined by the Local Government Board, after consideration of a scheme submitted on the first occasion by the council of the County or County Borough, and on subsequent occasions by the Public Assistance Authority.

(iv) Women to be eligible for appointment under either head (i) or (ii).

(*b*) That one-third of the members of the Public Assistance Authority shall retire each year, but shall be eligible for reappointment if duly qualified. A member ceasing to be a member of County Council or County Borough Council shall *ipso facto* cease to be a member of the Public Assistance Authority, but shall be eligible for reappointment if otherwise qualified.

(10). Area of the Public Assistance Committee.

24. The area of the Public Assistance Authority being determined, we now define within those limits the area of the Public Assistance Committee:—

(*a*) In the first instance the areas of the Public Assistance Committees shall be the union areas.

(*b*) Ultimately, the areas of the Public Assistance Committees shall be such as the Public Assistance Authority, with the consent of the Local Government Board, shall prescribe, and those areas shall as far as possible be coterminous with one or more rural or urban districts.

(*c*) Every union overlapping the boundaries of a County or County Borough shall be dealt with so that each part of such union entirely within a County or County Borough shall be either provisionally constituted a separate Public Assistance Committee area, or else provisionally attached to another Public Assistance Committee area within the County or County Borough in which such part is situated, and the Local Government Board shall issue Orders accordingly.

(11). Duties of the Public Assistance Committee.

25. The following will be the duties of the Public Assistance Committee, under rules laid down by the Public Assistance Authority:—

(*a*) To make careful inquiry into the circumstances and condition of all persons applying for Assistance within their area with a view to ascertaining the cause and nature of their distress.

(*b*) To review periodically the circumstances and condition of persons in receipt of Assistance.

(*c*) To investigate the means of persons liable for maintenance and to take the measures necessary for the recovery of the cost of the Assistance given.

(*d*) To sub-divide their area when desirable for the purposes of local Assistance, subject to the assent of the Public Assistance Authority.

(*e*) To determine in the case of each person applying for or receiving Public Assistance whether such person is by law entitled to such Assistance.

(*f*) To decide upon the best method of assisting applicants with a view to removing the cause of distress.

(*g*) To co-operate with the Voluntary Aid Committee* with a view to the assistance of cases of distress.

(*h*) To co-operate with other public and voluntary agencies.

(*i*) To inspect, supervise, and administer the Public Assistance Authority's institutions within their area and such other institutions as the Public Assistance Authority shall direct.

(*j*) To secure periodical visitation of all cases in receipt of Home Assistance.

(*k*) To make half yearly an estimate of their expenditure and requirements, and submit it to the Public Assistance Authority who shall from time to time remit such sum or sums as may be necessary.

(*l*) To control and supervise the officers assigned to them by the Public Assistance Authority.

(*m*) To furnish the Public Assistance Authority from time to time with such information concerning the proceedings and work of the Committee as the Authority may require.

(*n*) To discharge such other duties as the Public Assistance Authority may, from time to time, call upon them to undertake.

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* *See* pars. 105–109 and Part VII.

(12). Constitution of the Public Assistance Committee.

26. For each area constituted as in paragraph 24, the Public Assistance Authority shall appoint a Public Assistance Committee, which shall include a certain proportion of persons nominated by the Urban and Rural District Councils, and, where a Voluntary Aid Committee* has been established, a certain proportion nominated by that Committee. The persons so nominated shall be experienced in the local administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work and shall include a proportion of women, in our judgment not ordinarily less than one-third. One-third of the members shall retire each year, but shall be eligible for re-appointment.

(13). Poor Law Authority for London.

27. Whilst the general principles we have laid down as to the future administration and distribution of relief work apply with equal force to London as to other parts of England, the area to be included in the London district and the administrative machinery to be established within that area require special attention. The case for the abolition of Boards of Guardians has been more conclusively demonstrated in London than in any other part of the kingdom. Quite independently of inquiries proving corruption and malversation in certain unions, we found that there was an almost universal opinion amongst those acquainted with Poor Law work in the Metropolis that the present system, based on popular election in a multiplicity of separate districts, does not, under the conditions surrounding it, produce the right class of Poor Law administrator, or secure generally economical and efficient administration. That there are many capable hard-working Guardians in London at this moment, and that there are unions in London well-worked and managed, is not disputed. But London unions, as separate and distinct organisations, have not been able to adapt themselves to the needs of the Metropolis, and the legislation of the last half-century for the improvement of poor relief in London is based on a recognition of this fact. The characteristic of almost every statute effecting changes in London has been in the direction of throwing fresh charges upon a common fund. The variations of rateable value, as compared with needs and population, make it very difficult to establish a common standard of treatment without an equalisation of expenditure. An examination into the policy, practice, scale of relief, and cost of institutions shows a wide divergence between the different unions and sometimes between unions immediately adjacent to one another. These differences exist whether the unions in contrast are rich or poor, in the south, the east, or the west. Neither locality, nor wealth, nor poverty seems to have been the main contributing cause of this variation of treatment and of policy. An inquiry into the amount of public interest shown in the elections or in the subsequent policy of the Guardians, gives little hope that outside pressure is likely to revive such interest, so long as the present system prevails. The first reform necessary in our judgment is the total abolition of the present Boards of Guardians, and the establishment of a unified London for all purposes of Public Assistance. The financial effect of such a change would be comparatively small, as under the present system by far the largest proportion of Poor Law expenditure is not a union charge. The charges upon the Common Poor Fund, the disbursements made by the County Council to the separate Boards of Guardians, and the expenses of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, in the aggregate, amount to about 70 per cent. of the whole Poor Law expenditure in London, and they are directly or indirectly levied upon the whole rateable area of London. The transfer of the remaining 30 per cent. to a common fund would, we believe, be economical to London as a whole.

Area of London Poor Law Authority.

28. There are, outside the boundaries of the London County Council area, a number of urban communities, such as West Ham, Edmonton, Hornsey, and Kilburn, rapidly growing in population, and with a very low valuation per head of the population. These areas are, practically, a continuation of London. The poor rate in some of them is high and will probably rise. Although these districts possibly might, for administrative purposes, be advantageously included in the London of the future, we cannot on the knowledge before us make this recommendation. The question involves many considerations relating to other local branches of expenditure and administration which are outside our purview. We therefore suggest that

* *See* Part VII. par. 237.

a series of local inquiries should be undertaken by the Local Government Board in these districts, to ascertain what are the opinions of the localities themselves as to incorporation with London.

29. The area for the new Public Assistance Authority which we would recommend would be that of the London County Council. The areas of the Public Assistance Committees would generally be the areas of existing unions, though in certain cases some re-adjustment would be necessary.

Constitution of Public Assistance Authority for London.

30. The County of London with its central body in the shape of the London County Council, and with its borough councils within that area, some of which have control over populations exceeding 300,000 persons, presents a different problem from that of the ordinary county. The abolition of Boards of Guardians is necessitated by the impossibility of establishing a good general system of Public Assistance, so long as London is divided into sections,—each having an independent and separate authority of its own. There must be one central body for the control of the administration. If this reasoning be sound, it is equally effective against any proposal to put the Metropolitan Borough Councils in the place of the deposed Boards of Guardians

31. This was the plan officially placed before us by the London County Council. The scheme, as well as the examination of those recommending it, will be found in Vol. IX., Qs. 97473 to 98066. They suggested a committee of the London County Council as a central administrative body, and the substitution of the Borough Councils for the Guardians, each borough council to discharge locally the work of their predecessors, subject to certain restrictions, and supervision by the London County Council as a central authority. These restrictions and supervision were not clearly defined. The division of charges between those falling on local rates and those met out of a fund common to the whole Metropolis were to be much the same as before, with this one exception. The responsibility for maintaining children, either those in institutions or those whose parents were in receipt of poor relief, was to be transferred to the Education Committee of the London County Council, and the cost was to be defrayed as an item of expenditure separate from that relating to education. We fail, however, to understand how, or by what machinery, this was to be done, unless the relief of the child was to be dissociated from the relief given to the parent.

32. From an administrative point of view, this scheme has little, if any, advantage over the system now in force. It might be summed up as a practical continuance of the present plan of separate and independent Poor Law administration in London, Borough Councils being substituted for Boards of Guardians, accompanied by a transfer to the London County Council of some of the powers of supervision now exercised by the Local Government Board. It gives little hope of better classification or of improved or uniform general treatment; the control proposed to be given to the London County Council over the Borough Councils would not, in our opinion, be administratively effective.

33. We are not inclined to favour this scheme, as it does not seem to conform with the main principles we had laid down as the foundation of a reformed administration.

There remain, then, the following alternatives viz.:—

First.—Direct election.

Second.—Nominated Commissioners.

Third.—A transformed Metropolitan Asylums Board.

Fourth.—A Statutory Committee of the London County Council.

Direct election.

34. We have already given our opinion upon the evils resulting from a direct system of election for Poor Law purposes, and we are not disposed to perpetuate a system by which Poor Law administration in London would be disturbed by the oscillatory results of triennial political contests concentrated upon the one subject of eleemosynary relief.

Nominated Commissioners.

35. Some of us are of opinion that, looking to the enormous size of London, to the constant shifting of its population, and to the lack of cohesion between, and the different character and wants of, individual districts, the nomination of Commissioners as a central and controlling authority would be the best form of administration for it; such a body to be small in numbers, partly appointed by the London County Council and the Local Government Board, and assisted by local committees. We think that such a scheme would well suit the case of London and would give the best results both as regards efficiency and economy. It would, however, be an innovation certain to be strongly opposed and it may be that the political difficulties attendant upon it would be more than any Government would care to encounter.

A Public Assistance Authority for London on the lines of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

36. The Metropolitan Asylums Board, whose duties and composition have been described in evidence, have efficiently discharged as a central body for London the task entrusted to them. The Board, as was shown by the statements and examination of Mr. Helby, the Chairman, and Mr. Duncombe Mann, the clerk, believe in their ability to undertake other duties. In fact, Mr. Helby was confident that they could discharge as the central controlling and supervising body, in addition to their existing work, all the duties now performed by the Guardians.

We have, in a previous portion of our recommendations, expressed a strong opinion that the work now performed by the Guardians, especially if areas of administration be enlarged, should be divided into two branches :—

Firstly.—That of administration and control to be discharged by a central body.

Secondly.—That of dealing with individual cases to be discharged by local bodies.

37. The division of labour would hold good whatever the character and composition of the Public Assistance Authority for London. Assuming, then, that satisfactory Public Assistance Committees can be established, each in an area corresponding to an existing union, it remains to consider whether the constitution of the Authority should follow the lines of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. It would then be in part representative, in part nominated, and independent of the political issues of the day. It would in many respects resemble the Conseil de Surveillance in Paris.

Two methods have been suggested for supplying the representative element, viz. :—

1. Direct election in each borough.

2. Direct selection or nomination by each borough council.

It is not suggested that the whole of the Public Assistance Authority should be elected by the ratepayers in the various boroughs, but that a part only—say, two-fifths—should be so elected. By this means the Authority would be kept in touch with the several districts, each of which would contribute a representative.

38. Though some of our colleagues favour the first of the two methods suggested above, the evils of direct election for Poor Law purposes seem to the majority of us too patent to permit of their continuance in London. If the representative area of the future is to be the Metropolitan borough, its magnitude, and the fact that there are within each borough political organisations actively employed in promoting the candidature of their nominees for Parliament, county councils, and municipal work, would inevitably draw the administration of relief into the vortex of local politics. A direct election for Poor Law purposes has this danger; if the poll be small, it is in the power of a small fraction of the electorate to reverse the whole existing policy of relief; if the poll be large, then the question of how relief was, or was not, to be locally dispensed would be a burning question in the locality, with corresponding discontent and unsettlement. The Public Assistance Committee in the locality where the election took place might, under the instructions of the Public Assistance Authority, be conducting investigations and granting relief on principles which a majority of those polling in the district condemned, and friction would at once arise.

39. There remains the selection and nomination by the borough councils, and, assuming that it was considered that these bodies generally were, in *personnel* and standing greatly superior to the Boards of Guardians, they might be entrusted with the selection of nominees to the Public Assistance Authority. But we have no reason to believe that direct nomination by the Borough Councils of representatives to serve upon the Public Assistance Authority would result in securing the services of those best qualified for the work.

A Statutory Committee of the London County Council as the Public Assistance Authority for London.

40. The main objections to the fourth suggestion are two. The London County Council is already heavily worked, and would with difficulty, therefore, it is said, find the *personnel* for yet another committee, whose work would be responsible and exacting. Again, the county councillors are, to a greater extent than in the country, mainly elected on political grounds, and the echoes of the platform are not unfrequently heard in the council chamber. These drawbacks must be admitted, even though the first of them may be minimised by providing that the new committee shall consist, to a great extent, of persons who are not members of the council. On the other hand, if there be an advantage in including the relief of the poor within the purview of a municipal authority—and this assumption has prompted our proposed reconstitution of the Public Assistance Authority throughout England—it does not seem reasonable to exclude London from participating in this advantage. Nowhere are problems of poverty, under-employment, and public assistance more acute and more difficult, and nowhere do they require a more sympathetic and firm handling than in London.

41. After a full consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the various schemes we have considered in connection with the establishment of a Public Assistance Authority for London, we recommend a Statutory Committee of the London County Council with statutory duties as being most in harmony with modern developments of local government.

42. In fact, we apply to London the scheme drawn up for Counties and County Boroughs with the following modifications:—

(*a*) One-half of the members of the Statutory Committee to be nominated by the London County Council either from their own number or from outside;

(*b*) One-quarter of the members of the Statutory Committee to be appointed by the London County Council from outside their own number and to consist of persons of skill and experience in the administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work;

(*c*) One-quarter of the members of the Statutory Committee to be nominated by the Local Government Board so as to secure representation on the Committee of such interests as the medical and legal professions, employers and working men, hospital administration, charitable organisations, etc.

(*d*) We propose that a scheme on these lines should be drawn up by the London County Council and submitted to the Local Government Board for approval. The scheme should secure a considerable number (such as fifty or sixty) of members on the Committee and the inclusion of a certain proportion of women.

43. The Statutory Committee of the London County Council thus constituted we would call the Public Assistance Authority for London, and to it we would transfer the Poor Law work of the Metropolis.

Constitution of Public Assistance Committees.

44. As in the country, so in London, we propose that the work of hearing and deciding applications for Assistance shall devolve on local Public Assistance Committees to be constituted in London as follows:—

(*a*) Each Public Assistance Committee shall be appointed by the Public Assistance Authority, care being taken that, amongst those so appointed, there shall be included a certain proportion of persons nominated by the Metropolitan Borough councils, and, where a Voluntary Aid Committee* has been established in a district, a certain proportion nominated by that Committee. The persons so nominated shall be experienced in the local administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work and shall include a certain proportion of women, which proportion in our judgment should not ordinarily be less than one-third.

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* *See* pars. 105–9 and Part VII.

(*b*) One-third of the members shall retire each year, but shall be eligible for re-appointment.

(*c*) The number of members on the Public Assistance Committees should be largely regulated by the area and population of the districts in which they will act, and should be fixed by schemes submitted by the Public Assistance Authority to the Local Government Board for approval. As a large area will require a considerable body of members, such schemes should provide, if necessary, for sub-divisions of the Committee, it being understood that each sub-committee will act in a smaller area as a section of the Committee.

45. We also propose that Poor Law expenditure in London be a uniform charge over the whole area according to rateable value. Poor Rate for London.

(14). The Central Authority.*

46. Having laid down the area, constitution, and functions of the future local authority to be established for the purpose of public assistance, we will now consider what should be the *status* and powers of the Central Authority, and its relations to, and control over the local authority.

47. We have given a full account in a preceding chapter* of the origin and growth of the Local Government Board so far as Poor Law control was concerned. We have shown that out of the Poor Law Commissioners appointed in 1834 grew the Poor Law Board with its Parliamentary representatives, and how that Board was merged later in the Local Government Board. This Board has now to perform many duties relating to the local administration of the country in addition to those connected with Poor Law. To a large extent it discharges the duties of a Ministry of the Interior. Its *status* does not seem to us to be adequate, considering the importance, authority, and character of the multifarious work it discharges. We are in full accord with the proposal to raise the salary and *status* of the head of the Department to that of a Secretary of State.

48. Although our reference brought us into contact chiefly with the Poor Law side of the Local Government Board, yet this was sufficient to convince us that the Department is greatly over-worked. The enormous mass of administrative questions brought within its cognisance, upon subjects which do not brook of delay, gives to the higher officials insufficient time for the study of new and perplexing problems as they arise and come up before them. The volume and importance of such questions are on the increase. We feel it, therefore, of great importance that the staff of the Office should be adequately increased so as to relieve the Permanent Secretary and the higher officials of the undue strain which the present conditions often impose upon them. These considerations are of special weight at a time when it is proposed to re-organise the whole service of Public Assistance.

49. There are five "Divisions" of work in the Local Government Board, of which Poor Law is one; and this is again divided into two branches—the Poor Law Administration Department and the Poor Law Officers' Department. There are incidental and general questions connected with the Poor Law, such as questions of law, the issue of orders and statistics, questions of audit and accounts which are referred to and dealt with by the Order and Audit Departments of the Board. The aggregate powers and control exercised by this combination of departments over the local Poor Law administration and expenditure have already been fully explained. But we think it would be an advantage if the public generally could recognise that there is a separate "Division" of the Local Government Board, devoting its whole attention to Poor Law work. To this end we recommend that greater prominence should be given to the fact that there is a separate Division of the Local Government Board, under a separate Assistant Secretary, which will deal with the work of Public Assistance. We also recommend that in future the annual Report of the Public Assistance Division should be printed and presented to Parliament in a volume separate from the rest of the Report of the Local Government Board.

50. We recommend that there should be closer co-operation between the Public Assistance Division, and the Statistical and Audit Divisions of the Local Government Board. Similarly, the Public Assistance Division of the Local Government

* *Cf.* Part IV., Chapter 1.

Board should be in close touch with other Government offices in work in which they are commonly interested. One other large department which fulfils similar duties is the Home Office: and we think that there should be the closest co-operation between the Home Office and the Local Government Board. In the hands of the Local Government Board and the Public Assistance Authorities of the future will be the management of Public Assistance. In the hands of the Home Office is the provision made for persons who have been convicted and are placed in detention. These cases and the cases of persons who, amongst others, should be detained as inebriates, "ins-and-outs," or vagrants can be rightly treated only by measures which fall within the province of the Home Office, and we recommend that they should all be placed under the control of that office.* It is only by the recognition of this division of labour and by its observance by the Local Authorities and the Central Government Departments that the task of either can be properly accomplished.

51. The eyes and ears of the Local Government Board are the General Inspectors and, in Part IV., Chapter 1 of our Report, we have made a number of recommendations in regard to them. Appointments should in the future be given only to those who have special qualifications, and these qualifications should, as a general rule, be tested by service for a probationary period as an Assistant Inspector.

The number of Assistant Inspectors should be increased. This would relieve the Inspectors of their routine and less important duties, and enable them to strengthen their grasp of the administration of Public Assistance in their districts. We have already described the existing duties of Inspectors. We think that, for the future, these duties should be extended, and that the Inspectors should be authorised to attend, not only the meetings of the Public Assistance Authority, but also those of the Public Assistance Committees and sub-committees, as well as to visit institutions. They should be ready to advise the Public Assistance Committee in regard to the general principles and methods of Public Assistance; they should, in conjunction with the Assistance Officers† and otherwise, visit individual cases, so as to ascertain whether the Assistance is given under suitable conditions.

Upon appointment, Inspectors should receive written or printed instructions as to their duties, and such instructions should be periodically revised. Conferences should take place between the Inspectors, at least annually, to enable them to exchange views and experiences, and thus to carry out methodically the policy of the Department.

52. With regard to the Auditors of the Local Government Board, we recommend that appointments should be made from the ranks of Assistant Auditors; that qualifications for Assistant Auditors should be defined and tested by examination; and that there should be an increase of the auditing staff.

53. We consider that the increase in the number and efficiency of the inspectors and auditors which we propose is no more than is essential for the normal control and supervision of the administration of Public Assistance. But, in addition, we recommend that adequate funds should be placed at the disposal of the Local Government Board, to enable it from time to time to undertake inquiries, or to obtain expert assistance, upon particular subjects. The Central Authority responsible for the administration of Public Assistance should be abreast of expert knowledge, both at home and abroad, in regard to the constantly changing problems with which it has to deal.

54. We will now consider the relations of the Central Authority to the new Local Authorities. We see every reason to anticipate that, under the new *régime*, it will be possible for the Local Government Board to keep more closely in touch with the Public Assistance Authorities than it has been in the past with the Guardians.

Under the existing law, while the poor relief administration is in the hands of 643 different Boards of Guardians, meeting as a rule weekly or fortnightly, it is obviously out of the question for the Local Government Board to follow very closely the various methods and proceedings of each and all of them. The Board is not responsible for the due and effectual relief of the poor in the direct sense that the law has made the Irish Local Government Board responsible. For both these

* *Cf.* pars. 138 and 151. † *See* par. 19.

reasons the periodic survey by the Board at Whitehall of the Guardians' work, by means of Inspectors' and auditors' reports and statistical returns, must be a review of the past rather than of the current questions of administration, although the Board is frequently consulted by Boards of Guardians on questions of importance and as regards many current matters as to which some action on its part is required.*

55. The change which will be effected by concentrating everything but the routine work of these 643 bodies in the hands of 133 County and County Borough Authorities, gives an opportunity for a great advance in the way of a closer linking up of the central and local authorities in regard to important matters of current administration, and we suggest that this object might perhaps be achieved by the transmission of the minutes of Public Assistance Authorities to the Local Government Board immediately after each meeting.

56. The minutes might set forth not only the proceedings and orders of the Public Assistance Authority upon all reports and correspondence received, but also the financial position of the Authority and its subordinate Committees at the end of each month, as well as the statistics of admissions and discharges and other relief afforded during the same period. In Ireland this practice is adopted, and it is found that the minutes form a convenient means of communication between the Local Government Board and the Authorities; and when any matter comes up for consideration upon which the sanction, approval, or advice of the Local Government Board is desired, the clerk indicates the fact by a marginal note on the minute in question, thereby obviating the necessity for a separate letter on the subject. We suggest whether this practice might not be found suitable for adoption in England.

57. If such a system were adopted, the whole policy of each Public Assistance Authority would, as it were, be passed in review before the eyes of the Local Government Board and its Inspectors. The difficulties of the Authorities would be seen, their successes and failures would be followed and understood, and the Inspectors would be enabled to judge when their attendance at the meetings of the Authorities would be most likely to be helpful. Whether this system would be necessary or expedient as a permanent arrangement, time alone can show, but at all events, when these new county Authorities are first started and the reins of the new administration are thrust into their hands, it seems desirable that, if the new *régime* is to be carried out wisely and with uniformity throughout the country, with due regard to the principles laid down by Parliament and the orders of the Local Government Board, there should be some such intercommunication in the progress of business, between the Central and the County and County Borough Authorities.

58. To assist the new local authorities to understand the spirit of their duties and the intention of the legislature, the codification and consolidation of existing Poor Law statutes should at once be undertaken as well as of the orders and circulars issued under the authority of those statutes. To expedite this work, we would suggest the appointment of a small committee of Poor Law and legal experts to sit continuously until the task is completed.

59. We think also that it would be useful for the Central Authority to issue, or cause to be issued, a small manual of instructions for the guidance of the local authorities. The manual should contain a clear exposition of the main features of the law relating to Public Assistance, and of the policy of the Central Authority as laid down in their orders and circulars. The manual should be periodically revised and brought up to date.

60. We will next briefly review the changes which we propose in the powers and functions of the Central Authority.

We have not attempted to draw up a detailed list of those minor functions of the Local Government Board which might be handed over to the new Public Assistance Authorities, but we trust that the constitution of these bodies will enable the

* Moreover a statement is sent to the Inspector weekly by the clerk of each Board of Guardians in his district, and in this statement a copy of any special minute or notice of motion at the last meeting of the Guardians is included, together with any observation in reference to any unusual increase or decrease in the number of persons relieved.

Local Government Board to devolve upon them the power to give assent to many individual cases of relief, such as emigration cases, children sent to homes, etc. The devolution of such powers would lighten the work of the Local Government Board considerably and advantageously.

We have recommended that, subject to more precise qualifications being laid down for higher officers, the local authorities should have full discretion to appoint such officers so long as the prescribed qualifications are fulfilled.

We have also recommended that the power of the Local Government Board to sanction prospective expenditure under the Local Authorities Expenses Act should be abolished.

With these exceptions we do not propose any diminution in the powers of the Local Government Board. On the contrary, we think it of importance that its powers should be increased in the following directions.

61. The Local Government Board at present cannot order a new workhouse to be built unless a majority of the Guardians of the union or of the owners and ratepayers consent. It is desirable that this limitation should cease, and that the Board should have power to compel the local authority to provide adequate buildings and adequate classification.

The Local Government Board should have power to direct that a particular class or classes of paupers for whom there is no suitable accommodation in the area of a Public Assistance Authority should be removed to and treated in any available and suitable institution of another Public Assistance Authority.

62. We feel that a stronger check should be exercised than heretofore over the cost of buildings erected by loan. To prevent extravagance, they should be built more in accord with some accepted plan, and care should be taken that the buildings are actually erected in accordance with the approved plans.

The Local Government Board should have power to authorise the Public Assistance Authority to purchase land compulsorily for the provision or enlargement of institutions.

63. Previous to 1894 the Central Authority were able through the *ex officio* Guardians to carry on the business if the elected Guardians refused to act. Though we do not contemplate the likelihood of any such hitch occurring as that the new authority would decline to act, it would be well, in the legislation which will be necessary to give effect to our recommendations, that the Local Government Board should be given authority in such a contingency to empower persons to exercise temporarily all or any of the powers which they may consider necessary for the object in view.

64. We recommend further that the Local Government Board should be empowered to compel Public Assistance Authorities to combine to provide for certain classes of cases, when sufficient and suitable accommodation is not otherwise available, and failing agreement between the authorities concerned.*

(15) Grants in aid of Local Taxation.**

65. The control to be exercised over Government grants to local authorities for Poor Law purposes is a more complicated question. At present the Guardians do not receive any grant direct from the Government, except that in respect of agricultural rates, which is given to make good part of the deficiency caused by an alteration in the law of rating. The other grants are given to the Guardians through the County and Count Borough Councils, and are paid to them by such Councils in connection with certain specified services and payments. When the County and County Borough Councils become the Poor Law authority, they will retain the money they previously passed on to the Guardians, and, if the poor rate be a county and county borough rate, the Government grants will simply be an annual sum in reduction of the county and county borough rates, which would otherwise have to be raised.

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* See also par. 109 (16) as to placing Charities Commission under the Local Government Board.

** See also Part IV., Chapter 4, pars. 172–6.

66. The principle upon which for the future these grants should be calculated and paid over to the various localities has been a subject of much controversy, and the Royal Commission on Local Taxation were divided upon it.

The majority of the Commission were in favour of grants being made in respect of selected items of expenditure, but the minority, including Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir Edward Hamilton, and Sir George Murray, believed that the sounder principle would be to base the amount on calculations made from the assessable value, the population and the expenditure in each locality. Tersely expressed, their argument was that the grant should be measured by necessity and ability, necessity being represented by the population and expenditure, ability by the assessable value.

67. When, after years of special investigation, authorities, so high as those quoted above, differ upon a question of such intricacy, it is difficult for us, who have not been able to give any exceptional attention to the subject, to express a decided opinion one way or the other. What we feel strongly is that these grants should be conditional; that is to say, that there should be a power to refuse any or all of such grants to a local authority, if the services or work towards which they are a contribution is not up to a proper standard. The plea upon which such grants are given from the Imperial Exchequer is that the services towards which they go are national in their character; if they be of that character the nation, through its recognised authorities, has a right to see that the services are efficiently rendered.

We are, therefore, of opinion that such grants, or portions of such grants, should be withheld from any County or County Borough authority, in cases where the Local Government Board reports that the administration, or branches of administration, of Public Assistance are not efficient, in the same way as the police grant may be forfeited if the Secretary of State withholds his certificate as to efficiency in discipline. We should be disposed to favour that system of calculation which makes the withholding of such grants under the conditions contemplated the most effective weapon for enforcing efficiency, and it would seem to us, as at present advised, that the block grant system would be the most suitable in this respect.

68. As regards the amount of the grant, we note that both Reports of the Local Taxation Commission recommended an increase. We concur in that view, and recommend that it be raised to the sum of £5,000,000 per annum, the amount suggested by the minority.

(16). Officers of the Local Authorities.

69. We have recognised that the efficiency of the officers of the local authority entrusted with Public Assistance is a matter of the utmost importance and we have made a number of detailed recommendations (Part IV., Chapter 3) as regards their qualifications, appointment, terms of service and superannuation with a view of establishing and maintaining a high standard of efficiency. We repeat verbatim here for purposes of convenience these recommendations :—

(1) When a Local Authority and the Local Government Board concur in the opinion that the retention of any officer is, on general grounds, detrimental to the administration, the Local Authority should have power to terminate that officer's appointment after proper notice.

(2) No person should be appointed as Clerk who has not some knowledge and experience of the Poor Law, no person as superintendent of an institution who has not had some experience in dealing with the classes which the institution contains, and no person as a relieving officer who has not had some previous training as an assistant relieving officer or has not passed an examination and obtained a certificate of an examining authority recognised by the Local Government Board.

(3) There should be qualifying examinations for the higher officers. Once qualifications for each office are laid down, and the Local Government Board satisfied that they are fulfilled, the entire responsibility for the appointment of all officers might be left to the new Local Authorities.

(4) The Local Government Board might sanction a scale of officers' salaries for each Local Authority, and so long as the salaries, or increases of salaries, were in accordance with that scale, it should not be necessary for the Local Authority to require the sanction of the Local Government Board to individual salaries.

(5) A Central Superannuation Fund should be established for the whole service, and in the case of teachers transferring themselves from public elementary schools to the Poor Law service and *vice versa*, arrangements should be made by which any sacrifice of pension is avoided.

(6) The Clerk of the future or any officer performing analogous duties to any Local Authority shall not, save under very exceptional circumstances, and subject to the consent of the Local Government Board, be a part-time officer.

(7) If the General Workhouse is abolished, each of the specialised institutions which takes its place, will require a superintendent, qualified by knowledge and experience, for its management. The salary offered must be sufficient to attract men not merely of organising power, but having the moral qualities necessary to develop the capacities of those under their charge.

(8) Highly trained officers will be required in what are now regarded as less important posts, as *e.g.*, that of labour master.

(9) Provision should be made for inmates of all denominations receiving religious administration and instruction from the clergy of their respective churches.

(10) The indoor staff should be allowed to live out, where circumstances permit, and so far as is consistent with discipline and the proper discharge of their duties.

(11) Where adequate relief is offered and refused, the responsibility for the consequences arising from such refusal should not rest with the relieving officer.

(12) The relieving officer must not be burdened with too large a number of cases. In any scheme or regulations for the administration of relief in local areas, the proportion of cases to officers should be carefully and periodically revised.

(13) Pay stations should be abolished.

(14) In some places an officer might be appointed who, like the Inspector of Poor in Scotland, might fill the position both of Clerk and relieving officer with such assistance as is necessary.

(15) A Local Authority should not be allowed to appoint an ex-member as a paid officer, unless he or she has ceased to be a member of the Local Authority for a period of, say, twelve months before appointment.

(16) Women visitors might be employed for certain classes of out-relief cases.

(17) A graded Public Assistance Service should be set up which should include all officers concerned with the supervision, control, and disciplinary treatment of the poor, including relieving officers, both male and female, masters, matrons and superintendents of institutions of every grade, labour masters and mistresses. In this service there should be more opportunity of promotion from the lower to the higher ranks, and no question of superannuation should hinder the transfer of efficient and promising officers from one Local Authority to another.

70. We have also recommended, in this Part of our Report, that the officer referred to in recommendation No. 14 above, who will be the chief officer of the Public Assistance Committee, shall be called the Superintendent of Public Assistance, and that the relieving officers working under him shall be called Assistance Officers. The Clerk of the Public Assistance Authority we propose to call the Director of Public Assistance.

(17). Main Principles of a Reformed Poor Law.*

71. We have now completed the description of the new machinery we propose to set up in the place of the Boards of Guardians and their officers, and we turn to the principles which we hope this new organisation will keep before it in its exercise of its powers. These principles may be thus epitomised :—

(1) That the treatment of the poor who apply for Public Assistance should be adapted to the needs of the individual, and, if institutional, should be governed by classification.

(2) That the public administration established for the assistance of the poor should work in co-operation with the local and private charities of the district.

(3) That the system of Public Assistance thus established should include processes of help which would be preventive, curative and restorative.

(4) That every effort should be made to foster the instincts of independence and self-maintenance amongst those assisted.

72. Any treatment adapted to the needs of cases, especially if applied on a large scale, requires not only many helpers but also such a distribution of cases amongst officials and workers as will allow time and attention to be given to each individual case. Our scheme of organisation permits of this sub-division, for it will always be competent for the Public Assistance Authority to increase the number of Public Assistance Committees in any district, or to divide the district.

73. We now pass on to the methods of Public Assistance, and the treatment to be applied to the different classes who seek it.

(18) "Indoor" or Institutional Relief.†

74. The Royal Commission of 1832 intended that the workhouse should be a place in which the able-bodied could be set to work, and that for other recipients of indoor relief provision should be made in separate and appropriate institutions. We have found that this intention has been only partially realised. In the great majority of Unions the workhouse contains several distinct classes of inmates. As the outcome of this system we have found that :—

(i.) Proper classification is impossible.

(ii.) There is a great want of uniformity in the various workhouses.

(iii.) Indoor relief is deterrent to some and attractive to others.

(iv.) The cost of erection, equipment, and indoor maintenance all tend to rise.

(v.) A class of "ins and outs" has come into existence.

(vi.) Residence in a workhouse has a demoralising effect.

75. We recommend that in the future :—

(i.) General workhouses should be abolished.

(ii.) Indoor relief should be given in separate institutions appropriate to the following classes of applicants, viz. :—

(1) Children.

(2) Aged and Infirm.

(3) Sick.

(4) Able-bodied men.

(5) Able-bodied women.

(6) Vagrants.

(7) Feeble-minded and epileptics.

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* *Vide* also pars. 143 and 144 as to General Principles governing Public Assistance to the Able-Bodied.

† *Cf.* Part IV., Chapter 5, and Part VI., Chapter 4 (2.) (d).

(iii.) All indoor cases should be revised from time to time.

(iv.) Powers of removal to and detention in institutions should be given, with proper safeguards, to the Public Assistance Authority.

(v.) The treatment of inmates should be made as far as possible curative and restorative.

(vi.) The Central Authority should exercise a more strict control over expenditure on buildings and equipment.

(vii.) In every institution for the aged and for the able-bodied a system of classification should be adopted on the basis of conduct before and after admission.

(19) Outdoor Relief * or "Home Assistance."

76. We have dealt at some length with the history of outdoor relief and the problems which are bound up with it. We have seen that the Royal Commission of 1832 proposed the abolition of outdoor relief in the case of the able-bodied, and that Parliament accepted that principle. We have described the various orders issued from time to time by the Poor Law Commissioners, the Poor Law Board and the Local Government Board for its prohibition or regulation. We have also traced the fluctuations of public opinion which have greatly influenced its administration in those cases in which it is permitted.

77. The results of our investigations into its history, of our own observation in visiting Boards of Guardians in different parts of the country, and of the evidence given before us, may be summarised as follows:—

We have found a total want of principle and of uniformity in its administration, due, as we think, in part at least, to a lack of sufficient supervision. This want of uniformity does not necessarily arise from a difference in the circumstances of unions, but is generally the result of careless administration. We have been impressed by the inadequacy which often characterises it, particularly in the case of widows with families, and by the absence of thorough knowledge of applicants on the part of Boards of Guardians, and sometimes even of their officers. We have had to record cases in which it was distributed with a complete disregard of sound policy, and, though rarely, on grounds, so far as we could judge, inconsistent with any high standard of administrative honesty. We have found that in few cases is any care or thought given to the conditions under which those who receive it are living. We do not recommend its abolition, partly because we hope that, if our proposals are adopted, the need for it will gradually disappear, and, in any case, its mischiefs will be reduced to a minimum, and partly because we feel that time is needed for the development of a curative system of treatment, and that the abolition of out-relief might cause hardship. We also feel that it may be, if used wisely, a means of restoring to independence those to whom it is given, and that the strict supervision which we recommend of the housing, surroundings and habits of the recipients may do much to raise the level of a neighbourhood.

78. We think that the work done by out-relief, so far as it is useful, might be better done by voluntary agencies, and we hope that in the future it will be so, and that a clear line will be drawn between the "necessitous," who are properly relieved by the community, and the "poor" who are the proper objects of voluntary aid.

79. Our chief recommendations are:—

(1) That Out-relief, or as we shall call it, Home Assistance, should be given only after thorough inquiry, except in cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

(2) That it should be adequate to meet the needs of those to whom it is given.

(3) That persons so assisted should be subject to supervision.

(4) That, with a view to inquiry and supervision, the case-paper system should be everywhere adopted.

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* *Cf.* Part IV., Chapter 6, and Part VI., Chapter 4 (2) (d).

(5) That such supervision should include in its purview the conditions, moral and sanitary, under which the recipient is living.

(6) That voluntary agencies should be utilised as far as possible for the personal care of individual cases.

(7) That there should be one uniform Order governing Outdoor Relief or "Home Assistance."

(20) Children. *

80. Prior to 1834, of all the classes that came under the authority of the Poor Law, children were, perhaps, the most neglected. According to the evidence then given, the majority of the Poor Law children in workhouses outside London were merely trained in ignorance, idleness and vice, and not one-third of them found any respectable employment. The majority dropped almost mechanically into the ranks of pauperism and crime.

81. It is gratifying to us to be able to give a very different account of the present condition of the children. The evidence was almost unanimous as to the good results obtained under the various systems of education and training in force, and this evidence was confirmed by our own experience when visiting and inspecting the various educational institutions and domiciles. Few such children in after life fall back into pauperism, and it is probable that the children in some, at least, of the present Poor Law schools are being better fitted for earning their living than those educated outside. This substantial improvement must be put to the credit of the existing Poor Law administrators. We consider that they have, through the educational methods now in force, weakened if not stopped an old and copious source of pauperism.

82. We may briefly summarise our opinion upon the different systems of dealing with Poor Law children now in force.

83. First of all, we are strongly of opinion that effective steps should be taken to secure that the maintenance of children in the workhouse be no longer recognised as a legitimate way of dealing with them. We put this in the forefront of our recommendations.

84. As to the other systems in force, viz.: District Schools, Grouped Cottage Homes, Scattered Homes, Boarding-out, we consider that each system has its merits and its drawbacks, and that more depends upon the administrators than upon the system.

85. The District Schools, established first in 1844, give an excellent education, and those trained therein do well in after life. We do not endorse the wholesale condemnation of these institutions by the Committee on the Care of Poor Law Children in 1896. All large schools have inherent evils connected with the aggregation of children of various ages, and the District Schools are not free from such defects. We would not, however, in any case, recommend the multiplication of large institutional schools, as we think that there are other methods of education and training, particularly for girls, which are more adaptable and produce even better results.

86. Grouped Cottage Homes, introduced in 1867, give an excellent education and training, but there are grave objections to their elaborate construction and equipment, and the growing cost of maintenance in them.

87. The Scattered Homes, which have the great advantage of involving very little capital expenditure and of securing a kind of home life particularly valuable for girls, have been increasingly adopted by other unions since they were started in Sheffield. Such Homes, when closely supervised and under competent foster-mothers, promise good results.

88. Boarding-out is another method of training children which might and should be greatly extended. Here the expense is comparatively small and involves no capital outlay whatever, and where the system is well managed a real home life is secured for the children, and they enter upon industrial life on the same terms as

* *Cf.* Part IV., Chapter 8.

the children of the independent working classes. In Scotland, it is the general system for the upbringing of Poor Law children, and there it works exceedingly well; but a most careful and constant supervision over all such children is indispensable, and where such a system of inspection cannot be had, boarding-out ought not to be attempted. So far as our evidence and special investigations go, the system of boarding-out within the Union has been liable to be very unsatisfactory owing to lack of proper supervision.

We have recommended that the work of supervision of boarding-out within the Union by the Public Assistance Committee should be placed in the hands of competent women officers, and that special care should be taken when the boarding-out is with relatives.

89. We think that the power to adopt children of vicious parents should be more frequently exercised and accompanied by a stricter dealing with the parent, and that the Public Assistance Authorities should, in future, retain supervision of adopted children up to the age of twenty-one.

90. We think also that, in all cases, there should be systematic records of the after life of children leaving the care of the Public Assistance Authorities.

91. The condition of the out-relief children—that is, children whose parents are in receipt of out-relief—is much less satisfactory. The Guardians have not in the past assumed the same responsibility, or, in fact, in some cases, any responsibility for these children. The condition of many of them is far from what it should be.

It should be a direction to the Public Assistance Authority that when Home Assistance is given for the maintenance of children, it should see that the assistance is adequate in amount; that the children are being properly nourished; that the housing conditions are satisfactory; and, particularly that no children are maintained in immoral surroundings. Otherwise the children should be sent to an institution or industrial school.

92. As regards the difficult question of the employment of widows in receipt of Public Assistance, we have recommended that the mother, when a widow and respectable woman, should not be separated from her children, and that the Assistance should be such as to enable her to give the time necessary for taking care of her children. If the children are more numerous than she can manage, they or some of them should be sent as day boarders to a school where they can be fed during school hours. In populous districts these schools might be started much on the lines of the day industrial schools, but care must be taken to give to them such a designation and surrounding as will altogether dissociate them from crime or misconduct. When the children are too young to go to school, the mother should not go to work unless a sufficient substitute for her can be provided.

93. As regards the emigration of children, we are of opinion that its advantages on the whole outweigh its dangers, particularly where the parents are neglectful and unworthy. Boards of Guardians are well advised in taking advantage of this mode of treatment.

94. Since 1834, a large number of specialised charitable institutions dealing with special classes of children have grown up. These, when certified and put under inspection, have been largely utilised for Poor Law children, and we see in this a beginning of co-operation between Poor Law and voluntary charities which might form the basis of a much wider scheme. As regards other large charitable institutions for dealing with poor children generally which are not certified, it is a question whether they should not be registered as proposed in Part VII. and subject to some supervision.

95. Whilst we recommend special co-operation between the Poor Law and the Education Authorities, we are not in favour of transferring the education of Poor Law children wholly to the local Education Authorities, but we would recommend a scheme by which teachers in either service should have the same status and be interchangeable.

(21). The Aged.*

96. The question of the aged poor, as is shown in the chapter relating to that class, has in recent years received much attention; their diet and institutional accommodation have been improved, and the scale of outdoor relief has been raised. Of all the adult classes receiving relief, there is none whose condition appeals more strongly to public sympathy, and whose treatment requires more discrimination and greater variety.

97. The respectable aged regard a good character as their most precious possession; those who have sunk low in the scale of respectability consider good or bad character as a matter of indifference. By associating the respectable and the disreputable in institutions without classification, a sense of wrong is aroused in the minds of those of good character. They feel that a public authority, by forcing them to associate with the depraved, has stained and tarnished their most valued treasure. This feeling is recognised by many Boards of Guardians, who have classified the aged by character as far as the accommodation of a single institution permitted.

98. The health and strength of the individual which, in any case, must be on the wane, is a factor which obviously must be carefully taken into account in the treatment and classification of the aged. But there is another human element which, under our present system, is not called into action—that is, the capacity and willingness of the old person to help himself. When the institution is on a large scale he may become a mere *numero;* the aged person is, day by day, fed, clothed, and accommodated mechanically as one unit amongst many. His everyday life is deprived of all opportunity for exertion, thought and independence, and this has its inevitable effect upon the *morale* of even the active and the willing. The physical comfort of such a life may be enhanced, but that again is purchased by the loss of much that makes existence pleasant and cheerful even to the aged.

99. By the reforms we propose, the Public Assistance Authority will have at their disposal all the institutions within a county, and will, therefore, have facilities for classifying the necessitous poor by institutions. We recommend that one or more of those institutions, according to the requirements of each county area, should be set aside for the necessitous aged, and that their classification should be determined by their physical condition, the record of their lives previous to their admission into the institution, and their behaviour after admission.

100. We have greatly admired the small homes which some Boards of Guardians have erected, purchased, or rented for the accommodation of a limited number of respectable aged persons, who are there helped and looked after by a matron. The cost per head, including maintenance, rent, or repayment of building loan, is not greater than the cost in the workhouse, but the tone, and vivacity of the individual and his willingness to help himself is incomparably greater. In each room are the little treasures of the inmates—sometimes furniture, sometimes china, sometimes a keepsake,—intrinsically worth little, but the very sight of them, and the daily task they suggest, make the life of their owner very different from the colourless and dreary routine of workhouse existence. Whenever additional accommodation for the respectable aged is required, we recommend that the system of small homes should be adopted; but, with its adoption, visitation and supervision must at the same time be organised.

101. As regards outdoor relief or Home Assistance given to the aged, we recommend that greater care be taken to ensure its adequacy; and that the recipients be periodically visited by the officers of the Public Assistance Committee and by voluntary visitors. In rare cases in which the old person is helpless, has no friends, and is neglected, there should be power for compulsory removal to an institution to secure the comfort and even the safety of the person concerned.

* *Cf.* Part IV, Chapter 7.

(22). Medical Relief and its Proposed Reorganisation.*

102. In a previous part of our Report we have dealt at some length with the development of the present system of Poor Law medical relief. We have enumerated its main defects. We have described the working of the various agencies, public and private, which provide medical assistance to poor persons outside the Poor Law. We have shown the evils which arise from the present want of co-operation, and the consequent overlapping between these agencies and the Poor Law. We have also stated our objections to proposals which were submitted to us for making medical assistance gratuitous for all who cared to apply for it, and for transferring to the Sanitary Authorities the work of the Guardians in connection with medical relief.

103. We have drawn up a scheme with the object of co-ordinating and systematising the work of the various agencies now administering medical assistance to poor persons in sickness. Among other advantages we are hopeful that it will do much to bring the voluntary hospitals into closer co-operation with the rate-supported hospitals. So urgent and difficult is this question that it has been suggested to us that a special Royal Commission should forthwith be appointed for the purpose of endeavouring to secure a *modus vivendi* on reasonable and advantageous terms between all those agencies. Such a Commission may ultimately be necessary, but in the first instance we are inclined to await the results of the efforts at co-operation which will be initiated all over the country if the organisation which we propose to set up be adopted.

104. The organisation we propose will not only fit into and utilise existing medical agencies and institutions, but, by inducing the wage-earning population to provide medical assistance for themselves on a contributory basis, it will, we hope, encourage qualities of providence and independence. Our main proposals for medical assistance are as follows:—

(1) That, the Public Assistance Authority, to assist them in carrying out their functions in connection with medical assistance, shall appoint a committee from among their number, to which shall be added representatives of the Health Committee of the County Council or of the County Borough Council, and of the local branch or branches of the British Medical Association. This committee shall be called the County or County Borough Medical Assistance Committee, as the case may be, and shall have power to co-opt representatives of local hospitals, county or county borough nursing associations dispensaries, and registered friendly societies.

(2) That where necessary a local committee on similar lines shall be appointed by each Public Assistance Committee for the purposes of the local administration of medical assistance. This committee shall be termed the Local Medical Assistance Committee.

(3) That all or any of the functions of the Public Assistance Authority in regard to medical assistance may be referred to the County or County Borough Medical Assistance Committee.

(4) That, in all matters affecting medical assistance, there should be systematic co-operation between the Public Assistance Authorities, the Public Health Authorities, the Education Authorities, and the Voluntary Medical Institutions, based on a clear definition of their respective functions.

(5) That the medical and nursing needs of each area, whether institutional or otherwise, should be reviewed, and, if necessary, supplemented, regard being had to the available provision made by Poor Law, Sanitary, or Voluntary Authorities.

(6) That Medical Assistance should be organised on a provident basis.

(7) That a general system of provident dispensaries should be established, of which existing voluntary outdoor medical organisations be invited to form an integral part, and that every inducement should be offered to the working classes below a certain wage limit to become, or to continue

* *Cf.* Part V.

to be, members of a provident dispensary. To this end the subscription to the provident dispensary should cover the following advantages to its members:—

(*a*) Power to choose their own doctor from the doctors upon the list of the dispensary.

(*b*) The provision of adequate medical assistance at a rate or fee within the reach of those subscribing to the Provident Dispensary.

(*c*) Institutional treatment upon a recommendation from the dispensary doctor.

(8) That medical treatment should be more readily accessible to all who are in need of it; that, in cases of illness in which immediate treatment is necessary, the physical condition of the patient should be the first consideration; that in such cases medical aid should be obtainable in the first instance by application to any medical officer in the service of the Provident Dispensary.

(9) That, except as regards the cases requiring immediate attention above referred to, all necessitous persons shall receive medical assistance through the Public Assistance Committee.

(10) That certain cases in receipt of public assistance, such as the aged and widows with young children, might be made members of the Provident Dispensary on payment of the necessary fees by the Public Assistance Committee.

(11) That domiciliary medical assistance at the public cost should be conditional upon the maintenance of a healthy domicile and good habits.

(12) That no disfranchisement should be attached to any form of medical assistance.

(23). The Voluntary Aid Organisation.*

105. We have said so much in preceding parts of our Report as to the reorganisation of charity, that we need not here do more than indicate generally what the functions of charity should be, and the position it should occupy towards Public Assistance. The Public Assistance Authority can help only those who are destitute or, as we prefer to call it, necessitous, it cannot help many others who are, from various causes, steadily slipping downwards in the social scale. To stop this downward progress is the special duty of charity which, if properly organised, should be an effective agent combating the incipient development of destitution and distress.

But, in addition to this, charity has a still larger task of effective co-operation with the Poor Law, and Mr. Goschen's Minute of 1869 sent to Metropolitan Boards of Guardians laid down admirable principles as a foundation for such co-operation. We believe that it is mainly due to the want of general and systematic organisation that the principles there enunciated have not been extensively applied and made an operative force in our national system of relief.

106. We have endeavoured to create out of existing voluntary and charitable agencies an organisation, established by statute, to form a recognised link between Public Assistance and charity. We have therefore proposed that in every County and County Borough there shall be a Council of Voluntary Aid, and in every district a Voluntary Aid Committee, which shall carry on and develop the functions of charity by methods which we have detailed in Part VII.

107. The functions of Public Assistance and Voluntary Aid, as we have sketched them, are so closely allied that it may be asked whether the applicants for help can be divided out between them, and, if so, on what principle. The materials for an answer are supplied

* *Cf.* Part VII.

partly by the evidence tendered to us, and partly by our own personal observation. In addition to those of the able-bodied whom we have referred to in Part VI. as suitable for Voluntary Aid, there is a class of case which is in constant danger of falling into pauperism, viz.:—the mother of a family who is suddenly left a widow. To such cases Boards of Guardians make a grant of money and do little more. But money is the least of a widow's many needs. If her independence is to be preserved and her family to be well started in the world, she must have encouragement to persevere, opportunities for self-help, and openings for her children. Such a case should clearly be dealt with by Voluntary Aid; for Voluntary Aid is more sympathetic and more elastic than official assistance can be. Old people, again, who have done their best to make provision for themselves, and perhaps through the dishonesty of others have been disappointed, may be appropriately helped by Voluntary Aid. Even where a pension has been provided under the Old-Age Pensions Act, additions to the comforts may very fairly be made by charity. But we go further than this and express the hope that, when our proposed reforms are in full working order, the great majority of cases will pass, as it were, through the sieve of Voluntary Aid before they reach Public Assistance.

108. The special return of persons relieved during the year ended 30th September, 1907, suggests that many cases of temporary distress might be dealt with by voluntary agencies instead of by the Poor Law. Thirty per cent. of the applications to the Poor Law were cases of persons whose aggregate period of relief during the year did not exceed one month, and who were not relieved on more than two occasions during the year.

109. Our recommendations in regard to the Voluntary Aid Organisation are as follows:—

(*a*) *Establishment of the Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees.*

(1.) That in the area of each Public Assistance Authority, that is in each County or County Borough, there be formed a Voluntary Aid Council, consisting in part of Trustees of endowed charities, of members of registered voluntary charities, as defined below, of some members of the Public Assistance Authority, and of such persons as members of friendly societies and trade associations, of clergy and ministers, and of other persons being co-opted members, as may be settled in schemes approved by the Charities Commission.*

(2.) That a statutory obligation be imposed upon the Lord Lieutenants, the Chairmen of County Councils, the Lord Mayors, and Mayors of County Boroughs to take steps, within a given period, and after consultation with the managers of charitable societies, Trustees of Endowed Charities and members of the Public Assistance Authority, for drawing up schemes in accordance with the preceding recommendation, which schemes must be submitted to the Charities Commission for approval.

(3.) That the Voluntary Aid Council submit to the Charities Commission proposals for the formation of Voluntary Aid Committees to be drawn up in the form of schemes to be approved by the Commission, and that the Voluntary Aid Council under such schemes appoint as members of the Voluntary Aid Committees persons such as those mentioned in Recommendation I.

(4.) That Voluntary Societies or Charities as defined in Recommendation 17, be entitled to register at the Charities Commission on lines similar to those of the registration of Friendly Societies under the Friendly Societies' Act.

(5.) That a registered voluntary society be entitled to nominate members of its own body for appointment to the Voluntary Aid Council and to the Voluntary Aid Committee of the district in which either its institution or any branch of its institution has an office.

(6.) That it is desirable that the Voluntary Aid Committee have its offices in the same building as the Committee of Public Assistance.

* *See* Recommendation No. 18 as to the proposed change in the name of Charity Commission.

(b) Functions of the Voluntary Aid Council.

(7.) The duties of the Voluntary Aid Councils would be for the most part not executive but supervisory. The executive work would be assigned to the Voluntary Aid Committees. The Voluntary Aid Council would supervise the operations of these Committees generally and would, as far as possible, maintain the same principles of help and relief throughout County or County Borough. They would collect funds for distribution to Voluntary Aid Committees, and they would allocate funds to poor districts. The County is already the accepted area for many benevolent and philanthropic purposes. The local infirmary or hospital is frequently a County institution. There are County nursing associations, and the County is the recognised centre in connection with various naval and military charitable associations. We propose that the Voluntary Aid Council acting for the County should promote any voluntary institutions, associations, or societies for which the County, as a whole, has need. Its duties would thus be important and distinctive.

(c) Functions of the Voluntary Aid Committee.

(8.) That the Voluntary Aid Committee aid (1) persons in distress whose cases do not appear to be suitable for treatment by the Public Assistance Committee, and (2) applicants for Public Assistance whose cases have been referred to the Committee by the Public Assistance Committee.

(9.) That, with a view to the thorough treatment of individual cases, the Voluntary Aid Committee make such arrangements for the investigation of the applications made to them as the Charities Commission may deem necessary and sufficient.

(10.) That in dealing with persons in distress for whom it is desired to provide aid by way of monetary relief, it shall be the duty of the Voluntary Aid Committee to obtain such sums as may be possible from relations of the applicant, from friends, and from charitable sources generally for the aid of individual cases.

(11.) That with the administration of aid on the part of the Voluntary Aid Committee there should be associated such a system of voluntary visitation as the Committee may deem advisable in view of the responsibilities of their work in providing effectual aid, and in view of the physical needs and the habits of those whom they decide to assist.

(12.) That the Voluntary Aid Committee be empowered to appoint such Local Committees as it may deem necessary, subject to the approval of the Voluntary Aid Council.

(13.) That a Voluntary Aid Committee shall, as far as possible, register the cases dealt with by the Public Assistance Committee and by the Charitable societies and institutions in the district.

(14.) That Voluntary Aid Committees receive the support of the Public Assistance Committee, and of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, with a view to systematising the relations between the Public Assistance and Voluntary Aid Committees and promoting co-operation between them.

(15.) That Voluntary Aid Councils or Committees be eligible for subscriptions from the Public Assistance Authority, on the lines of 42 and 43 Vict., c. 54, Section 10.

(d) The Charities Commission.

(16.) That the Charity Commission be attached to the Local Government Board, and that the Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, permanent or temporary, be appointed by the Local Government Board, whose President should represent it in the House of Commons.

(17.) That the Charity Commission be enlarged, and that there be assigned to it two departments of work, the supervision of endowed charities on the lines of the Charitable Trusts Acts, and the registration of Voluntary charities or Societies which hold any property in land or houses by purchase, or by leasehold, or are the tenants of any property under yearly or other agreements.

(18.) That the name of the Charity Commission be the Charities Commission.

(19.) That the staff of the Commission be strengthened so as to fulfil all the various additional duties that may devolve upon them :—

1. As a centre for the registration of voluntary charities.

2. In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of Voluntary Aid Councils and for registering such schemes.

3. In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of Voluntary Aid Committees and for registering and supervising their administration.

4. In the scrutiny of accounts and statements relating to Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees.

5. In the supervision of other schemes ; and

6. In the scrutiny of the accounts of endowed and registered charities.

(20.) That Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act, 1869, by which certain charities founded for purposes of relief may be applied to purposes of education, be repealed.

(21.) That it be provided in a Statute amending the Charitable Trusts Acts that, by order of the Charities Commission, any charities, as defined in Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Acts, 1869, exclusive of Loan Charities, Apprenticeship Charities, and Charities for Advancement in Life, may be used for the relief of distress, subject to such conditions respecting enquiry and other matters as the Commissioners may determine under a general order.

[To prevent misunderstanding, it should, perhaps, be mentioned that we are not concerned with educational charities, whether ecclesiastical or not ecclesiastical, but with eleemosynary charities ; and further, neither here nor elsewhere do we intend to include in our recommendations the endowed or the voluntary charities of churches or congregations granted for religious purposes, nor the voluntary charities of churches or congregations provided for eleemosynary purposes.]

(24). Invalidity Insurance.*

110. On the very difficult and complex question of Invalidity Insurance, we arrived at certain tentative conclusions which we stated concisely in Part VIII of our Report. To further compress these views might lead to ambiguity or misunderstanding. We therefore here repeat the opinions we have already expressed.

111. We have shown in another Chapter† the great changes that have taken place in the organisation of industry during the last eighty years. The more intimate and inter-dependent relations that often used to exist between employers and employed have been superseded by a system which, in appearance and also largely in fact, divides the interests of the employers from those of the workmen. This in turn tends to efface duties which might have been urged on the one side or on the other as a kind of moral obligation.

112. The evidence shows that, with very few exceptions, what working-men desire is the "cash nexus"—the bare wage contract uninfluenced by any but purely economic considerations—and the employing classes generally have accepted the situation and consider their obligations fulfilled when they pay the wage. Over the great trades, wages are determined by collective bargaining between Trade Unions on the one side, and large employers and associations of employers on the other. The issue of the system is, for those who find employment, a maximum wage during the prime of life, and no wage at all when the prime is passed.

113. The theory of industry which used to prevail was that the worker should maintain himself throughout life by his own exertions, providing for contingencies and for old age by thrift, or that, if he could not do so and his relatives were unable

* *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 1. † Part VI., Chapter 1

to help, he should receive poor relief. But of late years the "cash nexus" has been supplemented and modified in two different ways—the Employers' Liability and the Workmen's Compensation Acts and the Old Age Pensions Act—the one insuring the operative against the accidents more incidental to work than heretofore, the other providing for a time when he is no longer able to work for his own support.

But it has become evident that these two methods do not meet all the exigencies which have arisen under this system. Accidents are not the only checks to wage-earning during active life, and wage-earning itself, as we have seen, generally ceases long before the pension age of seventy.

114. From the Chapter on "Social and Industrial Developments since 1834,"* it seems clear that the present organisation of industry, with its excessive specialisation and universal application of machinery, has raised the standard of work required from the ordinary operative. From such an organisation, many, we fear, owing to want of original capacity and want of early training, must always be excluded and fall into intermittent and ill-paid occupations. Trade Union regulations have worked in the same direction. The "standard wage" is based on the assumption that the worker employed is worth that wage to his employer; if the employer does not consider him so, the man is dismissed. The same tendency seems to have been strengthened by the working out of the Employers' Liability Act and the Workmen's Compensation Acts. Whatever be the cause, the fact remains that, since the passing of these Acts, the number of injuries registered has constantly increased. Against the undue extension of this liability, the insuring bodies, whether employers themselves or outside companies, must protect themselves, and the system necessarily excludes many who cannot fulfil the insurance standard whatever it may be. Those presumably more liable to accident, though still more or less efficient, are excluded, and a new standard of ability is created which reacts on industry generally. A large class grows up of partially efficient unemployed men. They accept the situation, with complaint, indeed, but with submission, and thus assume a new position which imposes on society many new anxieties and difficulties.

115. We have, again, evidence to show that industrial demand, as it now exists, draws many younger unskilled men into a kind of employment, in its early stages remunerated by a wage which will not increase at any later period of their lives but will rather diminish. Such a demand in effect puts a premium on want of skill; if it be inevitable, it suggests that measures should be taken by way of insurance to prevent in part the evil results which must follow.

116. The years between the withdrawal from wage-earning and the pension age present a more serious problem than ever before. Trade Union regulations make it difficult for men skilled in the great trades to work on at their trades and accept a lower wage, and partial employment is more difficult to get. If, as frequently happens, there is not enough put by to cover this period, insufficiency of means or the acceptance of relief seems inevitable. In such cases the fact of other men getting a State pension at the age of seventy, on the ground that they are unable to earn a wage, may create a feeling of injustice on the part of those who have not attained the age and are yet as effectually barred from wage-earning.

Unless, therefore, some system of wages graduated according to age can be adopted, it is clear that workmen above a certain period of life will for the future find it more difficult to keep themselves in continuous employment. We do not forget that, for the solution of these and other industrial problems, we may look with growing confidence to methods of remuneration such as co-operation and co-partnership. Of their importance and promise we are convinced; but we have felt that to deal with them fully would take us far beyond the terms of our reference.

117. We seem almost driven to the conclusion that a new form of insurance is required, which, for want of a better name, we may call Invalidity Insurance. The early superannuation of the best workmen is so well recognised that it will, in all probability, give rise to demands for lowering the pension age, and will, at some point or other, entail a financial burden beyond the power of the national resources to bear.

* Part VI., Chapter 1.

118. We have made strong recommendations as regards insurance against temporary unemployment, but this does not meet the case of such persons when entirely incapacitated from wage-earning. It would, at any rate, be more agreeable to them, and more consonant with the feeling of the community, that they should fall back on an insurance fund to which they had at least contributed a part, than that they should be forced to have recourse to the Public Assistance Authorities. Such a scheme of Invalidity Insurance strongly appeals to us as calculated to meet many of the evils which we have been discussing. One thing, however, must be borne in mind, Whatever be the risk insured against, whether it be sickness, accident, old age, or unemployment, the possibility of such insurance depends on the existence of savings, whether these savings be in private or collective hands, or be put in the hands of the State by taxes which represent the savings, or what otherwise might be the savings, of its citizens. Insurance, in short, is only a method for the utilisation of those savings. Whatever may be said, in order to insure, some people must have saved individually or collectively .

119. As the necessity for such insurance seems to arise from the very organisation of industry which the nation has adopted, such a fund, it seems to us, might appropriately be supported partly by contributions from employers, partly by contributions from employees, and partly by a subsidy from the State. But in considering the amount of any subsidies to be granted by the State, we think that full weight should be given to the fact that a very heavy charge has recently been imposed upon the revenue of the country by the Statute granting gratuitous old age pensions to all persons above 70 years of age who comply with certain conditions.

120. We have consulted three eminent actuaries as to the weekly premiums for which a man, aged twenty-one, in good health, and employed in a healthy occupation, could ensure the receipt of 10s. 6d. a week during the first twenty-six weeks of illness, and 7s. 6d. a week during the remainder of illness up to age sixty-five. Mr. T. G. Ackland, F.I.A., taking a 3 per cent. basis, places the amount at 3·9d.; Mr. George King, F.I.A., assuming $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. as the rate of interest, estimates the amount at 3·74d., and Mr. F. G. P. Neison, F.I.A., at 3·62d. These sums are little in excess of the average weekly fee payable per child at school up to 1891, and remitted by the Act of that year.

121. Though we have obtained a good deal of information from the Board of Trade concerning systems of insurance, both at home and abroad, and also from a number of witnesses representing the provident and benefit societies of this country, the information is not sufficient to enable us to make specific recommendations. An account of some of the foreign systems of Insurance will be found in Part VIII.* It will be seen that none of them exactly meets the case, and, moreover, generally the schemes have not been long enough in operation to enable us to judge as to their measure of success. The foundations of any future legislation ought to be very closely scrutinised. They should be broad, solid, and capable of continuous extension, and the organisations resting upon them should be so constructed as to expand automatically according to need. The great trade and benefit organisations in existence in this country ought to be very freely consulted before any proposals are made in Parliament. If time had permitted, we might have been able to make definite recommendations under this head, but in view of the urgent necessity of laying our more important proposals before Your Majesty, all we feel justified in doing is to state our opinion that the information at our disposal requires to be supplemented before legislation can be attempted.

(25). The Able-bodied and Unemployment.†

122. In the sections of the Report dealing with distress from unemployment, we gave a consecutive narrative of the social and industrial developments since 1834. Such a recital was necessary to establish the groundwork of our subsequent conclusions. A review of existing conditions has led us to two definite conclusions :—

(1) We have an increased aggregation of unskilled labour at our great ports and in certain populous districts.

(2) This aggregation of low-grade labour is so much in excess of the normal local needs as to promote and perpetuate under-employment.

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* *See* Chapter 1. † *Cf.* Part VI.

123. We went on to consider the conditions connected with skilled and high-grade labour, in order to ascertain if they were such as tended towards the alleviation or towards the aggravation of under-employment in the unskilled labour market. Though the survey of this part of our industrial system was far more satisfactory, yet there were causes in operation even here, which tended from time to time to add to the number of those seeking casual or intermittent employment. The growth and continuous expansion of our trade places cyclical fluctuations more and more beyond the control of any one single industrial district. The high pressure of competition raises the standard and shortens the period of efficiency of the worker, whilst changes both in fashion and in methods of production are becoming not only more sudden but also more uncertain in their duration. Employment once lost by the middle-aged and less efficient is regained with greater difficulty than heretofore. When to these ordinary conditions are added the cyclical depressions in trade, a serious state of affairs is created, and we came to our third conclusion that—

> (3) This normal condition of under-employment, when aggravated by periodic contraction of trade or by the inevitable changes in methods of production, assumes such dimensions as to require special machinery and organisation for its relief and treatment.

124. We then carefully scrutinised the constitution and operations of the various relief organisations, both public and private, normal and abnormal, that are now in existence. We looked at their work from various points of view and asked ourselves, firstly: was the relief given in times of distress adequate and suitable? and secondly: were the after consequences of such relief beneficial or prejudicial to the community affected—did it, in a word, strengthen or weaken the original causes of the distress?

125. We regret to state that our investigations point to the conclusion that the relief given was frequently unsuitable and inadequate, and that its effects were often pernicious.

Poor Law relief, if deterrent, is at times deterrent to the wrong people and restorative treatment plays a very small part in its methods.

Charity, when organised and working in co-operation with the Poor Law and other relief agencies, is always helpful, but, in the absence of these conditions, charitable effort too frequently takes the form of doles to the unworthy and results in demoralisation.

The relief works carried on by Municipal Authorities, and by Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, have in certain instances been successful in reaching the class for whom they were intended. In the vast majority of cases, however, they have perpetuated a system of able-bodied relief reproducing some of the bad features of the methods in force before 1834, which the Commission of that date so vigorously condemned.

It is impossible to contend that the relief measures and organisations now at work in any degree come within the category of "special machinery or organisation for the relief or treatment of distress" caused by under-employment.

126. But, during the Cotton Famine, there was a period of distress, historic both by reason of its duration and of the number of skilled workers affected by it, and in its latter phases we there found charitable and Poor Law organisations working in co-operation with marked smoothness and success. Charity and the Poor Law were supplemented not by relief works but by public works of utility managed on commercial principles, and not only was this combination most effective in times of distress but, when the distress was over, it left the community with a minimum of demoralisation. We propose to refer to these methods—which contrast so favourably with recent failures—together with certain other suggestions, which, while preventive in their character, are designed to elicit co-operation and self-support from those whom they assist. We will deal with preventive measures first.

(*a*) *Education.**

127. In previous parts of our Report we have shown how serious and widespread is the tendency for children to slip into occupations and callings which lead first to casuality and then to unemployment. Unless we can arrest at its source this increasing stream of casuality and under-employment our subsequent remedial measures may be futile. We therefore regard with favour the proposals of our Special Investigator Mr. Cyril Jackson :—

(1) That boys should be kept at school until the age of 15.

(2) That exemption below this age should be granted only for boys leaving to learn a skilled trade.

(3) That there should be school supervision till 16, and replacement in school of boys not properly employed.

We also believe that there is urgent need of improved facilities for technical education being offered to young people after the present age for leaving school. We consider that to prevent the deterioration of physique it is necessary that physical drill should be more prolonged and thorough than it has hitherto been. Although we are not unanimous upon this point, some of us believe that the most effective and thorough method of infusing into boys approaching adolescence a sense of discipline and self-restraint, both physical and moral, and of improving their physique for subsequent industrial occupations, would be a universal system of a short period of military training.

128. Before we leave the subject of education we must refer to one criticism that has been made with almost absolute unanimity. There seems to be outside the circle of the teaching profession a very strong general feeling that the education of our children in elementary schools is not of the kind which is helpful to them in after life. Education is the accepted antidote to unemployment and pauperism. The cost of elementary education in this country in 1905–6 was twenty million sterling. This is an almost entirely new national charge since 1870. It should have steadily reduced unemployment and diminished pauperism. If it has failed in this, its accepted mission, it cannot be said that the failure is due to lack of funds. The desire of the young to raise themselves in the social scale and improve their position should ever be encouraged, but this desire seems to us too frequently to take the shape of trying to avoid handicraft and manual labour by recourse to other occupations which, though associated with a black coat, are less remunerative and less progressive than skilled handiwork. Clerical labour is a glut upon the market ; high-class artisans are, according to our evidence, at times obtained with difficulty. We doubt if the atmosphere of our school life is altogether congenial to a career of manual labour. We would suggest to the Board of Education the advisability of meeting these criticisms by a thorough reconsideration of the time table and curriculum in our elementary schools as well as of the aims and ideals of elementary education. Though employers of labour may perhaps be apt to look at questions too much from their own standpoint, still, the unanimity of opinion that our school curriculum does not supply the right class of instruction and training for industrial purposes, cannot lightly be put on one side.

(*b*) *Labour Exchanges.*†

129. In the forefront of our proposals we place labour exchanges. We propose their establishment under the control and direction of the Board of Trade. We look to them to achieve two distinct objects :—

(1) An increase in the mobility of labour. To do this it is essential that they should be used freely by employers and employed, and that their management should be associated with a joint committee of these two classes. We think that Local Authorities and Government Departments should be encouraged to make use of them when engaging either skilled or unskilled labour. Their usefulness will be greatly increased if they are linked up all over the United Kingdom.

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* *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 1 (11), and Chapter 4 (1) (*b*).
† *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 4. (1) (*a*).

(2) The collection and distribution of information. The most obvious form of this would be the dissemination of information as to demand and supply of labour in the country, and as to public works and other large contracts. But their area of usefulness should extend much further. The Board of Trade should receive weekly from the labour exchanges accurate and detailed information as to the amount of unemployment and also as to the demand for employment throughout the whole country. Owing to our vast international trade and our dependence upon external sources for the supply of the raw material we require, industrial depression in this country is not unfrequently due to causes far away from the districts affected. We see no reason why the Board of Trade, availing itself of the information obtainable from our Consuls and other officials stationed abroad, might not in course of time become a kind of trade meteorologist, and by publishing the information received, which gradually will become greater and more exact, indicate the causes likely to affect our home industries. With this information from abroad and the returns of the labour exchanges at home, trade storm signals might be hoisted in time to prepare the districts likely to be afterwards affected.

Such a scheme would require time, money, and trouble to be expended upon it before it became a trustworthy source of advice and guidance; but in our judgment the experiment is well worth attempting.

Associated with the labour exchange there should be, in connection with every public elementary school, an intelligence bureau which would advise parents and teachers as to the branches of employment likely to give the best opening for children leaving school. By this means we hope to divert boys from the "blind-alley occupations" which so many enter at present, into occupations which will lead to permanent employment.

If this be accomplished we hope to cut off at its source one of the most fruitful supplies of casual labour.

(c) *Casual Labour.**

130. We have dwelt in several parts of our Report on the phenomena of casual labour and its far-reaching evils, both as regards the character of the man and the disastrous effect on his family life, and we have ventured on the statement that a system so dangerous to the social life of the whole community cannot be regarded solely from the standpoint of the employer and the employee.

The remedies, however, are not very obvious, as they must be undertaken in face of a dead weight of apathy on the part of the public, and perhaps an active opposition on the part of the various interests.

131. So far as casual labour is encouraged and fostered by mere thoughtlessness on the part of those who employ it, the remedy lies in an awakening of the public conscience, and we hope that some good may be done by the mere exposure of the evils entailed. We are convinced that Government Departments and municipal bodies might do more than they do to regularise the work of those they employ.

But in its most prominent form, dock labour, the more serious problem is that, at the great ports of the kingdom, many thousands of men are engaged in an occupation which seems almost of necessity casual, and moreover, the occupation is one which seems as attractive to the docker himself as it is advantageous to his employer. Here the formidable objection is that if decasualisation on something like the lines adopted by the London and India Dock Company is attempted, a certain proportion of persons at present under-employed will be thrown out of employment altogether until re-absorbed in other industries.

With full consciousness of the gravity of this issue, we venture to think that such an effort must be made, and we have recommended that the Board of Trade should send to our large ports and industrial centres, officers who might confer with masters and workmen, with a view to reducing casual and intermittent employment to the smallest dimensions.

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* *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 1 (15) and (21) and Chapter 4 (1) (*b*).

(d) *Insurance Against Unemployment.**

132. Whatever the methods adopted to promote regularity of employment, the old-fashioned virtue of thrift must still occupy a central place in preventing distress. Since 1834 the opportunities of husbanding small savings and making insurance against sickness, accident, old age, and death have very greatly increased. But there seems room and necessity for a great extension of insurance against Unemployment, and in this case we have not hesitated to recommend the encouragement of a State subsidy.

The difficulty here is that the classes who are not insured against unemployment are the classes most liable to unemployment, and that the uncertainty and intermittence of their occupation makes it very difficult for them to raise by combination the necessary aggregate amount for individual insurance.

We have examined the many experiments now being tried in other countries in this direction. None of them have been quite effective in reaching these classes. But by encouraging and promoting unemployment insurance amongst the labouring classes above the rank of casuality, we hope to foster the downward growth of a desire for it.

133. Our review of unemployment insurance enabled us to arrive at the following conclusions :—

First, that the establishment and promotion of Unemployment Insurance, especially amongst unskilled and unorganised labour, is of paramount importance in averting the distress arising from unemployment.

Second, that the attainment of this object is of such national importance as to justify, under specified conditions, contributions from public funds towards its furtherance.

Third, that this form of insurance can best be promoted by utilising the agency of existing trade organisations or of organisations of a similar character which may be brought into existence by a hope of participation in public contributions.

Fourth, that no scheme either foreign or British which has been brought before us is so free from objections as to justify us in specifically recommending it for general adoption.

134. Accordingly, we have recommended that a small Commission or Inter-Departmental Committee of experts and representatives of existing trade benefit organisations be appointed, with an instruction to frame a scheme or schemes for consideration.

135. Before leaving the question of insurance against unemployment, there is one point in connection with it to which we would draw attention. We have referred to the excellent work done by trade unionists in insuring against unemployment, and thus protecting themselves against one of the most formidable risks of a workman's life. But the attention of trade unions seems to us too much concentrated upon the amount of wage, too little upon the duration and regularity of the work. Irregular work, even if paid per hour at a high rate, is the workman's bane ; regular and continuous work, even if the rate per hour be somewhat low, is his salvation. Whilst we admit that both considerations should be taken into account, we think that the first ought not to entirely override the second.

(e) *Voluntary Aid and Unemployment.*†

136. We have already indicated our general proposals for establishing a Voluntary Aid Organisation. At a time of general unemployment there is usually a widespread desire to render voluntary assistance of some kind. This, as we have shown, can be done in many ways (*see* Part VI. and Part VII.), by help given to the man and his family, or to some member of his family. Voluntary Aid Committees, working in close co-operation with Public Assistance Committees, may prevent distress due to want of work at its earlier stages, and often a little aid for a comparatively short time will prove effectual in making other and more elaborate measures for the provision of unemployment relief unnecessary. Assistance should by this means be forthcoming to

* *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 4 (1) (c). † *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 4 (2).

an unemployed workman who has a prospect of work in any quarter. Men and women who have acquired some experience of the personal administration of relief become then most serviceable. Indeed, we look forward to the provision by means of Voluntary Aid Committees of an outlet for the countless forms of personal service which now, owing to lack of insight and co-operation, run to waste. We hope to find here, even more than in carefully administered money help, the prevention and cure of much of the poverty and suffering which form so sad a picture at the present day.

(*f*) *Public Assistance and Unemployment.**

137. Behind the organisation of Voluntary Aid will be the new Public Assistance Authority, which, freshly constituted and with increased powers, will be a far more potent agency in dealing with distress amongst the able-bodied than the bodies which it will supersede.

138. The methods at its disposal for dealing with the able-bodied out of employment will be many and graded. They have been described in much detail in Part VI. of our Report and include :—

(1) Home Assistance, on condition of daily work, which will be available for men of good character requiring only temporary employment.

(2) Industrial and Agricultural Institutions and Labour Colonies, with classification for those whose industrial antecedents perhaps are not so good, or who require more prolonged treatment.

(3) Detention Colonies under the Home Office to which the "ins-and-outs," the work-shy, and the loafer will be committed for periods of detention and training.

139. If the powers thus given to the new authority are exercised with discrimination, firmness and kindness, and if the treatment of all those of inferior efficiency and character applying for Assistance is governed by the idea of industrial and moral restoration, a change for the better should soon be effected in the management of that heterogeneous mass of persons now known as the Unemployed. At the root of the new system lies the principle of classification. Classification will in future be aided by the system of case-papers and by the records of workmen registered at the Labour Exchange.

(*g*) *Transitional Measures as to Distress from Unemployment.*†

140. The changes which we have proposed will take some time before they can fully mature themselves. When they have separately and in combination attained a reasonable standard of working efficiency, we believe that they will be adequate to deal with local distress. But, pending their development, we consider it necessary to formulate a supplemental scheme, so safeguarded as to be put into operation only under a number of specified conditions, to meet any exceptional and protracted distress. Under this scheme, the Local Government Board may after consultation with the Board of Trade authorise the Public Works Loan Board to grant special financial facilities to Local Authorities for the prosecution of public works. Before any such authorisation is given, the two first-mentioned Departments must be convinced, by ascertained and verified facts, that local distress due to severe and prolonged industrial depression is overtaxing the resources of the newly-established Public Assistance Authorities. The works must, moreover, be of public utility in the locality, and the plans and estimates in respect of them be approved beforehand by the Local Government Board.

141. We lay great stress on the condition attaching to such works, that they should be promoted and managed on ordinary commercial lines, and that those employed should be taken on not as paupers, nor as persons to whom work will be found because they are in distress, but as workmen capable of giving an adequate return for the wage paid. Fitness for the work will in fact be the governing consideration in the engagement and retention of such workmen as may be required.

142. We are well aware that this doctrine is very unpopular in certain quarters, where it is held that the mere existence of distress is sufficient to entitle everyone affected

* *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 4 (2). † *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 4 (3).

by the distress to have work provided for him at standard wages. We contest this proposition, not from lack of humanity, but because we know that such a theory is absolutely subversive of self-respect, self-exertion, and independence, and is detrimental to the industrial efficiency of the community.

(h) General Principles Governing Public Assistance to the Able-bodied.

143. Efficiency and inefficiency cannot work side by side at the same rate of pay without the certainty of inefficiency in the course of time lowering the standard of efficiency and determining the rate of pay and of progress. In all our proposals for dealing with poverty, distress, destitution, loafing, and laziness we have relied upon being able, under the treatment we suggest, to appeal to the better and worthier instincts of the individual. These may sometimes seem to be dead, and in certain cases even may be so, but in the vast majority of cases, by working for the moral regeneration of the individual, we may hope to restore him to independence and respectability. Such a process must often be slow, and in its earlier stages inflict personal discomfort. But in no case ought it to be possible to reverse this process and to allow the malingerer or the loafer to obtain a better payment than the diligent and well-conducted.

144. It has been pointed out that the increased comfort of our workhouses has made them attractive to a class of able-bodied to whose comfort it is not desirable to add. The elaborate proposals we now make will be nugatory unless for the future it is possible to segregate and deal separately with this class. It is not easy to formulate the principles of classification; but as, in the great majority of cases, it is curative treatment which is needed, we think that the determining factor should be the hopefulness of the case in the light of the present position and past life of the applicant. In some cases, no doubt, it will be found that a certain amount of preliminary discipline is indispensable before an applicant can be trusted to make a proper use of the opportunity and assistance given to him.

(26). Political Disqualifications on Account of Public Assistance.*

145. The question how far relief from the Public Assistance Authority should disfranchise its recipient is more closely connected with the relief of the able-bodied than with that of any other class of recipients of public assistance. We hold generally to the principle that those who, either from misfortune or otherwise, have failed to manage their own affairs successfully ought not by law to have power to interfere in the management of the affairs of others. But public assistance often assumes a transient form, and we are not disposed to disfranchise wholesale and unconditionally all who receive it. We therefore recommend that only those persons be disfranchised on account of public assistance who have received assistance other than medical relief for three months or more in the aggregate in the qualifying year.

As we have already stated, we do not think that medical assistance in any form should entail disfranchisement.

(27). Recovery of Cost of Public Assistance.†

146. In our review of the working of the present law as regards the recovery of the cost of relief from the persons relieved and from their relatives, we point out that, even under the present uneven and irregular application of the law, a considerable sum is annually obtained. We in no sense wish to diminish this help to the ratepayer. On the contrary we think that the present procedure requires strengthening in various details, and we make the following recommendations:—

(a) *Loan Relief.*

Procedure for recovery should be simplified.

(b) *Recovery from Relatives.*

(1) Relatives who are liable should be required to contribute, and this policy should be pursued uniformly and with firmness and discretion.

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* *Cf.* Part VI., Chapter 4 (2). † *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 3.

(2) Poor persons should have power to proceed directly against liable relatives, and the Public Assistance Authorities should have power to proceed against liable relatives before the applicant becomes actually chargeable.

(3) Simplification of procedure applicable to recovery of relief from relatives.

(4) The cost of relief given should be recoverable from relatives after the person has ceased to be chargeable.

(5) A man should be liable to contribute to the support of his grandparents.

(6) Non-liable relatives should also be induced to contribute where they are able to do so.

(28). Bastardy.*

147. Representations have been made to us that the procedure as to the recovery of maintenance under Bastardy Orders is difficult and uncertain, and that the power of the Guardians to obtain such orders is too limited. These representations appear to us to be generally well founded. We have, therefore, made a number of detailed recommendations which will operate to the advantage of the Public Assistance Authorities and of the mothers. One recommendation which we make in the interests of morality is that the money paid by a putative father to the mother of an illegitimate child under a Bastardy Order should be paid through the agency of a third person.

148. As to the treatment of unmarried mothers, regarding which we have received a great deal of evidence, we make the following recommendations :—

(*a*) *Single Lapse Cases.*—These should be dealt with in institutions apart from the workhouse, preferably in charitable institutions, but if these are not available the Public Assistance Authorities should institute homes of their own. Charitable workers to watch over the girls on their first return to the world.

(*b*) *Depraved, Immoral Women.*—Detention and reformative treatment on lines similar to those adopted for "in-and-out" cases should be organised.

(*c*) *Feeble-minded Unmarried Mothers.*—These should be dealt with in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded. Meantime the Public Assistance Authorities should have power to detain such mothers.**

(*d*) For the purpose of advising in regard to all maternity cases, a Women's Committee should be appointed in connection with every Public Assistance Committee, consisting of members of that Committee and of voluntary workers.

(29) The Detention or Continuous Treatment of Certain Classes of Persons Receiving or Applying for Public Assistance.†

149. It will have been observed that from time to time in our Report, we have recommended "detention" for certain classes of cases. We now propose to summarise our various proposals in this respect and explain very shortly our reasons for recommending this form of treatment.

150. The term "detention" is perhaps, however, infelicitous. It is generally associated with the idea of punishment by imprisonment. Our primary object in proposing detention is neither punishment nor imprisonment. We aim at obtaining opportunities for applying ameliorative treatment to particular individuals over a continuous period. We desire to substitute, for the present system of incontinuous and inefficacious relief, a continuity of care and treatment which shall benefit both the recipient and the community. To secure this continuity of treatment, some powers of control are necessary, but these powers of control are intended in the vast majority of cases to be curative and stimulative rather than punitive, nor need they necessarily be always exercised in an institution, as we shall see when we go into particulars of the various classes of cases.

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* *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 4.

† *Cf.* Part IV., Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9; Part V., Chapter 2; Part VI., Chapter 4 (2); and Part VIII. Chapters 4 and 7.

** *See* par. 151, Class III (*a*), page 638.

Sometimes the continuity of treatment which we propose, is required primarily in the interests of the individual, sometimes primarily in the interests of the community, and sometimes indistinguishably in the interests of both the community and the individual. But all these cases have this common characteristic, viz., that the absence of power of continuous treatment constitutes a danger either to the individual or the State.

(*A*) *Classes of Cases requiring Continuous Treatment.*

151. We may classify the cases according as the Continuous Treatment is necessitated by :—

I.—Extreme Age or Extreme Youth.

II.—Illness or Disease of Mind or Body.

III.—Persistent Indulgence in Vice or Pernicious Habits.

We will now describe more particularly the cases coming within these categories, and the conditions and safeguards under which we think that Continuous Treatment should be applied to them.

Class I.—Those Requiring Continuous Care and Treatment on Account of Extreme Age or Extreme Youth.

This class will be subdivided into :—

(*a*) The Aged, and

(*b*) Children.

(*a*) *The Aged.*—There are certain helpless, friendless, old people receiving or needing relief, and living in a state of neglect which is very harmful. Such, for instance, would be frail old persons who might fall into the fire or otherwise injure themselves, who cannot clean or feed themselves properly, or, again, who are suffering from some ailment which, though slight in itself, is yet crippling to advanced age. It does not seem right that such old people should be maintained by public money in conditions so distressing and so dangerous. They should clearly be dealt with either in almhouses or, if necessary, in infirmaries, where their wants and ailments could be properly attended to. But these cases require very considerate treatment, and it is only in the event of their being friendless, or, of the inability of their friends or relatives to look after them in their own homes, that we think that, in their own interests, what we shall call an Order for Continuous Treatment should be obtained in regard to them. The conditions under which such an Order should be obtainable are as follows :—

(1) A medical certificate that continuous care and treatment are essential in the interests of the health or safety of the person concerned.

(2) Sufficient proof that neither such person, nor his or her friends or relatives are able and willing to provide the continuous care and treatment.

(*b*) *Children.*—The children to whom we think "Continuous Treatment" should be applied are children of "ins-and outs" and of parents whose mode of life is so harmful to the children, that in the interests, both of the children and of the State whose future citizens they will be, the children should be separated from parental control. Under existing Acts, the Guardians already have the power to take over the rights of the parents of children until the age of eighteen, where they are of opinion that a parent of a child, by reason of mental deficiency or of vicious habits or mode of life, is unfit to have control of it. We consider that the principle of these Acts should be applied to the class of children we have specified, and that the control should continue until the age of twenty-one. More especially the Acts should automatically apply in all cases where parents have rendered themselves liable to detention through indulgence in vice or pernicious habits as explained in Class III. below.

Class II.—Those requiring Continuous Care and Treatment owing to Illness or Disease of Mind or Body.

(*a*) *Feeble-minded.*—Under this heading come those persons who, though not certified as insane, are yet not in such sufficient possession of their faculties as to be capable of properly looking after themselves. With regard to this class, their case is fully dealt with in the report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded. If, as we hope, the recommendations of that Commission are carried into effect, a system of control over the feeble-minded will be initiated which will free the Poor Law administrator from one of his greatest difficulties. Meanwhile, we think that as a provisional measure, the Poor Law Authorities should be given power to detain feeble-minded persons who come under their care.

(*b*) *Persons Suffering from Serious (Non-infectious) Illness.*—Such cases would be, for instance, persons bedridden with rheumatism, or suffering from some malignant disease which could not properly be treated in their own homes. The conditions under which such persons should become liable for Continuous Treatment should be those which we have specified for the "Aged" above, viz. :—

(1) A medical certificate that Continuous Care and Treatment is essential in the interests of the health or safety of the person concerned.

(2) Sufficient proof that neither such person, nor his or her friends or relatives are able and willing to provide the Continuous Care and Treatment.

(*c*) *Persons Suffering from Certain Infectious or Contagious Diseases.*—These may be divided into three classes :—

(1) *Phthisis in an Advanced Stage.*—We have dealt in Par. 155, Part V., with the difficulties surrounding this class of case, and with the difference of opinion in the medical profession as to when the development of this disease does become so infectious as to be a danger to those with whom the afflicted one may come in contact. We would, therefore, only advocate a compulsory Order for Continuous Treatment in advanced cases where a medical certificate is produced, certifying that the patient is likely to infect others, or where the home conditions of the patient are such as to lead, with practical certainty, to the spread of the disease.

(2) *Children Suffering from Ophthalmia or some other Infectious Complaint.*—As regards ophthalmic children of "in-and-out" parents, we have recommended that they should be "detained," and the same recommendation should be applied to all children suffering from infectious complaints of such a character as to be a source of danger to other children. In their case an Order for Continuous Treatment should be obtainable upon the production of a medical certificate to the effect that the diseased child is either in a state dangerous to others, or else is likely to communicate the disease to others, and that such danger or likelihood is not being obviated by the treatment provided by the parents, guardians, relatives, or friends.

(3) *Venereal Diseases.*—Those affected by these diseases come under a different category. In the vast majority of cases, they have contracted this ailment by their own misconduct. We have received evidence to the effect that these diseases work terrible havoc with the physique and stamina of the community, and that much of the infant mortality and bad health of children is due to their after consequence. If the object be the arrest and stamping out of these poisonous ailments, caution must be exercised in not prescribing treatment so drastic as to lead to their concealment. We are, however, clearly of opinion that whenever sufficient proof is produced that an individual is in such a condition as to be a danger to the community amongst whom he or she may be living, an Order for Detention or Continuous Treatment should be obtainable.

Class III.—Those Requiring Continuous Care and Treatment Owing to Indulgence in Vice or Pernicious Habits.

(*a*) *Unmarried Mothers.*—We have recommended that "first" cases should be dealt with in charitable institutions, and where the mothers are feeble-minded, they will be dealt with under that head. We have, however, to consider the case of the more depraved women who habitually make a convenience of the workhouse for the purpose of being confined with illegitimate children, who in their turn become a permanent charge upon the rates. We recognise the difficulty of dealing with these cases; on the one hand, they may not resort to the workhouse sufficiently frequently within the year to come within the ordinary category of "ins-and-outs"; on the other hand, whilst it is right to check, if possible, their career of vice, it must at the same time be recognised that the not always accessible putative father is largely to blame. We think that women of this class should be liable to an Order by Justices for a period of Continuous Treatment, and that after recovery from confinement they should be sent to some suitable institutions for a fixed period and placed under reformatory influence.

We commend this course in the interest of the woman herself. Unfortunate women, when they have fallen thus low, have often no means of subsistence except through a resumption of their vicious mode of life. The treatment we suggest may afford them some chance of regaining a respectable existence.

(*b*) *Adults Repeatedly Becoming Chargeable through Wilful Neglect or Misconduct.*—The last class of cases which we have to consider are those in which there appears to be no hope of applying beneficial continuous treatment, except under conditions of discipline and deterrence, such as could more efficiently and more suitably be exercised by an authority other than the Public Assistance Authority.

We have accordingly recommended that persons should be committed to a "Detention Colony" under the Home Office, for any period between six months and three years, who have been guilty of wilful and persistent repetition within a given period of any of the following offences:—

(1) Wilful refusal or neglect of persons to maintain themselves or their families (although such persons are wholly or in part able to do so), the result of such refusal or neglect being that the persons or their families have become chargeable to the Public Assistance Authority.

(2) Wilful refusal on the part of a person receiving assistance, to perform the work or to observe the regulations duly prescribed in regard to such assistance.

(3) Wilful refusal to comply with the conditions, laid down by the Public Assistance Authority, upon which assistance can be obtained, with the result that a person's family thereby becomes chargeable.

(4) Giving way to gambling, drink, or idleness, with the result that a person or his or her family thereby becomes chargeable.

The results of this provision will be, we hope, that the loafer, the "in-and-out," the person who neglects his family, or who makes them chargeable owing to habits of gambling, drink, or idleness, etc., etc., will be submitted to a course of severe discipine and training, which, even if it does not restore the man to a comparative state of industrial efficiency, will at the least for a certan period prevent him from further demoralisation, and will to some extent deter both himself and others from indulging in the vice or habit responsible for his downfall.

(*B*) *Procedure for Obtaining Order for Continuous Treatment for Classes I. and II. and Class III.* (*a*).

152. We will now consider the procedure by which an Order for Continuous Treatment should be obtained, and also what the effects of that Order should be.

It has been suggested that in certain cases an Order for Detention or Continuous Treatment should be an administrative matter in the hands of the Public Assistance Authority, just as the Guardians now have power to detain certain paupers for short periods in the Workhouse. It must be remembered, however, that the Continuous Treatment which we now propose would extend in some cases to three years. We feel, therefore, that a proposal to commit a person to compulsory control for such a period on a mere Order of the Public Assistance Authority might meet with great opposition, and would not, in the present state of public opinion, be accepted. We therefore propose that in all these cases an Order for Continuous Treatment should only be obtainable after an application on behalf of the Public Assistance Authority to Justices of the Peace and upon such Justices being satisfied that the conditions which we have specified as rendering persons liable to continuous treatment have been fulfilled. In making these suggestions we have in mind the existing procedure under the Public Health Act, 1875 (Sect. 124), and the Infectious Disease Prevention Act, 1890 (Sect. 12), under which persons suffering from certain diseases can be removed to or detained in infectious hospitals on a Justice's order. We do not think that the application for an Order for Continuous Treatment need be made in open court; but we would allow an appeal to Quarter Sessions. Such appeal, however, should not be allowed to interfere with the temporary validity of the Order.

We have suggested that cases of inebriety should be dealt with as far as possible in their earlier stages, on the ground that the inebriate is reducing himself and his family to such straits that he will have to apply to the Public Assistance Authorities for maintenance. We have already drawn attention to the recent report of the Departmental Committee on the subject generally, with which we are in substantial agreement.

(C) Effect of an Order for Continuous Treatment.

153. Persons against whom an Order for Continuous Treatment had been obtained would be under continuous control for the period named in the Order, or for a lesser period, if the Public Assistance Authority were satisfied that the conditions which had given rise to the order had ceased to exist.

It would not always be necessary that the control of the Public Assistance or other Authority should be exercised for the whole, or in some cases, for any part of the period in an institution. For instance, it would be within our view of what was right that an able-bodied man in a Detention Colony might be let out from such colony before the expiry of his Order for Continuous Treatment, on condition of reporting himself periodically to the Public Assistance Authority, in order to test the progress he had made in overcoming the habit which had led to his detention. If necessary, however, the issue of an Order for Continuous Treatment would empower the Public Assistance Authority to remove the cases to which the Order applied to an institution and to detain hem in such institution for the whole period of the Order.

154. Our survey of the evils and futilities of the present system convinces us that it is not possible to deal humanely, adequately, and restoratively with the cases we are considering unless there is power to give them continuous treatment under conditions which can be enforced.

(30). Settlement and Removal.*

155. Theoretically, there is much to be said in favour of the proposal to abolish the Law of Settlement and Removal. From a practical point of view, however, there is much to be said against its entire abolition, and, accordingly, until experience has been gained of the work of our new organisation of Public Assistance, we think it better to retain the law, but in a modified and simplified form. The specific recommendations we make are :—

(*a*) That the County or County Borough shall be the area for all purposes of settlement and removal.

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* *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 2.

(*b*) That the forms of settlement be reduced to four, viz. :—
Birth.
Parentage.
Marriage.
Residence.

(*c*) That a settlement be acquired by one year's residence in a County or County Borough.

(*d*) That the Local Government Board determine all cases of disputed settlement unless the Board consider that a particular case should be decided in a Court of Law.

(*e*) That there be reciprocity of removal as between England, Scotland and Ireland.

If these changes be given effect to, the labour of inquiry, the cost of litigation, and the hardship of removal under the existing law will be very greatly diminished. We would thus hope that most of the objections to the law would be met. But, if experience showed that total abolition of the law was preferable, that course might be adopted later.

(31). Vaccination and Registration of Births, etc.

156. If the Boards of Guardians are abolished, and their Poor Law functions are transferred to a Statutory Committee of the County and County Borough Councils, their duties in connection with vaccination and registration of births, etc., which are altogether extraneous to the work of public assistance, should be handed over to the committees of of those councils dealing with kindred matters. The Registrar-General considers that a closer relation between the Sanitary and Registration Districts is highly desirable, and has furnished us with a Memorandum containing a proposal having this object in view.

(32). Compounding for Rates.*

157. A survey of the evidence upon the subject of Compounding for Rates submitted to the Local Taxation Commission as well as to ourselves has convinced us of the desirability of the direct payment of rates by those who elect Local Authorities; and although we are well aware of the difficulties which would prevent a sudden abolition of the compounding system, we are fully persuaded that it should be reduced to the lowest possible limit. This would involve more careful and detailed arrangements for the direct collection of rates; but in the long run the community would benefit not only from less extravagant administration, but from a more active and intelligent interest in local self-government on the part of the electorate. If this policy were pursued, it might also be found desirable to modify the provisions of the Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act of 1869, in the direction of reducing the limit of rateable value for compounding purposes.

(33). The Compilation of the Statistics of Public Assistance.†

158. The marshalling and interpretation of the mass of statistical evidence on the subject of our inquiry has been a matter of some difficulty. Notwithstanding the many Poor Law statistical returns issued periodically we found it essential to call for further statistical information Reference is made elsewhere to the various statistics we obtained, and to which we attach considerable value. Most important, perhaps, was the Return of the persons relieved during the twelve months ended September 30th, 1907, and of the periods and recurrence of their relief. The results of this Reurnt have thrown a flood of light upon the character of the pauper population, and they reveal in a striking manner the varying problems which confront the Poor Law Authorities. On the one hand there are cases in which relief has been obtained on four or five different occasions during the year whilst not extending to a period of one week in the total, and on the other hand there are the many cases chargeable uninterruptedly throughout the year. Between those extremes all manner of cases are to be found, cases of the merest touch with the

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* *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 8.
† *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 10.

Poor Law, persistently recurring cases, and cases of protracted, though not permanent relief. So important do we consider this information that we recommend the collection at regular intervals of statistics upon the same lines.

We also recommend the regular compilation of medical and age statistics, an amendment in the principle of classification according to physical ability and special Returns as to the cost of various classes of persons relieved and of various methods of relief.

(34). Constructive Relief in the case of the Afflicted.†

159. We suggest an extension of the exceptions to the rule of constructive pauperis Under the existing law a man or a widow whose dependents receive relief is considered to be constructively relieved and may be disfranchised. If, however, the dependent be blind, or deaf and dumb, this rule does not apply, and we think that similar exceptions should be made in the case of the mentally defective, epileptic, lame, deformed, and crippled, provided that the assistance rendered from public funds to or on account of the afflicted wife or child is occasioned by such infirmity. It will be seen that this extension has an important bearing on the question of disfranchisement on account of relief.

(35). Temporary Commission, etc.

160. If our proposals are accepted and passed into law, we recommend that a smal Temporary Commission working under the Local Government Board be appointed composed of persons of administrative experience, who should place themselves in direct communication with the Local Authorities with a view to securing the early and effective development of the new system. The appointment of such a Commission and a definition of their powers and objects should, in our judgment, be made part of the Act reforming the present Poor Law system.

We do not feel called upon to set out in much detail the transitional arrangements which may be necessary to carry the reforms we suggest into operation, and we believe that it would not even be possible to do so in an Act of Parliament.

We assume that the Local Government Board will be given the widest possible discretion to make all orders and regulations which may be necessary, and to take any steps which, in their opinion and upon the advice of the Temporary Commission, may be required to remove any difficulties arising in the establishment of the new authorities and the organisation of their work. There are one or two points, however, which we must notice. We believe that the appointed day upon which the new bodies will be constituted and the expenses will become chargeable upon the new areas, cannot be earlier than the commencement of the financial year next ensuing after the passing of the Act. But we see no necessity for any similar postponement in the formation of the Labour Exchanges, and the appointment of the Central organisation to control them. In our opinion, this part of our proposal might be embodied in a separate Bill which should be passed at the earliest possible date. It will, of course, be understood that the new Public Assistance Authority and their Committees will, on the appointed day, take over the existing Poor Law institutions and officers, and will carry on the work of relief.

(36). Our Proposals in relation to Scotland.

161. The case of Scotland will be dealt with in a separate report which is being prepared, and will be issued as soon as possible. The Poor Law system of Scotland is in many respects essentially different from those of England and Ireland. For example:—

1. The area of Poor Law administration in Scotland is the parish. The parish is also the area for educational purposes.

2. The Parochial Boards established under the Poor Law Act, 1845, for administering the Poor Laws were superseded as recently as 1894 by Parish Councils—the present authority—and these Councils discharge other functions besides those connected with the relief of the poor.

† *Cf.* Part VIII., Chapter 9.

3. An able-bodied person is not legally entitled to poor relief.

4. The form of relief granted (although not to the same ex large burghal parishes) is mainly outdoor relief.

It is thus apparent that, while the principles of the scheme of Public Assistance which we have recommended for England may be applied to Scotland, modifications will be required. It should perhaps also be observed that, so recently as 1904, a Departmental Committee of the Local Government Board for Scotland took evidence and reported on the system of Poor Law Medical Relief and on the Rules and Regulations for the management of Poorhouses in Scotland.

162. It is thus apparent that, while the principles of the scheme of Public Assistance which we have recommended for England may be applied to Scotland, considerable modifications will in any case be required. It is also to be observed that, so recently as 1904, a Departmental Committee of the Local Government Board for Scotland took evidence and reported on the system of Poor Law Medical Relief and on the Rules and Regulations for the management of Poorhouses in Scotland. Further, the administration of medical relief in Scotland is not on all-fours with the practice of England. For instance, in Scotland, there is an obligation resting on the Sanitary Authority to deal with and control Pulmonary Phthisis as an infectious disease in terms of the Public Health Statutes. It would be inadvisable to alter that law which is now in operation, and there may therefore be, in this and other respects, deviation as regards Scotland from the principles and scheme which we have proposed for England.

163. The Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 applies to Scotland as well as to England, and although we are aware that the conditions and the methods of administration are not wholly identical in the two countries, we think that, in the main, our recommendations as regards the unemployed and relief of distress are applicable equally to Scotland and England. The sections of our Report describing the preventive measures which we propose, such as the decasualisation of labour, the establishment of a national system of labour exchanges, and the institution of a system of insurance against unemployment are of general application, and could be put in operation simultaneously in England and Scotland.

(37). Our Proposals in Relation to Ireland.

164. We also deal in a separate volume with Poor Law administration in Ireland. The Poor Laws of England and Ireland have much in common, on many points they are identical. Thus we have often found that the experience of one country suggests a reform in the other, and it may be convenient to state here that we intend that our recommendations in regard to the extension of areas, the constitution of the new authorities, and the classification of institutions should apply equally to both. At the outset of our inquiry we found that a Vice-Regal Commission had lately reported on several points in connection with Poor Law administration in Ireland, and had formulated certain proposals for reform. The Commissioners were men of great experience and wide local knowledge, and their recommendations appear to have received general support throughout the country. We are greatly indebted to their Report, so much so that we have not thought it necessary to take any further evidence on matters with which they had dealt exhaustively. But we visited Ireland in order to make ourselves acquainted with the existing state of things, and some reports on the institutions, etc., in different parts of the country will be found in the Appendix. Our scheme, it will be seen, in the main falls in with the views of the Vice-Regal Commission, and although, in recommending the abolition of Boards of Guardians and the substitution of Statutory Committees, we have carried the reform a step further than the Vice-Regal Commissioners have gone, still we believe this will be found on the whole to be an advantage, as it will secure that the authority which provides the funds for the relief of the poor will also be responsible for their administration.

It is true that the suggestion of the Irish Commissioners to revert to the old District Electoral Division as the area of rating for outdoor relief would not harmonise with the general principle of central county administration we have outlined. But now that the Old-Age Pensions Act has so greatly restricted the sphere of out-relief, this will become a minor consideration. Moreover we believe that in practice the experiment of collecting separate rates over different areas for indoor and outdoor relief might be found difficult of application.

165. Save as regards their proposals affecting outdoor relief, and the retention of the old Boards of Guardians to administer the county rates for the relief of the poor, we find ourselves generally in accord with the recommendations summed up in the concluding chapters of the Vice-Regal Commissioners' Report, and it appears clear that the statutory enactment required to give effect to our scheme of Poor Law reform would, if extended to Ireland, be found to give legislative authority for carrying out the almost identical reforms in Ireland which were recommended by the Commissioners in 1906.

166. We do not suggest that our transitional arrangements for the relief of temporary exceptional distress should be applied to Ireland. The Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 has already made provision for any temporary emergencies which may arise, by a system which is no doubt better suited to the requirements of an agricultural country like Ireland than that which we propose for the relief of distress in centres of industrial population in England.

Our separate Report in regard to Ireland will fully describe the differences between the English and the Irish Poor Law systems, and will explain in detail the application of the suggested reforms to Ireland.

(38). Conclusion.

167. The proposals we make cover a large field of administration, will conflict with many old traditions, and will take time before they can come into really effective operation. But the evils we have had to describe are so widespread and deep-rooted, and form so integral a part of the social life of the country, that no remedies less in scope or in force would in our judgment be sufficient.

168. But great as are the administrative changes which we propose, and costly as some of the new establishments may be, we feel strongly that the pauperism and distress we have described can never be successfully combated by administration and expenditure. The causes of distress are not only economic and industrial; in their origin and character they are largely moral. Government by itself cannot correct or remove such influences. Something more is required. The co-operation, spontaneous and whole-hearted, of the community at large, and especially of those sections of it which are well-to-do and free from the pressure of poverty, is indispensable. There is evidence from many quarters to show shat the weak part of our system is not want of public spirit or benevolence, or lack of funds or of social workers, or of the material out of which these can be made. Its weakness is lack of organisation, of method, and of confidence in those who administer the system. We have so framed the new system as to invite and bring into positions of authority the best talent and experience that the locality can provide. In addition to those vested with such authority we have left a place in the new system for all capable and willing social workers; but they must work in accord, under guidance, and in the sphere allotted to them.

169. Great Britain is the home of voluntary effort, and its triumphs and successes constitute in themselves much of the history of the country. But voluntary effort when attacking a common and ubiquitous evil must be disciplined and led. We have here to learn a lesson from foreign countries whose charitable and social organisations, notably in France, Germany, Belgium and Holland, work under official guidance with efficacy, promptitude, and success. Looking at the voluntary resources and societies at our disposal there is every reason to believe that we can vie with and surpass any results obtained abroad. To this end it is organisation we need, and this organisation we now suggest.

170. There are other forms of assistance and prevention which we hope this Report may evoke from certain sections of society whose attitude hitherto has not been helpful. "Example is the school of mankind," and this aphorism was never truer than in these days of publicity. In every community the mode of life, the habits and the expenditure of the rich and ostentatious, reflect and reproduce themselves in the lower grades of society. Witness after witness has noted the extravagance in dress, the restless craving for amusement, the increasing time spent in watching sports or games—in a word, the subordination of the more serious duties of life to the frivolity and amusements of the moment. These are habits which cannot exist side by side with thrift, self-restraint, and self-improvement.

In the judgment of these witnesses these habits are largely responsible for much of modern pauperism and distress. A reform in these respects is required. May it not be fairly urged that to be effective and rapid the lead and example should be given from above ?

171. But over and above these we must notice two other causes which exercise a subtle but important influence—we mean irregularity of demand and the confusion which exists in the minds of many consumers between cheapness and low price :—

(1) It is perhaps Utopian to imagine that men and women will ever free themselves from the bondage of fashion, and indeed its power seems to be greater now than ever. But fashion with its incessant changes exercises a powerful influence on production. The lace-trade at Nottingham may be cited as a typical case. The popular use or disuse of lace determines to a large extent, the amount of employment in Nottingham, which is thus dependent on a demand of which it can only be said with certainty that it is irregular.

(2) It was laid down by Adam Smith that the consumer is the best judge of the quality of a product, and the dictum had an important bearing on legislation. But experience shows that many people, and the working classes themselves at least as much as any other, prefer commodities which are not durable, and which have the apparent advantage of being low priced. It is in the production of such commodities that much of the worst paid labour is employed. Furniture and clothing are prominent examples, but the list might be greatly enlarged. If consumers could be induced to spend their money thoughtfully on articles of permanent value, and of real use, many of the labour problems of the day would be in a fair way towards solution.

172. In our analysis of the modern development of industry we have drawn attention to the inherent evils of casual and intermittent employment upon those so engaged. We are convinced that the reason why the bulk of those employing this kind of labour have made no serious or combined effort to mitigate its evils is that they are unaware of their magnitude. We hope to remove from all sections of society this unconsciousness of and unconcern in the wants, the failings and the sufferings of those outside their immediate circle, and to replace them by knowledge, sympathy and co-operation.

173. "Land of Hope and Glory" is a popular and patriotic lyric sung each year with rapture by thousands of voices. The enthusiasm is partly evoked by the beauty of the idea itself, but more by the belief that Great Britain does, above other countries, merit this eulogium, and that the conditions in existence here are such that the fulfilment of hope and the achievement of glory are more open to the individual than in other and less favoured lands. To certain classes of the community into whose moral and material condition it has been our duty to enquire, these words are a mockery and a falsenood. To many of them, possibly from their own failure and faults, there is in this life but little hope, and to many more "glory" or its realisation is an unknown ideal. Our investigations prove the existence in our midst of a class whose condition and environment are a discredit, and a peril to the whole community. Each and every section of society has a common duty to perform in combating this evil and contracting its area, a duty which can only be performed by united and untiring effort to convert useless and costly inefficients into self-sustaining and respectable members of the community. No country, however rich, can permanently hold its own in the race of international competition, if hampered by an increasing load of this dead weight; or can successfully perform the role of sovereignty beyond the seas, if a portion of its own folk at home are sinking below the civilization and aspirations of its subject races abroad.

We have from the outset worked under the knowledge that it was necessary to report upon the questions referred to us in time to guide impending legislation. The pressure thus imposed compelled us to accelerate our proceedings and in consequence we have not been able to give to all the subjects brought under our cognisance the time and investigation we desire. Even so it would have been quite impossible for us to have compressed our work into a period of three years, but for the exceptional assistance we have received from the staff placed at our disposal. This staff, though small for the burden of work imposed upon it, was admirably organised and skilfully handled. The arranging, distribution, annotation, and correction of the vast masses of evidence and papers brought before us was daily performed with unfailing punctuality and precision.

Our Secretary, Mr. Duff, of the Local Government Board, displayed great organising power, a clear judgment, and a complete grasp of the problems involved. His tact, energy, and enthusiasm have gone far to smooth the way and lighten the work of the Commission.

Of our Assistant Secretaries, Mr. Jeffrey, of the Scottish Local Government Board, over and above the invaluable assistance which he gave to us in all matters relating to Scotland, has throughout been fertile in suggestions, as well as clear and accurate in his handling of detail.

Mr. Craven, of the Statistical Department of the Customs, to whose conversance with statistical methods we are specially indebted, has shown conspicuous ability in dealing with these and with all the other matters that have come under his charge.

We desire to bring to the notice of the heads of their respective Departments our strong sense of the value of the services which these gentlemen have rendered to the Commission.

ALL WHICH WE HUMBLY SUBMIT FOR YOUR MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS CONSIDERATION.

(Signed) GEORGE HAMILTON,
✠DENIS KELLY,
H. A. ROBINSON,
S. B. PROVIS,
F. H. BENTHAM,
ARTHUR DOWNES,*
THORY GAGE GARDINER,
CHARLES S. LOCH,*†
J. PATTEN MACDOUGALL,
THOMAS HANCOCK NUNN,**
L. R. PHELPS,
W. SMART,
HELEN BOSANQUET,*†
OCTAVIA HILL.*‡

R. G. DUFF, *Secretary.*
JOHN JEFFREY, *Assistant Secretary.*
EDWARD J. E. CRAVEN, *Assistant Secretary.*

4th February, 1909.

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* I sign, subject to the reservations stated in my Memorandum below (p. 671), and I desire to detach myself from the schemes of new administrative machinery proposed in the Report.

(Signed) ARTHUR DOWNES.

*† Subject to Memorandum on page 677.

*‡ Subject to Memorandum on page 678.

** Subject to Memoranda on pages 679 and 712.

For Separate Report signed by the Rev. Prebendary H. Russell Wakefield, Mr. Francis Chandler, Mr. George Lansbury, and Mrs. Sidney Webb, see page 719.

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LIST OF PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT.

NOTE.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(A) THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD AND ITS OFFICERS. (*See* Part IV., Chap. I., and Part IX., 46–64.)

(1) The Central Authority should assume a more direct position of guidance and initiative in regard to the Local Authorities. (IV., 47.)

(2) The *status* of the Local Government Board does not seem to us to be adequate, considering the importance, authority, and character of the multifarious work it discharges. We are in full accord with the proposal to raise the salary and *status* of the head of the Department to that of a Secretary of State. (IX., 47.)

(3) We feel it of great importance that the staff of the Office should be adequately increased so as to relieve the Permanent Secretary and the higher officials of the undue strain which the present conditions often impose upon them. (IX., 48.)

(4) The Division of the Local Government Board which has hitherto dealt with "the Relief of the Poor" should in future be known as the Public Assistance Division. (IV., 49.)

(5) We recommend that there should be closer co-operation between the Public Assistance Division, and the Statistical and Audit Divisions of the Local Government Board. Similarly the Public Assistance Division of the Local Government Board should be in close touch with other Government Offices in work in which they are commonly interested. (IX., 50.)

(6) We recommend that in future the annual Report of the Public Assistance Division should be printed and presented to Parliament in a volume separate from the rest of the Report of the Local Government Board. (IX., 49.)

(7) To assist the new local authorities to understand the spirit of their duties and the intention of the legislature, the codification and consolidation of existing Poor Law statutes should at once be undertaken as well as of the orders and circulars issued under the authority of those statutes. To expedite this work, we would suggest the appointment of a small committee of Poor Law and legal experts to sit continuously until the task is completed. (IX., 58.)

(8) We think also that it would be useful for the Central Authority to issue or cause to be issued a small manual of instructions for the guidance of the local authorities. The manual should contain a clear exposition of the main features of the law relating to Public Assistance, and of the policy of the Central Authority as laid down in their orders and circulars. The manual should be periodically revised and brought up to date. (IX., 59.)

(9) We trust that the constitution of the new Local Authorities will enable the Local Government Board to devolve upon them the power to give assent to many individual cases of relief, such as emigration cases, children sent to homes, etc. The devolution of such powers would lighten the work of the Local Government Board considerably and advantageously. (IX., 60.)

(10) The powers of the Local Government Board under the Local Authorities (Expenses) Act, 1887, should be strictly limited to sanctioning expenditure after it has been incurred. (IV., 24.)

(11) The Local Government Board at present cannot order a new workhouse to be built unless a majority of the Guardians of the union or of the owners and ratepayers consent. It is desirable that this limitation should cease, and that the Board should have power to compel the local authority to provide adequate buildings and adequate classification. (IX., 61.)

NOTE.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(A) The Local Government Board and its Officers—*cont.*

(12) The Local Government Board should have power to direct that a particular class or classes of paupers for whom there is no suitable accommodation in the area of a Public Assistance Authority should be removed to and treated in any available and suitable institution of another Public Assistance Authority. (IX., 61.)

(13) We feel that a stronger check should be exercised than heretofore over the cost of buildings erected by loan. To prevent extravagance, they should be built more in accord with some accepted plan, and care should be taken that the buildings are actually erected in accordance with the approved plans, estimates, and quantities (IX., 62, IV., 204., & V., 134). *Cf.* Recommendation 70

(14) The Local Government Board should have power to authorise the Public Assistance Authority to purchase land compulsorily for the provision or enlargement of institutions. (IX., 62.)

(15) Previous to 1894 the Central Authority were able through the *ex officio* Guardians to carry on the business if the elected Guardians refused to act. Though we do not contemplate the likelihood of any such hitch occurring as that the new authority would decline to act, it would be well that the Local Government Board should be given authority in such a contingency to empower persons to exercise temporarily all or any of the powers which they may consider necessary for the object in view. (IX., 63.)

(16) We recommend that the Local Government Board should be empowered to compel Public Assistance Authorities to combine to provide for certain classes of cases, when sufficient and suitable accommodation is not otherwise available, and failing agreement between the authorities concerned. (IX., 64.)

Grants in Aid of Local Taxation.

(17) Grants or portions of grants in aid of Local Taxation should be withheld from a County or County Borough Authority in cases where the Local Government Board reports that the administration, or branches of the administration of Public Assistance are not efficient (IX., 67), and the amount of the grants should be raised to £5,000,000, as recommended by the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation.

Inspectors, Auditors, etc.

(17a). The staff of Medical Inspectors should be increased. (V., 127.)

(18) Definite qualifications should be laid down for the office of General Inspector, and prior to appointment Inspectors should, as a rule, be appointed Assistant Inspectors, and in that capacity should have opportunities of learning the character of the administration of relief, both legal and voluntary. (IV., 35.)

(19) The General Inspectors should have afforded them the help of Assistant Inspectors, to whom they might depute some of their routine and less important duties, and should be given the assistance of experts when needed. (IV., 33.)

(20) We think that for the future the Inspectors should be authorised to attend, not only the meetings of the Public Assistance Authority, but also those of the Public Assistance Committees and sub-committees, as well as to visit institutions. They should be ready to advise the Public Assistance Committee in regard to the general principles and methods of Public Assistance; they should, in conjunction with the Assistance Officers and otherwise, visit individual cases, so as to ascertain whether the Assistance is given under suitable conditions. (IX., 51.)

(21) Upon appointment Inspectors should receive written or printed instructions as to their duties, and such instructions should be periodically revised. Conferences should take place between the Inspectors, at least annually, to enable them to exchange views and experiences, and thus to carry out methodically the policy of the Department. IX., 51.)

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(A) THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD AND ITS OFFICERS.—*cont.*

(22) The present system of audit should be maintained, on the understanding that persons appointed as Auditors should be experts, both in the law and in the practice of the Poor Law, and should, as a rule, have served, in the first instance, as Assistant Auditors; Assistant Auditors should, before appointment, be required to show that they have definite qualifications for the post, both by reason of their knowledge of the general administration of the Poor Law and by reason of their professional ability as Accountants; and as a rule the possession of such qualifications should be tested by examination or otherwise. (IV., 18.)

(23) The Audit Staff should be increased. (IV., 19.)

(24) We consider that the increase in the number and efficiency of the inspectors and auditors which we propose is no more than is essential for the normal control and supervision of the administration of Public Assistance. But in addition we recommend that adequate funds should be placed at the disposal of the Local Government Board, to enable it from time to time to undertake inquiries or to obtain expert assistance upon particular subjects. (IX., 53.)

(B) THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR OFFICERS (*See* Part IV., Chap. 2, and Part IX.).

Magistrates.

(25) The powers of Magistrates to visit and report on the state of Workhouses and to order relief may be regarded as obsolete and should be abolished. (IV., 61.)

Public Assistance Authorities and Committees.

(26) We have separated the duties now performed by Boards of Guardians into two categories, and we propose to call into existence two bodies for the discharge of the two sets of functions, viz: (IX., 20.)

(1) A Local Authority for central administration and control within an enlarged area.

(2) Local Committees for dealing with applications, investigating and supervising cases, and undertaking such other duties as may be delegated by the Local Authority.

(27) We recommend that the new Local Authority shall be known as the Public Assistance Authority, and that the Committees which will carry on its work locally shall be known as Public Assistance Committees. (IX., 3.)

Area of the Public Assistance Authority.

(28) The area of the Public Assistance Authority shall be coterminous with the area of the county or county borough, and no exception from this principle shall be permissible unless the Local Government Board is satisfied that such exception would, in each particular case, be in the best interests of administration. (IX., 7.)

(29) Any union area, which at present overlaps a county or county borough, shall be divided up so that each part of it will be attached for Public Assistance purposes to the county or county borough within the boundaries of which such part is at present situated. (IX., 7.)

(30) Any injustice or anomaly arising from this arrangement may be remedied subsequently by the ordinary procedure for altering county or county borough boundaries, supplemented, if necessary, by further powers to the Local Government Board. (IX. 7.)

(31) Financial adjustments necessitated by the partition of a union area shall be determined by agreement between the authorities concerned, and, failing agreement, by arbitration as under Section 62 of the Local Government Act, 1888. (IX., 7.)

NOTE.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(B) The Local Authorities and their Officers.—*cont.*

Constitution of the Public Assistance Authority.

(32) The Public Assistance Authority shall be a statutory committee of the County or County Borough Council constituted as follows (IX., 23) :—

(i.) One-half of the members to be appointed by the council of the County or County Borough, and the persons so appointed may be persons who are members of the council.

(ii.) The other half of the members to be appointed by the council from outside their number, and to consist of persons experienced in the local administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work.

(iii.) The actual number of members of the Public Assistance Authority, in each case and from time to time, to be determined by the Local Government Board, after consideration of a scheme submitted on the first occasion by the council of the County or County Borough, and on subsequent occasions by the Public Assistance Authority.

(iv.) Women to be eligible for appointment under either head (i.) or (ii.).

(33) One-third of the members of the Public Assistance Authority shall retire each year, but shall be eligible for reappointment if duly qualified. A member ceasing to be a member of County Council or County Borough Council shall *ipso facto* cease to be a member of the Public Assistance Authority, but shall be eligible for reappointment if otherwise qualified. (IX., 23.)

Duties and Powers of the Public Assistance Authority.

(34) The powers and duties of the Public Assistance Authority would, subject to the regulations and general control of the Local Government Board, be as follows :—(IX., 20.)

(*a*) To set up and supervise Public Assistance Committees for investigating and deciding applications for Assistance, and for dealing with applicants in accordance with the regulations of the Local Government Board.

(*b*) To make rules and standing-orders for the guidance of the Public Assistance Committees.

(*c*) To dissolve any Public Assistance Committee subject to the assent of the Local Government Board.

(*d*) To organise, provide and maintain the institutions necessary for the supply of sufficient and suitable Assistance within their area, or to combine with other Public Assistance Authorities for that purpose, and to be responsible for all contracts and stocktaking.

(*e*) To provide for the cost of the administration of Public Assistance within their area, and, generally, to undertake financial responsibility for such administration.

(*f*) To appoint and allocate to the Public Assistance Committees such officers as are necessary for their work.

(35) The expenditure which each Public Assistance Authority determines to be required for the administration of Public Assistance within its area, should, in the case of a County, be paid out of the County fund in the same way as the expenditure of a Standing Joint Committee is payable under Section 30 of the Local Government Act, 1888, and it should be the duty of the County Council to provide for such payment accordingly. (IX., 20.)

Similarly in the case of a County Borough, the expenditure should be made payable by the Town Council out of the Borough fund. (IX., 20.)

(36) Any loan required would be raised by the Council of the County or County Borough as the case may be. (IX., 20.)

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

B. The Local Authorities and their Officers—*cont.*

Areas of the Public Assistance Committees.

(37) In the first instance the areas of the Public Assistance Committees shall be the union areas. (IX., 24.)

(38) Ultimately, the areas of the Public Assistance Committees shall be such as the Public Assistance Authority, with the consent of the Local Government Board, shall prescribe, and those areas shall as far as possible be coterminous with one or more rural or urban districts. (IX., 24.)

(39) Every union overlapping the boundaries of a County or County Borough shall be dealt with so that each part of such union entirely within a County or County Borough shall be either provisionally constituted a separate Public Assistance Committee area, or else provisionally attached to another Public Assistance Committee area within the County or County Borough in which such part is situated, and the Local Government Board shall issue Orders accordingly. (IX. 24.)

Constitution of the Public Assistance Committee.

(40) For each area constituted as in Recommendations 37 to 39, the Public Assistance Authority shall appoint a Public Assistance Committee, which shall include a certain proportion of persons nominated by the Urban and Rural District Councils, and, where a Voluntary Aid Committee has been established, a certain proportion nominated by that Committee. The persons so nominated shall be experienced in the local administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work and shall include a proportion of women, in our judgment not ordinarily less than one-third. One-third of the members shall retire each year, but shall be eligible for re-appointment. (IX., 26.)

Duties of the Public Assistance Committee.

(41) The following will be the duties of the Public Assistance Committee under rules laid down by the Public Assistance Authority (IX., 25):—

(*a*) To make careful inquiry into the circumstances and condition of all persons applying for Assistance within their area with a view to ascertaining the cause and nature of their distress.

(*b*) To review periodically the circumstances and condition of persons in receipt of Assistance.

(*c*) To investigate the means of persons liable for maintenance and to take the measures necessary for the recovery of the cost of the Assistance given.

(*d*) To sub-divide their area when desirable for the purposes of local Assistance, subject to the assent of the Public Assistance Authority.

(*e*) To determine in the case of each person applying for or receiving Public Assistance whether such person is by law entitled to such Assistance.

(*f*) To decide upon the best method of assisting applicants with a view to removing the cause of distress.

(*g*) To co-operate with the Voluntary Aid Committee* with a view to the assistance of cases of distress.

(*h*) To co-operate with other public and voluntary agencies.

(*i*) To inspect, supervise, and administer the Public Assistance Authority's institutions within their area and such other institutions as the Public Assistance Authority shall direct.

(*j*) To secure periodical visitation of all cases in receipt of Home Assistance.

(*k*) To make half yearly an estimate of their expenditure and requirements, and submit it to the Public Assistance Authority who shall from time to time remit such sum or sums as may be necessary.

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

* *See* Recommendation 175.

(B) THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR OFFICERS—*cont.*

(*l*) To control and supervise the officers assigned to them by the Public Assistance Authority.

(*m*) To furnish the Public Assistance Authority from time to time with such information concerning the proceedings and work of the Committee as the Authority may require.

(*n*) To discharge such other duties as the Public Assistance Authority may, from time to time, call upon them to undertake.

Scheme of Local Authorities for London.

(42) We apply to London the scheme drawn up for Counties and County Boroughs with the following modifications. (IX., 42):—

(*a*) The area for the new Public Assistance Authority would be that of the London County Council. The areas of the Public Assistance Committees would generally be the areas of the existing Unions, though in certain cases some readjustment would be necessary. (IX., 29.)

(*b*) The Public Assistance Authority for London would be a Statutory Committee of the London County Council, with statutory duties. (IX., 41.)

(*c*) One-half of the members of the Statutory Committee to be nominated by the London County Council either from their own number or from outside;

(*d*) One-quarter of the members of the Statutory Committee to be appointed by the London County Council from outside their own number and to consist of persons of skill and experience in the administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work;

(*e*) One-quarter of the members of the Statutory Committee to be nominated by the Local Government Board so as to secure representation on the committee of such interests as the medical and legal professions, employers and working men, hospital administration, charitable organisations, etc.

(*f*) We propose that a scheme on these lines be drawn up by the London County Council and submitted to the Local Government Board for approval. The scheme should secure a considerable number (such as fifty or sixty) of members on the committee and the inclusion of a certain proportion of women.

(43) The Statutory Committee of the London County Council thus constituted we would call the Public Assistance Authority for London, and to it we would transfer the Poor Law work of the Metropolis. (IX., 43.)

(44) As in the country, so in London, we propose that the work of hearing and deciding applications for Assistance shall devolve on local Public Assistance Committees to be constituted in London as follows (IX., 44):—

(*a*) Each Public Assistance Committee shall be appointed by the Public Assistance Authority, care being taken that, amongst those so appointed, there shall be included a certain proportion of persons nominated by the Metropolitan Borough councils, and, where a Voluntary Aid Committee has been established in a district, a certain proportion nominated by that Committee. The persons so nominated shall be experienced in the local administration of Public Assistance or other cognate work and shall include a certain proportion of women, which proportion in our judgment should not ordinarily be less than one-third.

(*b*) One-third of the members shall retire each year, but shall be eligible for re-appointment.

(*c*) The number of members on the Public Assistance Committees should be largely regulated by the area and population of the districts in which they will act, and should be fixed by schemes submitted by the Public Assistance Authority to the Local Government Board for approval. As a large area will require a considerable body of members, such schemes should provide, if necessary, for sub-divisions of the Committee, it being understood that each sub-committee will act in a smaller area as a section of the Committee.

NOTE.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(B) The Local Authorities and their Officers—*cont.*

(45) We also propose that Poor Law expenditure in London be a uniform charge over the whole area according to rateable value. (IX., 45.)

Officers of the Local Authorities. (*See* Part IV., Chapt. 3, and IX., 69.)

(46) When a Local Authority and the Local Government Board concur in the opinion that the retention of any officer is, on general grounds, detrimental to the administration, the Local Authority should have power to terminate that officer's appointment after proper notice (IV., 101).

(47) We think that the Local Government Board should lay down more precisely the qualifications for the higher offices under the new system. (IV., 104.) No person should be appointed as Clerk who has not some knowledge and experience of the Poor Law, no person as superintendent of an institution who has not had some experience in dealing with the classes which the institution contains, and no person as a relieving officer who has not had some previous training as an assistant relieving officer or has not passed an examination and obtained a certificate of an examining authority recognised by the Local Government Board. (IV., 106.)

(48) There should be qualifying examinations for the higher officers. Once qualifications for each office are laid down, and the Local Government Board satisfied that they are fulfilled, the entire responsibility for the appointment of all officers might be left to the new Local Authorities. (IV., 107.)

(49) The Local Government Board might sanction a scale of officers' salaries for each Local Authority, and so long as the salaries, or increases of salaries, were in accordance with that scale, it should not be necessary for the Local Authority to require the sanction of the Local Government Board to individual salaries. (IV., 107.)

(50) A Central Superannuation Fund should be established for the whole service, and in the case of teachers transferring themselves from public elementary schools to the Public Assistance service and vice versa, arrangements should be made by which any sacrifice of pension is avoided. (IV., 114).

(51) The Clerk of the future or any officer performing analogous duties to any Local Authority shall not, save under very exceptional circumstances, and subject to the consent of the Local Government Board, be a part-time officer. (IV., 117.)

(52) If the General Workhouse is abolished, each of the specialised institutions which takes its place, will require a Superintendent, qualified by knowledge and experience, for its management. The salary offered must be sufficient to attract men not merely of organising power, but having the moral qualities necessary to develop the capacities of those under their charge. (IV., 118.)

(53) Highly-trained officers will be required in what are now regarded as less important posts, as *e.g.*, that of labour master. (IV., 119.)

(54) Provision should be made for inmates of all denominations receiving religious administration and instruction from the clergy of their respective churches. (IV., 120.)

(55) The indoor staff should be allowed to live out, where circumstances permit, and so far as is consistent with discipline and the proper discharge of their duties. (IV., 121.)

(56) Where adequate relief is offered and refused, the responsibility for the consequences arising from such refusal should not rest with the relieving officer. (IV., 127–8.)

(57) The relieving officer must not be burdened with too large a number of cases. In any scheme or regulations for the administration of relief in local areas, the proportion of cases to officers should be carefully and periodically revised, and pay stations should be abolished. (IV., 36; 130 & 131.)

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(B) The Local Authorities and their Officers—*cont.*

(58) In some places an officer might be appointed who, like the Inspector of Poor in Scotland, might fill the position both of Clerk and relieving officer with such assistance as is necessary. (IV., 134, & IX., 19.)

(59) A Local Authority should not be allowed to appoint an ex-member as a paid officer, unless he or she has ceased to be a member of the Local Authority for a period of, say, twelve months before appointment. (IV., 136.)

(60) Women visitors might be employed for certain classes of out-relief cases. (IV., 142.)

(61) A graded Public Assistance Service should be set up which should include all officers concerned with the supervision, control, and disciplinary treatment of the poor, including relieving officers, both male and female, masters, matrons and superintendents of institutions of every grade, labour masters and mistresses. In this service there should be more opportunity of promotion from the lower to the higher ranks, and no question of superannuation should hinder the transfer of efficient and promising officers from one Local Authority to another. (IV., 143.)

(62) We have also recommended that the officer referred to in recommendation No. 58 above, who will be the chief officer of the Public Assistance Committee, shall be called the Superintendent of Public Assistance, and that the relieving officers working under him shall be called Assistance Officers. The Clerk of the Public Assistance Authority we propose to call the Director of Public Assistance. (IX., 19.)

(C) Methods of Assistance.

Indoor Relief or Institutional Assistance (*See* Part IV., Chap. 5).

(63) General workhouses should be abolished. (IX., 75.)

(64) Classification by Institutions is an essential preliminary to making indoor relief rightly effective (IV., 224; *Cf.*, 145–167), and accordingly indoor relief should be given in separate institutions appropriate to the following classes of applicants, viz.: (IX., 75.)

(1) Children.

(2) Aged and Infirm.

(3) Sick.

(4) Able-bodied men.

(5) Able-bodied women.

(6) Vagrants.

(7) Feeble-minded and epileptics.

(65) All indoor cases should be revised from time to time (IX., 75) by a responsible Committee with a view to seeing whether the existing treatment is producing the desired result, or whether it is desirable that the treatment should be altered. (IV., 212.)

(66) Powers of removal to and detention in institutions should be given to the Public Assistance Authority under proper safeguards. *See* (J) page 667.

(67) The treatment of inmates should be made as far as possible curative and restorative.

(68) The Central Authority should exercise a more strict control over expenditure on buildings and equipment.

(69) In every institution for the aged and for the able-bodied a system of classification should be adopted on the basis of conduct before and after admission.

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(C) METHODS OF ASSISTANCE—*cont.*

(70) We think that the Local Government Board should exercise its authority more strictly in checking excessive expenditure. (*See* Recommendation No. 13) and that, on any proposal being made for building new institutions, it should be considered

(1) Whether some part of the demand for institutional treatment could not be met by a greater and more systematic use of voluntary homes and hospitals;

(2) Whether the institution is necessary in view of the desirability of breaking up the existing workhouses into institutions specialised for different classes, and, if so, what the policy of the local authority should be in utilising the workhouse or a particular class or classes and not for applicants of all or many kinds;

(3) Whether the proposals for building do, or do not, exceed a recognised standard of cost per bed, which buildings for the particular class of inmates should in no circumstances be allowed to exceed;

(4) Whether the land on which it is proposed to build is not, in view of modern facilities for movement, unduly near the large towns and unduly expensive, considering the particular class of inmates for which the accommodation is desired.

Outdoor Relief or Home Assistance. (*See* Part IV., Chap. 6.)

Our chief recommendations are (IX., 79):—

(71) That Out-relief, or as we shall call it, Home Assistance, be given only after thorough inquiry, except in cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

(72) That it should be adequate to meet the needs of those to whom it is given.

(73) That persons so assisted should be subject to supervision.

(74) That, with a view to inquiry and supervision, the case-paper system be everywhere adopted.

(75) That such supervision should include in its purview the conditions, moral and sanitary, under which the recipient is living (IX., 79 (5)); it should be a condition of out-relief that the recipients are living respectable lives in decent houses, and, as a step towards this, the Public Assistance Authority should have power to refuse relief in certain areas where the conditions of living are bad. (IV., 268.)

(76) The provision which obtains in London, that it is the duty of the relieving officer to inform the Sanitary Authority of overcrowded and insanitary premises, should be extended to the rest of the country and enforced, and the Public Assistance Authority should be required, if the Sanitary Authority refuses to take action, to report the fact to the Local Government Board. (IV., 268.)

(77) Power should be given to the Public Assistance Authority, under due precautions, to remove persons living in a state of neglect to an institution (IV., 270). *Cf.* (J) page 667.

(78) Every case of out-relief to widows should have special and individual attention. (IV., 285.)

(79) Outdoor relief should not, except in special cases, be granted to any woman deserted by her husband during the first twelve months after desertion. (IV., 286.)

(80) There should be systematic co-operation between the Public Assistance Authorities and recognised Voluntary Aid Committees in the care and treatment of cases of distress (IV., 301) and voluntary agencies should be utilised as far as possible for the personal care of individual cases. (IX., 79 (6)).

(81) There should be one uniform Order governing outdoor relief or Home Assistance. (IV., 230.)

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(C) METHODS OF ASSISTANCE—*cont.*

Children. (*See* Part IV., Chap. 8.)

(82) The supervision of children boarded-out within the Union should be placed in the hands of competent women officers, and should be brought under Local Government Board inspection. Special care should be given when the boarding-out is with relatives, and all such cases should be specially notified to the Local Government Board. (IV., 383.)

(83) Whilst strongly advocating the extension of boarding-out as far as possible, we do not recommend any relaxation in the care exercised. (IV., 389.)

(84) In all cases of boarding-out the fullest inquiry should be made into the character of the foster-parents and the suitability of the home before, rather than after, the children are handed over. (IV., 390.)

(85) In all cases of adoption, no person should be eligible as a foster-parent who does not profess the same religious belief as is indicated on the creed register of the child. (IV., 390.)

(86) Effective steps should be taken to secure that the maintenance of children in the workhouse be no longer recognised as a legitimate way of dealing with them. (IV., 394.)

(87) The Public Assistance Authority should have power to keep the children of "ins-and-outs" in institutions, while their parents are detained in a Detention Colony. (IV., 394.)

(88) Children under treatment for ophthalmia, or some chronic contagious ailment, should not be discharged along with their parents. (IV., 394.)

(89) Guardians should have power to retain supervision of adopted children up to the age of twenty-one, and in such cases parental responsibility should be more strictly enforced, in some cases by detention in an institution, and, wherever practicable, by charging to the parents the whole or a part of the cost of maintenance of the children; such children should become the Wards of the Local Authority up to the age of twenty-one; the children, whether removed from their parents or left with them, should be kept under supervision; and one of the parents, if found worthy, or some other responsible person should, if willing to act in that capacity, be associated with the Local Authority as the official guardian. Every case in which a conviction is obtained should be reported to the authority by the police. (IV., 396.)

(90) Voluntary agencies should be recognised by the Public Assistance Authorities as regards the after-care of Poor Law children, and should report to them; such reports to be entered on a record. (IV., 399.)

(91) A system of supervision and record such as prevails in the case of children leaving industrial schools and reformatories, should be applied to the children leaving the care of the Poor Law Authorities. (IV., 400.)

(92) The provision of Homes for boys who leave Poor Law schools to take up work should be undertaken by voluntary agencies. (IV., 401.)

(93) There should be closer supervision of the condition of children in receipt of out-relief. (IV., 413.) Care should be taken that the total income from whatever source is sufficient to afford proper food, clothing, and housing conditions for the whole family (414), and the Public Assistance Authorities should ascertain that the children are being properly nourished. (IV., 415.)

(94) Unless satisfactory conditions in the home can be assured, the children should be maintained in a Public Assistance institution or an industrial school, and no children should be maintained by out-relief in immoral surroundings. (IV., 416.)

(95) There should be more medical supervision of all children under the Poor Law, both indoor and outdoor. (IV., 417.)

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(C) METHODS OF ASSISTANCE—*cont.*

(96) Care should be taken that the children of widows get a fair start on leaving school. (IV., 418).

(97) The employment of mothers in receipt of out-relief should not in all cases be prohibited. But the circumstances in each case should be carefully considered, and watched, and the mothers should not be expected to earn unless satisfactory arrangements can be made for the children (IV., 419); for many such children provision might be most satisfactorily made by means of day boarding schools. When the children are too young to go to school, the mother should not go out to work where it is impossible to provide a sufficient substitute. Special provision should, where necessary, be made for the children of widowers. (IV., 420.)

(98) Voluntary agencies should be enlisted for the supervision of out-relief children; when such are not available additional officials—in many cases women—should be appointed. (IV., 421.)

(99) The increased expenditure in connection with the assistance of children should be accompanied by a strenuous effort to return to a simpler, though not less effective, way of dealing with the children for whom institutional life is necessary. (IV., 421.)

(100) In the case of children of neglectful and unworthy parents (adopted under the Poor Law Act, 1899) as well as in the case of orphan and deserted children, Boards of Guardians might take advantage of emigration, so long as adequate inspection is ensured. (IV., 426.)

(101) Consideration should be given to the question whether all voluntary charitable institutions dealing with children should not be registered and subject to the same supervision and be required to co-operate with the public authority. (IV., 432.)

(102) Children now under the Poor Law should not be transferred entirely to the care of the Local Educational Authorities. (IV., 435.)

(103) Teachers in Poor Law schools should have the same status as teachers in the public elementary schools, and every facility, including pension, should be given them for passing from one class of schools to the other. (IV., 436.)

(104) The policy and terms of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, should be reconsidered in its relation to the relief of distress generally; if relief for necessitous children is required, and is not, and cannot be, met from voluntary sources, it should become part of the duty of the Public Assistance Committees to provide such assistance as may be necessary by way of meals or otherwise. (IV., 440.)

The Aged. (*See* Part IV., Chap. 7.)

As regards institutional relief:—

(105) The aged should have accommodation and treatment apart from the able-bodied, and be housed on a separate site, and be further sub-divided into classes as far as practicable with reference to their physical condition and their moral character. (IV., 354.)

(106) The system of small homes such as has been instituted at Kingston-on-Hull and Woolwich should be promoted and extended, both on the ground of economy to the ratepayer and increased happiness to the recipients. (IV., 328, 354.)

As regards outdoor relief:—

(107) Greater care should be taken to ensure adequacy of relief.

(108) The aged recipients of out-relief should be periodically visited both by officers of the local authority (who might be women) and by voluntary visitors, as may be arranged with a local committee for voluntary aid. (IV., 339–40.)

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(C) METHODS OF ASSISTANCE—*cont.*

(109) As regards old persons given to drink, or of dirty habits, they should not be enabled to remove themselves from control either by a pension or by the granting of outdoor relief. (IV., 354.)

Medical Relief or Assistance. (*See* Part V.)

Our main proposals for medical assistance are as follows, viz.: (IX., 104.)

(109a) The primary responsibility of the Public Assistance Authorities for the inspection and supervision of Medical Assistance should be clearly recognised and carefully maintained; but, meanwhile, the arrangements for both indoor and outdoor Medical Assistance should be periodically inspected by Medical Inspectors on behalf of the Local Government Board; to this end the Board's staff of Medical Inspectors should be increased. (V., 127.)

(110) That, the Public Assistance Authority, to assist them in carrying out their functions in connection with medical assistance, shall appoint a committee from among their number, to which shall be added representatives of the Health Committee of the County Council, or of the County Borough Council, and of the local branch or branches of the British Medical Association. This committee shall be called the County or County Borough Medical Assistance Committee, as the case may be, and shall have power to co-opt representatives of local hospitals, county or county borough nursing associations, dispensaries, and registered friendly societies.

(111) That where necessary a local committee on similar lines shall be appointed by each Public Assistance Committee for the purposes of the local administration of medical assistance. This committee shall be termed the Local Medical Assistance Committee.

(112) That all or any of the functions of the Public Assistance Authority in regard to medical assistance may be referred to the County or County Borough Medical Assistance Committee.

(113) That, in all matters affecting medical assistance, there should be systematic co-operation between the Public Assistance Authorities, the Public Health Authorities, the Education Authorities, and the Voluntary Medical Institutions, based on a clear definition of their respective functions.

(114) That the medical and nursing needs of each area, whether institutional or otherwise, be reviewed, and, if necessary, supplemented, regard being had to the available provision made by Poor Law, Sanitary, or Voluntary Authorities.

(115) That Medical Assistance should be organised on a provident basis.

(116) That a general system of provident dispensaries should be established, of which existing voluntary outdoor medical organisations be invited to form an integral part, and that every inducement should be offered to the working classes below a certain wage limit to become, or to continue to be, members of a provident dispensary. To this end the subscription to the provident dispensary should cover the following advantages to its members:—

(*a*) Power to choose their own doctor from the doctors upon the list of the dispensary.

(*b*) The provision of adequate medical assistance at a rate or fee within the reach of those subscribing to the Provident Dispensary.

(*c*) Institutional treatment upon a recommendation from the dispensary doctor.

(116a) That the Public Assistance Authority should have power to subscribe, if necessary, to the purposes indicated in Recommendations 114, 115 and 116. (V., 237.)

(117) That medical treatment should be more readily accessible to all who are in need of it; that, in cases of illness in which immediate treatment is necessary, the physical condition of the patient should be the first consideration; that in such cases medical aid should be obtainable in the first instance by application to any medical officer in the service of the Provident Dispensary.

(118) That, except as regards the cases requiring immediate attention above referred to, all necessitous persons shall receive medical relief through the Public Assistance Committee.

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(C) METHODS OF ASSISTANCE—*cont.*

(119) That certain cases in receipt of Public Assistance, such as the aged and widows with young children, might be made members of the Provident Dispensary on payment of the necessary fees by the Public Assistance Committee.

(120) That domiciliary medical assistance at the public cost should be conditional upon the maintenance of a healthy domicile and good habits.

(121) That no disfranchisement should be attached to any form of medical assistance.

(D) THE ABLE-BODIED AND UNEMPLOYMENT. (*See* Part VI. Chapter 4.)

I.—Labour Exchanges.

(122) A national system of Labour Exchanges should be established and worked by the Board of Trade (507) for the general purposes of assisting the mobility of labour and of collecting accurate information as to unemployment. (VI., 487.)

(123) The Labour Exchanges should be in charge of officers of the Board of Trade, assisted by Committees of employers, workmen, and representatives of local authorities. (VI., 507.)

(124) There should be no compulsion to use the Labour Exchanges, but the object of the Government and the Local Authorities should be to encourage and popularise them in every way, *e.g.*, by propaganda and by making use of the exchanges in engaging workmen. (VI., 519, 528.)

(125) The Labour Exchanges should be granted free postal and telephone facilities by the State. (IV., 520, 528.)

(126) Arrangements should be made to enable the Labour Exchanges to grant passes entitling workmen travelling to a situation to specially cheap railway fares; in suitable cases the cost of the passes might be defrayed by the Labour Exchange and recovered afterwards from the workmen. (VI., 528.)

II.—The Education and Training of the Young for Industrial Life.

(127) The education in our public elementary schools should be made less literary and more practical, and better calculated than at present to adapt the child to its future occupation. To this end the curriculum should be revised. (VI., 553.)

(128) We regard with favour the suggestions (VI., 549):—

(*a*) That boys should be kept at school until the age of fifteen instead of fourteen.

(*b*) That exemption below this age should be granted only for boys leaving to learn a skilled trade;

(*c*) That there should be school supervision till sixteen and replacing in school of boys not properly employed.

(129) There is urgent need of improved facilities for technical education after the present age for leaving school. (VI., 550.)

(130) With a view to the improvement of physique, a continuous system of physical drill should be instituted which might be commenced during school life, and be continued afterwards. (VI., 582.)

(131) In order to discourage boys from entering uneducative occupations which offer no prospect of permanent employment, there should be established, in connection with the Labour Exchange, a special organisation for giving boys, parents, teachers, and school managers, information and guidance as to suitable occupations for children leaving school. (VI., 527; 537–546).

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(D) THE ABLE-BODIED AND UNEMPLOYMENT—*cont.*

III.—The Regularisation of Employment.

(132) Government Departments and Local and Public Authorities should be enjoined :

(*a*) To regularise their work as far as possible. (VI., 561, 568.)

(*b*) To endeavour, as far as possible, to undertake their irregular work when the general demand for labour is slack. (VI., 566, 568.)

(133) The Board of Trade should send officers to visit and hold inquiries in localities where intermittent employment prevails, and should endeavour through conference with employers and employed to arrange schemes for the progressive decasualisation of such employment. (VI., 563, 568.)

IV.—Unemployment Insurance.

(134) The establishment and promotion of unemployment insurance, especially amongst unskilled and unorganised labour, is of paramount importance in averting distress arising from unemployment. (VI., 604.)

(135) The attainment of this object is of such national importance as to justify under specified condition, contributions from public funds towards its furtherance. (VI., 604.)

(136) This form of insurance can best be promoted by utilising the agency of existing trade organisations, or of organisations of a similar character, which may be brought into existence by a hope of participation in the public contributions. (VI., 604.)

(137) No scheme of Unemployment Insurance, either foreign or British, which has been brought before us, is so free from objections as to justify us in specifically recommending it for general adoption. (VI., 604.)

(138) A small Commission or Inter-Departmental Committee of experts and representatives of existing trade benefit organisations should be at once appointed with an instruction to frame as quickly as possible a scheme or schemes for consideration. (VI., 605.)

(139) After that Committee has reported, a special Advisory Board should be set up to help and promote schemes adapted to the varying conditions of different industrial communities. (VI., 606.)

V.—Organisations engaged in the Public Assistance of the Able-bodied, and their Functions.

(140) There shall be in every district four separate but closely co-operating organisations with the common object of maintaining or restoring the workman's independence (VI., 607,608), viz. :—

(*a*) An organisation for insurance against unemployment, to develop and secure (with contributions from public funds (604)) the greatest possible benefits to the workmen from co-operative insurance against unemployment. (VI., 608.)

(*b*) A Labour Exchange established and maintained by the Board of Trade to provide efficient machinery for putting those requiring work and those requiring workers into prompt communication. (VI., 608.)

(*c*) A Voluntary Aid Committee to give advice and aid out of voluntary funds especially to the better class of workmen reduced to want through unemployment. (VI., 607-608.) (*See* also Part VII.)

(*d*) A Public Asistance Authority representing the County or County Borough nd acting locally through a Public Assistance Committee, to assist necessitous workmen under specified conditions at the public expense (VI., 607, 608, 609). *Cf.* Recommendations 32 and 40.

(141) It shall be a fundamental principle of the system of Public Assistance that the responsibility for the due and effective assistance of all necessitous persons at the public expense shall be in the hands of one and only one authority in each County and County

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(D)—THE ABLE-BODIED AND UNEMPLOYMENT—*cont.*

Borough, viz., the Public Assistance Authority (VI., 609), a Statutory Committee of the County or County Borough Council (*See* Recommendation 32).

(142) The guiding principles of the organisations engaged in the work of Public Assistance should be :—

(*a*) Co-operation, so as to secure prompt and efficacious treatment of appropriate cases by the various agencies. (VI., 611–614.)

(*b*) Discrimination, so as to select treatment appropriate for each case and yet encourage general thrift and independence. (VI., 615.)

(*c*) Restoration, so as to prepare workmen by restorative treatment, for return to independent life. (VI., 616–618.)

(143) From the point of view of treatment, the necessitous unemployed may be divided into three classes (VI., 619, 622, 627, 628) :—

Class I.—Those requiring temporary maintenance and work. (VI., 620–622.)

Class II.—Those requiring for a longer period maintenance and work with training. (VI., 627.)

Class III.—Those requiring detention and discipline. (VI., 628.)

(144) For Class I. and Class II., there will be available various methods of treatment under the Public Assistance Authority (VI., 622, 626, 627), but Class III. will be handed over to another authority—the Home Office—and dealt with in Detention Colonies. (VI., 629, 655–666.)

VI.—Methods of Treatment of Able-bodied.

(145) There will be available for the Public Assistance Authority the following methods of treatment of the able-bodied (VI., 630) :—

(1) Home Assistance.

(2) Partial Home Assistance.

(3) Institutional Assistance.

(4) Continuous maintenance in a Detention Colony under the Home Office.

(5) Emigration. (VI., 663.)

VII.—Home Assistance.

(146) By Home Assistance we mean assistance at the home, whether in money or in kind, and given without requiring the recipient to live entirely in an institution. The conditions under which such assistance should be granted to the able-bodied would be as follows (VI., 630) :—

(*a*) That the requisite assistance is not forthcoming from any other source.

(*b*) That the assistance be given on condition of daily work, in an industrial or agricultural institution or colony, or otherwise as the Public Assistance Authority may decide within regulations laid down by the Local Government Board.

(*c*) That the assistance should only be given to an applicant with a decent home and a good industrial record.

(*d*) That the order for assistance should only be for a strictly limited period, and subject to revision.

(*e*) That the applicant should be registered at the Labour Exchange, and that the relief should cease as soon as suitable occupation has been offered through the Labour Exchange.

(147) An essential principle to be observed in connection with Home Assistance to the able-bodied is that it should be, in some way, less agreeable than aid given by the Voluntary Aid Committee or than the receipt of Unemployed Benefit through Insurance. (VI., 623.)

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(D) The Able-bodied and Unemployment—*cont.*

VIII.—Partial Home Assistance.

(148) By Partial Home Assistance we mean Home Assistance for the family of an applicant, the applicant himself being maintained in an institution and given work. (VI., 624, 630.)

IX.—Institutional Assistance.

(149) By Institutional Assistance we mean continuous maintenance in an Industrial or Agricultural Institution or Colony without detention, except in so far as the applicant binds himself by a written agreement to stay for a definite period. (VI., 630.)

X.—Industrial or Agricultural Institutions.

(150) Industrial or Agricultural Institutions should be situated in the country or on the outskirts of towns (VI., 631–632), in many cases a disused workhouse might be adapted. (VI., 631.)

(151) They should include housing accommodation for those receiving Institutional or Partial Home Assistance. (VI., 635.)

(152) They should be built in an inexpensive manner and with sufficient land to employ a large number of persons. (VI., 631.)

(153) For industrial occupations, inexpensive workshops should be erected. (VI., 631.)

(154) The workshops and land need not necessarily be adjacent to the housing accommodation. (VI., 635.)

(155) The Industrial and Agricultural Institutions will be in direct communication with the Labour Exchange, and one of the primary objects of their officials should be the restoration to industrial efficiency and independence of the inmates under their care. (VI., 634.)

(156) On entrance into the institution the applicant should, as far as possible, be placed on work adapted to his previous occupation, and his capability and willingness to work will thus be ascertained. (VI., 634.)

(157) The different treatment and classification of the able-bodied should commence from the time that the application for assistance is entertained, and every effort should be made, at an early stage, to dissociate the respectable unemployed from the habitual "in-and-out." (VI., 634)

(158) It will probably be found necessary to establish separate industrial institutions for women. (VI., 635.)

XI.—Labour Colonies.

(159) While appreciating the limited experience and success of Labour Colonies, we recommend their establishment (VI., 641) and use on the following grounds:—

(*a*) The open-air life will conduce to the rehabilitation of those subjected to its influence. (VI., 641.)

(*b*) The expense of maintenance, site, and building should be less than in the case of Urban Workhouses. (VI., 642.)

(*c*) The colony affords better opportunities than the workhouses for more varied methods of industrial treatment (VI., 641), and for classification. (VI., 643.)

(160) The colony system should provide several distinct classes of treatment, either in separate colonies or in distinct divisions of the same colony. (VI., 647.)

(161) Public Assistance Authorities might combine to establish a colony or colonies for their common use. (VI., 647.)

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(D) The Able-bodied and Unemployment—*cont.*

(162) The colonies of voluntary and religious bodies should be utilised by the Public Assistance Authorities for restorative treatment in suitable cases. (VI., 648.)

(163) The colony system should be carefully controlled and supervised by special additional officers of the Local Government Board. (VI., 650.)

XII.—Good-Conduct Pay in Public Assistance Authorities' Institutions and Colonies.

(164) Well-conducted men in institutions or colonies might, if they show industry, be awarded small gratuities in the shape of good-conduct pay, the greater part of such pay to accumulate and be given to the men on leaving the colony or institution. (VI., 651.)

XIII.—Detention Colonies.

(165) Compulsory Detention Colonies are essential to the success of a system of voluntary Labour Colonies. (VI., 629, 653.)

(166) Detention Colonies under the control and supervision of the Home Office should be established (655); to which might be committed, for any period between six months and three years (658) persons guilty of a wilful and persistent repetition of any of the following offences (VI., 657):—

(*a*) Wilful refusal or neglect of persons to maintain themselves or their families (although such persons are wholly or in part able to do so), the result of such refusal or neglect being that the persons or their families have become chargeable to the Public Assistance Authority.

(*b*) Wilful refusal on the part of a person receiving Assistance to perform the work or to observe the regulations duly prescribed in regard to such assistance.

(*c*) Wilful refusal to comply with the conditions laid down by the Public Assistance Authority, upon which Assistance can be obtained, with the result that a person's family thereby become chargeable.

(*d*) Giving way to gambling, drink, or idleness, with the result that a person or his or her family thereby become chargeable.

(167) Public Assistance Authorities should pay the full cost of maintenance of persons sent to Detention Colonies by them. (VI., 656.)

XIV.—Emigration.

(168) While emigration by itself cannot be considered as a sufficient remedy for unemployment, it is, nevertheless, a valuable means of dealing with a certain class of cases, which are likely to make a fresh start under new conditions. More especially is it indispensable in dealing with districts where an excessive congestion of labour has taken place, and where exceptional treatment is called for. (VI., 662.)

(169) This work of emigrating poor persons at the public expense falls well within the functions of the Public Assistance Authority, which would, however, naturally co-operate with established emigration agencies, and would be—either through those agencies or immediately—in close touch with the responsible authorities in the countryof destination. (VI., 663.)

Disfranchisement of Able-bodied receiving Public Assistance.

(170) Only persons receiving assistance (other than medical relief) for not less than three months in the qualifying year shall be disfranchised on account of such Assistance. (VI., 667.)

XVI.—Discontinuance of Unemployed Workmen Act.

(171) The Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, should expire so soon as the new system of Public Assistance has come into operation. (VI., 677.)

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

XVII.—Transitional Measures as regards Distress from Unemployment.

Special Works and Loans for times of Exceptional and Protracted Distress.

(172) For a strictly limited period during the earlier years of the reforms which we suggest (VI., 678), the following arrangements should be made:—

(*a*) The various existing Local Authorities (VI., 692) should draw up, either singly or in co-operation, and submit to the Local Government Board for approval (702) schemes of works of public utility (703) which might be put in operation in times of exceptional and protracted distress due to severe industrial depression. (VI., 695.)

(*b*) If the Local Government Board are satisfied, after consultation with the Board of Trade (VI., 697, 703), that there exists exceptional and protracted distress, to meet which the resources of the Voluntary Aid committees and Public Assistance Authorities are inadequate (698), then the local authorities (other than the Public Assistance Authorities (692), may obtain loans from the Public Works Loan Commissioners at the rate of interest at which the Imperial Government can borrow, so as to enable special works approved under (*a*) to be carried out. (VI., 695, 703.)

(*c*) The Special works should be carried out on ordinary commercial lines, by contract, and the fitness or unfitness of workmen for the work shall be the main consideration in engaging or dismissing them, and in determining the conditions of their employment. All workmen so employed shall, as far as practicable, be taken from the register of the Local Labour Exchange. (VI.,703.)

(*d*) The wages paid will be the ordinary market wages for the kind of work done, whether piece-work or time rates. (VI., 703.)

(E) Charity and Voluntary Aid. (*See* Part VII.)

Our recommendations in regard to the Organisation of Voluntary Aid are as follows (Part VII., 237):—

Establishment of Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees.

(173) That in the area of each Public Assistance Authority, that is, in each County or County Borough, there be formed a Voluntary Aid Council, consisting in part of Trustees of endowed charities, of members of registered voluntary charities, as defined below, of some members of the Public Assistance Authority, and of such persons as members of friendly societies and trade associations, of clergy and ministers, and of other persons being co-opted members, as may be settled in schemes approved by the Charities Commission.*

(174) That a statutory obligation be imposed upon the Lords Lieutenants, the Chairmen of County Councils, the Lord Mayors, and Mayors of County Boroughs to take steps, within a given period, and after consultation with the managers of charitable societies, trustees of endowed charities, and members of the Public Assistance Authority, for drawing up schemes in accordance with the preceding recommendation, which schemes must be submitted to the Charities Commission for approval.

(175) That the Voluntary Aid Council submit to the Charities Commission proposals for the formation of Voluntary Aid Committees to be drawn up in the form of schemes to be approved by the Commission, and that the Voluntary Aid Council under such schemes appoint as members of the Voluntary Aid Committees persons such as those mentioned in Recommendation 173.

(176) That Voluntary Societies and Charities, as defined in Recommendation 189, be entitled to register at the Charities Commission on lines similar to those of the registration of Friendly Societies under the Friendly Societies' Act.

(177) That a registered Voluntary Society be entitled to nominate members of its own body for appointment to the Voluntary Aid Council and to the Voluntary Aid Committee of the district in which either its institution or any branch of its institution has an office.

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* *See below* as to the proposed change in name of the Charity Commission.

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(E) CHARITY AND VOLUNTARY AID—*cont.*

(178) That it is desirable that the Voluntary Aid Committee have its offices in the same building as the Committee of Public Assistance.

Functions of the Voluntary Aid Council.

(179) The duties of the Voluntary Aid Councils would be for the most part not executive, but supervisory. The executive work would be assigned to the Voluntary Aid Committees. The Voluntary Aid Council would supervise the operations of these Committees generally and would, as far as possible, maintain the same principles of help and relief throughout County or County Boroughs. They would collect funds for distribution to Voluntary Aid Committees, and they would allocate funds to poor districts. The County is already the accepted area for many benevolent and philanthropic purposes. The local infirmary or hospital is frequently a County institution. There are County nursing associations, and the County is the recognised centre in connection with various naval and military charitable associations. We propose that the Voluntary Aid Council acting for the County should promote any voluntary institutions, associations, or societies for which the County, as a whole, has need. Its duties would thus be important and distinctive.

Functions of the Voluntary Aid Committee.

(180) That the Voluntary Aid Committee aid (1) persons in distress whose cases do not appear to be suitable for treatment by the Public Assistance Committee, and (2) applicants for Public Assistance whose cases have been referred to the Committee by the Public Assistance Committee.

(181) That, with a view to the thorough treatment of individual cases, the Voluntary Aid Committee make such arrangements for the investigation of the applications made to them as the Charities Commission may deem necessary and sufficient.

(182) That in dealing with persons in distress for whom it is desired to provide aid by way of monetary relief, it shall be the duty of the Voluntary Aid Committee to obtain such sums as may be possible from relations of the applicant, from friends, and from charitable sources generally for the aid of individual cases.

(183) That with the administration of aid on the part of the Voluntary Aid Committee there should be associated such a system of voluntary visitation as the Committee may deem advisable in view of the responsibilities of their work in providing effectual aid and in view of the physical needs and the habits of those whom they decide to assist.

(184) That the Voluntary Aid Committee be empowered to appoint such Local Committees as it may deem necessary, subject to the approval of the Voluntary Aid Council.

(185) That a Voluntary Aid Committee shall, as far as possible, register the cases dealt with by the Public Assistance Committee and by the Charitable societies and institutions in the district.

(186) That Voluntary Aid Committees receive the support of the Public Assistance Committee, and of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, with a view to systematising the relations between the Public Assistance and Voluntary Aid Committees and promoting co-operation between them.

(187) That Voluntary Aid Councils or Committees be eligible for subscriptions from the Public Assistance Authority, on the lines of 42 and 43 Vict., c. 54, Section 10.

The Charities Commission.

(188) That the Charity Commission be attached to the Local Government Board, and that the Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, permanent or temporary, be appointed by the Local Government Board, whose President should represent it in the House of Commons.

NOTE.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(E) Charity and Voluntary Aid—*cont.*

(189) That the Charity Commission be enlarged, and that there be assigned to it two departments of work, the supervision of endowed charities on the lines of the Charitable Trusts Acts, and the registration of Voluntary Charities or Societies which hold any property in land or houses by purchase, or by leasehold, or are the tenants of any property under yearly orother agreements.

(190) That the name of the Charity Commission be the Charities Commission.

(191) That the staff of the Commission be strengthened so as to fulfil all the various additional duties that may devolve upon them : —

(1) As a centre for the registration of voluntary charities.

(2) In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of Voluntary Aid Councils and for registering such schemes.

(3) In assisting in the preparation of schemes for the establishment of Voluntary Aid Committees and for registering and supervising their administration.

(4) In the scrutiny of accounts and statements relating to Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees.

(5) In the supervision of other schemes ; and

(6) In the scrutiny of the accounts of endowed and registered charities.

(192) That Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act, 1869, by which certain charities founded for purposes of relief may be applied to purposes of education, be repealed.

(193) That it be provided in a Statute amending the Charitable Trusts Acts that, by order of the Charities Commission, any charities, as defined in Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Acts, 1869, exclusive of Loan Charities, Apprenticeship Charities, and Charities for Advancement in Life, may be used for the relief of distress, subject to such conditions respecting enquiry and other matters as the Commissioners may determine under a general order.

(F) Disfranchisement on Account of Public Assistance.

(194) We recommend that only those persons be disfranchised on account of Public Assistance who have received assistance other than Medical Relief for three months or more in the qualifying year. (IX., 145.)

(195) We do not think that Medical Assistance in any form should entail disfranchisement. (IX., 145.)

(G) Recovery of Cost of Public Assistance. (*See* Part VIII., Chapter 3.)

(196) Procedure for recovery of relief on loan should be simplified. (VIII., 80.)

(197) Liable relatives should be required to contribute, and this policy should be pursued uniformly and with firmness and discretion. (IX., 146.)

(198) Poor persons should have power to proceed directly against liable relatives, and the Public Assistance Authorities should have power to proceed against liable relatives before the applicant becomes actually chargeable. (IX., 146.)

(199) Simplification of procedure applicable to recovery of relief from relatives. (IX., 146.)

(200) The cost of relief given should be recoverable from relatives after the person has ceased to be chargeable. (IX., 146.)

(201) A man should be liable to contribute to the support of his grandparents. (IX., 146.)

(202) Non-liable relatives should also be induced to contribute where they are able to do so. (IX., 146).

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(H) Bastardy Orders. (*See* Part VIII., Chapter 4.)

(203) An order once obtained, either by the mother or the Guardians, should be available by whichever party is maintaining the child, and where the order has been obtained by the mother, the Guardians, if maintaining the child, should be empowered to apply for an increase in the amount of the allowance. (VIII., 138.)

(204) Action for recovery of expenses of chargeability should be brought against the putative father by the Guardians immediately on the birth of the child, irrespective of the fact whether the mother is then able at once to give evidence or not; and, if the mother is then unable to give evidence on account of her state of health, the man should be bound over to appear at a later date. (VIII., 139.)

(205) We recommend that the putative father be chargeable for the maintenance of the mother of his child from the date of the mother's admission to relief, and for the child after birth; and that, immediately on the mother's admission, inquiry on behalf of the local authority be made in regard to the paternity of the child. If the cases be numerous these inquiries should be made by a special officer suitable for the work; but the interrogation of the mother should be by a woman. (VIII., 141.)

(206) Money paid under a Bastardy Order by a putative father to the mother of an illegitimate child should be paid through the agency of a third person. (IX., 147.)

(I) Treatment of Unmarried Mothers. (*See* Part VIII., Chapter 4.)

(207) *Single Lapse Cases.*—These should be dealt with in institutions apart from the workhouse, preferably in charitable institutions, but if these are not available the Public Assistance Authorities should institute homes of their own. Charitable workers to watch over the girls on their first return to the world. (IX., 148.)

(208) *Depraved, Immoral Women.*—Detention and reformative treatment on lines similar to those adopted for "in-and-out" cases should be organised. (IX., 148.)

(209) *Feeble-minded Unmarried Mothers.*—These should be dealt with in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded. Meantime, the Public Assistance Authorities should have power to detain such mothers. (IX., 148).

(210) For the purpose of advising in regard to all maternity cases, a Women's Committee should be appointed in connection with every Public Assistance Committee, consisting of members of that Committee and of voluntary workers. (IX., 148.)

(J) Orders for Detention or Continuous Treatment.

(211) Certain classes of persons applying for or receiving Public Assistance (*see* Part IX., paragraphs 149–154) should, subject to appeal, be liable to an Order for Continuous Treatment after an application by the Public Assistance Authority to Justices of the Peace. (IX., 152.)

(212) Persons against whom an Order for Continuous Treatment had been obtained would be under continuous control for the period named in the Order: this control need not be exercised in an institution for the whole of such period, but, if necessary, the Order would authorise the Public Assistance Authority to remove persons to and detain them in institutions. (IX., 153.)

(213) We have recommended that persons should be committed to a "Detention Colony" under the Home Office, for any period between six months and three years, who have been guilty of wilful and persistent repetition within a given period of any of the following offences (IX., 151 Class III. (b)):—

(1) Wilful refusal or neglect of persons to maintain themselves or their families (although such persons are wholly or in part able to do so), the result of such refusal or neglect being that the persons or their families have become chargeable to the Public Assistance Authority.

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(J) Orders for Detention or Continuous Treatment—*contd.*

(2) Wilful refusal, on the part of a person receiving assistance, to perform the work or to observe the regulations duly prescribed in regard to such assistance.

(3) Wilful refusal to comply with the conditions, laid down by the Public Assistance Authority, upon which assistance can be obtained, with the result that a person's family thereby becomes chargeable.

(4) Giving way to gambling, drink, or idleness, with the result that a person or his or her family thereby becomes chargeable.

(K) Settlement and Removal. (*See* Part VIII., Chapter 2.)

(214) Theoretically, there is much to be said in favour of the proposal to abolish the Law of Settlement and Removal. From a practical point of view, however, there is much to be said against its entire abolition, and, accordingly, until experience has been gained of the work of our new organisation of Public Assistance, we think it better to retain the law, but in a modified and simplified form. The specific recommendations we make are:—

(*a*) That the County or County Borough shall be the area for all purposes of settlement and removal.

(*b*) That the forms of settlement be reduced to four, viz.:—

Birth.
Parentage
Marriage.
Residence.

(*c*) That a settlement be acquired by one year's residence in a County or County Borough.

(*d*) That the Local Government Board determine all cases of disputed settlement unless the Board consider that a particular case should be decided in a Court of Law.

(*e*) That there be reciprocity of removal as between England, Scotland and Ireland.

(L) Compounding for Rates. (*See* Part VIII., Chapter 8.)

(215) Compounding for Rates should be reduced as much as possible and it might be found desirable to reduce the limit of rateable value for compounding purposes under the Poor Rate Asssessment and Collection Act, 1869. (IX., 157.)

(M) Constructive Relief in the Case of the Afflicted.

(216) A person should not be considered constructively a pauper on account of Public Assistance to a dependant, occasioned by such dependant being mentally defective, epileptic, lame, deformed, or crippled. (IX., 159.)

(N) Stocktaking and Workhouse Accounts.

(217) A paid Stocktaker should be appointed by each Public Assistance Authority to undertake the double duty of taking stock and checking the necessary books. (VIII., 256.)

(218) The keeping of accounts should be simplified as far as possible, and the number of books and forms reduced to a minimum consistent with sufficient safeguards to prevent or detect fraud, and to prevent laxity of method. (VIII., 257.)

Note.—*The Roman figures at theend of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(O) The Compilation of the Statistics of Public Assistance. (*See* Part VIII., Chapter 10.)

(219) The Director of Public Assistance in each Public Assistance area of sufficient size should have a Statistical Officer whose duty it should be to prepare the Returns of persons assisted and transmit them to the Local Government Board. (VIII., 283.)

(220) A Return should be prepared at regular intervals showing the aggregate period and occasions of relief granted to each person, distinguishing between Institutional Relief and Outdoor Relief, and classifying by ages (in three or four groups), the persons assisted. (VIII., 284.)

(221) A person should be considered to be in receipt of public assistance when he, or any dependant of his, subject to certain exceptions to the rule of constructive relief, or, being a dependant, when he or the head of the family receives money, kind, or medical attention at the cost of public funds, notwithstanding that the whole or part of such cost be repaid by the person assisted or by relatives or others. The Local Government Board should bring this rule to the notice of the Public Assistance Authorities. (VIII., 285.)

(222) Separate statistics should be obtained of the cases involving constructive pauperism both as to the persons actually relieved and the persons only constructively relieved, as well as of the exceptions to the rule, such exceptions being classified according to the various classes of the afflicted. (VIII., 286.)

(223) The use of the terms "able-bodied" and "not able-bodied" should be discontinued, and the terms "ordinarily able to work" and "not ordinarily able to work" should be substituted therefore. If the definition of "able to work" be ability to perform (1) light (2) moderate or (3) hard work of a suitable character within an institution, a practical standard might be established. (VIII., 288.)

(224) The class "ordinarily able to work" should be sub-divided in order to distinguish those able to work on the date of the Return from those ordinarily able to work who are temporarily incapacitated on the date of the Return. (VIII., 290.)

(225) Under each of the above classes those on the Medical Relief Lists should be distinguished from those who are not on those Lists. (VIII., 290.)

(226) Wives of men in receipt of outdoor relief should be classified according to their own physical condition, and not according to the physical condition of their husbands. (VIII., 291.)

(227) The classification by physical condition should be embodied in the Relief Lists for separate infirmaries. (VIII., 291.)

(228) In regard to the statistics of medical relief only for the day counts the Local Government Board should lay down the rule that the persons counted should be those patients dealt with during the week preceding the date of the Return. (VIII., 294.)

(229) The medical statistics of persons in receipt of public assistance should be further developed. (VIII., 295).

(230) The ages of persons relieved should be regularly tabulated on uniform lines and this information might be combined with other statistical facts. (VIII., 297).

(231) All children under 16 years of age, of parents in receipt of relief, should be counted, whether the children are earning or not. (VIII., 307).

(232) The present classification by "families" or "cases" should be continued, and be supplementary to the classification of individuals according to their industrial ability and physical condition. (VIII., 308).

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

(O) The Compilation of the Statistics of Public Assistance—*cont.*

(233) There should be a further classification of individuals under the heads of:—

(*a*) Indoor paupers; (*b*) Outdoor paupers, and (*c*) Boarded-out paupers;

and that, subject to reconsideration when the scheme we recommend is put into force, the present classification by Institutions should be continued. (VIII., 308.)

(234) Statistics should be obtained of the number of deserted wives and children. (VIII., 308).

(235) For the purpose of the half-yearly Returns, the numbers relieved at midnight on the day selected should be recorded instead of those relieved on a given day. By this means persons who received both indoor and outdoor relief on the date of the Return would no longer be counted twice over. (VIII., 308.)

(236) Periodical returns should be obtained of the cost per head (in the case of annual expenditure) or per unit of accommodation (in the case of capital expenditure) of various classes of persons relieved and of the various methods of relief. (VIII., 309.)

(237) The items of expenditure of Public Assistance Authorities should be classified and an Index prepared on the lines of the "Index of Classification" included in the "Uniform System of Hospital Accounts." (VIII., 309.)

(238) The accounts of the Public Assistance Authorities should in all cases be made up to the 31st March and 30th September. (VIII., 310.)

(P) Temporary Commission.

(239) A temporary Commission, working under the Local Government Board, should be appointed with a view to securing the early and effective development of the new system of Public Assistance. (IX., 160.)

Note.—*The Roman figures at the end of each Recommendation refer to the Parts of the Report, the Arabic figures to the paragraphs in those Parts.*

MEMORANDUM BY DR. DOWNES ON THE REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION.

I have signed the Majority Report because I desire to support the principle that public relief in every form should be administered and controlled by one local authority in each area. The control of assistance from public funds is a foremost function of Government, but it is not one which the people of this country would willingly surrender to a *regime* of officialism, however this may commend itself to the ultimate aims which have inspired the Minority Report.

But I regret that I must dissent from the scheme of administration proposed in the Majority Report. I view with grave misgiving the wholesale and imminent disruption of existing agencies and the transference of the work of relief to a complicated, untried, and, as I venture to think, unworkable system of machinery with manifold and inherent dangers. It is doubtless true that the present elective basis of our local government has in some places proved insufficient to secure efficiency or to exclude corruption, and that it has failed to preserve a due balance of representation of interests or to enlist the services of many well-qualified workers and administrators. But all this could be adjusted by other measures, and a proposal to sweep away all directly elected representation in this great field of local government is so contrary to the national instinct and to our established principles, and so fraught with contingent dangers, as to demand the most rigid proof of its necessity. The sufficiency of such proof, either in the Majority or in the Minority Report may, I think, be justly challenged, and it is improbable that the picture drawn in the latter Report will be generally recognised as an accurate or impartial presentment of the actual facts.

In so momentous an issue it is perhaps unfortunate that the Evidence should not have been previously made public, and that even now it will not be accessible to many. It is important that every statement should be carefully tested, and that all contingent conditions should be taken into account. I do not think that the extracts given, even in the Majority Report, sufficiently comply with this in all cases. As an example I may refer to the extracts given in Part IV., Chapter 6, from certain Reports. These extracts fail to convey the very important fact that there is in the original Reports abundant evidence to show that the conditions of life of the outdoor paupers described are certainly no worse than those of the neighbouring independent people of the poorest class. What is there in question is, in fact, not so much the administration of relief to which prominence is given, as shortcomings of education, of sanitation, and of housing.

That defects exist would be denied by no one, and that the machinery must advance with the times and be adjusted continually to the standard of the age is clear. But in a balanced consideration of those defects we should not lose a just sense of proportion, nor omit to take into account the advance which has been and continues to be made, in the general welfare and standard of living, and in the administration of the Poor Law itself.

To take an example :—The Commissioners are impressed,and rightly,with the importance of classification : this, indeed, is a pivot of both Reports, but the illustration of shortcomings is so prominent that, as I have said above, there is danger of injustice. For in this matter of classification it is a fact to the credit of the country that of the indoor poor—exclusive of lunatics in asylums and of casuals—more than 38 per cent. were in 1908 already provided for in specialised institutions quite apart from the ordinary workhouse,* and the proportion in London was more than 50 per cent. There may indeed be a danger of classification being carried too far, to the verge of hardship or even tyranny. The breaking up of families, the removal of old folk from their associates and friends, may outweigh many administrative advantages. And administrative difficulties may themselves arise of minor import compared with the above, but well to be remembered. Classification run to an ideal entails many practical difficulties and even evils.

* The percentage might be increased by the inclusion of a large number of indoor poor accommodated in "homes for the aged," etc., but technically included in the list of "workhouses" so-called. Moreover, it is irrespective of all the classifications, sometimes highly elaborated, within the workhouses themselves. Nor does it take into account the great and ever-extending use of voluntary institutions by the existing relief authorities.

To take another example : It is surely no mean thing to be able to say that now o all the children in receipt of relief, not 7 per cent. are housed in a workhouse proper, and that there is hardly a union which does not send this remnant out to the public elementary school to mingle with their fellows. In 1838 nearly half ot the entire number of the inmates of the workhouses were children under sixteen years of age. Now only one-tenth ot the inmates ot " workhouses," are children under sixteen ; of these one-half are in the sick wards or separate infirmaries, and a large proportion of the remainder are babies under three years of age.

Not less satisfactory is the record that within the same period the number of paid nurses of the sick indoor poor has risen from less than 200 to more than 6,000, many of whom are highly trained in their profession. The beds in the separate infirmaries of London alone now nearly equal if they do not outnumber those ot all the general hospitals in the whole country. It is a significant proof of the public appreciation of these infirmaries that the proportion ot the total deaths in London which occur in the Poor Law institutions has risen from 12·3 per cent. in 1890 to 20·5 per cent. in 1907. We should be careful, in considering statements of cases in which the Poor Law is asserted to be deterrent, not to lose sight of these broad truths I regret that there is not in the Reports a fuller recognition of them and of the work that has been accomplished by the guardians and their officers, a work in which the co-operation of many voluntary agencies has greatly aided.

I have studied the list of defects on which the sweeping changes advocated in the Majority Report are based. My experience convinces me that there is not one which could not be met, and I venture to say, better met by a revision, a strengthening, and an extension of existing powers on lines already established. Powers exist, more elastic and more extensive than the proposals of the Report, whereby any necessary extension of area, any combination ot local administration, or any classification could be effected. Some revision or addition of detail and a public mandate is alone needed to set them in operation.

The Report, premising that extended areas are necessary, proposes that the future area of local Poor Law administration shall be the county or the county borough. The vast amount of readjustment involved in this will best be realised by those who have had experience of the difficulties entailed. " There would have to be no less than 225 adjustments of existing properties and liabilities, involving much time, trouble, and expense, and *without finality being secured*. Urban districts grow into populous places and may be organised as boroughs. Boroughs increase in importance and will claim to rank as county boroughs. Each change will necessitate further adjustments, and the more complete the institutional service provided by the administrative county from which the population would pass, the more difficult the rearrangement would become. With what confidence could institutions be established for so uncertain a population ? " * The scheme of the Report indeed is inconsistent with the object ot self-contained classification on which it is chiefly based. There are even cases in which the area would be reduced ; the union of West Ham with a population in 1901 of more than half a million, would be replaced by a county borough of only half the population of the dissolved union, while the remnant would be incongruously grouped for relief purposes with the sparsely peopled marshes of the coast.

At present there are ninety-two Poor Law unions, each with a population of more than 100,000. Among the administrative counties and county boroughs by which it is proposed that these unions should be replaced, seventy-seven only have populations exceeding 100,000. The scheme in fact does not solve the problem of the great urban populations where necessity for reform is greatest, while it threatens a maximum of disturbance to the rural districts where the need is least pressing. It may indeed, be doubted whether many of the proposed areas would after all suffice for a complete self-contained scheme of classification; some of them are manifestly too small for moderate or even elementary requirements. But the grouping of county or county borough areas would be difficult or practically impossible, in proportion to the incongruity of social and industrial conditions and to the jealousies of strong municipalities. And thus the problem of the fringe of the great cities would still remain.

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* Memorandum by the Right Hon. Charles Booth. See Appendix.

From these objections a policy of grouping or amalgamating existing unions would be largely free. The adjustment of properties and liabilities would be comparatively simple. "The plan could look forward to and automatically provide for the future: existing machinery would be available and could be used for all it was worth." * And in this connection the question of the existing officers should not be forgotten. The scheme before the Commissioners does not fully deal with this, and no estimate of possible cost of compensation for loss of office is given. Nor is there any indication of possible cost as regards the scheme as a whole, although it is apparently contemplated that the change shall be applied by one measure to the whole country.

But such an upheaval would, I think, be rather astonishing to the rural districts, where pauperism is largely an affair of old age, and may reasonably be expected to be substantially relieved by the Old-Age Pensions Act, and where enormous reductions have taken place in child pauperism. The necessity of drastic interference with these areas is not apparent. It is in fact not in the rural districts but in London and in the urban centres, and in regard to adult pauperism, especially of men, that the position is serious. The most disquieting index of urban pauperism is the increasing proportion of able-bodied men in health who are dependent on the rates, and the growing percentages of previous applicants to committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act.

The following table (Report Part II.), seems to me so significant that I reproduce it:—

INCREASE OR DECREASE PER CENT. IN NUMBER OF ABLE-BODIED MEN IN HEALTH IN RECEIPT OF POOR LAW RELIEF.

Groups of Unions.	Indoor.		Outdoor.	
	Between 1891–1900.	Between 1895–1905.	Between 1891–1900.	Between 1895–1905.
London	+ 0·7	+ 38·4	+ 6·6	+ 137·9
Extra Metropolitan.				
Wholly urban	+ 12·8	+ 24·4	− 5·5	+ 133·8
Partly urban and partly rural, of which the following proportions are comprised in boroughs and urban districts:—				
(*a*) 75 per cent. and upwards	+ 34·0	+ 19·2	− 32·6	+ 56·3
(*b*) 50 per cent. and under 75 per cent.	− 3·5	+ 2·3	− 48·9	− 18·5
(*c*) 25 per cent. and under 50 per cent.	− 6·4	+ 8·4	− 45·0	− 39·3
(*d*) under 25 per cent.	− 26·1	− 19·0	− 44·2	− 34·4
Wholly rural	− 30·0	− 33·7	− 41·0	− 37·7
England and Wales	+ 6·5	+ 21·2	− 28·4	+ 49·9

The decreased rate of able-bodied pauperism in the rural or semi-rural districts is as striking as the progressive increase in the urban districts, culminating in the Metropolis, is disquieting. There is indeed abundance of statistical evidence to show that the present position is more serious in London than in any other part of the country, and this seems to demand that with London and the urban centres reform should begin.

So far I have spoken of objections to the adoption of the county or county borough as an area. There are further reasons for opposing any step which tends to municipalise the administration of public relief under the existing conditions of municipal government in this country; conditions which are devoid of essential safeguards, and are fundamentally different from those of continental cities, a point which appears to be too often forgotten.

A strong control of public relief is a vital necessity; I repeat that I wholly agree with the recommendation that this control should govern public relief in every form and that it should be in the hands of one authority. But I hold that that authority should be directly constituted for its special purpose: its functions are too great to warrant

* Mr. Booth's Memorandum.

its attachment as an appendage to a borough council. The device of a statutory committee is at best but a makeshift of representative government: the great county or county borough councils are already over-burthened with duties, and the minor municipal bodies can claim no such *status* as would entitle them to a dominant control of public relief.

Any idea that the scheme would promote co-operation of departments—public health, education, works, relief—I believe to be illusory and dangerous. The mutual jealousies of committees, even of the same body, are familiar to those engaged in practical administration, and statutory committees may be expected to revolve in their own orbits apart from the rest. There is a greater probability of eventual fusion, the children to the education committee, medical relief to the sanitary officers, the able-bodied to the works department. In this light the scheme would appear to be but a halfway step to the multiplication of relief authorities advocated by the Minority, and to the very end which the whole argument of the Majority Report condemns.

I should favour, then, for London a scheme under which a relief authority should be constituted for its set purpose, partly elected and partly nominated, with an administrative area which could, if and when thought fit, be extended to include the "fringe" of London. I am convinced that it would be a mistake to make such a body too large: one elected member from each borough area should suffice, the nominated members being representative of defined interests. This body would set up its local relief committees on the lines generally suggested in the report, and I desire to especially support the proposed association of each committee with a chief and expert officer charged with very responsible duties—such as are now discharged by the clerk of a board of guardians, but with powers superadded on the lines of the office of inspector of poor in Scotland. For the control of institutions, numerous though they be, a large body is not requisite: to this the experience of many railways and other commercial concerns will testify. I believe that a small temporary Commission of, say, five experienced administrators could initiate the whole machinery Strong and systematic central financial control is indispensable throughout, and I am not sure that this has been sufficienty emphasised.

Although London presents an exceptional problem, I see no reason why a similar machinery should not in turn be applicable to great urban areas elsewhere, each area being built up of existing units of Poor Law administration, according to their community of social and industrial interests. It was calculated by Mr. Booth, in a memorandum from which I have largely drawn, that 154 urban unions, out of a total of 645, with two-thirds of the entire population of the country, might be thus dealt with, leaving the remaining 491 more or less rural unions, in which no great change is required, largely undisturbed for the present, further than by some adjustment in the numbers of guardians and the adoption of representative nomination, or by a grouping and possible provision of a federal district board to co-ordinate the general administration, and to make better provision for certain classes such as the sick* or the able-bodied. On these lines I believe that efficiency may be secured and a large measure of devolution obtained.

Where the relief administration is thus systematically organised, it might properly take over the administration of the lunatic asylums and fever hospitals. Both of these are essentially instruments of public relief, and there would be obvious advantage in consolidating the administration of these public institutions under one body specially equipped for such a duty. The experience of London has shewn that the fever hospitals and the ambulance services may be admirably administered by such an authority, and that the arrangement admits of many advantages which could not otherwise be secured. The scientific application of principles of administration, the development of a trained and organised service, the control of finance, of contracts and supplies, and the adaptation of accommodation according to the need of the time, may be instanced in illustration.

As regards medical relief I fear that the scheme proposed in the Report is too complicated for adoption in practice, and too dependent on agencies beyond the

* I have great hope that, in the Counties, much may be done for the sick by nursing organization, and by the development of County Infirmaries and Cottage Hospitals under the auspices of the Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees proposed to be established in Part VII. of the Majority Report. With this portion of the scheme, I am heartily in accord. But on these Councils and Committees the medical profession should be represented.

control of the Poor Law. The future must largely depend on the action of the great voluntary hospitals and institutions of charity and self-help. There are signs that this will be forthcoming when the future of Poor Law relief has been settled, but this settlement should be the first step, and alignment of the other agencies should follow. The interest taken in this matter by the representative medical association, by some of the leaders of the medical profession and by the hospital organisations is a guarantee that the matter will not rest. The building up of the provident dispensaries, their relation to the voluntary hospitals, the reciprocity of each with any system of public medical relief, and the ever-increasing public demands upon the services of the medical profession, involve problems which should, I submit, be considered by some body more representative of the interests concerned and more directly equipped to deal with detailed difficulties than the present Commission. The scheme set out in the Report appears to me to offer what amounts to a large measure of free medical relief without adequate safeguard either to the medical profession generally or to the ratepayer. Provident dispensaries established by the enrolment of paupers and subsidised by the rates would, I fear, become provident in name only, and the offer, or inducement, of free institutional relief to any member of these dispensaries is one which in my judgment could not be met until the available accommodation for the sick has been largely augmented. The margin of spare accommodation at present lies in remote country workhouses and not in the infirmaries of the urban centres of demand. This offer of free institutional relief implies also, but does not insure, a settled scheme of reciprocity between the voluntary and the rate-supported hospitals; unless this is done, the Poor Law in order to fulfil the obligation incurred, would be compelled to establish a costly system of specialised hospitals parallel to and competing with the voluntary institutions.

The problem of institutional medical relief lies mainly in the question of the man who is not ordinarily dependent on the rates. His necessity may be very real and urgent; a sudden requirement of costly and imperative surgery may be ruinous or even prohibitive to many who for the ordinary needs of life would be counted well-to-do. The solution will doubtless be eventually found partly in increased facilities of accommodation for those who can and wish to pay according to their means, partly in the resources of co-operation and insurance, and partly in the re-organisation and mutual reciprocity of the existing medical services, whether voluntary or rate-supported, which, I hope, may not be long deferred. As matters stand the position of the pauper may in this respect be not of less, but of greater eligibility than that of the man who has maintained his independence.

Meanwhile, the grouping or combination of existing Poor Law units on the lines contemplated in this Memorandum into broad areas of administration for medical relief should with the widened choice of institutions, facilitate the classification of the sick poor, with advantage and economy, and at the same time enlarge the scope and conditions of the medical service. If this step is well assured Poor Law medical relief will, I think, progress on safe lines and will be prepared for systematic extension of co-operation with the voluntary agencies at the proper time. For co-operation with the Sanitary services provision already exists and could be developed without difficulty. The separate functions of the two services, however, are quite definite, and any amalgamation of them such as is suggested in the Minority Report would, in my judgment, and I have had experience of both, be detrimental and contrary to the public interest.

On the question of disfranchisement the following observations of our Investigators, Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire are, very pertinent, "at present medical out relief does not disfranchise," infirmary treatment does so in some cases and in some places but not in others. . . . . The origin of the present state of affairs lay in the cry 'Why should a man lose his vote just for a bottle of medicine.'" And the distinction "is precisely the reverse of what is really reasonable. In the case of a serious illness demanding institutional treatment the expense might well be beyond the resources of a thrifty man. The opposite is the case with a medical order. Hence at present a man is not disfranchised if he gets relief which he ought to have been able to provide for himself. He may be disfranchised for seeking relief he could not reasonably be expected to provide and which in addition it was often to the public benefit as well as his own that he should get."* Personally I think that disfranchisement should at any rate be reserved for certain cases, *e.g.*, persons able to pay but failing to repay for infirmary relief obtained by them.

* Memorandum "On certain aspects,' etc., paragraph 2.

Finally, I am of opinion that the whole question of the cost of hospital and infirmary construction and administration, and the standard of equipment generally should be inquired into by a Departmental Committee.

The most pressing need for action is occasioned by the distress which is associated with lack of employment. Few things could be more injurious to the commonweal or more unsettling to men's minds than hesitation or delay in such a matter. And this, even if it stood alone, would to my mind be a fatal objection to the revolutionary schemes and to the breaking up of existing machinery proposed by the Reports. I fully agree that the provision of public relief made by the Poor Law should be such as may be offered without loss of self-respect to the well-conducted man who is obliged to resort to it. To every man should be given a chance in the first instance and a possibility of hope even in the last resort. It needs no great enlargement of present powers to secure this, and to extend the arrangements whereby a decent home shall not be broken up in time of depression. This demands a more effectual severance of the idle and vicious from the industrious, a severance which can only be effectually enforced if the relief is in the hands of one authority in the first instance. To this end I would urge the promotion of legislation on the lines of the Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, and I regret the inconclusive reference of the Majority Report to the recommendations of that Committee.

I dissent from any recommendation for the provision of special work by local authorities at times of depression. The machinery of the Relief Authority should be so constituted as to suffice, and it should include provision for the use of spare accommodation in other localities if the accommodation of a distressed area should be found to be inadequate. More power for the utilization of distant accommodation is indeed needed for ordinary administration, and it is imperative if great towns are to deal with able-bodied men in workhouses with sufficient land attached. In the rare case of local industrial disaster, such as the Lancashire cotton famine, I should desire to see provision for financial assistance on the principle of a rate-in-aid over an extended area. I regret that this and the financial considerations of public relief generally have not been more fully dealt with by the Commission, and especially so, because the proposals of either Report must, in my judgment, inevitably involve an immediate but uncalculated outlay of public money.

The hurried issue of the Reports does not permit me to consider them in further detail, and I will only in conclusion refer to the proposed tabulation of statistics by the Central Authority. The experience of the statistical work of the Commission itself and of various public departments certainly does not support the conclusion that this work would impose too great a burden on the Central Department. I attach great importance to a proper and accurate system of statistics as an instrument of administration, and I trust that a strong Statistical Department and Intelligence Bureau will be established as a division or branch of the Central Authority.

(*Signed*) ARTHUR DOWNES.

MEMORANDUM BY Mr. C. S. LOCH AND Mrs. BOSANQUET.

The Treatment of Unemployed Persons.

We accept the necessity of making some provision for meeting exceptional distress, if it should arise in the transitional period, before the system of Public Assistance has been actually established. But we think that the ability of the Public Assistance Authorities to meet exceptional distress of all kinds, after that period, might have been more fully explained and illustrated in the Report. We regret that this has not been done.

The Commission have agreed to the principle of there being one relief authority only. This authority it is proposed to call the Public Assistance Authority. The change of name from Poor Law to Public Assistance implies and indicates a change in spirit and purpose, methods and organisation. In these circumstances there seems to us to be no reason, why, when the new system has been set on foot, the Public Assistance Authorities should not meet all the exigencies of exceptional distress of whatever kind they may be, subject to the enforcement of the principle, which is based alike on general experience and on the dictates of common sense, that the provision made for persons in distress who are able to work should not be more attractive than the conditions of self-support.

We see no reason, why, under obvious safeguards, the Public Assistance Authorities should not be empowered to purchase land or to take any other measures which they may deem desirable to deal with exceptional or severe distress, as, for instance, such measures as might be required to meet the distress of a Cotton Famine or the difficulties that might arise in a cyclical want of employment.

We are strongly of opinion that the treatment of distress, exceptional or other, should be entirely dissociated from the municipalities and from municipal employment.

We should very greatly regret it, if the methods proposed in the Report, in order to meet exceptional distress during the period of transition, should become permanent methods of procedure.

(Signed) Charles S. Loch,

Helen Bosanquet.

MEMORANDUM BY MISS OCTAVIA HILL.

While signing the Report because I agree, in the main, with its conclusions, I regret that I must differ from my colleagues on the following points :—

Machinery.

A statutory Committee of the County Council appears to me to be open to the following objections :—

(1) It tends to the municipalisation of the Poor Law.

(2) It is comparatively untried machinery.

(3) It is, at best, composed mainly of those elected for other duties, and already over-weighted with work.

I should have recommended an *ad hoc* authority elected from an enlarged area, and with a strong nominated, or co-opted element. The prospect of more hopeful work which must open out under the fresh arrangements would probably attract the services of those interested in the poor, and able to devote undivided strength and thought to them, as they would not be burdened with County Council business, nor eager for political advancement.

Medical Relief.

The scheme for Medical Relief sketched in the Report is not, in my opinion, workable, moreover it opens the door too widely to free Medical Relief.

Disfranchisement.

I regret that the recommendations with regard to disfranchisement extend, rather than diminish, the number of those dependent on public funds, who would have votes.

Special Schemes of Work under Authorities other than those for Public Assistance.

But, finally, and chiefly, I emphatically dissent from the recommendation as to the provision of special work at times of depression. However guarded the conditions may be, the mere knowledge of the existence of such schemes would, I believe, do harm. Artificial work provided by State or Municipality has never yet been successful, whether financially, industrially, or in its influence on character. There is also danger of corruption creeping in, the more industrial enterprises are carried on by Municipalities. The relation between these and their employés, who are also their constituents, is not satisfactory. Moreover, the duty of inspecting private enterprise cannot be properly performed by those who are competing with it.

But there are far more important objections to a supply of artificial work. Such supply withdraws attention from those radical changes which can alone meet the difficulties of unemployment If, as I believe, we must trust to the energy, resolution, and keen practical sense of our people to find the places where they are wanted, and to fit themselves for the work which is needed; if we must look to them to provide against times of crisis by foresight, insurance, and savings; we must not buoy them up by visions of State, or Municipal, employment,—schemes specially devised to meet their capacity instead of developing their power to do what is really wanted. Nor must we keep them in congested districts.

It may be that the provisions recommended in the Report, *i.e.*, Insurance and Labour Exchanges for the industrious, and places of detention for vagrants and wastrels, may still leave a certain number of unemployed. Then let our Workhouses—called, if it is thought well, Industrial and Agricultural Institutions or Labour Colonies—be, as the Report recommends, such that we shall not be ashamed to offer them to a respectable man out of work, where he can wait, in healthy surroundings, withdrawn from the labour market, afforded special training and employment, until he can resume his place in the industrial world.

(Signed) OCTAVIA HILL.

MEMORANDUM BY MR. T. HANCOCK NUNN AS TO THE FUNCTIONS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY AND ITS LOCAL COMMITTEES, WITH A NOTE UPON THE HAMPSTEAD SYSTEM OF CO-OPERATION BY MEANS OF A COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

(A). Introduction.

This Memorandum is written to indicate an alternative view of the functions of the future committees of Public Assistance, and to suggest an alternative method of appointing them. This view and this method are derived very largely from my experience of the Hampstead system of co-operation by means of a Council of Social Welfare. Accordingly, I have, in the Note following the Memorandum, described the genesis and functions of that Council. It is, I think, the only constructive and comprehensive attempt made in England, so far, to federate all the Public Bodies and Friendly Societies in one Borough in one organized effort of social beneficence alleviative, restorative, and preventive.

The Commission has been practically unanimous in selecting the County Area as the unit of administration of Public Assistance in the future, and in recommending that the organization of Public Assistance be given to a Statutory Committee of the County Council. Concurring as I do most cordially with this cardinal reform of our present Poor Law system, I feel bound to make the following alternative suggestions as to the functions of the new Authority, and consequently as to the constitution of the new Authority and the method of appointment of their local managers.

(B.) Alternative Suggestions.

I would recommend :—

1. That in each local area a Council of Social Welfare be formed on a scheme made by the Public Assistance Authorities, and approved by the Charities Commission Department of the Local Government Board, representative of all the Public, Voluntary, Endowed, and Friendly Bodies at work in that local area for the social betterment of the people. That the functions of this Council of Social Welfare be deliberative and electoral only.

2. That in each County, or County Borough Area, a Council of Social Welfare be formed on a scheme drawn up by the County or County Borough Council and approved by the County Council Department of the local Government Board, representative of all the Public, Voluntary Endowed and Friendly Bodies at work in the County, or County Borough, but over areas transcending the local areas, for the social betterment of the people. That the functions of this Council of Social Welfare be deliberative and electoral only.

3 That the majority of the Public Assistance Authority be members of the County Council or County Borough Council, whilst the minority consist of persons nominated by the County Council of Social Welfare and appointed by the County Council or County Borough Council.

4. That the local Committee of Public Assistance consist of persons nominated by the local Council of Social Welfare and appointed by the Public Assistance Authority.

5. That in addition to the Duties and Powers recommended in Part IX. of our Report the Public Assistance Authority be empowered to effect organized co-operation amongst the constituent Bodies of the County and local Councils of Social Welfare, but that no special Statutory powers be given them for this purpose beyond the power of making grants towards the working expenses involved in effecting such co-ordination as they might recommend. This would involve an extension of 42 & 43 Vict., c. 54, Section 10.

6. That in addition to the duties laid down for the Public Assistance Committee in Part IX. of our Report, it be the duty of these committees, with the approval of the Public Assistance Authority and in consultation with the Local Council of Social Welfare, to organize co-operation amongst the constituent Bodies of the local Council of Social Welfare, and to recommend to the Public Assistance Authority grants to voluntary agencies under the extended powers of 42 & 43 Vict., c. 54, Section 10.

I would venture further to recommend, in order to mark the fact that the powers and duties, greatly enlarged no doubt, of the present Poor Law Guardians, are to be transferred to a Statutory Committee of the County Council,

7. That the Public Assistance Authority be referred to as the County Guardians and their local committees as the Guardians' Managers.

Under this system, although it would be open to the County Guardians and the local Managers to appoint Medical Committees, these would not be related to the Authority in such a way as to absorb most of the organising work of what I describe as the democratic base of the system. Nor can I entirely subscribe to the suggestion in our Report that through the Medical Committee a direct path should be opened from an application to the Guardians directly into a Provident Dispensary. Under this system the better way would surely be to promote such an organisation of combined Medical Aid as is actually in progress at Hampstead as sketched in Section XIII. of the following Note. The path to the Provident Dispensary is there opened up, not through an application for relief, but by the enthusiasm, good fellowship and brotherhood, that links the members of a great Friendly Society.

(C.) An Organic Relation between the Statutory and Voluntary Bodies.

The general effect of these proposals is to make the County Guardians a real democratic base to the New System of Public Assistance; to place in the hands of these Guardians not only the provision and organization of Public Assistance but the promotion of co-operation amongst *all* institutions that aim at the betterment of the people; and to do this by means of County Committees and local Managers; but to secure the representation on both of these, of the bodies whose co-operation is sought. These alternative proposals are based upon my confirmed opinion that no reform of our present Poor Law will be effective if the new system is not fortified by, and at the same time safeguarded from, the operations of equally powerful Bodies in the same field; and that the way to effect this is to connect organically the Statutory and the Voluntary Bodies.

I.—*Electoral.*

It is now agreed on all hands that the direct election of the local administrators of Public assistance is a failure. Overwhelming evidence has been submitted to us proving that the great majority of the local electorates are not sufficiently interested to vote *ad hoc*. On the other hand it is felt that the electoral dependence of the local administrator of relief upon the individuals who may themselves become applicants for relief is demoralizing to the representative and to the electorate. This very kind of demoralization, followed by a reversion to those condemned methods of relief at once pauperizing to the poorer classes, and impoverishing to all classes of the community, has been only too conspicuous of late.

But if we are forced, owing to the apathy of the electorate to abandon one form of representative government for the appointment of the local managers of the democratic Authority, have we then exhausted the possibilities of representative government? If the ordinary elector is not sufficiently interested in Public Assistance to go to the poll, who is sufficiently interested, to whom is it of importance? The answer is that it is of importance, it is of vital interest, to certain classes of the community – to those who, by adopting certain professions, or as voluntary workers, or as organizers of Friendly Societies, are devoting all or a large portion of their time, strength and abilities to the service of their poorer neighbours. The clergy of a Ruri-decanal Chapter, the members of a Free Church Council, a Branch of the British Medical Association, the Governing Bodies of our great Hospitals, Nursing Associations and Dispensaries, the Trades Councils representing the Trades Unions of their districts, the Committees of the great affiliated and other Friendly Societies, the members of Public Health Committees, Bath Committees, Libraries Committees, and Distress Committees of our Municipal bodies, Committees—men and women—of

Voluntary Societies, Trustees of local and county Endowments—to these people, a great and constantly increasing number of influential persons drawn from all classes of society, all religious denominations, and every shade of political opinion. To these certainly the election of the local managers of the Public Assistance Authorities is of extreme importance. Their work may be upheld and aided, or undone altogether, by the local administration of the laws relating to the poor. On the other hand, since by their maladministration they may flood the local managers of the Guardians with applications for relief or wreck the policy conceived by the County Authority, their sympathy and co-operation are essential to Public Assistance.

It has been shown in Hampstead how easy it is to form out of these elements an Electoral Council by which the local managers of Public Assistance might be nominated—their appointment—like the constitution of the Electoral Council itself—remaining in the hands of the democratic Public Assistance Authority of the Council.

It must be remembered that we are face to face with a real political difficulty—the astonishing apathy of the elector at the triennial election of Guardians; and that we are also face to face with an administration of the Poor Laws which—although there are many shining exceptions to prove the rule—reflects the temper of the electorate in its want of heart, want of mind, and general want of power to deal with the most difficult problems presented by the present condition of the Poor.

II.—*Personal.*

Now is it not true that in the community itself what is wanted is just that kind of concentration or rallying ground for social sympathy, social aspiration and enthusiam, social effort, and social co-operation, which a Council of Social Welfare affords? In the sporadic efforts now being made to imitate unofficially the official Elberfeld system, in the Guilds of Help which are springing up in the provinces and competing, it is to be feared rather unhappily, with existing charity organization societies, in the efforts more or less successful to reform the Charity Organisation Society itself and adapt it to the needs of this generation, in the excellent organization of Health Visitors in London and in the country, in Mrs. Asquith's admirable league of Personal Service in London, which must be *established* or it will evaporate—in all these efforts one sees an awakening of the public conscience—a desire to "serve God in the State," a civic enthusiasm that cries aloud for organization. This need has been met in Hampstead by the gradual building up of a representative Council of Social Welfare. Such a council meet two needs at once because the needs are so intimately connected. It can form an electorate for the nomination of the local managers to be appointed by the Public Assistance Authority. And it can concentrate and rally all the personal service of the community—now more or less isolated and to that extent ineffective. But I have to show that it can perform two more services not a whit less important. For, thirdly, in appointing an Executive as in Hampstead, or in nominating (not appointing) the local Managers of the Guardians in our new system, it can give them its mandate to promote co-operation amongst its own constituent Bodies. And, fourthly, by seating the representatives of the Voluntary, Friendly and Municipal Services, which are largely preventive in their operation, in the heart of the system of Public Assistance (which is now mainly alleviative but increasingly remedial), it may enable the Public Assistance Authority to harmonize the whole system of assistance within and without its statutory limits. These two later propositions I proceed to illustrate from the Hampstead system, only premising that what obtains there under a purely voluntary system would in my opinion obtain with greatly enhanced advantage in the case of a County Council of Social Welfare nominating a minority of the County Authority, and in the case of a local Council of Social Welfare nominating all or nearly all of the local Managers of Public Assistance.

III.—*Executive.*

The need of co-operation is enforced at some length in the following Note, because I feel that in our Report we have regarded the Voluntary Aid Committee too much as a Voluntary Committee of Assistance for individual cases of distress. What each community needs is a co-operative civic Body which will secure the organisation that makes all case work effective. Such a Body concentrates effort upon Social Welfare itself, and minimises the need of relief, not by charitable relief of individual cases, but by raising the whole standard of life and character by the development of social responsibility.

The principle underlying the co-operation, that is, the distinctive features of the Hampstead System, is the Representative Control by all the agencies of those departments of their work which come into contact with one another, which may therefore clash by overlapping, or gather power by co-operation. This Representative Control is in its turn based upon the principle that growth takes place from within, in other words, that all successful co-operation must depend upon the consent of the co-operating parties. We may go further and say that where co-operation is to be of real value the point of view of each agency must be sympathetically grasped by some central Body; and that not until all sides have been heard and understood can the true solution of any complicated social problem be indicated. These considerations are elaborated in the concluding section of the following Note, in which the need and use of a Representative Council and Executive of Social Welfare are advanced.

Now the point about the Executive which I am anxious to make quite clear is this:—that the control it exercises over Agencies is, as I suggest that the control of the County Guardians should be, indirect. By an appeal which is backed by no statutory powers at all, it brings into conference the Agencies whose co-operation in some departments of their common work is required. The agencies themselves exercise in common whatever direct control is necessary, and this control goes as far, and goes on as long as it is found to be useful. Only the points of contact between the Agencies come under common control, each Agency retaining its entire independence in all other matters. In Section XVI. of the Note it is suggested that only under very exceptional circumstances would it be possible for any Body with less than Municipal Authority to compass the co-ordination here indicated; but at the present time the trend of public opinion is distinctly in favour of municipal intervention, provided it does not take the form of absolute control over voluntary enterprise. The Note that follows this Memorandum illustrates the kind of co-operation that may be brought about, provided it is the duty of some permanent body to bring it about. In the new scheme of Public Assistance we advocate, the work would fall to Standing Committees of the County Guardians and of the Guardians' Managers respectively. The Chairmen of these Committees would need to be men of influence in the County and in the local area, and their chief officers men of liberal education, experienced in all departments of local work.

IV.—*Organic.*

But one of the greatest of our social problems is—how to provide preventive assistance just at the very point where dependence or pauperism may begin, such a backthrust—such an automatic backthrust—as shall start the applicant for Poor Relief upon the path of independence. Here again the application of the principle of representative control has been applied with success. The Note shows how the Board of Guardians in Hampstead, already containing several earnest social workers, was gradually reinforced until it became practically a representative body of social workers. These workers, recognising the unsuitability of the machinery of a Destitution Authority for the purposes of charitable relief, and having full scope for voluntary enterprise in the Charitable Friendly and Municipal Bodies to which they already belonged, were able to apply what we may call the principle of Mr. Goschen's Circular to the relations between Voluntary and Statutory Relief. That principle, surely, is that, just as it is the function of the general local authorities to provide services for the public convenience or the public health where private interest or enterprise is not equal to the task, so the appeal to the Guardians is not so much determined by the kind or degree of calamity into which a family has fallen, but upon the answer to this question:—Is there or is there not available the voluntary help adequate to the right treatment of the case. The idea that the Poor Law was to deal with all destitute cases, and charity with all poor persons in need but not actually destitute, is apparently derived from the fact that upon an application for Relief the Poor Law Authority must relieve all who are destitute and only those who are destitute. But as a matter of fact some of the most destitute cases are regarded as the special province of charity; whilst the Commission has found all over England and hardly any Board of Guardians confine their help to cases of destitution.

The principle that the State and the Municipality should supplement Voluntary Services only where the need of such supplement is proved to exist, seems to me to be the principle that should govern this confessedly difficult relation. On the one hand it gives free play to all the positive spiritual and social influences which are needed for social or individual reform. On the other hand it secures municipal intervention

where individual or social enterprise fails. The necessity of the position is that these forces should interact. What is needed is, not that there should be anything like parallelism between Statutory Relief and Voluntary Assistance, but that the exactly opposite relation should subsist. Parallel lines are lines that never meet. Charity and a Poor Law should never part. Each should have within the other an organ of co-operation. That is, the Guardians' Managers should be representative of the Voluntary Bodies, and so be enabled without friction and by means of organic relation, to promote the co-operation that safeguards both lines of action. This is provided by the system of which the Council of Social Welfare is the pivot, either in the local area or in the County or County Borough.

(D). The Actual Adminstration of Relief.

(1). Under this system one of the first duties of the Organising Committee of the Guardians Managers would be to promote local committees of assistance on the lines laid down in Part VI., Section VII., of the following Note. When they were formed all applicants for Domiciliary Aid would be at first referred to them. Afterwards they would soon learn to apply to them direct. The Guardians would still have the power of granting Out-relief in cases where they considered the local Committee of Assistance had failed to take the right line. But this is a power they would use very sparingly. Being members of voluntary agencies themselves, they would know that relief from the rates would tend to dry up relief from charitable sources. Their power would largely consist in their personal influence as members of the Voluntary Bodies, in the fact that the local committees would themselves be representative, and last but not least in their power of recommending grants for working expenses based upon the efficiency with which the local committees co-operated.

(2). All Domiciliary Relief, whether asked by a joint Medical Committee, or by an Infants' Health Committee, or by a Children's Care Committee, or any other mediate organizing Body, would be administered by the local Committees of Assistance, representative of all the agencies, religious and otherwise, in an area of two or three parishes.

(3). All relief given in the home would be raised from voluntary sources, through appeals, collections and voluntary subscriptions. Such a system would, however, carry with it the principle of personal friendly visiting, and would thus convert the mechanical allowance system of the present Poor Law which pauperises into a system of personal influence in the direction of self-reliance and mutual dependence.

(E). Conclusion.

The objections I have tried to meet in our present Poor Law System are :—First, that no Body of men and women appointed to act as a Destitution Authority will stop short of relieving Destitution only. Humanitarian motives will draw them over the border line that is supposed to separate Poor Law from Charity. On the other hand, the human feelings that prompt charitable assistance will inevitably deal most readily with the most destitute cases. If therefore this interaction cannot be avoided, it must be met and organized. And it may as well be organized as thoroughly as possible by a constant organic relationship between the Body that relieves Destitution and the Bodies (1) that aim at saving and restoring human wreckage, (2) that aim at promoting Preventive and Constructive methods of Social Welfare. It will be objected that I am advocating Municipal Socialism in a region hitherto exempt altogether from the ravages of that bogey. I can only meet this objection by saying that any dread of Municipal Socialism that I harbour lies in the danger it involves of destroying Individual or Social Enterprise. But as a matter of fact the system I am advocating is proposed largely with a view of meeting and disposing of this very difficulty. A reference to Sections X., XI. and XII. of the following Note will show that in the domain of Public Health, Elementary Education and Poor Law Relief the field of Municipal administration in Hampstead is simply packed with voluntary workers whose activities are trained and heightened and fortified by their contact with expert officials, whilst the officials are freed from many of the trammels incidental to statutory regulations by the presence of a body of free but trained and organized visitors. This is in fact the chief contribution of the Hampstead system to the most pressing Problem of the Day. It offers a fair and as I think a final answer to the old antagonism between State and Voluntary enterprise. That answer is this, and it is of the essence of our system—That the cure for these Social antagonisms is—not that they should part, but that they should meet.

(Signed) Thomas Hancock Nunn.

NOTE BY MR. T. HANCOCK NUNN ON THE HAMPSTEAD SYSTEM OF CO-OPERATION BY MEANS OF A COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

PART I.—COMMUNAL CO-OPERATION.

I.—Introduction.

For the past nine years a sustained effort has been made in Hampstead to co-ordinate all the agencies in the borough that deal with the social betterment of the people. And the instrument adopted for this purpose has been an old and very simple one—the principle of representative control. This principle has been applied in the earlier stages of the movement to small local groups or for special purposes, *e.g.*, the prevention of phthisis, or the prevention of overlapping in relief. But it has been applied more and more widely as its advantages were gradually recognised and accepted, until at the present time the whole of the agencies in the borough—religious, municipal, voluntary, endowed, mutual—are represented on one council whose object—the improvement of the condition of the people—is sufficiently general, if rightly interpreted, to include all further social developments.

It is this fact, that the system has grown, group by group and purpose by purpose, that differentiates it from most of the associations that have since adopted its main principle. At Edinburgh the only completely similar undertaking was inaugurated about three years ago with a complete representative constitution. The same thing is now being attempted in some English provincial towns. This is all to the good. But these associations, until they have gained their experience and produced their organization, prove the desire, but not the power, to co-operate. In Hampstead* the constitution of the representative council† has been built up very gradually out of smaller representative groups of men and women interested in one particular locality or in one special phase of the social problem. This constitutes the unique interest of the Hampstead experiment. It is not a paper constitution from which men hope for things they cannot see. It is a point of view and a habit of action reached by the representatives of a whole community through their own experience and their own acts. It is a natural growth. It proves—what it *is*.

Consideration then is claimed for this experiment, because up to a certain point it has proved successful. It has virtually eliminated overlapping of relief. It has strengthened, instead of weakening, the agencies associated. It has given to their combined efforts an effectiveness they could never have achieved in isolation. And it has unified and standardised many, and often conflicting, methods of social reform.

Up to a certain point the system has succeeded. But beyond that point it has failed. And it is submitted that its failures are even more instructive than its successes.

But successful or unsuccessful, *it is here*. Embodied in the resolutions of every agency—religious, municipal, voluntary, endowed, or mutual—in one not unimportant borough of London, are agreements to act in concert with all the other agencies for social betterment. The minutes of the Council of Representatives indicate those lines of least resistance upon which agreement is not only desired but approved as practicable. The reports of the Executive Committee show how co-operation is actually practised in direct relation to the lives of the poor.

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* And in Stepney, where a similar association of agencies is now being built up by the Bishop of Stepney and Canon Barnett.

† *See* Charities Appendix.

It has been urged that Hampstead is so small, and that its conditions are so exceptional, that the experiment is valueless to the social investigator. But will a social investigator of any eminence say this? No practical thinker would neglect the study of republican government in Switzerland, for instance, because Switzerland is small and exceptionally situated. These factors might, indeed, give to the Swiss variant its special interest. It might be argued that under those conditions, if any, the referendum, for instance, should prove a success; that if it is not successful under those conditions, it is difficult to conceive any conditions under which it might safely be used. So with the voluntary, as opposed to any municipal, system of public assistance. It might be argued that if it could succeed anywhere, it should have succeeded in Hampstead; that it has failed there; and that therefore it will be hopeless to depend upon it, say, in Bethnal Green.

But the gravamen of the case against Hampstead as a fair ground for a social experiment is not that it is small and active, cultivated and liberal, but that it is *rich*. As a matter of fact, the Borough of Hampstead contains the poor of Kilburn. This is often forgotten in Hampstead, and quite unrealised by outsiders. Indeed, Hampstead, with its rich side and its poor side, is an epitome of London itself. It has the poverty neither of Bethnal Green nor of Southwark. Nor has it the riches of the City or of Mayfair. Still it strikes much the same average. It is an ordinary borough, and like most London boroughs, very progressive in thought, very moderate in action. But like every other borough in London, and like London itself, the community needs communion; and, like them, must owe its social salvation to whatever trains its citizens, heart and mind and will, to realize their mutual dependence, their membership of one body. This it is that the Hampstead system professes to do.

II.—The Charity Organisation Society.

For such an attempt as was conceived in Hampstead there could be no better starting point than a local centre of the Charity Organisation Society. Indeed, the object of that society as set forth in its manual, viz., the improvement of the condition of the poor, is sufficiently wide to include all forms of social work within its scope. Compared with the public services of the municipal bodies, or with the partial schemes of ordinary philanthropic enterprise, it strikes one at once by its comprehensive and ideal character.

It has been partly the misfortune and partly the fault of the society that the public have never been persuaded to take this larger view of its programme. Criticism has halted between two ideas as to its functions—the idea that it was a relief society that gave too little, and the idea that it was a detective agency that inquired too much. Both these misconceptions arose from the conscientiousness of the society's older members. They were determined, according to their lights, to sift every case thoroughly—and they were dubbed inquisitorial. They were honestly of opinion that relief should be minimised—and they were stigmatised, by those who mistake cash for charity, as hard-hearted. They were confronted by a mass of cases of whose need and deserts they were satisfied; they raised money for them, giving in carefully selected cases relief that was adequate; then their own friends turned upon them, and reproached them with pauperising the people! Indeed, a society which, in London alone, enlists the active services of some thousand almoners and actually administers £35,000 per annum in the relief of distress, has found it hard to convince the public that it is not a relief society. It is useless to contend that by inquiries, reports, and organisation, it has probably directed into right channels a much larger sum; or that a still larger amount has been probably saved for useful objects by its criticism of bogus or inefficient institutions, and its detection of fraudulent applicants for alms. The fact remains that in the past it has fed relief and starved organisation, and has allowed charity or "love made wise" to appear too often as a mere almsgiver. But at the same time, in criticising the action of others, it has led public opinion to demand wiser methods of relief. The Lady Bountiful, on her merciful errand of creating paupers at a shilling a ticket, is giving place to a District Visitor, a Deaconess, or a C.O.S. Almoner, who gives *herself* to strengthen character and family life in some relation to the needs of the community. As such friends of the poor learn to wield the instrument organisation can place in their hands, doles and allowances fall back; schemes of moral or economic help, carefully planned and patiently carried out, take their place. In such service, money plays a subsidiary, although an important, part; and is used not to replace, and so to wither, moral fibre, but to save where effort has been unavailing against physical and moral weakness or social calamity.

The third complaint against the society, viz., that it hard-heartedly rejected more than half the applications made to it by the poor or their helpers, is so intimately connected with the society's relation to the Poor Law, that a short historical retrospect is necessary to clear the ground.

The society was founded at a time when enlightened public opinion was deeply impressed by the evils resulting from indiscriminate relief. During the last three decades of the nineteenth century it was constantly combating the idea that relief can be regarded, from any point of view, as a social lever. Accordingly, the society's earlier case-books show a large percentage of what are called "rejected" applications —cases in which a man's difficulties were found to be irremovable by any method of material relief; in which the applicant was therefore "thrown back" upon his own resources. Unfortunately this negative policy was usually applied to precisely those unhappy members of the community whose resources in character or circumstances were least able to stand the strain. In them self-reliance needed to be most carefully fostered, and upon them the Poor Law, to which they were "left," could exercise only a sterilising influence. During these earlier years the society was moved more by fear than by love—the wholesome fear of indiscriminate relief. During the 'eighties public feeling about the condition of the poor, the resulting Universities' Settlements movement, and such fresh light upon their lives as was given by Mr. Charles Booth's "Life and Labour of the People," aided an inevitable reaction towards a more positive, a more thorough, and a more humane treatment of distress. The members of the C.O.S., like other people, were asking, What can we do to share the burdens of the very poor, to learn their life, to cultivate their friendship, and so to create character? As men learned more about that self upon which the poor were expected to rely, and about the conditions under which they were expected to thrive, they learned that the doctrine of self-reliance needs to be supplemented by the doctrine of our mutual dependence, our membership of one spiritual body. Thenceforward, in the C.O.S. as elsewhere, men and women made greater efforts at individual and social reconstruction, borrowing from the American systems of friendly visiting. The result is seen in an almost paradoxical reversal, not in C.O.S. principles, but in their application. District committees of the society are now to a large extent occupied in the prevention of distress. The school and the club are becoming matters of first importance to them. Whole classes of cases formerly "rejected" as hopeless are found to yield to treatment. The case quoted on page 15 is one which, ten years ago, very few, if any, C.O.S. committees would have dared to take up. It is one which, two years ago, was only taken up by the Hampstead committee in faith and blind hope. Its difficulties yielded to the combined power of organised enthusiasm.

But an objection far more serious because more fundamental than any of these, was felt by thoughtful men and women, not so much without as within the society. Whilst the central council was propagating sound doctrine on charitable relief, and the district committees were devoting themselves with ceaseless energy to enquiries and reports—yes, and adequate assistance—in thousands of cases per annum, a vast and growing complex of religious, endowed, voluntary, and municipal forms of assistance, largely inspired by the society's own teaching, were cutting athwart, and often undermining, the small and scattered work of the C.O.S. The first year the Hampstead Associated Agencies registered their assistance, for instance, it was found that the C.O.S. was dealing with less than ten per cent. of the total number of cases assisted in the borough. And yet co-operation has been put forward by the society as the first means of promoting any improvement in the condition of the poor. Let us glance at the genesis of some of the contemporary movements to which we have alluded. The Society was founded in 1869—the year of Lord Goschen's circular on "Charitable Co-operation with the Poor Law Guardians." The Elementary Education Act followed in 1870. In the next decade the county councils were created. The Act of 1894 extended, with far-reaching results, the qualifications and electorate for poor law guardians. A few years later the borough councils were formed; and, still later, under the Unemployed Workmen's Act, the Distress Committees began their work. Alongside of this rapid development of municipal activity there has been a no less vigorous growth in the sphere of voluntary assistance, in the largest sense of the word, in the rise and influence of the Universities Settlements, and in a vast output of social work organised by the churches of all denominations, and by innumerable lay societies. The same period has witnessed a parallel extension of the great Industrial and Friendly Societies' mutual provident movement.

In one generation the very foundations of public assistance had been shifted. The improvement of the condition of the poor was now seen to be no longer, if it ever had appeared, a mere matter of the organisation of charitable relief. Voluntary assistance, altogether transcending mere schemes of relief, had enormously expanded, largely, it is true, owing to the society's initiative. The mutual help of workmen's associations had achieved a commanding position in trade, in industry, and in charity. Meanwhile municipal and legislative control already threatened to seize much of the ground thus occupied. It is not strange if the mid-Victorian name and practice of the C.O.S. have become antiquated in the face of a much larger need for the co-ordination not of some, but of all the social forces that aim at the "Improvement of the Condition of the Poor." Nor would it be anything but a sign of paralysis if, in the new conditions with which we have to deal, the application of the old principles were not profoundly altered.

In Hampstead the agencies—religious, municipal, voluntary and provident—united to prevent this danger, and saved the C.O.S. from itself. For years smaller groups of agencies, brought together by local contiguity or by common interest in special departments of social work, learned by mutual concessions and common efforts the value of unity and co-operation. These smaller groupings, growing in strength, efficiency, and mutual confidence, have rendered possible the Council of Social Welfare representative of all the local agencies in the borough.

III.—Co-operation.

Those who conceived the Hampstead system, endeavoured to rid themselves of the cant that pins its faith to any one form of social enterprise—the cant of municipal socialism—the cant of the C.O.S.—the cant of the unemployed banner: "Damn your charity." The religious, municipal, voluntary, mutual movements were here. The effectiveness of their total services depended not upon the predominance of one, but upon the harmony of all. They were different arms of an army actually in the field. They must either clog and cancel or support and fulfil one anothers' efforts. In such a host of agencies social effort must federate or fail.

Now the enemy within the gate was a virtue in disguise—the loyalty and sense of duty that inspire the "local body" jealous of any assistance from without, that institutional exclusiveness, that perverted sense of doing one's own duty, which, while it narrows our own action, cabins and confines on every side the action of our fellow-workers in the same field. It was felt that in our social world at any rate, with its complex of agencies, no one social problem could be solved by one agency alone, and by no number of agencies acting without unity; but that as it takes a soul to save a soul, so it must take all that is best in the community to save all that is worst. This means that the guerilla warfare that has so long been maintained against carelessness, ignorance, and sin, must be given up, and a highly-organised and well-equipped army take the field.

But our belief in co-operation was tempered by a lively fear of over-organisation since much of the best social work consists in the personal influence of one human being over another. We did our utmost to secure that our system should present these three conditions:—

(1) That the actual hand felt by those in distress be the hand of a friend, and not of an official organisation.

(2) That the helper should yet be backed by a powerful instrument for handling the network of agencies that exist for social betterment.

(3) That the relationship between helper and helped should continue long enough to develop the knowledge essential to friendly help.

But the individuality of a society, its spontaneity, and freshness, and *esprit de corps*, are as important to any combination to which it belongs as is the individuality of a member of a community.

Accordingly, whilst our system aimed at—

(1) Complete intercommunication between the associated agencies,

it contented itself with merely offering—

(2) Opportunities for any closer co-operation that might be desired, either permanently or as a temporary expedient,

and maintained—

(3) The complete freedom of action of each agency.

Above all things we were anxious to escape the dangers of a too highly centralised system, and to build one up which would fairly lend itself to influences that were local, personal, generic, and co-operative. For effecting this something very different from the existing relief society machinery of the local C.O.S. was needed. What was wanted was a *nidus* for a mutual association not yet formed. This in turn would depend upon an effort of faith, imagination, sympathy, and patience in a constantly growing body of persons.

Fortunately this effort was forthcoming. In the little meetings at which our plans were laid some nine years ago, now a neighbouring vicar or guardian, now the minister of one of the Free Churches, or a district visitor, or again a Friendly Society man, or some quite unofficial person who had heard of what was going on, would come forward with helpful advice or a promise to bring into the work a fresh colleague or agency. Thus the mutual association, which for so long did not receive a constitution, became a real thing because it met a real need by the most potent and the most fruitful instrument in use amongst human beings, band work, the support of something that grows, and can grow only by effort and sacrifice that are mutual. The closer association of the Hampstead Agencies has not been the work of one committee or of one society. It has been a gradual growth in unity of spirit amongst those who recognised the necessity of co-operation; and its motive force has been the growing realisation of this truth, that any improvement in the condition of the poor is not forwarded, but is seriously menaced, by relief; and to be compassed only by mutual personal influences that develop individual character, family life, and social responsibility.

IV.—Antecedent Organisation.

It is indeed lamentable that the only thorough effort made in modern England to introduce order in the chaos of philanthropic effort should have suffered such a series of disasters as befell the C.O.S. Conceived on the broadest lines and launched under most favourable circumstances, the local committees of the Society, out of sheer humanity, abandoned the ideal of co-operation, and added one more, although an excellent one and the best, to the many relieving agencies they had set themselves to co-ordinate. Out of sheer humanity. Those who blame the C.O.S. for its "freezing reason's colder part" misconceive its mistake. In a spirit of catholicity which has been maintained at a high pitch through a whole generation, the doors of the Society have been open to the poor daily in some forty districts of London for nearly forty years. Failing to secure the right treatment for its cases from the various societies to which it referred them, the C.O.S. set about the heroic task of securing *by its own efforts* that all helpable cases should be adequately relieved. The Society suffered the defeat that attends those who start with the intention of standardising effort, and then enter the lists with those they would regulate. What was the result? Through sheer pressure of case-work the Committees of the Society had to confine themselves almost exclusively to the relief of those who applied at their own offices. Their larger and harder task had been, so to co-ordinate and harmonise the work of all the agencies in each district that every distressed person, and not merely those applying at their offices, should be adequately assisted and permanently benefitted. Their aim, indeed, had been to go still further to build up an organisation preventive of future distress. These larger tasks were by the local committees perforce abandoned.* Until lately the self-constituted Committees of the C.O.S. have on the whole been glad if they could secure some co-operation on their own cases only.

Antecedent organisation, secured by representative control, for dealing effectually with all the distress in the borough has been the mediate aim of the Hampstead Society. The successive stages and departments of this *antecedent organisation* have now to be described.

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* By the local committees. In a pamphlet of great interest Mr. W. A. Bailward has shown how steady, persistent and powerful the influence of the Central Council has been upon public and political opinion.

PART II.—CHURCHES AND CHARITIES.

V.—Registration of Agencies and of Assistance Given.

As the last act of the reformed C.O.S. in Hampstead, in 1908, was to hand itself over to all the agencies in the borough, to be merged in their general executive, so its first act in 1900 was to endeavour to realise *their* point of view, *their* methods, and *their* ideals; and its second to become, as it were, the *general servant* of all the agencies in the borough.

A complete survey was made of the whole borough. The legal limits of each parish were carefully investigated, and the limits in use for practical purposes were duly registered and "agreed" amongst the vicars concerned. The head of every agency in the borough—municipal, endowed, voluntary, or mutual—was interviewed, printed matter obtained, and the objects and methods elicited. It was not until four bulky volumes containing this information had been carefully considered throughout a winter session, that the first practical move was made. Many points of departure suggested themselves; but the registration of assistance was selected for a beginning, because of all the reforms needed, it seemed likely, from the outcry already heard against overlapping of relief, to indicate the line of least resistance in the direction of one goal of our efforts—the establishment in small local areas, of representative committees of assistance. The goodwill of our fellow workers favoured us. Nearly all the agencies in time agreed to register weekly, fortnightly, or monthly;* but they agreed upon two conditions. One was that the information given should be confidential information—given not to the C.O.S. generally, but to a small group of persons, the Registrar and his immediate assistants—the beginning of our new organisation. The second condition was that each agency should reserve from registration the help given to certain cases of a specially confidential character. These conditions were very willingly accepted, for we were confident that this form of wisdom would ultimately be justified of all her children. And so it has turned out. Some of the clergy, for instance, began to use it rather tentatively. But they soon found in it a simple and effectual method of systematising, and therefore of supervising, the record of their district visitors' work.† Very soon a demand arose for the registration of the membership of mothers' meetings, and later of the membership of some of the boys' clubs. Very early in its course, registration was applied quietly, but most effectually, for mingling justice with generosity in such matters as Christmas dinners and Christmas coals.

VI.—Interparochial Conferences.

The mere notification of overlapping did not suffice for its prevention. Still less did it meet the need of co-operation such cases so palpably presented. For the agencies notified often did not take the trouble to compare notes. A case soon occurred to crystallise registration of help into local conferences of helpers:—

> Before we had been registering a month, a certain widow, a Mrs. A., had applied to the Guardians for relief, deliberately and fraudulently concealing the fact that she had just received £20 from her late husband's benefit society. The causes of this double dealing began to unfold themselves as two more agencies reported help. An experienced visitor was then appointed to deal with the case, on the understanding that personal influence and not monetary aid was the chief need. Shortly after, a fourth agency reported relief given to the case, and was asked to leave it in the hands of the lady in charge. All this took place in July, the first month of registration. Then came the summer break, during which time no new lists came in. The lady strove with Mrs. A., but ineffectually. In October, Agency 5 began to send in lists, and was found to be giving a "little help regularly." In November, Agency 6 had commenced to register, and informed us that it was giving Mrs. A. 3s. per week.

This little story is cited because it illustrates exactly the chief evil registration is devised to prevent. Had registration been started three months earlier, all these six agencies would probably have notified their case simultaneously, and the courageous worker who essayed the difficult task of moral reconstruction, would have been free from the cross-currents of relief which were constantly thwarting her efforts. Those who do such work have enough of wasted power, disappointed hopes and tragical results to contend with already. This clashing of relief agencies seemed so humiliating in itself, so fruitful of evil, and so easily preventable as to make the action of those

* For a statement of the order that guides the Guardians in this matter *see* Charities Appendix.

† For a statement of the method of registration, *see* Charities Appendix.

who declined to notify quite unintelligible. But the case further suggested that some division of labour was the only justifiable sequel to the discovery of overlapping. We must decide in such cases either that one agency shall become solely responsible, or in a less difficult case, where co-operation is desirable, that two or more agencies shall work together on understood lines. This meant that besides performing the written work, which had answered admirably up to a certain point, we must form two or three monthly or fortnightly conferences, for the oral settlement of the overlapping cases. The representatives of the six agencies involved in the above case met at once, and have met every month since, with the utmost regularity. They met, filled with a sense that the degradation of this woman's character was the fault, in a less degree of the woman detected in fraud, and in a greater degree of those whose negligence had tempted her to deceive.

Within two years practically all the agencies had entered into the combination; and four (since five) interparochial conferences had been formed,* meeting monthly, to consider how co-operation might be effected in the cases in which overlapping occurred. Used at first merely to consider cases of overlapping, these meetings became useful in other ways. At these conferences, the helpers met, in many instances, for the first time. Misunderstandings which had been the growth of years were corrected at a single meeting. Recognised spheres of influence were established, where, before, constant cross-currents of work had confused and tempted the poor. For instance, for various religious, educational, and social purposes, one family often uses several agencies. The conferences have made a monthly partition of such families as belonging, for purposes of assistance, to one agency alone. As the list of such families in the hands of each agency increases, the chances of overlapping are reduced to a minimum, and tend to disappear, except for new families arriving in the district. Then again, any wide divergence of principle amongst the agencies that assist within a given area is seen, when viewed from a common standpoint, to be unjust to those who are so unequally treated. A common effort to act up to a good average standard in our decisions upon case work has been recognised as more effective in preventing poverty than a scale of standards, one or two of which in certain particulars may be very high indeed.† In various ways the conferences, at first used solely to arrange co-operation in overlapping cases, have taken up case work, either where members have desired to consult the conference on a case of special difficulty; or at such a period of exceptional distress as occurred in the winter of 1904–5, when cases which could not be helped by employment were referred by the Distress Committee to these conferences for other assistance. The conferences have also been used as common meeting-places to promote special organisation, local schemes for the improvement of the condition of the poor, or any meetings of common interest.

Throughout all this, the representatives at the conferences were jealous to preserve the freedom of action of each agency in its own work, co-operating whenever spheres of influence were found to overlap. But it was always recognised that as their members learned to work together in harmony, the conferences might become increasingly useful for other purposes. They gave rise to the Board of Social Study, whose work is described elsewhere. And they suggested another fresh departure.

VII.—Interparochial Committees of Assistance.

It was, indeed, an obvious development of the system, that the voluntary agencies, at least, should meet and consider their cases not after, but before, assisting them. But the change thus indicated, although undoubtedly logical and convenient, and pursuant of the best interests of the poor, would probably never have been attempted but for the growing sense that the personal influence of the district visitor as a friend of her people is hampered almost fatally by one fact—that the poorest and weakest look to her, and to a large extent adapt their conduct towards her, as to a dispenser of alms.‡ The improved personal relation between visitor and people is not, of course, the only advantage likely to accrue from the formation of local committees. These

* Hampstead is about a mile and a half square. It is divided into fifteen ecclesiastical parishes and has a population of 80,000 persons.

† *e.g.* The District Visitor's standard of religious influence and constant friendly visiting, the C.O.S. standard of thorough enquiry, family responsibility, and adequate assistance.

‡ *See* Charities Appendix for addresses (1) to the Clergy of the Hampstead Ruridecanal Chapter; (2) to the Visitors of the Council of Social Welfare.

will probably be better equipped for the actual work of making wise decisions than the district visitor; for, besides the fact that much of her knowledge is at their service (in many cases she is herself the almoner of the committee), the committee is reinforced by the presence of men of business and working men, who are perhaps more keenly alive to the economic dangers of too much or too little relief. An important incidental advantage lies in the fact that municipal and other bodies are more likely to co-operate with a responsible committee that with an isolated district visitor.

The Parochial Committee is valuable because it shifts responsibility for relief, *but not for personal care*, from the district visitor, who is the Church's spiritual messenger, to a body to whom the recipient is unbeholden. The Interparochial or Local Committee carries this principle one stage further, and saves any church that co-operates thus from any who might be tempted by the loaves and fishes. It is a recognition of the principle that the administration of relief is so important, and is attended by such grave social and religious difficulties, that it calls for a combination and a division of labour amongst all the religious and social workers concerned.

As the conferences upon overlapping-cases gave place to the far more effective local committees for the consideration of *all* cases, the outlines of a new system of domiciliary visitation began to emerge. Groups of local committees, connected by a central council on the one side with various agencies of social reform throughout the Borough, and on the other side with the district and other visitors within its own area, might make it possible that no family really in need of assistance should be left uncared for, and that no family should be visited as a rule by more than one visitor. The full development of such a system was two years ago still beyond the reach of the Associated Agencies; but there were active tendencies in those departments of our work that deal with Social Study, Poor Law Reform, and the Friendly Societies' Movement, that showed how many and how hopeful were the elements for an important reconstruction. By this time all relief—municipal, voluntary, or endowed—was registered. Overlapping was prevented. One temptation to deceive (so strengthened where donors act without knowledge of each other's gifts) was virtually removed. The representatives of the agencies came to know one another's aims and methods. Differences tended to disappear. Large-hearted combined efforts took their place. Doles were discarded. Grants or allowances were made in effective amounts.* More and more the building up of character in the home, in the workshop, and in the club were recognised as the great social aim. As Lady Bountiful passes away with her tickets and her tracts, the friendly visitor, the spiritual adviser, finds her way to the people's hearts, unbarred by any supposed nexus of cash or kind. Relinquishing the actual administration of relief to an Interparochial Committee, she finds a new and fertile region open for her cultivation, a new dignity in her calling, a new hope in her work. Where, as in four pairs of parishes in Hampstead, the latest step has been taken, and every church and chapel, and every charitable society, and every affiliated benefit society in the area has resolved that this immensely important question of relief shall be their common concern, the religious life of the neighbourhood enters imperceptibly upon a new phase. It is no longer a chance or a choice which church or chapel may earn an applicant's "anticipative gratitude." No doubtful adherents are gained by dole or ticket. No appearance of competition discounts religious zeal. The decision of a common committee on which all churches are alike represented, frees the souls of poor men and poor women from a taint suffered for ages.

After much consideration, indeed, after actual experience of a committee working over one parish, the area comprising two or more parishes was selected as preferable on several grounds. We have found that the extended area, by bringing in more points of view, liberalised and broadened the whole work of the committee; whilst the population usually to be found in two parishes—about 15,000 persons—does not present an unmanageable number of families to be dealt with. A great deal of very local up-to-date knowledge of the poor is still available from the representatives of the churches and friendly societies. The distances, too, are quite manageable, and the whole machinery of assistance works at a mechanical advantage.

* An Incumbent who was most helpful in forming one of these Interparochial Committees, the Vicar of Christ Church, Hampstead, has publicly stated that within six months from the commencement of the Committee's work, the ticket doles given in his parish were reduced by 75 per cent. There was no diminution in the amount of relief administered. The same sum was more effectively spent in the permanent benefit of of a smaller number of families.

Besides this, the chairmanship of a parochial committee is inevitably and properly accorded to the incumbent of the parish; and an official chairmanship like that of a clergyman in a purely parochial organisation is one of far greater predominance than that of an ordinary chairman chosen annually by his colleagues. It was felt by the clergy of the Established Church that in a relation which might offer not a few possibilities of friction, anything that might give to an interdenominational undertaking the appearance of denominational control should be eliminated. This one the clergy, by selecting the wider area, eliminated straight away. The Ward was rejected as an area for such a committee, first, because it corresponds with no area of assistance already in use for purposes of assistance; and secondly, because we were anxious, in view of still later possible developments, to eliminate the coincidence of a relief area with a voting area.

VIII.—Board of Social Study.

The Interparochial Committees of Assistance were a direct development of the conferences of workers for the prevention of overlapping and the promotion of co-operation. But they were responsible for a development in another direction, which must now be described. Composed as they were of representatives of widely differing points of view, they could not meet and discuss concrete cases of distress without feeling the need of a common standard. The feeling grew that such an association of workers was inadequately equipped without some body of doctrine based on experience and guided by theory as to the best methods of attacking the social problem. Turning to the local societies that make such study their first object—the Christian Social Union and the Christian Social Brotherhood—we found that whilst doctrinal differences had hitherto prevented their formal co-operation, both were willing to meet and work on the interdenominational lines of the "Associated Agencies."* Pourparlers, meetings, and a final meeting at the Town Hall resulted in the formation of a Board of Social Study, consisting of the chairman of the four interparochial conferences and about half a dozen economists and other experts.

The Board's first business was to circulate amongst the churches and social institutions in Hampstead an account of its objects and provisional plan, with a somewhat full list of subjects and books to be read in each course of study suggested. The circular suggested that social study circles should be formed in every congregation and social agency in the Borough, and that these circles should be formed upon the following lines:—

(1) They should be small circles consisting of friends, members of the same congregation, society, or club, who would co-operate in preparing their subject for consideration, would understand one another's point of view, and would not be afraid of their own ignorance or their neighbours' knowledge.

(2) They should drop the occasional papers and speeches of the debating society and the mutual improvement guild, attack one subject, and master a a few solid books, in a continuous course extending through at least one session.

(3) They should not only attack their subject in practical co-operation but should guide it towards some practical outcome. The courses were intended to meet two needs and to bring together two classes of persons:—(1) Workers feeling the need of more knowledge; (2) Social students desiring to train for social service. A fair intermixture of both these classes at the study circles would, it was hoped, secure the best elements for the study itself, a higher standard of efficiency amongst present workers, and at once a recruiting ground and a training ground for future workers.

These proposals caught on immediately. In the first winter, 1905–6 no less than ten Social Study Circles were at work, taking such subjects as:—The English Poor Law; The Problem of the Unemployed; The Interdepartmental Report on Physical Deterioration; Friendly Visiting; Phthisis Visiting; Luxury; The Friendly Societies and Relief; Principles of the C.O.S. For each circle a leader, who was more an organiser of study than a teacher, was appointed by the Board of Social Study. The circle on the Unemployed has continued through three winter sessions. That on Friendly Visiting consisted of the district visitors of an incumbent who was helping in the formation of an

* The name under which the present Council of Social Welfare was developed.

Interparochial Committee. Those who studied the relation between the Friendly Societies and Relief became the nucleus of our Women's Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters—the first in Hampstead and the largest ever started anywhere. The students of physical deterioration were definitely asked at the outset to equip themselves for a fresh development in the work of our Health Society. At the end of the session they formed themselves into the Infants' Health Committee, whose work has progressed steadily ever since.

The experience of the first two sessions suggested to those who were intimate with the social work going on in this borough that we might impress upon all those who intended to devote themselves to social service, the desirability of securing at the beginning of their labours for others, a more comprehensive course of training for themselves.

The entry of each fresh band of social workers tends to imperil the privacy of the homes of the poor, and at the same time, in spite of our careful system of mutual registration of assistance, tends to create overlapping. Now, overlapping is even more destructive where personal influence is aimed at, than in the mere administration of material relief. Would it, we asked, be demanding too much of a district or other visitor entering upon her work, to attend such a course and apply herself to attain in social method and general knowledge something like professional skill? Such a system of training would enable those who are responsible for social or religious work to organise workers on the basis of one worker to each family; and whilst it would not, we may be sure, interfere with normal friendly relations between different classes of society, it would generally prevent the necessity of calling a fresh worker into a family because of some fresh need, which the ordinary visitor had not studied, *e.g.*, the need of advice and guidance in the case of a careless phthisis patient, or in that of an ignorant young mother in a poor home.

It has been felt that some such unity of knowledge, the kind of training connoted by the word "University," is as necessary to voluntary social workers as it is to the members of any liberal profession. Accordingly we have aimed at a training which should inform the social worker generally; giving an introduction to the theory and practice of social work—a vade mecum to all sources of information—a point of view from which to realise the relations of the individual, the family, and society; and a method of interpreting individual experiences by the aid of wider experience and social theory.

One of the first acts of the Council of Social Welfare has been the inauguration of a sessional course, partly theoretical, partly practical, for the guidance of district and other visitors. It is attended by some seventy students.

PART III.—MUNICIPAL AND MUTUAL AID.

In the preceding sections a sketch has been attempted of the combinations effected, chiefly, amongst the voluntary charities, strictly so called, and the churches. We have now to consider the leading municipal, mutual, and endowed institutions in the Borough, and review the efforts that have been made to harmonise their action. It will be convenient to deal with one institution at a time, and see how others have been led to co-operate at whatever point their services might otherwise have overlapped. That, it will be remembered, is the distinctive feature of the Hampstead system; whilst leaving each agency full scope for its own work so long as it does not interfere with others—to promote co-operation at all points of contact with other bodies, and to do this by means of representative control. In this section we shall make it abundantly clear that in and about every Municipal Body, and in connection with several Voluntary and Friendly Societies, numerous bands of visitors are being recruited and trained; and that unless the visitors of the churches are willing not only to accept a similar training, but to share their work with the men and women who are now coming forward to befriend those in distress, a new kind of overlapping—a confusion of personal influences—must inevitably result.

IX.—The Friendly Societies.

When, in 1900, a survey was made of all the agencies in the Borough, the Friendly Societies, and especially the branches of the great Benefit Societies, claimed our most careful attention. An examination was made of their financial soundness at the office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies; and, after a careful comparison on this point and upon the *personnel* of the respective societies, we chose a Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters for the development of a long-cherished scheme. We found that some of the clergy harboured in their Institutes—Slate Clubs, of whose unsoundness they were aware, but whose popularity amongst a certain class of workmen they were unable to resist. On the other hand, the affiliated societies saving their surplus funds from year to year found the improvident but popular societies, that shared out every Christmas, the greatest stumbling-block in their path. On the common ground afforded by our organisation, the idea was conceived of joining forces for the attainment of several objects we had in common—to undermine the influence of the Slate Club—to plant juvenile branches of the Foresters throughout the Borough—to secure unlicensed premises for the meetings of Benefit Societies and Trade Unions—to promote branches of the Foresters for Girls and Women*—and to bring the great Friendly Societies and the other social agencies of the borough generally, into active co-operation in all schemes for social betterment. The campaign has been carried on with unflagging interest for seven years, and during that period one Men's Branch (the first adult branch in the London United District), one Women's Court (the largest ever started), and six Juvenile Branches, of the A.O.F. have been formed in the Borough, with over 800 new members. All these meet in unlicensed premises. One of them sent a deputation to a neighbouring Court (meeting in a public-house), which was objecting to the extension of the new movement. Opportunity was taken to point out the advantages of meeting on unlicensed premises. Within six months the Court visited had moved out into a provident dispensary. Another deputation visited a Slate Club, in order to try to convert it to Forestry. It met with a cold reception, but before leaving, arranged for a Juvenile Branch of the Foresters amongst the men's sons. The membership of the Juvenile Court is now three times that of the Slate Club. Nearly all the Juvenile Courts are formed in Sunday or Day Schools. In clubs, cadet corps, boy's brigades, we have tried, but so far have failed, to establish them. Still, so far, the alliance effected between the National Church and a national movement of workmen in furtherance of mutual help, has been fruitful of good work, and the numbers of self-reliant, mutually dependent workmen, who now throng some of the Hampstead churches on Foresters' Sundays, bear witness to a new understanding between the Church and the people.

In all this the C.O.S., or, as it was now being called, the Associated Agencies, was simply acting as a connecting link between agencies whose co-operation was most desirable. But what did it mean? It meant that here, in Hampstead, if these forces of self-reliance and mutual aid were thus prevailing against pauperism, and other forms of dependence, the workmen of the next generation might, to an extent hitherto unknown, provide against sickness, put by their savings in club banks, buy their own houses by advances from the club funds, and secure pensions as they now secure sick benefit. A Court or Lodge of one of the great affiliated Orders, apart from its sick benefit and life assurance, is the cheapest form of building society, the most profitable of savings banks, and quite the most suitable agency to effect the provision of infirmity insurance. Taking into account the influence these great Orders exercise upon the character and circumstances of their members, it is easy to see how vitally their development must affect the future of both legal and voluntary aid.

Mr. Long's proposals for dealing with the unemployed were used as an opportunity of securing fresh co-operation in matters relating to the welfare of the workman.

The Joint Committee in Hampstead was the first to be formed in London, and was composed, on the initiative of the then C.O.S., of five representatives nominated by that body from the Associated Agencies, five from the Guardians, and five from the Borough Council. Some of its members, supplemented by representatives of all the registered Benefit Societies and Trades Unions in Hampstead, and several leading employers, were appointed a Standing Committee to consider and assist the cases of

* *See* Charities Appendix for an Address to the Girls of the Welfare Club.

such of the unemployed as were found to belong to Friendly Societies. This committee was continued after the Act of 1905 as a Standing Committee of the Associated Agencies. It is representative of the Hampstead Trades Council, three Trades Unions, all the Hampstead branches of the leading Sick Benefit Societies (Hearts of Oak, Oddfellows, and Foresters), one (registered) Slate Club, the Employment Exchange Committee, and one or two other workmen's associations. Its objects have been :—

(1) To co-operate with the Distress Committee by dealing with applications belonging to Friendly Societies.

(2) To aid in the movement for the provision in other than licensed premises of the various Hampstead agencies (especially provident) for improving the condition of the working classes.

(3) To propagate opinion in favour of sound finance in the administration of Benefit Societies.

(4) To take up selected cases of men past work, referred to it by the Distress Committee.

(5) To enquire into the conditions and aid the members of decaying industries.

The committee has devoted half its time each session to the study of some subject connected with Friendly Societies' interests. In one session, "A Minimum Wage"; in the next, "Sharing-out Societies"; in the last, Shelford's "Industrial Efficiency"; in the current session, "Medical Aid." With the introduction of medical inspection of elementary school children, and the removal of both the out-patient departments of the two Hampstead hospitals, it was felt that an important move might be made in strengthening the position at once of Provident Dispensaries and of Friendly Societies. Four conferences were held on the relation of these to hospitals and Poor Law infirmaries, and a careful examination was made of the Medical Associations in the provinces. In these associations, the Friendly Societies in many towns federate for the purposes of medical attendance and drugs, paying a medical officer, or medical officers, resident at the common dispensary. One or two meetings had already been organised by the committee with a view to securing a common hall for workmen's association meetings. It was thought that a Central Dispensary, supplementing the four local dispensaries already situate on the borders of the Borough, might supply this want, and afford a h ome for the various voluntary societies in the Borough. Here the matter began to transcend the scope of this committee, became a subject for, and was accordingly referred to, the Council of Social Welfare.

The Under-employed.

The Distress Committees, as conceived by Mr. Walter Long and Mr. Gerald Balfour, were in themselves an achievement in co-operation ; and if the central authorities had upheld the administrative arrangements they had made for applying their excellent regulations, the Distress Committees would have found work for steady, regular, thrifty workmen, suffering from depression of trade. These were the men to whom preference was to have been given. But the means of identifiying these were removed, under popular pressure, from the application forms. The committees were left without the means of discriminating. And the standard inevitably fell. In Hampstead the influence of the Industrial and Provident Committee secured that at least membership of a sick club or trades union should be ascertained ; and the cases of such members were dealt with either (1) by the Distress Committee in the provision of work, or (2) by the Industrial Committee (described under Friendly Societies), when the men were in arrears, or had lost membership, in sick or trade clubs, or (3) by the Committees of Assistance already described. A case or two may indicate the kind of co-operation that has been established between the Distress Committee and other agencies :—

A young harness maker, who, owing to slackness in his trade, had taken to labouring work, and in that also had failed to find employment, applied to the Distress Committee for emigration to Winnipeg, where he had an offer of regular work from a saddler who had known him in this country. Owing to the fact that he had a wooden leg, however, the Central Unemployed Body was informed that he could not be passed for emigration. Fuller inquiry by our Kilburn Committee led to proof that his infirmity was due to an accident in childhood, and not to any inherent disease. This was reported to the chiefs of the Interior Department, with the result that his application was accepted. Fuller knowledge of the man, however, had also led to the

discovery that one cause of his distress had been an inclination to intemperance. A member of Committee induced him to become a member of the Sons of the Phœnix, and a former employer, also a member of a Temperance Society, threw himself warmly into the work of helping him to keep the pledge. Through this former employer we were able to arrange that the emigrant should be met by members of the Good Templars who were already working in the saddlery to which he was bound. Pending emigration, help was given to his wife and children through a visitor who became their real friend, and by the time the arrangements were complete the man had proved that so far he had conquered his intemperate habits. The family were able to enter upon their new life across the seas with every prospect of success.

All cases of families of more than four members were investigated, and emigrated through the agency of the C.O.S. At present, the Council of Social Welfare undertakes that the cases of men in acute distress but "listed" for relief work, shall be, in the meantime, dealt with by various local committees of assistance.

Much of the worklessness in modern cities is the result of the education of the children, so inadequate in many respects to the purposes it ought to fulfil. In local work, however, it is our business to administer to the best of our ability the law as it stands; and here again it is comforting to reflect how much can be done by voluntary societies if they will look to union as the source of strength. We felt that whilst we must look to other organisations to secure an alteration in the Education Acts, by extending the school age and adapting education to the needs of a workman's life, much might yet be done by co-operation and personal influence to save some of the boys and girls from forms of employment that led to nothing. We describe later our effort to promote the *morale* and *physique* of the children still at school. We have during the past year taken two steps to support the agencies that have most to do with the first start made in life by the boys and girls as they leave their school. 1. We we able to arrange last winter an exchange of representatives between the Employment Exchange Committee and the Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment Committee. 2. Again, on the 15th June, 1908, by the co-operation of the Managers of the Group I. Schools with the Apprenticeship Committee, a most interesting meeting was brought about at one of our poorest schools. All the boys and girls likely to leave within three months were brought together and addressed on the importance of their next step in life, the facilities afforded by the Apprenticeship Committee, and the desirability if their parents agreed, of another year of school. This meeting has been followed up by visits to the parents of the children—the Apprenticeship Committee taking up the children likely to follow skilled employments, the Care Committee of the Managers visiting those whose children enter the battle of life as errand boys and van boys in blind alley occupations that will in the course of a few years throw them upon the casual labour market as unemployed, underemployed, or unemployable. The visitor of the Care Committee is concentrating her attention upon causes, in the character or circumstances of the parent that have led them to sacrifice their children's future to the gain of a few shillings per week at the present time. For the number of boys entering unskilled occupations varies, roughly speaking, inversely with their age and proficiency at the time of leaving school.

X.—The Borough Council.

The Public Health and Under-employment.

Three of the Borough Council's committees are brought into direct contact with social workers:—(1) The Public Libraries Committee, (2) The Public Health Committee, (3) The Distress Committee. With the first, although it offers many opportunities for fruitful co-operation with other bodies, we have not yet dealt. The last is already dealt with (for reasons there stated) under Friendly Societies.

The Public Health Committee.

The Hampstead Borough Health Society (founded in 1902)—the first of many such societies now at work throughout London—has been the instrument by which a great variety of institutions have been brought into direct co-operation with the Public Health Department. It was in its turn, the direct result of the ideas that found expression in the (Voluntary) Notification of Diseases Act, and the International Congress on Tuberculosis (1901). A successful agitation was started by the C.O.S. in Hampstead for the adoption of the Act; and the Health Society was formed with the intention of securing that the Act should become effective in Hampstead, so far as its somewhat limited powers secured.

The society's objects were wider, of course, than the mere prevention of phthisis. It was formed to act as a rallying-point for public opinion in *all* matters relating to the public health of the Borough, and to bring into co-operation all who individually, or through their connection with some society, could contribute towards that object. Its method was not merely to stimulate vigilance, and (if necessary) lead criticism It has stood for the principle that not only should the whole community be alive to the causes of its own suffering, but that all who conveniently can should be willing to play their part in an organised effort to remove these causes. In reporting upon certain insanitary areas, in its criticism of the system of dust collection, of the ventilation of public buildings, and of the measures taken for the prevention of expectoration, it has exercised a considerable influence on public opinion and municipal action. In the health lectures organised for visitors, mothers' meetings, and evening continuation schools, and by undertaking the distribution of leaflets on hygiene, temperance, infantile diseases, and phthisis, published by the Borough Council, it has carried its propaganda to the people themselves. By appointing a Nurse in the schools when medical inspection was still in its infancy, it indicated the line it has since taken in the formation of its Joint Phthisis Committee and its Infant's Health Committee. The former of these is so typical of the function of voluntary effort in supporting municipal action, that it is proposed to give a short account of its methods. When we began our work, voluntary notification still needed to be adopted by the Borough Council; the open-air principle had still to be adopted in the wards of the workhouse infirmary; and some system needed to be arranged by which the Poor Law, the Borough Council, the country sanatoria, the local hospitals, the local visiting and assisting societies, all dealing with phthisis, might be brought into co-operation. This has been effected simply and easily by means of representative control.

Practically all the churches and local societies have agreed to deal with their phthisis cases amongst the poor and ignorant through the Phthisis Committee. Both the local general hospital and the Mount Vernon Hospital for diseases of the chest have agreed to notify their phthisis cases (although this is still largely dependent, in practice, upon the feeling of each member of the staff); and on our Joint Phthisis Committee their representatives meet the medical officer of health, the lady sanitary inspector, the district medical officer, the medical officer of the infirmary (to whose efforts the open-air wards are chiefly due), the ladies visiting the open-air wards, the clergy or their deaconesses, the representative of the Invalid Children's Aid Association, and others. The decisions of this joint committee are carried out by a large body of voluntary health visitors, aided by the lady sanitary inspector. The result is, that in this borough, prevention and cure go hand in hand. Antecedent organisation has arranged that the services of each institution shall be set in motion automatically, and each performs its own part better for the co-operation of the rest. The medical staff at the Consumption Hospital are able indirectly to supervise the home treatment of their patients; the latter are aided in the gradual improvement of their surroundings by a trained visitor; foods are supplied as the doctors direct; as far as possible work is found for the restored consumptive under conditions altogether different from those under which he contracted the disease. The medical officer of health finds the way for disinfection of premises, and for the general prevention of the spread of disease, paved by the persistent persuasion of the health visitor. Influence is brought to bear upon destitute and hopeless sufferers to induce them to enter the open-air wards at the workhouse infirmary. In a hundred ways, but always by gentle personal means, the pressure of a widespread and educated public opinion, itself largely formed by our society's efforts, is brought to bear upon the sufferers from this most fatal but most preventible disease.*

One of the cases that led to our close co-operation with the hospitals in our neigbourhood was that of a young man who was an out-patient suffering from bronchitis and heart disease. The hospital doctor who gave him his medicine time after time was not aware that the lad slept in an attic with a hole in the roof, through which in wet weather the rain poured in immediately above his bed. What could advice and medicine do against such conditions?

Again, the mere knowledge that phthisis exists in a home may lead, without the intervention of any machinery, to important results. The first case to come under the notice of one of our visitors indicated this. An elderly woman living alone, was notified as suffering from advanced phthisis, and duly reported to the health visitor of the parish in question. Enquiry showed that the patient's daughter came in for several hours during the day to look after her mother. But she could not leave her own child, two years of age; so she brought it with her and *laid it to sleep in its grandmother's bed.* This patient and her daughter were quite unaware of the danger to which they were exposing the child; but as soon as they realised it, they made a different arrangement; the child was excluded from the room; and its life was probably saved.

* *See* Charities Appendix.

But perhaps our confidence in friendly influences is in no other part of the work so necessary as where a family, or a member of it, has to be induced to give up hurtful habits and modes of life that have become second nature. There is no strict line of demarcation between physical and moral habit. There is no machinery to our hand at present for its guidance but the vigilance and alertness, the care and patient skill, of the friendly visitor and lady inspector. And yet these preventive methods need, in the more difficult cases, to be supported by instruments of social amelioration, which in other boroughs are found only in scattered groups amongst the municipal, voluntary, and mutual agencies. These need to be combined by antecedent organisation before the friendly visitor can use them to the best advantage. If there is no combination before her work begins, she has to effect it piecemeal upon every case with a maximum of friction and other waste. But if the antecedent organisation is ready, the help flows in along its accustomed channels.

There was referred to us by the medical officer of health the case of a builder's labourer. The man drank and was constantly out of work. The wife was emaciated and terror-stricken. Her little girl of eleven was suffering from tubercular glands and was spitting blood. Her boy of five years was half paralysed. Her baby of two years was a hopeless idiot. The home was wretchedly poor and neglected. A friendly visitor was appointed and the committee set itself to support her efforts.

The eldest child was sent away for several months to the seaside, returned completely set up, and was kept under observation at home and at the out-patients' department, and aided with milk when she showed signs of flagging. Arrangements were made with the medical inspector of the L.C.C. for a suitable school and conveyance for the paralysed boy. To the dismay of the committee it was announced that another child was shortly to be added to this unhappy family, whose members showed successively so awful a decline. But the visitor stuck to her guns. Daily milk and eggs were supplied to the wife for four months before her confinement and for seven or eight months afterwards. A beautiful baby was born, quite normal, and at the close of its first year is still thoroughly healthy.

But something more powerful than milk and eggs has gone to the salvage of this wrecked family. The representative on our committee from a neighbouring P.S.A. set his mates to work with the man. They closed in on him and gave him no peace until he had given up the drink. He has become a reformed character. His debts, which were many, he has paid up. His wife is well and happy. His home is such a home as it never was before. The last report—two years afterwards—tells us that not only has the man maintained his own position, but is becoming an influence for good in his neighbourhood, especially in the Temperance cause.

In such a case as this we cannot but see how closely positive personal influence of a general character, and curative relief in several forms, may intersect the preventive work of the Public Health Department. As public health busies itself more and more with personal hygiene, the need for something more than a scientific and administrative interest in this department of its work is felt by its officers. At the same time the opportunity for scientific administration in the work of personal assistance forces itself upon the voluntary worker. The solution of this two-fold need lies in the close co-operation of the two parties concerned, in a closer understanding of their common object—not the health only, but the *wholeness* of the community. Here is a case. Is the disease arrested, and its spread prevented, and another life saved from the death-rate for the community? Here, too, is a *man*. Has he been strengthened in weakness, re-established in industry, restored to the life of the family, worth to his community what has been spent upon him in money, time and loving service?

Mrs. Nunn, the organiser of this Committee, owes much to Dr. McCleary. His great knowledge of all that relates to the public health has been placed unreservedly at the disposal of our workers, whose teaching, on the medical side, he has largely undertaken. The presence of the medical officer of the infirmary (as chairman) and of the district medical officer has also been of the greatest service.

The Hampstead Health Society was the first Borough Health Society formed in London. During the past six years it has witnessed and aided the formation of many similar societies throughout London. It has lately been instrumental in forming a representative council of those whose object is to influence public opinion and co-operate with the sanitary authorities and medical agencies throughout London.

XI.—The Elementary Schools.

All other social problems, from the preventive point of view, are of secondary importance compared with that of the education of the young. Those of us who are managers felt some years ago, that, greatly as legislation was needed, we would not wait for legislation before attacking, as thoroughly as we could, the social and physical side of the child's

development. The "Social Side Committee" at the poorest council school in Hampstead was intended as a definite expression of this view, and as a rallying point for the various agencies, municipal, mutual and social, concerned with the child's development. Since then the County Council has formed the Care Committees with similar duties, and we have adopted that new and excellent name. Although our programme was considerably wider than that as yet reached by the Council for its Care Committees, we are glad to see that these committees are rapidly developing in the same direction. Our work was to provide for the managers an organ for supervising, recording, and assisting in the development of the social side of the child's life as distinguished from the work in the class-room—its home ties, its physical and moral welfare, the occupation of its leisure, its need of play and of country holidays, its future industrial career, its provision for mutual help in sickness, its protection from hurtful influences at home and abroad. Accordingly, the committee is representative of the managers, the teaching staff, the school visitors, the local committees of assistance, the Children's Country Holiday Fund, the Invalid Children's Aid Association, the Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment Committee, and the Play Guild. In response to the County Council's request, too, it has organised the dinner arrangements for children whose circumstances render a midday dinner at home difficult to arrange, and whose parents are willing to pay the twopence the dinner costs. Where the parents appear to be unable to provide the child with dinner, the case is regarded as one requiring careful inquiry and adequate assistance, and is taken up by one of our local committees of assistance. It is felt that if the children actually lack food, that is a serious symptom of some defect in the family life. To attempt to alleviate the symptom, without attempting to remove the real cause of the difficulty, would be to play with misery, and neglect the child's best interests. The cases of children needing country holidays, of children employed industrially out of school hours, of children needing spectacles, and of children leaving school, have all in turn been investigated by the committee, and appropriate action has been taken in each case. The advent of three new members who had undertaken the Play Guild at the school, suggested the possibility of forming a juvenile branch of the Foresters in this school as we had done at St. Mary's, Primrose Hill, New End, and St. Paul's, Winchester Road. And this step seemed even more desirable in view of the medical inspection of school children in accordance with the Act of 1907. It was felt, however, that the full development of our plans in regard to the children would be more conveniently considered in conferences with additional agencies not represented on the Care Committee. The matter was accordingly referred to the Council of Social Welfare as forming part of the more general problem of medical aid; and it will be dealt with under that head.

XII.—The Guardians of the Poor.

As the progress of any local reforms in the Poor Law has been more or less arrested by the larger possibilities opened up by the appointment of a Royal Commission, this brief historical sketch, so far as the Poor Law is concerned, may be said to break off somewhat suddenly some too or three years ago. It seems desirable, therefore, after premising a few facts about the Hampstead Board, to concentrate attention upon a set of facts bearing most closely upon one problem, which will probably survive even the Report of the Commission. This problem relates to the nature of the arrangement that should subsist between the local body that administers public assistance, and those who are engaged in the voluntary visitation and assistance of the poor.

The Hampstead Board, then, consists of eighteen elected (no co-opted) members. Of these, six are women. It meets weekly, in the morning, and in a population of 80,000 persons has one superintendent, and two district, relieving officers, and two district medical officers. Its clerk is a part-time officer, with an assistant clerk. The case-paper system has been in use for about three years. Relief, indoor and outdoor, is granted only for a stated period, at the close of which the case comes up automatically for revision. No out-relief is given to the able-bodied, and therefore there is no labour yard. There are no schools belonging to the Union. The children are dealt with (1) in their own homes by poor law relief given to their own mothers, or by the services of friendly visitors and relief from the voluntary committees of assistance; or (2) institutionally at the grouped homes of other Unions; or (3) in the allowed cases, and in as many of them as possible, by boarding-out in the country. There is no boarding-out within the Union.

The Associated Voluntary Agencies have, for some time, been very largely represented on the Board, and hardly a week passes without a case being referred to them for assistance. During the time, some two or three years ago, when there was a positive majority of the representatives of voluntary agencies on the Board, the amount spent in out-relief went down; the amount spent in charitable relief went up; there was a marked increase in the membership of the Friendly Societies in the Union; and a marked increase in the numbers and interest of those who served the poor. These are all facts which are to be found in the books and publications of the various Associated Agencies. What did they mean? Those of us who led the movement interpreted them in this way. We saw that Poor Law Relief and Voluntary Aid were two forces whose interaction was inevitable, and that unless the closest co-ordination could be effected between them they must thwart one another at every turn. The temptation to a Board of Guardians to play the part of charity is as irresistible as it is dangerous, and is illustrated up and down the country in Union after Union; and the only solution of this difficulty seemed to be, so to man the Board with voluntary workers and voluntary associations with Guardians, as to ensure an enlightened policy on the part of both. At any rate the Hampstead Board, after having been dominated by a chairman to whom the Poor Rate was a constant temptation to lavish out-relief, became a Board of social workers, who realised that the legal limitations of a destitution authority practically precluded any serious form of charitable enterprise. "A charity-rigged Board" it will be said. Is there, then, any better qualification for a Guardian of the Poor than that he cares for the Poor and has devoted time and thought to their welfare? This is indeed just the Guardian we need; not the man who needs the position as a stepping-stone to higher municipal or political bodies, nor the man who wants to handle money, or to exercise patronage, or just to fill up his time. Quite the best Board would be one composed of men and women whose social insight, administrative ability, and personal influence had secured for them the suffrages of their fellow workers in Friendly Societies and Benevolent and Municipal Institutions. At least this arrangement secured the recognition by the Guardians of the principle that their action should leave the fullest scope for the personal influences of wisely directed voluntary effort.

Although there is much in Lord Goschen's Circular of 1869 which is now inapplicable to the relation between Poor Law and Charity, there is one provision that is still of the greatest importance—the liberty given to Relieving Officers in cases not actually destitute at the moment, to refer suitable applicants to recognised Charitable Institutions. This provision has led, in Hampstead as elsewhere, to the reference of a large number of cases annually to our Committee. The inquiry instituted by the Relieving Officer is merely intended to ascertain whether the resources of the applicant, or of his relatives who are legally liable for his maintenance, are sufficient for his support and that of his dependants. The inquiry of the Charity Organisation Society goes much further and effects much more. It aims at ascertaining what are the causes of the family's distress, as revealed by careful and sympathetic inquiry into character and circumstances. This inquiry is intended to indicate the treatment by which these causes of distress may be removed, or, at least, alleviated. This difference in the motive and the method of inquiry corresponds with differences equally great in the actual treatment of each case. As the inquiry goes further back and deeper down, so the treatment carries the family further forward, and aims at uplifting circumstances and character alike. This aim of charity—to give, not merely adequate relief but permanent benefit, is reflected in one practice of our Committee which needs a little elucidation. In the Appendix* will be found, extracted from the Annual Report of of the Clerk to the Guardians (1903) a statement of the cases referred to and assisted by the C.O.S. Since that year the number of cases referred has increased by about 75 per cent., and the practice of printing a statement of them has had to be abandoned. In those of the cases which have been decided over three months there appears an entry, "Revised on such and such a date." This refers to the fact that when all has been done that appears immediately possible to remove the causes of distress in a family, a statement of causes, treatment and *immediate* results is drawn up and presented to the Committee. The family is then left, for three months, in the hands of the friendly visitor, who, at the expiration of that time, reports whether the assistance has proved *permanently* beneficial. If it has not, the case is attacked again with the help of the visitor's experience. This arrangement, which is aimed primarily at producing thoroughness of treatment, is, it need hardly be said, of considerable educational value to the Committee—indicating as it does the comparative value of its

* Charities Appendix.

diagnosis and treatment. The inquiries made by voluntary aid contrast sharply with those made by the Relieving Officer in another important respect. They are used to indicate not merely the causes of distress but also the sources from which the help required may be forthcoming. This is one of the real triumphs of the London C.O.S., for which the influence and pressure of the Central Council's Committees should have the highest credit. Of the forty or fifty thousand pounds per annum, not all of it actually passing through the Society's books, but expended on C.O.S. cases, a mere fraction is drawn from any Relief Funds. It has been secured from relatives, friends, old employers, special societies, the Churches, the Benefit Societies, and Trades Unions, and from other persons previously, or as a result of the appeal of the C.O.S., interested in the case. At what a cost to more important work this has been done—for it is painful to reflect how many of these appeals are quite fruitless—we have already told in an early section. The following case illustrates not only the kind of inquiry and the kind of treatment received by those referred to us by the Relieving Officer, but also the principles on which such treatment is based.

'An old carpenter, past work, was advised by employers to apply for outdoor relief. A few minutes conversation with the man convinced the relieving officer that more suitable aid than that of the Poor Law would be at once forthcoming from charitable sources; and the old man, whilst his application still stood for report to the Guardians, was advised to apply to the Charity Organisation Society. Here his circumstances were more fully entered into. He was country born and bred, had served his apprenticeship as a carpenter, had married at twenty-three, and, with his wife, had come to London to seek his fortune. For sixty years he had worked for her and to bring up a family, all of whom, except one daughter, had died. He "had worked for sixty years and his wife had never had to earn a penny." Line by line the story of his life came out, not in one interview at our office, but in the course of several visits to the old people's home, where the remains of their once comfortable surroundings were stored in one kitchen-bedroom, always kept beautifully clean and bright and orderly by the dutiful affection of their only remaining daughter, who yet lived a mile away, and had her own family and her own troubles. As the inquiry into the case deepened, the respect and affection of the old man's new friend deepened still more. It was found that the old couple had faced many misfortunes together. Amongst these were the loss of six children, after prolonged illness; the temporary failure of their sick club (now one of the best and safest in the kingdom); the loss through want of business knowledge of the house they had acquired in a building society; the failure at last of their little hoard of cash, and the prospect of the pauper's lot at the end of a long and strenuous struggle for independence. As these facts were verified by inquiry, the man's character and his wife's were revealed in the most honourable light. With the help of relatives, not legally liable, and old employers, to whom such an alternative to outdoor relief had not occurred, an adequate pension has been raised which will keep the old couple in peace and comfort for the rest of their days. Instead of the small dole and tickets handed to them across the pay-table of the relieving officer, a fuller allowance is taken week by week by one who will be glad of the old people's friendship, and bring to them not merely an allowance, but many of those refinements of life which a friend may place at their disposal —in their window garden, in their little library (for the old man is a steady reader), and in other domestic comforts necessary to the period of old age.

This case is merely typical of some seventy-seven pensioners on our books, and of some 1,700 on the books of our Society throughout London. We cite it in order that the system of co-operation between the Associated Agencies of the Borough and the Board of Guardians may be fully understood. Had Outdoor Relief been given in this and similar cases—

(1) Some of the well-disposed ratepayers would have lost sight of their poorer brethren, and would have lost the opportunity of personally knowing them and serving them in their time of need.

(2) The assistance of the remoter relatives would not have been forthcoming, and their duty would have been neglected.

(3) Old employers would not even have been asked to contribute.

(4) Workmen making sacrifices to strengthen their provident associations by mutual aid would have been discouraged and hampered, by the conviction that the Poor Law rate is the best poor man's club; and as this tendency worked itself out a general slackening in the administration of outdoor relief would ensue.

(5) Provident workmen, keeping themselves above the line of pauperism by their own exertions, would be made to pay rates, contrary to their strongest convictions, for the comfortable support of the improvident; and these payments would tend to drag them down to the same level.

The case of the widow has always seemed to us most unsuitable for Poor Law Relief, and one in which the intervention of a Friendly Visitor is most opportune. Here no weekly payment, in cash or kind, can be supposed to fill the gap in the family life. Brothers and sisters and other relatives, the club members, and similar resources are

looked to, and do their best, often in most unstinted fashion, often with real self-sacrifice. But amongst the poorest, amongst the friendless, the paramount need is the need of one wise friend who understands the life of those she is dealing with, is willing to devote herself to their service, and is backed by such a combination of the sources of help to be rendered by the community as our friendly visitors have at their command. The resources of the family and friends, the personal resources of the widow herself, and of her older children, the provision for immediate needs, a plan for the whole family in the future, the need for change of rooms, the supervision of the older boys—these are but a few of the points upon which the sympathy, counsel, and personal support of the Friendly Visitor are found to be most acceptable. Even where many offers of help are forthcoming from friends and neighbours, these are not always the wisest offers; and to discriminate between them and use them to the best advantage will be no slight tax upon the worker on whom the responsibility falls.

A very respectable widow, with three young daughters, was referred to us by the Guardians in order that something better than a mere allowance might be secured for her. Inquiry showed that the husband had lost his life in an accident, which was due, so far as we could see, to his employer's mismanagement. The woman, who had received much help from the employer, was destitute when this ceased. We raised from various sources 6s. per week for boarding out two of the children with their grandmother in the country, leaving the widow with one child to support by charing. With the kind help of one of our subscribers, a solicitor, we fought the employer and recovered £100 compensation, entrusted to us for the maintenance of the children, who, owing to necessary changes in the grandmother's household, have been transferred to a small orphanage, where they are doing well.

A young widow, with seven dependent children, was referred to our Committee for help and advice. She had received 9s. 6d. outdoor relief during the illness of her husband, who had been a lazy good-for-nothing man, but now she needed some well-thought-out plan for her future; she had thoroughly lost heart and her home and children had suffered from neglect. Though her own parents were poor, her father-in-law was found to be a cabinet-maker in a fairly good position, and when he found she was no longer to be helped by the rates, he willingly promised to allow her 10s. a week. Her eldest son, who was thoroughly out of hand, was by the Committee's influence got on to a training ship, and another boy sent to a Home of the Waifs and Strays at Margate, whilst the widow herself, now freed from the worst of her anxieties, set to work with a will, and managed to support her family by taking in washing, with the help from her father-in-law and a little assistance from her elder daughter. After some months, however, the grandfather died, and his widow and sons were only able to continue 7s. for two or three weeks longer. By this time one other daughter was able to go into service, and at the Committee's advice two more children were taken by the Guardians (one to Dr. Barnardo's and one to Banstead Schools). The widow and her three remaining children moved into one large room, and a grant of £1 tiding her over the first few weeks, she became entirely self-supporting. Since then she has again fallen into temporary difficulties, owing to the removal of her chief employers. But again her relatives have been persuaded to come forward. They have now taken the youngest child for a prolonged visit; another boy is being taken by the Guardians, and she is working up a new connection, with only one child to support, but hoping soon to be able to have her little boy at home again. She is now a bright, clean, energetic little woman, very proud of all her children, and especially of the once troublesome son, now a well-set-up sailor-boy.

Very often the case of an able-bodied man is referred, and often these cases are dealt with partly by a "voluntary" adaptation of the modified workhouse test—the Guardians sending to Lingfield Farm Colony (a voluntary institution) a husband who needs the discipline and personal influence that are such a satisfactory feature of Lingfield, whilst one of our Committees of Assistance helps the wife. The following is a case referred to us by the Guardians, but sent, not to Lingfield, but to the Distress Works at Hitchin:—

A young couple were referred to us by the Board of Guardians, to whom the wife had applied for work for her husband. She was in an emaciated condition, looking wretchedly ill, nervous, and depressed. Inquiries showed that both man and wife came of respectable families, but had wrecked their prospects by an improvident marriage which had caused the young man, or rather boy, to lose his work as under-gardener—his employer being unwilling to keep married servants. Since their marriage they had roamed about from place to place, living partly with relatives, the man doing casual work, but always earning a good character. There were indications, however, that his desultory life was undermining his capacity for steady work, whilst his wife was breaking down in her efforts to keep the home together by her earnings. Interim relief was obtained from the clergy, and the man dispatched to the Distress Committee, who set him to work at the Garden City at Hitchin. The wife was sent for treatment to the Hampstead Hospital, helped by the Nursing Association, and then sent with her baby to Hove for three weeks. On her return an arrangement was made for her to live with her mother until her husband's return. But her husband did not return. Work at a pound a week and a cottage were found for him at Hitchin, and within eight months of his despairing application to the Guardians he was joined by his wife and children in their country home.

But there was a far more sad and difficult class dealt with by the Poor Law that made a powerful appeal for our help—the young unmarried women, the merest girls, very often, applying, in the first instance, for Maternity Relief. We felt that in their cases if in any, charity should exercise its prior claim, step in before the Poor Law, and rescue those who in so many instances had been mere victims, from some of the

results of their fall. The interview with the Relieving Officer, the appearance before a mixed Board with all the possibilities of cross-examination—the life in the able-bodied wards before confinement, in which all maternal instincts would suffer desecration and suppression, the early separation from the child necessitated by the need of merest breadwinning—these seemed a series of misfortunes from whose hardening effect charity might save those who were willing to be saved. After considerable controversy* it was agreed, between the Guardians and our Executive, that, in accordance with the principles of Mr. Goschen's Circular, these young women should, in every first case, at the outset, be offered the alternative of being dealt with by a woman worker—one of the members of our Rescue and Maternity Committee. By these, the young women, who almost invariably accept the alternative thus offered, are sent first to a Maternity Home and then to a Maternity Hospital, often the same institution. For the first three, six, or sometimes twelve months of the baby's life, the mother is enabled to earn her livelihood in the Maternity Home without separation from the life of her child. A glance at the Appendix† will indicate what measure of success has attended this difficult work. Of the influence on character—the most important thing—a schedule can only speak most vaguely. But it speaks definitely on two tendencies; firstly, the prevention of application to the Relieving Officer, and, secondly, the steady increase in the number of cases in which the man has been successfully prosecuted. Under the Poor Law the cases in which a prosecution of the man was successful, were exceedingly rare. It has only been by enlisting the systematic co-operation of many societies and institutions that this piece of work has been so completely established by Miss Topham, the hon. secretary of the Committee. The Appendix† shows how the efforts made within the borough have also been brought into line.‡

A girl of seventeen in service, who came of a thoroughly respectable family, found it necessary to seek Maternity Relief. Her own mistress did not trouble where she was going; but her sister's mistress advised application to the Relieving Officer. This lady's medical attendant, however, who was consulted, knew the work our Committee was doing, and the girl was sent direct to Miss Topham. To this lady the girl confessed everything, including the name of the man who had wronged her. The man was seen by a member of the Committee, was made to realise the gravity of his offence, and was made to pay regularly towards the maintenance of his child as long as it lived. The girl's family gratefully contributed towards the cost of her treatment. The girl herself, who was very weak and wayward, just the sort whom Poor Law treatment could not have saved, was first sent to a Maternity Home, and has since gone for two year's discipline at a Home in the country. Here she is reported to be improving. The man has been reconciled to his wife. All that charity, at once compassionate and stern, could devise, has been tried; and so far it has not failed.

PART IV.—A COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

XIII.—Co-operative Medical Aid.

In dealing with certain departments of our work we have once or twice referred to matters of great importance, to many interests, neither purely local, nor purely generic—in which further progress could hardly be made without a far more general consent than our Local or Special Committees could give. These matters are the peculiar province, and the chief justification of a Council of Social Welfare. One of these matters of general interest is the possibility of a large combination between the medical profession, the hospital and dispensary authorities, the friendly societies, and ultimately, perhaps, even the municipal authorities in the reorganisation of medical aid throughout the borough on a provident basis.

Our first step in this direction was to lay the matter before the Council, whence it was referred after a preliminary discussion to the general Executive to ventilate the subject and to forward co-operation; our second step was to invite the secretary of the British Medical Association in Hampstead to read a paper at the Council, describing the attitude and relation of the hospitals to mutual provident aid. Immediately the question was taken up by the Industrial and Provident Committee, and four public conferences were held.

Reports from this Committee and the Care Committee of the Managers of the Kilburn Group of Schools were then considered by the Executive, and it was resolved

* For a Circular to Guardians and the C.O.S. on this subject, and for a Schedule of cases dealt with during three years, *see* Charities Appendix.

† Charities Appendix.

‡ For Memorandum by Rural Dean and the Hon. Sec. of the Council of Social Welfare, *see* Charities Appendix.

to approach the various bodies concerned seriatim, beginning with the British Medical Association. It seemed possible at the present juncture to initiate a widespread reform. There were several facts that seemed to indicate that such a change as we suggested might be carried out in the immediate future. First, with regard to the Elementary Schools :—

(1) During the past five or six years we had been instrumental in bringing about, between the clergy, the managers of elementary schools, and one of the great Friendly Societies, a great development in the Juvenile Forestry movement. During these six years over six hundred children had entered the ranks, either as members of Sunday schools, or as attending the elementary schools. This forms but a very small minority of the children receiving elementary education within the borough. Lately, however, by the provisions of the Education Act of 1907, a beginning has been made by the County Council to organise medical inspection of all elementary school children. In this borough the medical inspector has already inspected the children at the poorest of our schools, and the inspection has yielded a total of eighty-one cases in which he indicates that medical and sometimes surgical treatment are required. If anything like similar figures are yielded in the other schools in the borough, a very large amount of work must necessarily be thrown, either upon medical practitioners in their private capacity, or upon the doctors at dispensaries, or at the out-patient departments of the nearest hospitals. All these cases have been warned by the teachers and visited on behalf of the Care Committee; and we regret to say that in twenty-nine cases of disease the parents had taken no action; in those that had, thirty had been taken to hospitals and fourteen to private practitioners. Only one had been treated at a Provident Dispensary, and none by a Friendly Society's doctor.

This led us to consider a second fact: the use of the Out-Patient Departments in our hospitals.

(2) Both the out-patient departments that were formerly used by the poor of this borough have now been removed. The inspected children, therefore, found to be suffering from illness or defect that would probably have been treated at these hospitals, will have to go outside the borough for their treatment. A great many of these cases, being chronic, and not of an exceptional character, should be treated by a family doctor, and not go to swell the numbers of those who make use of the out-patient departments in our hospitals. For a long time we had felt, in connection with cases of illness where the home conditions were well-known to us, that the medical treatment at the hospital was largely, if not altogether, nullified by ignorance of the actual possibilities of treatment that the home afforded; and that the family medical man on the spot was the only person who could deal with them adequately. Recognising that the out-patient departments should be made consultative in their character, and used chiefly for that, and for casualties, and for cases in which expensive or highly specialised equipment is necessary, we could not regret, on the whole, the disappearance of the *ordinary* out-patient department's work in our district, especially if their removal could be used for the greater development of provident dispensaries and friendly societies.

This brought us to a third point—our Local Dispensaries:

(3) For the people of Hampstead, there are, happily near to the five elementary schools in the borough, four provident dispensaries. But it is unhappily true of two or three of these, as of many other dispensaries: (1) that the membership fluctuates very greatly, and (2) that the equipment, and in one or two cases, possibly the dispensing department, are below the standard which the medical staff would like to secure.

This led us to a fourth point: the possibility of a Public Medical Service for Hampstead.

(4) In connection with one, the Kilburn, Provident Institute there were two facts to be observed: one was that the Institute was served, not by a chosen staff, but by what may almost be called a public medical service, open to all practitioners in that part of the borough, and giving the members a wider choice of a medical man than the staff system allows; another was that one or two benefit societies had already been induced to use this Institute for their medical attendance and drugs.*

* See Charities Appendix.

Taking these four facts together, it appeared that the time had come when the whole of the provident medical aid in Hampstead might be systematised.

Our suggestions were ,—

(1) Might not the whole medical profession in the borough become, for the purposes of provident dispensaries at least a public medical service?

(2) As the doctors belonging to the benefit societies would be included (we hope without exception) in this service, might not these societies be asked to do what is now being done on a smaller scale at the Institute above mentioned—use the dispensary for their medical attendance and drugs?

(3) Might not the movement for extending the provision against sickness be established in our schools by the formation in all of them where they do not at present exist, of Juvenile Courts of the Foresters and Juvenile Lodges of the Oddfellows? So much success had attended our efforts in this direction, that we thought that in time nearly all those who would not under present circumstances be more suitably dealt with by the poor law, might be induced to join. We regard these juvenile societies as valuable in training the children to become members of the great friendly societies later on in life; but they are of even greater value educationally in training the children in habits of mutual helpfulness, order, and solidarity.

It is well known that the system here advocated has already been adopted, and carried out with some degree of success, in many of our provincial towns. But in most cases it has been done without the co-operation of a public medical service, and we regretted to find in some of them that the medical appointment has been made a mere commercial arrangement between the societies and the medical officers. Medical men have been found who were willing to act as resident medical of officers the combined dispensaries at a salary which has in some cases been considered too low by their medical brethren in the town in question. Knowing, as we did, the liberal custom of the medical profession in graduating their fees according to the income of their patients, as roughly estimated by the rent of the house they occupy, we were anxious that this point of view should be carefully considered in any proposals we had to make, in order that our constituents amongst the leading benefit societies might reconsider in the light of the practice to which we have just alluded, the desirability of instituting—not of course for ordinary insurance for sick benefit, nor for the purchase of drugs at co-operative prices through the dispensaries—but for medical attendance only, a scale of fees, rising approximately, according to the house-rent paid by, or the wages earned by, the member.

There remained the question of expense: (1) In the possibility of a fifth central Dispensary being required, This might merely mean leasing a house and adapting it to the new requirements, or if any rich local endowment, or rich residents, could be brought to our help, it might mean not merely a central dispensary, but the long-coveted Societies' Hall, for the meetings of Friendly Societies and the establishment of the offices of the various voluntary societies under one roof. (2) In the equipment or improvement of the present dispensaries, especially with a view to the treatment of children's cases, the Friendly Societies themselves might contribute. And the Dispensaries' incomes might be supplemented by grants made in accordance with Section 13 (1) of the Education Act of 1907.

We have set forth this scheme at somewhat wearisome length, although it is still under consideration, in order to indicate the function of such a representative Council as we have set up in Hampstead. On that Council, the local division of the British Medical Association is represented by two members, the Trades Council by four members, the Oddfellows and Foresters by two members respectively, the Hearts of Oak by one member, the Dispensaries by two members, the Hospitals by four members. But the three local departments of municipal government are all more or less closely concerned in such a scheme. The Guardians, who possess perhaps the best equipped dispensary in the borough, are represented by two members; the Borough Council, the co-operation of whose health department is helpful to the move ment, has four members;* and the Managers of the County Schools, whose consent must be secured, have three members.

* Also the Mayor and Deputy-Mayor are President and Vice-President.

If one reflects how often good schemes are wrecked for want of some common ground whence a scheme, well considered from all points of view, may be worked out, the advantages of our union of all agencies becomes apparent.

XIV.—A Body of Social Doctrine.

This was a phrase by which Arnold Toynbee designated one of the ideals to which he gave, and for which he gave up, his life. If our action is to be effective, it must be based upon principle; and since principles vary with men's minds, some reconciliation or unification, some *body* of doctrine must be reached, before workers can hope to influence for good the lives and conditions of the people. Here again we have trusted to representative control; and representative control has has not failed us. Our Board of Social Study was composed of the chairmen of the local Committees of Assistance, reinforced by a few economists and social experts. It was successful in the formation of many Social Study Circles in congregations and local societies; but as we said on page 10, it always looked forward to the establishment of a general course of study that should at once harmonise and inform the action of all the workers in the borough. Accordingly the Representative Council of Social Welfare, appointed a special committee on Domiciliary Visiting, consisting of the Rural Dean and other leading clergy of the Established and Free Churches with a few representative women and laymen, including Miss F. K. Urwick, an experienced District Visitor, who acted as hon. secretary. We shall deal later on with their reference, as it related to the main subject they were asked to consider; but an interim report was sent in by this special committee recommending, as the first essential in any systematisation of visiting, a common training at once theoretical and practical for the visitors. In accordance with this recommendation, a sessional course of the character suggested has been inaugurated and is being attended steadily by an average audience of over seventy students—chiefly district, and other, visitors amongst the poor. We believe that this piece of work alone would justify the Council's existence, for it must exercise far-reaching results in one of the most important departments of social work—friendly visiting and its influence upon family life.

XV.—Elberfeld in London.

The special committee on Domiciliary Visiting could, therefore, look back with some satisfaction upon certain achievements of our system of co-operative control; although they were fully aware how much had yet to be done.

(1) Virtually complete intercommunication between all assisting agencies had been secured by our system of registration; whilst the permanent allocation of certain families (composite as to their relations with several churches) to certain churches and societies, or to the Guardians, had minimised the possibilities of overlapping.

(2) The release of the district visitor in several parishes from almsgiving, and the administration of assistance by weekly or fortnightly committees representative of the churches, had purified the friendly influence of the visitor, and the spiritual influence of every church.

(3) The Social Study Circles, by rendering continuous social study easy, attractive, and practical, had paved the way for the Continuous Course, now running, which aims at providing such a general equipment as to eliminate the necessity, in all but exceptional cases, of employing a fresh visitor to meet fresh needs unstudied by the visitor already at work.

But the committee had to consider not merely the areas where the whole system, so far as it went, was already in force, but others where it was as yet incomplete The committee asked itself: What is the problem taken at its worst? A new family enters a district—a poor family in a poor neighbourhood. Supposing two denominations, seeking souls to be saved, in all good faith, but without intercommunication, invite their attention at church, or mission, or chapel. This in itself is a kind of confusion that might be eliminated, especially in very poor quarters, for it is bad enough. But it may be worse. Suppose the newcomers are in actual want, and suppose one or both of the denominations, ignorant of each other's action, begin to give relief? How will the lowest class we are thinking of escape something worse than confusion, something more like corruption—not from the motives that prompt, but in the results

which may follow, these negligent gifts? Yes, negligent, not in their kindness and care for the poor; but careless and unkind in their neglect of what others, equally earnest may be striving, at the same time, and in the same home, to effect.

But we have not yet ended our account of the invasions and confusions to which the poor are subject. The visitors of the churches are not the only visitors. Apart from rent collectors, insurance collectors, and others, there are the school visitors, the care committee visitors of the school managers, the health visitors, the separate visitors of all the children's societies—Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment, Invalid Children's Aid, Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Children's Country Holidays. We need not labour the list of these. Their sum is great. But if the purposes for which the visits are made were catalogued, the confusion of counsel would be still more apparent.

There is a host of visitors, in every London Borough at least, representative of the municipal bodies and lay societies. The seriousness with which these visitors conceive their duties will determine the earnestness and persistence of their advice, their persuasion and their practical schemes for each family visited. One visitor may be bringing port wine or brandy to the man pledged by another visitor to total abstinence. The child destined by a phthisis visitor for the isolation and special treatment of a Sanatorium, may be sent by another to regain its strength amongst a crowd of little cousins in a country cottage. The young and ignorant mother, who is being carefully guided by a lady Sanitary Inspector in the nurture of her infant, may be presented by some other visitor whose authority the mother deems to be greater, with a deleterious patent food. After much of the best kind of persuasion a father has consented to apprentice a bright lad to a trade. Another visitor nips this in the bud with a pecuniarily seductive offer of a situation that will lead to nothing but a place in an unskilled labour market already overstocked.

Let it be granted that nothing is due to our self-respect, our consideration for others, or our sense of humour. But let this be answered: Is it just to the poor that these multiplied invasions of their homes, these divided counsels, involving life and death, good and evil, should stand in the way of trained thought and orderly service? The Report of the Special Committee which follows, indicates two simple methods of minimising the evil:—(1) The co-operation of interparochial committees of assistance, representative of all bodies of visitors; (2) The ascertainment by every visitor, as one of her most important duties, of the relations of the various members of each family to other organisations and visitors.

Report of the Special Committee.

The Special Committee has already presented its first or interim Report dealing with what its members regarded as their first duty under the circumstances, viz., to recommend that such visitors as feel the need of it should be offered a training that will enable them to deal with all ordinary cases of distress, without the frequent intervention of a special visitor. This Interim Report met with the approval of the General Executive and of the Council; and, accordingly, in co-operation with the Board of Social Studies, we have arranged a series of twenty-one addresses on practical subjects. A preliminary course of four addresses has been attended on the Tuesday mornings of November by an average of over seventy ladies. By the kind permission of the Vicar of Trinity Church, these addresses have been given in Trinity Church Hall. These are to be followed after Christmas by ten lectures on Methods of Public Assistance. After Easter visits to Institutions will be arranged. A Reading Party has also been formed this term amongst a few of those attending the lectures.

2. The Special Committee next held a meeting in conjunction with the Upper Hampstead Committees of Assistance with a view to ascertaining what were the views of the heads of Religious Bodies and other Societies in Upper Hampstead, as to the possibility of ensuring a friendly visitor for every family likely to need a visitor's help. The possibility of

introducing some modification of the Elberfeld System was considered, and Dr. Horton and Dr. Newton Marshall were in favour of an attempt being made in that direction. Another speaker suggested that one of the chief difficulties of the German system lay in the want of proper communication between the visitors under that system, and those who are visiting on behalf of religious and other voluntary Associations, over the same areas. It was accordingly resolved, with the cordial concurrence of Dr. Horton and Dr. Newton Marshall, that an attempt should be made, in the two parishes covered by the operations of the Upper Hampstead Committee of Assistance, to ascertain as exactly as possible what visiting was already systematised, who the visitors were, and what families they visited.

3. Returns have been received from all the Churches and Societies at work within these two parishes, except from the Salvation Army, viz., the Parish Church and Christ Church, St. Mary's, Holly Hill (Roman Catholic), Lyndhurst Road Congregational Church, Heath Street Baptist Chapel, Prince Arthur Road Wesleyan Chapel, Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, the Invalid Children's Aid Association, the Care Committee of New End School, the Guardians, the Upper Hampstead Committee of the Council of Social Welfare.

Although it is true that overlapping in material gifts has been reduced to a minimum by our system of Registration, and conference, and by the permanent allotment, for the purposes of relief, of the various composite families—families whose members are connected with more than one religious organisation—yet we regretted to find that whilst a very few very poor families were apparently not being visited at all, certain families were being visited by more religious bodies than one.

4. We think that both these difficulties may be met by means of our established machinery. In the district selected for our enquiry we have a Committee, representative of every religious and other body, engaged in the work of Assistance. Small Conferences consisting only of the workers actually concerned can therefore adjust the visiting of such families as are connected with more than one body. Nor will it be difficult to secure fresh visitors for those at present unvisited, as soon as the Committee is advised which families these are. But in order to carry out these arrangements it will be necessary to know, further than we already know, precisely how this institutional overlapping occurs in each family. We would therefore earnestly recommend that every regular visitor of a family ascertain, gradually of course and not as the subject of a special enquiry, to what religious and social organisations each member of a family belongs. Some "overlapping" in the sense of visiting by more than one religious body is, we fear, inevitable so long as various members of the same family, living under the same roof, have attached themselves to different religious bodies; but we hope and believe that the use of such opportunities by the Visitor, in order to influence the convictions of the other members of the family, is becoming in Hampstead more and more rare, owing to the good feeling and more intimate association existing between the representatives of the various religious organisations: an association which is at least in part due to opportunities for common work afforded by the Council of Social Welfare. The Vicar of the Parish and the Vicar of Christchurch have both recorded their opinion that the steps taken to prevent overlapping of Relief have resulted in a distinct improvement in the tone of those neighbourhoods where that reform has been effected; and we hope for still further gain as a result of the fresh efforts we now ask all visitors to make.

5. But it is not from religious bodies alone, by any means, that the difficulty arises. There are several lay societies, doing excellent work,

but yet, unfortunately, traversing the visits of the Churches Visitors', viz., the Phthisis and Infants' Health Committees, other visitors of the Standing Committees of the Executive of the Council of Social Welfare, the visitors of the Care Committees, the visitors of the Children's Country Holiday Fund, the Invalid Children's Aid Associations, and of other excellent organisations. These in their aggregate actually outnumbered the visitors of the Established Church. The Pthisis visitors alone visit nearly 150 families.

We have already made a beginning of reform here by invitations, most willingly accepted, to the hon. secretary of the Infants Health Committee, the Medical Officer of Health for Hampstead, and the lady Sanitary Inspector, to address and advise three meetings of District Visitors as to the treatment of families under the system known as Health Visiting. And the Vicars of the Parish and Christ Church have since arranged with the Phthisis Committee for a beginning to be made in the clearance of overlapping with that Committee by the use of the services of the District Visitors for Phthisis Visiting.

It will be seen that progress must be slow, if, instead of adopting a system which ignores the work of others, and gives an appearance of order which only covers confusion, we take into account, and endeavour to adjust, the diverse efforts of all workers; and to train for their work all who have set themselves to serve the poor.

None who have the least acquaintance with the missionary methods that obtain in the poorest quarters of our greater cities will deny the difficulties we have met. But only a few both know them and realise their danger. The majority of those whose attention is drawn to them will simply adopt the attitude that it is impossible to introduce system into a complication of so many discordant elements. And yet in other walks of life far more complicated matters have to be disentangled and settled. Those who are familiar with Mr. and Mrs. Webb's "Industrial Democracy," for instance, may remember the striking passage in which the extreme complications that attend the collective bargaining of the cotton-weavers are described. The factors that enter into the piecework rates of the Lancashire cotton operatives are so complicated that both the employers and the workpeople have found it necessary to employ permanent professional experts devoting their whole time to the interests of the employers' association and the trades union respectively. The agreed wage depends on many factors involved in the machinery, the materials, their quality and wear and tear, and the arithmetical calculations needed for countless differing cases. Yet the two experts under the representative control of the employers' and workmen's associations solve the problems in the end to the satisfaction of all parties. The Captains and the rank and file of Industry seek for their justice through a host of bewildering facts and most difficult calculations based upon them, although the end may be but the rise or fall of wages by a penny or twopence. Shall not we who have the lives of the unhappiest at stake "venture as warily, use the same skill?"

At any rate, in Hampstead, experience shows us that all these difficulties due to isolated and impulsive action yield to treatment—yield, that is, to experience, forethought, and representative control.

XVI.—Conclusion.

Our history, therefore, has been a history, firstly, of co-operation; secondly, of co-operation; and, thirdly, of co-operation—co-operation between the bodies that deal with the unemployed; between the bodies that administer Poor Law Medical Relief and those that administer through the Borough Council the Public Health Acts; between the Guardians of the Poor and the neighbours of the poor as to the respective spheres of Public Relief and private charity; between those who formerly undertook Relief work as District Visitors and the other agencies working over the same area; between the National Church and one of the great national movements of workmen for mutual help.

The crying need for co-operation and unity in social work to-day results from the great and irregular growth of our Voluntary and Municipal Institutions. Their numbers and great variety have indicated how much there is to be done, and how many there are to do it. But we found the army of Social Reform still an army of irregular bands. If its units and groups were to turn out decent work, their efforts must be consolidated. Each group must learn to trust other groups, to share in some of the work, to specialise in some, and to give up some altogether. Unless this spirit of mutual help and mutual concession is evolved, social work cannot be disentangled from the muddle it now almost everywhere presents. The question arises: How, by whom, and at whose expense, is this disentanglement to be performed, so that the personal and financial resources of the community may be sustained in co-ordination? It might be attempted in one of three ways. The State or the Municipality might attempt it, but at present neither shows any sign even that it appreciates the need. Or, one society out of the many societies might attempt it. One society has attempted it, and, so far, has failed. It has failed because it has not learnt the simple lesson that except in the most rudimentary organisms growth takes place from within; or because, knowing that, it has not troubled to apply its knowledge to the social facts with which it was concerned. Or, finally, all the societies might attempt it together.

In Hampstead the attempt to "organise" "charities" from without had long been abandoned as a delusive enterprise. Patiently and attentively, and for many years, members of the now Associated Agencies who believed in unity and co-operation had studied the Agencies with which they were already connected, or working with other Agencies, had endeavoured to learn their aims and point of view. A very few persons in a Borough who concentrate their time and strength in this way can do a good deal; and the Hampstead Associated Agencies have certainly become what they are in unity and co-operation because their representatives were willing to learn other Agencies' methods of work, to admit that other people's point of view demanded serious and sympathetic attention, to work hard at other people's jobs, and to take as their wages —unity and co-operation.

Now, as soon as the case for association had been fairly made out, as it had been in Hampstead; as soon as enough progress in co-operation had been made as to justify it to the mass of reasonable persons; the time had arrived when the regulation of the new relations should be placed in the hands of some recognised, responsible body. The linking of personal effort through the local committees, and through the local conferences for the prevention of overlapping; the linking of various forms of public medical assistance through the Health Society; the linking of various Provident Societies through the Industrial Committee, and of various Rescue Agencies through our Rescue and Maternity Committee; the powerful influence that is wielded, and might be abused, by a Board of Social Study—these made up an organisation at once too delicate and too extensive to be left without some such central support as a representative Council supplies. It was because those of us who had been responsible for establishing these delicate and yet necessary connections between many institutions (municipal, endowed, and voluntary) felt the weight of our responsibility, that we laid before these various agencies a definite scheme for a representative Council. We believed that co-operation had gone as far as it could go without being the outcome of direct personal control.

Nine years of steady growth had been marked by the appointment of a General Executive Committee, and by the development at the hands of the new body of some dozen young and vigorous Committees which were applying the old principles in new ways. The one comparatively simple response to the application made by the poor *after* distress had overtaken them, had been superseded by an entirely New Organisation—sympathetic and comprehensive in its relation to other agencies, aggressive and varied in its attack upon social evils, preventive first and curative afterwards, constructive of a new system in which the Churches, the great Friendly Societies, and the three main branches of Municipal Administration co-operate for the improvement in the condition of the people.

We had lost the simplicity and possibly some of the precision of an army made up of one Arm. We had gained the complexity, interdependence, and spontaneity needed for modern warfare. In fact, we had become a fighting force, a Movement with a purpose. And it has been given us to see some of the fruits of our labours in

a decreased pauperism, bettered conditions for the working classes, and a new interest at once humane and scientific, in the social problem. But we are thankful to think that more than this has flowed from common efforts for which our Society in Hampstead has been a rallying ground. A better understanding between men and women of different classes, sects, and parties has resulted in a complete revolution in the administration of voluntary and municipal assistance, and an extraordinary development of the Friendly Societies' movement.

CONSTITUTION OF THE HAMPSTEAD COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

I.—The name of the Council shall be The Hampstead Council of Social Welfare. (The number of representatives that may be appointed by each agency are given in the second column below.)

II.—The Council shall consist of—

(1) Representatives of such of the following Agencies as are willing to co-operate. (2) All the members of the Executive, and three representatives of each of the Committees and Conferences of the C.O.S., and of its Associated Agencies.

(1) *Co-operating Agencies.*

Agency.	No. of Representatives.
Hampstead Ruridecanal Chapter	4
Hampstead Free Church Council	4
Jewish Synagogue	1
Dominican Church, Southampton Road	1
Society of Friends, Willoughby Road	1
Salvation Army, Hampstead Headquarters	1
Ethical Society	1
The Three Unitarian Churches in Hampstead	1
Borough Council	4
Board of Guardians	2
Council Elementary Schools	4
The Wells and Campden Charity	2
Stock's Charity	1
Hampstead Division of the British Medical Association	2
The Hampstead General Hospital	2
The North London Hospital, Mount Vernon	2
The Hampstead Provident Dispensary	2
The Kilburn Provident Medical Institute	2
The Kilburn Dispensary	1
The Hampstead Nursing Association	1
The Kilburn Nursing Association	1
The Brondesbury Crêche	1*
The Hampstead and St. Pancras Day Nursery	1
The Hampstead Branch of the Invalid Children's Aid Association	1
The Hampstead Branch of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	1
The Hampstead Rescue Association	1
The Hampstead Women's Shelter	1
The Committees of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants	1
Hampstead Branches of the Girls' Friendly Society	1
Hampstead Young Men's Christian Association	1
Hampstead Young Women's Christian Association	1
The Women's and Girls' Diocesan Association	1
Christian Social Union, Hampstead Branch	1
Hampstead Council for the Promotion of Public Morality	1
Hampstead Temperance Council	2
Hampstead Health Society	1
Hampstead Branch of the Anti-Sweating League	1
Hampstead Employment Exchange Committee	1
Hampstead Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment Committee	1
The Hampstead Trades Council	4
Court Goulding's Pride of the Ancient Order of Foresters	1
Court Abbey of the Ancient Order of Foresters	1
Prince George of Cambridge, Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows	1
Dansie Lodge of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows	1
The Hearts of Oak (Hampstead District)	1
The Carlton Lodge of the Total Abstinent Sons of the Phœnix	1
Lyndhurst Road Friendly Society	1
Adult Schools	1
The Hampstead Working Men's Association	1
Kilburn Conference of the Society of St. Elizabeth	1
Kilburn Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul	1
Total	74

(2) *Executive and its Committees, and Conferences of the Associated Agencies.*

General Executive	25
Finance Committee	3
Pension Committee	3
Board of Social Study Committee	3
Industrial and Provident Committee	3
Joint Phthisis Committee	3
Rescue and Maternity Committee	3
Upper Hampstead Committee	3
Fleet Road	3
Belsize Committee	3
Kilburn Committee	3
Kilburn Conference	3†
Total C.O.S. and Associated Agencies	58

III.—The representatives of the Agencies shall be appointed by the Agencies scheduled on the request of the Executive Committee of the Council triennially in the May succeeding the Borough Council's and Guardian's elections.

IV.—If any Agencies fail to appoint their representatives within three months of the official request for the same, the Council may itself proceed to select representatives.

V.—The Council shall elect its own President and Vice-Presidents annually. All other officers shall be appointed by the General Executive Committee. Twenty-five per cent. of its actual members shall form a quorum.

VI.—The Council shall meet quarterly for the discussion of matters of common interest, to receive reports and suggestions from the General Executive, and to make reports and suggestions to the General Executive. Special meetings shall be summoned whenever the General Executive Committee desires to consult the Council, or upon requisition from 10 per cent. of the Council's actual members.

VII.—The Council shall elect triennially in the May succeeding the Borough Council's and Guardians' elections, a General Executive Committee, which shall be the District Committee of the London Charity Organisation Society.

VIII.—The Council shall perform all executive functions through the General Executive, which shall consist of twenty persons, ten of whom at least shall have served upon the General Executive, or upon any of its Standing Committees during the previous year. The General Executive Committee shall have power to co-opt five additional members and to fill all vacancies caused by death, or resignation, or otherwise. Six of its actual members shall form a quorum.

IX.—Alterations of the rules must receive the assent both of a majority at the Council and of a majority at the General Executive. Any resolution for the alteration of the Rules must be received by the Hon. Secretary to the Council at least fifteen days before the meeting at which it is to be brought forward. A clear week's notice must be given to members of the Council of any such proposed alteration.

* The only agency that has failed to send a representative.—T.H.N.

† The only Conference not converted into a Committee.—T.H.N.

MEMORANDUM BY MR. T. HANCOCK NUNN IN REGARD TO UNEMPLOYMENT.

I. The Work of the Central Unemployed Body.

Some of the chief difficulties under which the Central Unemployed Body has laboured, have been caused by the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, and the Regulations of the Local Government Board under that Act. In London, owing to the machinery of the Act all the Distress Committees in the various boroughs were brought into existence, and many began to act, before the Central Unemployed Body met. This produced a variety of method and principle in dealing with cases of distress, which it took the Classification Committee a couple of years to reduce to any degree of uniformity.

With regard to the classes of cases with which the Central Unemployed Body was called upon to deal, the regulations placed the body in an initial difficulty. Preference was to be given to men who had shown thrift and had been in regular employment. But in spite of the appeals of the Classification Committee of the Central Unemployed Body, the Local Government Board declined to allow a place in their record paper for any record as to the Applicant's membership of a Friendly Society, and further declined to afford any facilities in the record paper for enquiries into employment extending further back than one year. These two facts combined to make any classification on the lines laid down by the Local Government Board extremely difficult. The two readiest means of ascertaining thrift and previous regularity of employment were withheld. And the impression was given that the Central Authority did not really care for classification on these lines. It is also the fact that the circumstances of the time stimulated an overwhelming proportion of applications from labourers whose employment had been more or less casual in the past. In dealing with these applications the Central Unemployed Body was successful at least in one particular. It set up a standard of work and wages for men employed in relief work, which to the utmost of its ability it enforced. The men employed under the Act, whether directly by the Body or indirectly through the Municipal Bodies worked under careful supervision, worked five days a week continuously for several weeks, were paid at a rate per hour equal to the Market rate, but at a weekly rate which was below the ordinary Market rate for labourers in London. To have established this principle and carried it out through three years, was a performance for which the Local Government Board and the Central Unemployed Body should have full credit.

Then with regard to Hollesley Bay, "The Body" was placed in a fresh difficulty. Its predecessor, "The Fund" of Mr. Long's organization, had secured the Hollesley Bay estate and started the work there with the intention of using it for training purposes. It was realised that any work for the Unemployed must contain as far as possible this element, and that no permanent good would be effected unless the work given resulted in an improvement of industrial conditions and industrial character. But the President of the Local Government Board declined either to support with money, or countenance in any way the use of a colony secured under the Act, for any purposes but those of giving employment to the Unemployed.* Schemes therefore which had for their object the training of men for agricultural life, either fell to the ground, or were left to private enterprise. In spite of these facts, however, it is true that a small proportion of the men employed there have entered or re-entered upon agricultural life, and that a very much larger number have been transferred either to agricultural or other kinds of industrial life through emigration to Canada. It was as an introduction, we can hardly say as a training, for Canadian life, that the value of

* The Act was "An Act to establish organization with a view to the provision of *Employment or Assistance* for Unemployed Workmen in proper cases, and in the Local Government Board's Circular, 10th October, 1905, the Central Unemployed Body was described as empowered to assist by providing or contributing towards the provision of temporary work in such manner as they think best calculated to put him in a position to obtain regular work or other means of supporting himself."

the Colony was most conspicuous. A considerable proportion of the Body's emigrants were set up bodily, mentally and morally, before they emigrated, by a continuous stay at the Farm Colony.

The Emigration work of the Central Unemployed Body must also be described as successful. At a time when Canada required more workmen, and a certain class of workmen required a fresh industrial outlet, the Body dealt with real success with this department of its work. There is no doubt that the very careful enquiries instituted into the cases of these men before they were passed for emigration, enquiries in which the services of the Charity Organisation Society and of the East End Emigration Fund were very largely utilised, resulted in the selection of a class of men whose services were appreciated in Canada; and the Body was able in its "Experience, 1908" to quote a gratifying letter received from Mr. J. Obed Smith, the Assistant Superintendent of Emigration to the Canadian Government, in which he spoke in the following terms:—

> "We say, Give us more of such men. Our experience has been that the men sent out by the Unemployed Body have proved first class settlers."

That was because they had been carefully selected and many of them, before emigrating, "hardened out" on the land at Hollesley Bay. Unfortunately the tide of emigration was checked during the past winter by economic causes over which the Central Unemployed Body could exercise absolutely no control. But during the two years in which their operations were in full swing, there is no doubt that a large number of men were selected and placed in Canada who were much better calculated for the industrial life of the Colony than for industrial life in England. Very few applications were received from the skilled workmen, needed in England, and on the whole well able to find employment here; whilst the wastrel whose services are useless either here or elsewhere was weeded out by strict enquiry. But a large number of labourers, many of whom had drifted to London from the country, who were not first-class labourers in the sense of being able to hold their own in the competition of the London Market, received a fresh start under new and less exacting conditions that accorded with their capacity for work.

The Central Unemployed Body, therefore, secured relief-employment for a large number of men in and around London, under conditions which nearly all experts in the subject then approved. It gave a fresh start in the Colonies to many for whom there appeared to be no opening in the Mother Country. But more constructive work than the employment or rehabilitation of individual cases of distress was undertaken and performed. Mr. Chamberlain's attempt, as President of the Local Government Board in 1836, to co-ordinate in times of distress the work of the Vestries and the Boards of Guardians, was the precursor of the Labour Bureau Act of 1902. But there were left very serious traces which it has taken years to eradicate. The registers modelled on the 1886 arrangements were registers which aimed at procuring employment-relief. All their forms assumed that employment was to be given, not to the most efficient but to the most needy workmen, and long after the Labour Bureau had been established under the Act of 1902, there lingered amongst these forms all kinds of traces of this, in the request for information from applicants as to their rent, the number of their family, the earnings of the adult children and so on. When the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 gave to the Central Unemployed Body of London the duty of organizing the metropolitan employment exchanges, Mr. Long's "Fund" had already eliminated most of these traces of the Order of 1886, (1) by making it clear that the candidate for work had no need to state any of his resources or want of resources, but merely to explain his industrial character: (2) by absolutely separating the Exchanges, in their Officers, in their Offices, and in the whole spirit of the work, from the operations of the Distress Committees. It had gone further than this, for it had not only strengthened the old exchanges and started fresh ones, it had linked and co-ordinated them all by means of the Central Employment Exchange, pooling all information and rendering each local exchange effective over the whole metropolis. Here again, however, the actual operation† of the Act stopped short and failed to allow for full development. It was

† 2 (1), (2) and (3) imposes upon the Local Government Board, and in their default upon County Councils and County Borough Councils, duties which would have nationalised the federation of Labour Exchanges, had they been performed.

recognised from the beginning that no area less than national would meet the need Employment Exchanges had to meet; but the Regulations had laid down a system of labour-tight compartments co-terminous with the Central Unemployed Body's area. This precluded the possibility of any back-thrust to rural immigration, and although the Act of 1905 had allowed for the payment of migration expenses for workmen, who could show that they had found work in the country, the Local Government Board in reply to an application from the Central Employment Exchange for leave to deal with the fares of men for whom work was actually found in the country, replied that all such cases must be dealt with not by the Employment Exchange itself, but by the Distress Committees. As this involved an amount of time which could not be allowed in taking up a situation that was offered, the migratory clause of the Act practically became a dead letter.

I have ventured upon these considerations because it appears that the Central Unemployed Body for London was seriously hampered in every direction, both by the Act and by the Regulations of the Local Government Board; but that it triumphed over a great many difficulties, standardized the conditions of employment—relief, re-established some men in the colonies, and laid the basis for important constructive work in its organisation of employment exchanges. Much solid work has, however, been done independently of the Act. Gradually the Trades Unionist feeling against the Exchanges is being met and satisfied. The Local Exchange rooms have been placed at the disposal of Workmen's and Employers' Associations for meetings; some Trade Unions have even come to use the Exchanges as their own place of call. The last link with 1886 was severed when the Borough and Union area was abandoned last summer in recognition of the fact that an Employment Exchange has no direct relation to the Public Services of the Borough Council, and still less to the Public Relief of the Union, but must concentrate its efforts upon the ganglia of industry where labour most needs to be mobilised.

II.—The Preventive and Curative Treatment of Underemployment.

The fundamental principles of the English Poor Law of 1834 in regard to the treatment of the able-bodied were briefly (1) that all destitute applicants for relief should be relieved; (2) that, in order to prevent the subsidence of a dependent class, this universal offer should be safeguarded by rendering the lot of the pauper less eligible than that of the independent labourer. This element of ineligibility in the pauper's lot is secured by the Workhouse and other tests which involve loss of Personal Reputation, loss of Personal Freedom, and Disenfranchisement.

The Victorian Poor Law relating to the able-bodied may be said to have failed, so far as it did fail, by the failure of the principle of Deterrence. It should, and it does deter the independent labourer, because, unlike the ante 1834 Poor Law, it makes the pauper's lot less eligible than his. It was not foreseen then, perhaps it could not then have been foreseen, that it was the interest of the community, whilst safeguarding the independent labourer so far from himself, to go one step further and safeguard him, and at the same time safeguard the community, by withdrawing from competition in the open market the ineligible labourer, whether his ineligibility was economic or personal. Such a safeguard for the independence of labour if it be not secured by the compulsory withdrawal of the ineligible labourer must be found in offering a condition which, whilst it is less eligible than the lot of the independent labourer is more eligible than the lot of the dependent, unemployed and unprovided for labourer.

It is to the disregard of this important distinction that many of our "Unemployed" difficulties are due. Few enactments in the history of legislation have been more strikingly successful than the re-creation of the independent labourer by the offer of Ineligible Employment Relief. But it succeeded, because it threw the labourer back upon his own resources, personal or economic; and it failed, and it continues to fail, where the labourer lacks these resources.

Surely the treatment of the problem this ineligible labourer presents must be twofold. The first and important question is: How can we in the future endow him, or help him to endow himself, with the necessary equipment, personal and

economic, of independence. The answer is: By Education, Training, and Mobility. The second question is:—If in the past we have failed to deal with the unemployables (as we have failed so far, being confronted with a class living parasitically, and lowering moral, hygienic and economic standards all round them), how are we to deal with them now? The answer to this question is more difficult. The earlier Victorian Poor Law frankly leaves them alone. The State has made its offer of relief. The offer is declined. The State's responsibility ends. Not so that of the growing conscience of the community. The later history of Victorian Poor Law shows the philanthropist on the one hand, and the philanthropic guardian on the other, reducing the old test to insignificance. This reaction on two fronts has vitiated, although it could not wholly destroy, the personal care of the community that was to have been safeguarded by the Poor Law.* and the Mutual Provident movement which only asked that the State should neither interfere, nor compete, with its efforts.

III. The Preventive Treatment by Education and Training.

The "unemployable" looms largest in the Urban Centres. The largest industry is still agriculture. The figures submitted to us by the Board of Trade, coupled with the statistics of Distress Committees, at last prove conclusively the conjecture of common experience, that the city dweller is under a constant process of being ousted by the countrymen from the regular work of the city and sinking into the ranks of the casuals, of whom he constitutes a large majority.

Now, there are two ways in which the State and the community may co-operate, are co-operating, to re-adjust the balance between town and country labour. The enormous strides made by Continental countries in agricultural organization and the steps being taken in this country in educating farmers and peasantry, re-populating and enriching barren districts, promoting co-operative industry and reviving the social interests and attractions of the country-side, are well-known to those who follow the movement.†

By what means is it possible for the Government to supplement the help already given to the movement by the Board of Agriculture, the County Councils and other Bodies throughout the Country? The line of action has been sufficiently indicated by many expert witnesses, but the precise significance of their testimony, its relation to the problem presented by the urbanization of the countryman, has not been brought out.

If the school age were raised to 16, and no industrial employment of children under that age allowed, the State might take up the responsibility, not of conducting children through a certain process up to an uncertain age, but of turning out a clearly defined product at the age of 16. If the State borrowed the hint suggested by the Scotch Leaving Certificate, and by the practice of some Continental countries, in retaining control to a later age of lads and girls who had not reached a certain stage of development; if education might be made more individual, by the reduction of the present classes, and by the hygienic adaptation of the class-rooms in our elementary schools to about half their present accommodation, we might begin to turn out citizens prepared in some degree for the conduct of life. How should the longer period and the more intensive culture be turned to account?

1. What has already been dealt with by many witnesses—the training of the eye and hand manual dexterity, drawing, the manipulation of materials, some acquaintance with machinery, some direction on the path of general or special culture, sketching, singing, country tastes, etc.

2. The later years of school life should become increasingly *purposive*. The parents should be invited to consider their child's future occupation; the Labour Gazette (of the future) and the Employment Exchange Superintendent (of the future) should be consulted; and the earlier stages of technical or specific training should be entered upon.

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* Some of the Tudor Statutes are very clear on this point. The State provision for all who really needs it is to enable the charitable to select. Again, not begging only, but giving to beggars is made a punishable offence.

† "Agricultural Organisation," by Pratt, and the serial and other publications of the Agricultural Organisation Society.

3. But apart from technical training for boys, if we recognise that labourers will still be needed and labourers of increasing intelligence, one great use of the extension of school life would lie in the production, by gymnastics and other methods, of young men of increased physical power, combined with manual dexterity and mental alertness.

4. Medical Inspection might in the later years of school life be supplemented by greatly needed instruction upon *practical* human physiology—food, air, exercise, alcohol, the sexual relations, citizenship.

5. Definite and much needed teaching on such subjects as the principles of Trades Unionism, Co-operation, Friendly Societies. These, especially the last, might be taught practically.* The Inspection of school children under the Education Act, 1907, and the action of the Health Societies, are tending to a care of the health of the children which must produce a marked influence on the next generation.

6. For the girls, practical housewifery, care of infants, nursing, athletics, etc.

7. For the lads, home arts, athletics, cadet corps, etc.

8. But one of the great uses of the increased years of Education would lie in the back-thrust it would enable us to give to the urban aspect of the Rural Exodus. Surely it is more economical, wise and kind to send boys (and girls for bee-keeping, poultry farming, gardening, &c.) to learn country life and work, whilst it has attractions for them,† instead of sending them to Farm Colonies ten or twenty years later, when city life has become habitual and their industrial opportunities have been lost. The same remark applies with less force, owing to parental objections, to emigration, but with equal force to the rural education of children, who, having lost their parents, are being brought up by the State.

What would be some of the results, as bearing upon our problem, of such an extension of compulsory Education?

(i) It would provide agricultural employment in the new and more highly productive system now coming into force.

(ii) It would relieve the labour market to the extent of the School detention effected, giving an opportunity for porterage and messages to the older men now needing employment. More would have to be paid for older labour; but the cost to the community would be less than the cost of the present destruction of youth; and thus might not prove to be less, but more efficient.

(iii) The boys' and girls' high wages, which now render them independent of family ties and wasteful in their expenditure, would be reserved for later and wiser years. (By arranging a continuous succession of opportunities in occupations, a considerable number of lads now stranded after a few years' service might still be economically retained as messengers, always provided that special opportunities of continued education and employment were afforded them.)

(iv) We should enable the urban youth to compete on more equal terms with the youth from the country.

Education costs a great deal already. It is going to cost more. But it will never cost so much as the neglect of it would cost. No change in the Poor Law will have the same *direct* results in preventing distress as will a modification, in the direction here indicated, of the Education Acts. In a word—the problem of preventing under-employment is fundamentally an educational problem, and as such it must be treated.

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* In Hampstead during the past five years, over 600 school children have joined the Foresters.

† The evidence of the Industrial Schools put in by London County Council.

IV.—The Curative Treatment by a National Industrial Intelligence Department and Labour Exchanges.

So much has been said in comment upon the mass of evidence we have considered that I shall confine my note of dissent from the Majority Report to the fewest possible words.

A National Industrial Intelligence Department.

The Report assumes rather than describes the important changes that must take place in the central arrangements of the Board of Trade if the suggested local arrangements are to be successful in the decasualisation of the now unskilled labourers. As the National Intelligence Department with world-wide sources of information, it should be the final arbitrator as to the degree of distress at any given moment. It should decide this important question of fact from purely scientific data, and until it has declared exceptional distress in any group or groups of industry or in any given locality, no exceptional steps to absorb surplus labour should be taken. But when it has done so, another department of the Board of Trade should be ready to recommend, from data constantly accumulating, largely through the same channels—the exchange system—but of course from administrative sources—what local works of real and special utility, which would not otherwise have been undertaken, may be undertaken as a means of absorbing surplus labour. At all times, whether of exceptional distress or of exceptional prosperity, the "play" between these two intelligence departments would determine Governmental action in supporting local schemes, or in pushing forward or retarding works of national or local importance, always on purely commercial lines, and where local authorities carried out the work, by contract. I attach the greatest importance to the work of the first of these two departments, whose freedom from any Executive interference or popular pressure should be as strictly preserved as are judicial sentences or the Reports of the Meteorological Office.

But I have so much belief in the possibility of husbanding national and local necessary work, and in the new provisions we are proposing for the better education of the young, the increased mobility of labour, the substitution of Training for Deterrence, and the substitution of Detention for Vagabondage, that I believe this "South cone" will seldom be hoisted. Still I cannot regard as "transitory" the possibility of such exceptional Distress as would necessitate exceptional measures. Against such a possibility the maintenance of these two departments would be a cheap Insurance; whilst from a statistical point of view it would be priceless.

V.—Decasualisation.

There are three special measures of Decasualisation to which I should like to profess my adherence.

1. Although I consider Mr. Webb's proposal to compel employers to use the Exchange for taking on all casual labour (engagements of less than a month) as impracticable, I believe that a beginning might be made with dock-labour; that Exchanges should be established in all docks and their use by employers and employed made compulsory.

So many efforts have been made from all sides to tackle the problem of the casual docker; they have been so unsuccessful; the condition of the labourers is so miserable; that State intervention of a compulsory character seems to me amply justified. The regularisation of the wages of the dockers might be aided by their training as a regular staff to perform much of the necessary work about the docks which would under present circumstances be given to other trades.

2. The evidence submitted annually to the House of Commons, and the experience of all who are connected with the administration of the Act of 1905, shows how large a share of the responsibility for casual labour—with its consequent demoralisation and stagnation—is borne by the Borough Councils and County Borough Councils. It was this assumption by Borough

Councils of the work of Public Assistance by doles of work that led to Mr. Long's action in 1904. The evil has not yet been cured; and as the present attitude of the Councils will, if it is persisted in, undo to an unknown extent the effect of the recommendations in this Report in favour of better methods carefully thought out, I would recommend that a special enquiry be held as to the best methods of checking this kind of expenditure. Perhaps nothing short of the pressure of an informed public opinion can really check the evil; but I confess that the analogy of the work of a County Council's District Surveyor suggests one possibility to me. The District Surveyor is appointed in each Borough by the London County Council under the provisions of the London Building Acts, 1894 to 1905. Notice of all building operations in his district must be sent to him, in order that no structures dangerous to the public may be erected. The inquiry I have suggested would elucidate the desirability and possibility of framing Regulations and appointing officials, under an Act of Parliament, with a view to supervising the employment of casual labour by local authorities, in order to prevent their administration of employment relief.

3. The evidence submitted to the Vagrancy Committee, and our own observations, have clearly indicated to me that vagrants should be left exclusively to the Police. The advent of the Employment Exchange with powers of assisted migration renders it absolutely unnecessary for any department of Public Assistance to deal with the Vagrant. The *bona fide* seeker for work will seek it at the Employment Exchange, and to that work, if he be necessitous, he will be sent as soon as it is found. It is to be hoped that the more humane arrangements now recommended for the Unemployed by means of graduated labour colonies and daily institutional work, will gradually oust the night shelter and soup kitchen from the favour of the subscribing public. The encouragement in our midst of a nomad and penniless population is a constant terror to women and children in country districts, and altogether incompatible with a settled civilization. On the other hand the equally humane but sterner methods of the penal colonies we have recommended offer the best chance of restoration for the vagabond, and a certainty of protection for the public.

(Signed) THOMAS HANCOCK NUNN.

SEPARATE REPORT

BY THE

REV. PREBENDARY H. RUSSELL WAKEFIELD,

MR. FRANCIS CHANDLER,

MR. GEORGE LANSBURY,

AND

MRS. SIDNEY WEBB.

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INTRODUCTION.

We find ourselves unable to agree with the Report of the majority of our colleagues. Our reasons will be plain when we have stated the facts as they have been revealed to us by the investigations, and set forth the reforms which, in our opinion, these facts irresistibly demand.

PART I.

THE DESTITUTION OF THE NON-ABLE-BODIED.

The Poor Law is at the present time only to a small extent concerned with the man who is able-bodied. The various sections of the non-able-bodied—the children, the sick, the mentally defective, and the aged and infirm—make up to-day nine-tenths of the persons relieved by the Destitution Authorities. In Scotland indeed, no other persons can lawfully receive Poor Law relief. In England and Wales, though persons in distress from want of employment may be relieved under the Poor Law, and have, at times, loomed large in Poor Law statistics, this section now forms only a small fraction of the pauper population. In Ireland the position is essentially the same as in England.

CHAPTER I.

The General Mixed Workhouse of To-day.

The Poor Law Report of 1834 was concerned, almost exclusively, with the problem of Able-bodied Destitution; that is to say, with the case of the labouring man unable, through unemployment or under-payment, to maintain himself and his family. The one positive recommendation with regard to the children and the aged that can be extracted from the Report is the repeated demand that, where these classes are provided for in institutions, they must be, not in a single "mixed" institution, however perfect might be the nominal classification, but in entirely separate buildings, with distinct rules and arrangements, and under quite independent management. Nothing can be stronger than the condemnation in the Report of the General Mixed Workhouse, whether large or small, old or newly designed for its purpose. The Assistant Commissioners had found, in the great majority of parishes, the Workhouse "occupied by sixty or eighty paupers, made up of a dozen or more neglected children (under the care, perhaps, of a pauper), about twenty or thirty able-bodied adult paupers of both sexes, and probably an equal number of aged and impotent persons, proper objects of relief. Amidst these the mother of bastard children and prostitutes live without shame. . . . To these may often be added a solitary blind person, one or two idiots, and not infrequently are heard, from among the rest, the incessant ravings of some neglected lunatic. In such receptacles the sick poor are often immured." On account of the inevitable association of the different classes, even the largest and best designed General Mixed Workhouses were equally condemned. "Even in the larger Workhouses," continues the Report, "internal sub-divisions do not afford the means of classification, where the inmates dine in the same rooms, or meet or see each other in the ordinary business of the place. In the largest houses, containing from 800 to 1,000 inmates, where there is comparatively good order, and in many respects, superior management, it is almost impossible to prevent the formation and extension of vicious connections. Inmates who see each other, though prevented from communicating in the house, often become associates when they meet out of it. It is found almost impracticable to subject all the various classes within the same house to an appropriate treatment. One part of a class of adults often so closely resembles a part of another class, as to make any distinction in treatment appear arbitrary and capricious to those who are placed in the inferior class, and to create discontents, which the existing authority is too feeble to suppress, and so much complexity as to render the object attainable only by great additional expense and remarkable skill." Hence, stated the Report, "at least four classes are necessary, the aged and really impotent, the children, the able-bodied females, the able-bodied males," for each of which distinct institutions were to be provided. "Each class," continues the Report, "might thus receive an appropriate treatment; the old might enjoy their indulgences without torment from the boisterous; the children be educated; and the able-bodied subjected to such courses of labour and discipline as will repel the indolent and vicious."*

We regret to have to report that, notwithstanding the distinct and emphatic recommendations of the Report of 1834, to which it is commonly assumed that Parliament gave a general endorsement by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, the General Mixed Workhouse has not been abolished. In the course of the past half-century, a certain

* Report of Poor Law Commission of 1834, pp. 303, 306, 307 of the 1905 Edition.

number of specialised institutions, such as Poor Law Schools and Poor Law Infirmaries, to be hereafter described, have been established for the children and the sick of certain districts. But every one of the Unions of England, Wales and Ireland, and now a large number of parishes or combinations of parishes of Scotland, has its General Mixed Workhouse; and the great majority of the non-able-bodied poor for whom institutional treatment is provided are still to be found intermingled with the able-bodied men and women in these institutions. Of the 50,000 children who are in Poor Law Institutions in England and Wales, there are still 15,000 living actually inside General Mixed Workhouses.* We found that in Scotland, where it is commonly assumed that the Poor Law children are either boarded-out or maintained upon Outdoor Relief, there were 1845 children in the General Mixed Workhouses, or not far short of as many in proportion to population as in England itself.† In Ireland, out of 9,000 children maintained in Poor Law Institutions, no fewer than 8,000 are in the General Mixed Workhouses, where their condition is the worse in that they do not even go out to the public elementary day school, but are taught on the Workhouse premises. Nor is it otherwise with the sick and the aged. Of the uncounted host of inmates of Poor Law Institutions who are so sick or infirm as to need nursing or medical attendance—estimated to number in the United Kingdom at least 130,000—more than two-thirds are in General Mixed Workhouses. Of the 140,000 persons over sixty in Poor Law Institutions, only a thousand or two in England and Scotland, and none at all in Ireland, are in the separate establishments recommended by the Report of 1834, where "the old might enjoy their indulgences without torment from the boisterous." Commingled with this mass of non-able-bodied or dependent poor there may be found, in all the Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland, and in the Poorhouses of Scotland, a number of men and women in health and in the prime of life—termed "able-bodied" in England, Wales and Ireland, and "tests" or "turn-outs" in Scotland ‡—who are scarcely capable, from physical or mental defects, of earning a continuous livelihood. In the mammoth establishments of London, Glasgow, Liverpool, Dublin, and Belfast we found even a considerable number of really able-bodied and mentally competent men and women, who are "work-shy" or merely unemployed through misfortune—some of them being chronic "Ins and outs," or, as the Scotch say, "week-enders," who, whilst they add comparatively little to the official statistics of indoor pauperism, are a perpetual cause of demoralisation of the other inmates. In fact, the General Mixed Workhouse, including all classes of destitute persons, far from having been abolished, forms to-day the basis of the whole system of Poor Relief in England and Wales; it has, within the last century, spread over all Ireland; and we even see it, during the past decade, growing up in its worst forms in Scotland, which had formerly been free from its baneful influence.

(A) The Promiscuity of the General Mixed Workhouse.

We see no reason to differ from our predecessors, the Royal Commissioners of 1834, in their decisive condemnation of the General Mixed Workhouse. We do not wish to suggest or imply that the workhouses of to-day are places of cruelty; or that their 250,000 inmates are subjected to any deliberate ill-treatment. These institutions are, in nearly all cases, clean and sanitary; and the food, clothing and warmth are sufficient—sometimes more than sufficient—to maintain the inmates in physiological health. In some cases, indeed, the buildings recently erected in the Metropolis and elsewhere, have been

* Our Children's Investigator reports that the children living "in Workhouses are not diminishing in number, having remained between 21,000 and 22,000 for some years. Of these, 565 children of school age are still being taught in schools within the Workhouses, the remainder (of school age) being sent to Public Elementary Schools" (Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 2). A certain proportion of these children are in separate Poor Law infirmaries, which are officially classed as Workhouses. The exact figures, as revealed by the Commission's Census of Paupers on March 31st, 1906, were, for children under sixteen, in the ordinary wards of Workhouses, 14,439; in the sick wards, 4,119; in Poor Law infirmaries, 3,149.

† The Census of Paupers taken by the Commission showed that on March 31st, 1906, there were, in Scotland, 1,845 children under sixteen, simultaneously in the Poorhouses, and in Ireland, 9,148 on Indoor Relief (not yet in volume form). *See also* House of Commons Return No. 284 of 1907.

‡ It must be remembered that, in the official terminology of English and Irish Workhouses, the term "able-bodied" is applied practically to all men and women under sixty years of age who are not in the sick wards, or on special diet. The halt, the lame and the blind, the man with only one arm or only one leg, the sane epileptic and the feeble-minded may be all included as "able-bodied." In the Poorhouses of Scotland, where it is against the law to relieve any able-bodied man, the corresponding class includes, as we have ascertained by special medical inspection, exactly the same kind of persons as those who in English Workhouses are termed "able-bodied" (Report on the Physical Condition of the Able-bodied Male Inmates of Certain Scotch Poorhouses and English Workhouses and Labour Yards, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 14).

not incorrectly described, alike for the elaborateness of the architecture and the sumptuousness of the internal fittings, as "palaces" for paupers. In many other places, on the other hand, the old and straggling premises still in use, even in some of the largest Unions, are hideous in their bareness and squalor. But whether new or old, urban or rural, large or small, sumptuous or squalid, these establishments exhibit the same inherent defects. We do not ignore the zeal and devotion by means of which an exceptionally good Master and Matron, under an exceptionally enlightened committee, here and there, for a brief period, succeed in mitigating, or even in counteracting, the evil tendencies of a general mixed institution. But these evil tendencies, exactly as they were noted by the Commissioners of 1834, are always at work; and sooner or later they have prevailed, in every Union of which we have investigated the history. After visiting personally Workhouses of all types, new and old, large and small, in town and country, in England and Wales, in Scotland and Ireland, we find that the descriptions of the Workhouses of 1834, so far as we have quoted them above, might be applied, word for word, to many of the Workhouses of to-day. The dominant note of these institutions of to-day, as it was of those of 1834, is their promiscuity. We have ourselves seen, in the larger Workhouses, the male and female inmates, not only habitually dining in the same room in each other's presence, but even working individually, men and women together, in laundries and kitchens; and enjoying in the open yards and long corridors * innumerable opportunities to make each other's acquaintance. It is, we find, in these large establishments, a common occurrence for assignations to be made by the inmates of different sexes, as to spending together the "day out," or as to simultaneously taking their temporary discharge as "Ins and Outs." It has not surprised us to be informed that female inmates of these great establishments have been known to bear offspring to male inmates and thus increase the burden on the Poor Rate. No less distressing has it been to discover a continuous intercourse, which we think must be injurious, between young and old, innocent and hardened. In the female dormitories and day-rooms women of all ages, and of the most varied characters and conditions, necessarily associate together, without any kind of constraint on their mutual intercourse. There are no separate bedrooms; there are not even separate cubicles. The young servant out of place, the prostitute recovering from disease, the feeble-minded woman of any age, the girl with her first baby, the unmarried mother coming in to be confined of her third or fourth bastard, the senile, the paralytic, the epileptic, the respectable deserted wife, the widow to whom Outdoor Relief has been refused, are all herded indiscriminately together.† We have found respectable old women annoyed, by day and by night, by the presence of noisy and dirty imbeciles.‡

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* In the large General Mixed Workhouse of a leading provincial town, one of our Committees noted that "Until quite recently, the pauper women scrubbed and cleaned all the men's quarters; now the latter clean one floor. The feeble-minded women do much of this cleaning and scrubbing, and consequently are more in contact with the men than is advisable." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 22 E., p. 53.)

† In a Union celebrated for its good administration, one of our Committees found the Workhouse, though clean and otherwise well-managed, more than usually "mixed." "There is very little attempt at classification in the Workhouse. The imbeciles and epileptics are scattered about amongst the other inmates, and there seemed to be no classification according to character. . . . Two features particularly struck us; first, the number of children in the house, eighteen girls and twenty-nine boys; and second, the fact that cases of infectious disease are treated inside, and are not removed outside the house to any isolation hospital. . . . The number of confinement cases has lately been unusually large" (*Ibid.*, No. 64, p. 132). In another Workhouse of a large provincial town in 1907, "we saw," notes another of our Committees, "the able-bodied women coming from dinner; there are a large number of them, and imbecile sane, epileptics are all together" (*Ibid.*, No. 24 D., p. 65). In one Union, reports our Children's Investigator, "the sleeping accommodation consists of a dormitory furnished with beds and cots; this is used for all the girls, the boys under eight, and the nursing mothers. Thus girls up to sixteen share a room with the mothers of illegitimate babies. This is, I consider, a very serious matter." (Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 107.) This is no exceptional case. Of another Union, the same lady reports that: "A large dormitory contains sixteen beds and some cots. Here sleep all the younger children, including babies. Nursing mothers also sleep here in beds beside the babies' cots. . . . Thus, little boys and girls share a room with the mothers of illegitimate children, an undesirable condition enough. . . . There is also a small dormitory containing eight beds for the older girls. These two are separated from each other by a passage." (*Ibid.*, p. 107.)

‡ In one South Country Workhouse, the 394 inmates included, at the date of our Committee's visit, 32 able-bodied men, 47 able-bodied women, 163 non-able-bodied men, 120 non-able-bodied women, 14 boys and girls, and 18 infants, among them all being no fewer than 47 certified lunatics, 6 certified epileptics, 7 sane epileptics, and 10 "observation cases." "The certified and uncertified female imbeciles are in the same ward with a few old troublesome women. There are four sane epileptics in the same ward. There is no special sick ward for these persons, and they are taken to the infirmary when they fall ill. . . . During the day the mothers visit the infants every two hours. . . . A number of able-bodied men were wandering aimlessly about the airing yard, no work of any sort being provided for them." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 54, pp. 107–8.)

"Idiots who are physically offensive or mischievous, or so noisy as to create a disturbance by day and by night with their howls, are often found in Workhouses mixing with others both in the sick wards and in the body of the house." * We have ourselves seen, in one large Workhouse, pregnant women who have come in to be confined, compelled to associate day and night, and to work side by side with half-witted imbeciles and women so physically deformed as to be positively repulsive to look upon. In the smaller country Workhouses, though the promiscuity is numerically less extensive, and, in some respects, of less repulsive character, the very smallness of the numbers makes any segregation of classes even more impracticable than in the larger establishments. A large proportion of these Workhouses have, for instance, no separate sick ward for children,† and, in spite of the ravages of measles, etc., not even a quarantine ward for the constant stream of newcomers.‡ Accordingly, in the sick wards of the smaller Workhouses, with no constraint on mutual intercourse, we have more than once seen young children in bed with minor ailments, next to women of bad character under treatment for contagious disease, whilst other women, in the same ward, were in advanced stages of cancer and senile decay.§ Our Children's Investigator reports, after visiting many Workhouses in town and country, "that children when detained in the Workhouse always come into contact with the ordinary inmates. Certainly, in a country Workhouse this seems impossible to avoid. Paupers are always employed to help with the rough scrubbing and cleaning, and though Matrons invariably try to send the more respectable women into the children's quarters, often the only women available are the mothers of illegitimate babies." ‖ In many Workhouses we have ourselves found the children having their meals in the same room and at the same times as the adult inmates of both sexes, of all ages, and of the most different conditions and characters. Even the imbeciles and the feeble-minded are to be found in the same dining-halls as the children.¶ In some Workhouses, at any rate, the boys over eight years of age have actually to spend the long hours of the night in the same dormitories as the adult men.** In all the small Workhouses and in many of the larger ones, the infants are wholly attended to by, and are actually in charge of, aged, and often mentally defective, paupers; the able-bodied mothers having, during the first year, daily access to their own babies for nursing, and, subsequently, such opportunities for visiting the common nursery as the Master may decide. In the better managed, and in the largest establishments the nursery is, it is true, in charge of a salaried nurse, but even here, the handling of the babies is mostly left to pauper inmates. However desirable may be the intercourse between an infant and its own degraded mother, it is not to the advantage of the scores of infants in the nursery to be perpetually in close companionship for the first three or four or five years of their lives, with a stream of mothers of various types that we have mentioned. Such a nursery imbedded in the midst of an institution containing, not merely hundreds, but thousands of paupers of the most diverse classes is impregnated through and through with the atmosphere of pauperism.

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* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. VIII. (A) Par to 43 Vol. I.,

† We have been unable to ascertain how many Workhouses have separate sick wards for children, as the statistics have not been obtained. But of the three rural Unions visited by our Children's Investigator, two had no separate sick wards for children; out of five urban Unions, one had no separate sick ward, and another had some children in the adult female wards. (Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Miss E. Williams, 1908, p. 7.)

‡ "I have been struck," says our Children's Investigator, "by the absence in every Workhouse visited of any arrangement for quarantine for children under three. Considering how fatal the acute specifics are at these ages there should be some arrangement to prevent their introduction into the nurseries." (*Ibid.*, p. 112.)

§ "At . . . several older girls suffering from chronic diseases had spent months, and one or two years in the women's sick wards. . . . The cases of chronic disease in children, mostly tubercle, which one finds so often scattered about the adult women's wards in Workhouses, would . . . do very much better in a children's convalescent home, and would be saved from much undesirable company." (*Ibid.*, p. 113.)

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

¶ "The quarters for the children . . . are very incompletely separated from the rest of the house and its inmates. Except for separate dormitories for boys and girls, the children have no separate apartments, and take their meals in the dining hall. . . . The babies are with their mothers and have no separate nursery or attendant." (*Ibid.*, p. 109.)

** "Boys over eight in men's dormitories. . . . The older boys sleep in the dormitory for old men. . . . For boys too old to put with the girls and infants there are no quarters at all, and any boy over eight has to be put amongst men." (*Ibid.*, pp. 7, 107.) "The boys' dormitory is at the top of the house among the men's rooms. No room is specially appropriated to the boys, but they are given one or another of the rooms on this floor, according to their numbers. At the time of the visit, they had a fairly large room, but three male paupers were sleeping with them." (*Ibid.*, p. 107.)

(B) The Unspecialised Management of the General Mixed Workhouse.

Apart from this promiscuity—which, be it noted, increases with the size of the establishment—it is an inherent defect of the General Mixed Workhouse that it makes impossible the proper treatment of any one of the various classes of paupers agglomerated within its walls. It is, indeed, largely on the ground that it actually prevented the subjecting of each class to its "appropriate treatment" that the General Mixed Workhouse was condemned by the Royal Commissioners of 1834. We have satisfied ourselves that this condemnation is still entirely justified. The very uniformity of regimen to which all the inmates are subjected makes it impracticable to deal properly with any one class.*

But a more insidious, and, as we think, equally disastrous incident of the mixed institution is what we venture to call the "mixed official." To place under the management of one man and his wife, an institution which, whether large or small, combines the functions of rearing children from infancy to adolescence; treating sickness in all its forms from phthisis to cancer, from maternity to senility; controlling the feeble-minded, the imbeciles, the epileptics and even the certified lunatics; reforming the mothers of illegitimate children; maintaining respectable deserted wives and widows, and setting to work the able-bodied of both sexes—not to mention the usual additional duty of harbouring vagrants—is to abandon all hope of getting expert training or specialised skill. To begin with, the mixture in a single institution, of both men and women—against which the Commissioners of 1834 expressly protested—has, for obvious reasons, involved placing the management in the hands of husband and wife. This leads constantly to an inferior or even an unfit Master being appointed or retained, because of the qualities of the Matron his wife; or an inferior or even unfit Matron being put up with, because of the excellence of her husband the Master.† But over and above this elementary difficulty, the union of so many different classes in one establishment makes it impossible for any head to acquire the training that is needed for such manifold duties. Neither man nor woman can be simultaneously trained and technically expert in the rearing of children, the setting to work of adult labour, the superintendence of a hospital, the tasking of vagrants, the control of lunatics and the wardenship of an almshouse.‡ Boards of Guardians are often blamed for entrusting the management of institutions containing hundreds or even thousands of inmates—children, and sick, aged and imbeciles, sturdy rogues and dissolute women, respectable old men and widows—to a promoted porter or ex-labour master, and the wife whom he happens to have married. We do not see what other course they can take. If they promote the schoolmaster or the nurse these more refined natures may be unfitted to cope with the sturdy vagrant or the "in and out" prostitute. There

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* To this important feature of the General Mixed Workhouse we shall recur in Chapters III., IV., V., VI. and VII. of this Part, dealing with the infants, the children, the sick, the mentally defective, and the aged; and in Part II., dealing with the able-bodied. The uniformity of regimen is sometimes carried to an extreme. "Three meals per day," deposes one witness, "are served out to the inmates of —— Workhouse, rice milk being one of the tabulated diets and served twice per week. On cooking this diet a large quantity of fat is mixed into it, and the consequences are that many of the aged inmates, both males and females, cannot eat it because it makes them ill. I have noted ten of these dinners served out to the poor old folks, who preferred to go without dinner sooner than be made ill with the fatty rice milk. The attention of Dr. Fuller (medical inspector) was drawn to this matter, and he advised an alternative diet for such persons as could not eat it, but his advice has been set at naught by the Master, Matron, and superintendent nurse. Before these aged persons can have an alternative diet they must declare themselves sick, and go into the hospital." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 41761, Par. 8.)

† "There is an unwritten law," writes the Special Investigator of the *British Medical Journal*, "enforced by the Local Government Board, which requires that the Master and Matron be husband and wife, the reason alleged being that this ensures freedom of consultation in all official matters. This, however, is attained at great cost, for it favours collusion, and incompetence, and must restrict the range of selection. It does not follow that a competent Master is married to a woman of equal capacity, or *vice versa*. Freedom of action or independent criticism on the part of the Master or Matron is next to impossible, and the Guardians can with difficulty arrive at facts concerning the management of the House" (*British Medical Journal*, June 1st, 1895).

‡ The following are the separate classes in a typical urban Workhouse of medium size, all under the superintendence of a man and his wife: "On the first Saturday in this year, January 5th, 1907, we had in the establishment 891 persons, distributed as follows:—

164 Imbeciles.
235 Sick.
183 Aged and Infirm.
39 Children (generally too young for the Cottage Homes).
270 In main body of the house (men and women in health).

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(Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 42781, Par. 11.)

is no conceivable training that would fit one man (and his wife) for the task. And the very mixture of functions—the impossibility of attaining technical excellence or, indeed, achieving any recognisable success, in any one of them—has, we have repeatedly noticed, a subtle deteriorating effect on the persons appointed. This is hard on the large class of excellent men and women, for the most part quite poorly remunerated, whom the General Mixed Workhouse has enlisted in its service. Here and there we meet exceptionally gifted natures, whose faith and love and moral refinement enable them, to some extent, to withstand the deadening influence of the non-specialised institution, and to persist in regarding each inmate as an individual soul. But to the common run of men and women who gain appointments as Master and Matron, there comes to be, amid all the differences of sex or age or character, or health, or strength, or defectiveness, but one category of inmate—the pauper ; the person who ought not to be there ; the semi-delinquent who ought to be grateful for being, at the public expense, just kept alive ; whose condition, far from being improved, is supposed always to be kept less eligible than that of the lowest grade of independent labourer. The effect of having always to superintend and organize—not a hospital or a school, a lunatic asylum or even a reformatory, in which there is some recognisable standard of technical success *—but a hopeless mass of undifferentiated pauperism, with which there is nothing to be done, necessarily develops in the ordinary man or woman, during the years of fruitless service, a particular type of character, manifesting itself in a certain trick of bearing, even a peculiar facial expression quickly recognisable by the experienced visitor. "We all know," remarks a professional journal, "the common uneducated type of man to be found in this office in so many places ; his mind stored, for the confounding of newly elected Guardians, with rules, by-laws and regulations, his heart hardened by long contact with a system under which deceit is the only means by which relaxation of rules can be obtained."† As some of the best among these Workhouse Officers pathetically complained to us, the men and women whom we harness to the service of the General Mixed Workhouse almost invariably develop an all-embracing indifference—indifference to suffering which they cannot alleviate, to ignorance which they cannot enlighten, to virtue which they cannot encourage, to indolence which they cannot correct, to vice which they cannot punish. The one attribute common to all Workhouse inmates which can be, and is, appreciated by those in authority over them, is ready and unhesitating obedience, passing into servility.‡ The faculties which the Master and Matron find developed in themselves are the trick of securing a machine-like order, and a suppleness of seeming compliance with the fancies of Guardians who are as devoid of specialised training as they are themselves. In too many cases, as has been well said, "Guardians and Master are satisfied if the floors are washed, the steps pipeclayed, and the regiments of books of entry in order for the inspector."§

(c) The Universal Condemnation of the General Mixed Workhouse.

So complete a condemnation of the General Mixed Workhouse will, to those who know that institution only by repute, or who have come to accept it as inevitable, appear exaggerated. Their first thought may be that we are expressing only a personal view, inspired by some unreasonable ideal, and based only on a few bad examples that we happen to have visited. This is not the case. We have to report that there exists in all parts of the Kingdom, among all classes, the greatest dislike and distrust of this typical Poor Law institution. The respectable poor, we are told, "have a horror of it," and they

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* The "mixed" Superintendent has naturally no appreciation of the value of specialised subordinate-service. Of one small Workhouse it was reported that the "Master was of opinion that the male nurse has not enough to do, and that his duties might include the care of the schoolboys out of school hours. . . . The proposed doubling of parts is the bane of Workhouse organisation, where the authorities, in country districts at least, have not yet learnt that subdivision and definite duties, and the filling of the posts so defined by specially trained persons, are the secret of efficient and economical working." (*British Medical Journal*, February 9th, 1895, p. 327).

† *Ibid.*, July 7th, 1894, p. 30.

‡ To this influence must be added the subtly degrading effect of having always at command a limitless and costless host of household servants. One of the best Workhouse Masters confided to a Commissioner who was staying with him, his sense of the corrupting influence on himself, his wife, and his children of being, by this army of pauper servants, eager to help in the house and garden, relieved of every inducement to personal effort. The converse of this is the almost invariable appearance of the Master and Matron in broadcloth and silks, as obviously non-working costumes ; seeming to the paupers to be doing nothing but look on. This is in marked contrast with the working dress and bearing of such specialised officers as the nurse, the schoolmaster and the farm bailiff.

§ *British Medical Journal*, October 13th, 1894, p. 845 ; *see* Evidence before the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, *Q.* 773.

will not go "into the House at all unless they are compelled."* The whole institution, reports our Medical Investigator, "is abhorred. . . . The Workhouse and everything within its walls is anathema excepting to the very dregs of the population."† It is, said one of our witnesses, "the supreme dread of the poor."‡ "Life in the Workhouse," sum up our Investigators, "does not build character up. It breaks down what little independence or alertness of mind is left. . . . It is too good for the bad and too bad for the good."§

This "evil reputation" of the General Mixed Workhouse among the respectable poor is, reports our Medical Investigator, "partly traditional or historical, and partly due to the curious and objectionable agglomeration of purposes which it now serves. It is a home for imbeciles, an almshouse for the destitute poor, a refuge for deserted children, a lying-in hospital for dissolute women, a winter resort for the ill-behaved casual labourer or summer beggar, a lodging for tramps and vagrants as well as a hospital for the sick."† "Being gathered into one establishment," says the Vice-Chairman of the Manchester Board of Guardians, "all must be subject to the same regulations—framed to be deterrent to the lazily disposed, and to prevent preference of the workhouse to labour. The day rooms and dormitories are necessarily shared by good and bad, and close association is inevitable. The cost of separation into small groups in a Workhouse is prohibitive of attempts to place like-minded inmates together. This aggregation of inmates is not at all unpleasant or irksome to the loafer, to the vicious, to the drunkard seeking the safety and rest of the Workhouse after a debauch, and to the careless idler, who is ever preying upon the labour of others. Their chief objection to the Workhouse is the curtailment of liberty and the absence of opportunity of self-indulgence. But to the reputable clean-minded inmate this association with the depraved is the bitterest and most humiliating experience of life."‖ It is to be noted that this condemnation applies alike to the five or six hundred smaller Workhouses or Poorhouses of rural districts of the United Kingdom, as well as to the two or three hundred larger establishments. These latter have terrors of their own. "The mere size of the Great House" may, indeed, as has been suggested, be in itself "a strong deterrent to the honest poor. Accustomed to live in a single room they are appalled at the size of the Workhouse, and as terrified to go into it as a child into the sea. It can seldom be possible . . . for any one man to grasp all the details of our largest Workhouses, and where he cannot do so there must be great danger of neglect and bad under-management."¶ But the smallest rural Workhouses exhibit, in some respects, the greatest mixture. "A small country Workhouse with fifty or sixty inmates," testifies a well-known and experienced county administrator in the North of England, "is a shame to our Christian civilisation. There may be found collected in it perhaps ten old men and ten old women, drunken, idle blackguards, the outcasts of society; and, compelled to live among them, perhaps five or six respectable old people who, through absolutely no fault of their own, having worked hard all their inoffensive lives, have come to poverty. There will probably be three or four imbeciles of each sex, sometimes harmless and amusing, very often vicious and annoying to the inmates; two or three single women waiting for their confinements—in many cases an annual visit; three or four loafing "ins and outs," able-bodied men; three or four feeble persons; and eight or ten illegitimate children, all practically living together, and too often under a master who is tyrannical in his treatment and careless of his duties. It is a life absolutely repugnant to the respectable poor. Surely the time has come when, for the sake of not only the aged poor, but of the sick, the imbeciles, and the children, a drastic reform should be made, which would, at all events, bring us to a level with

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 71398.

† Report . . . on the Methods and Results of . . . Poor Law Medical Relief, by Dr. John C. McVail, 1907, p. 146.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. CXI., Par. 4 to Vol. VII.,

§ Memorandum on Certain Aspects of Poor Law Administration, by A. D. Steel-Maitland and R. E. Squire, p. 1. "The more respectable shrink, very naturally, from being herded together with the general ruck of undesirables found there" (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXVII., Par. 4, to Vol. VII.) "Some would rather starve than enter its portals." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXX., Par. 13, to Vol. V. "The Workhouse, as it exists at present," sums up the Vice-Regal Commission, "must be a place of torture for respectable married women with young children." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 51.)

‖ "Classification of Paupers and Poverty alongside Pauperism," by A. McDougall, J.P., Vice-Chairman of the Manchester Board of Guardians, p. 4. Nor is this confined to the large urban Workhouses. "There are in the ordinary country Workhouse," writes a clerk to a Board of Guardians in the South of England, "a few characters utterly bad, and these try to make the life of the others miserable. The Master and the officials are helpless; in other words, classification is impossible."

¶ "Our Workhouse System," by R. J. Pye-Smith, in *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, September 7th, 1896.

Denmark and other European countries."* It is in the wards of such small country Workhouses that the visitor may see—to use the words of an experienced lady Guardian of the Poor in a southern county—"all the inmates under lock and key, good characters and bad classed together, imbeciles and epileptics amongst them, all dressed in ill-fitting Workhouse clothes of old-fashioned clumsy make, all sitting on hard benches round the long tables or the walls of the ward, while the building with its bare stone floors, curtainless windows, and harshly clanging locks seemed more like a prison for criminals than a last home for aged men and women."†

Nor is this condemnation of the General Mixed Workhouse any new-fangled complaint. From 1834 down to the present day there has been a stream of adverse comment on an institution which is, we believe, unknown to any other country. We need not quote again the opinion of the Royal Commissioners of 1834. In 1862 the principal author of their Report, Nassau Senior himself, recorded his protest against the perpetuation of the General Mixed Workhouse which they had done their best to rid the country from, and with which, nevertheless, Boards of Guardians, at the instance of the Poor Law Board, were covering both England and Ireland. "We recommended," he said, "that in every Union there should be a separate school; we said that the children who went to the Workhouse were hardened if they were already vicious, and became contaminated if they were innocent. We recommended that in every Union there should be a building for the children and one for the able-bodied males, and another building for the able-bodied females; and another for the sick. We supposed the use of four buildings in every Union—four distinct institutions—except this, that they need not be Workhouses. You might easily hire a house [apiece] for four distinct institutions separate from one another. *We never contemplated having the children under the same roof with the adults.*" ‡

The feelings of surprise and dismay with which Nassau Senior watched the perpetuation of the General Mixed Workhouse were widely shared. "During the last ten years," said a learned lawyer in 1852, "I have visited many prisons and lunatic asylums not only in England, but in France and Germany. A single English Workhouse contains more that justly calls for condemnation in the principle on which it is established, than is found in the very worst prisons or public lunatic asylums that I have seen. The Workhouse as now organised is a reproach and disgrace peculiar to England, nothing corresponding to it is found throughout the whole Continent of Europe. In France, the medical patients of our Workhouses would be found in 'hopitaux'; the infirm aged poor would be in 'hospices'; and the blind, the idiot, the lunatic, the bastard child and the vagrant would similarly be placed in an appropriate but separate establishment. With us a common *malebolge* is provided for them all; and in some parts of the country, the confusion is worse confounded by the effect of prohibitory orders, which, enforcing the application of the notable Workhouse Test, drive into the same common sink of so many kinds of vice and misfortune the poor man whose only crime is his poverty and whose want of work alone makes him chargeable. . . . It is at once equally shocking to every principle of reason and every feeling of humanity that all these varied forms of wretchedness should be thus crowded together into one common abode; that no attempt should be made by law . . . to provide appropriate places for the relief of each."§ Continental writers of authority, at one time admirers of our Poor Law, became equally condemnatory of the General Mixed Workhouse. "The English Workhouse system," declared Rudolph von Gneist in 1871, "notwithstanding the elaborate Orders, remains undeniably at a stage of development which most Continental administrations have passed. The Workhouse purports at one and the same time to be: (i.) A place where able-bodied adults who cannot and will not find employment are set to work; (ii.) an asylum for the aged, the blind, the deaf and dumb or otherwise incapacitated for labour; (iii.) a hospital for the sick poor; (iv.) a school for orphans, foundlings and other poor children; (v.) a lying-in home for poor mothers; (vi.) an asylum for those of unsound mind not being actually

* Statement of Evidence of Mr. John Hutton, J.P., Member of the County Council for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXVII. (Par. 44) to Vol. IX.). The reader will notice the close resemblance between this description of the small country Workhouse of to-day, and that already quoted of the small country Workhouse of 1834.

† "Poor Law Questions as affecting Women Guardians," by Mrs. E. G. Fuller, in *Report of Poor Law Conferences*, 1901–2, p. 396.

‡ Evidence of Nassau Senior before Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1862. (House of Commons, No. 468 of 1862, p. 74.)

§ "Pauperism and Poor Laws," by Robert Pashley, Q.C., late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, author of "Travels in Crete," etc., 1852, p. 364.

dangerous; (vii.) a resting-place for such vagabonds as it is not deemed possible or desirable to send to prison. The combination of such mutually inconsistent purposes renders the administration defective as regards each one of them; subjects to shame and indignity whole classes of persons who never ought to be brought into such companionship; and in particular makes the institution as a place for children absolutely ruinous."* A quarter of a century later, a French critic made much the same complaint. "In the Workhouse as we have described it," wrote Monsieur Emile Chevalier, "we see many faults. The requirement of work from inmates, justified if it contributed towards the cost of maintenance, becomes, when it is so ludicrously unproductive, nothing better than an unwarranted punishment. Yet the institution might possibly justify itself, if not to the economist, at any rate to the philanthropist, as capable of affording a temporary refuge for unmerited distress, but for the fact that in these establishments the very notion of relief gives way to that of penal treatment, whilst in the majority of cases they result in complete promiscuity between the idle and the worthy, between vice and misfortune."† Nor have these weighty foreign condemnations of the very nature of the General Mixed Workhouse evoked any denial of the facts. The institution, admitted, in 1881, the Rev. T. W. Fowle, "contains those very classes whom one would least of all select to associate with each other; both sexes, extreme ages, different degrees of imbecility and disease, those who are much to be pitied and those who are much to be blamed. All these are under the same roof, and under the government of the same officials, who may be as fit to deal with one class of inmates as they are unfit to deal with another. Hence, there comes from this aggregation of classes something that may be described as the Workhouse essence; it is neither school, infirmary, penitentiary, prison, place of shelter or place of work, but something that comes of all these put together. Nor is it possible by any classification to prevent contact, and it may be, moral contagion; in the smaller houses classification is at all times difficult, and in no case does it hold good at meals, church and other occasions. And it may well be that the regular and peaceable (afflicted) inmates endure much preventible suffering from the operation of this cause." ‡

(d) Why the General Mixed Workhouse has continued to exist.

In face of so universal a condemnation of the General Mixed Workhouse—begun in the Report of 1834; continued decade by decade by all sorts of critics, English and foreign; admitted during a whole generation by the Local Government Board itself; and abundantly confirmed by our own investigations—the question naturally arises why was this institution re-established by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47; why was it continued by the Poor Law Board of 1847–71; and why has it endured down to the present day, in spite of the almost incessant endeavours of the Local Government Board, by urging successively the withdrawal of vagrants, the children, the sick, the able-bodied and the aged from its demoralising influence, to break it up altogether? Our inquiries show that the explanation of the re-establishment of the General Mixed Workhouse by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47, in flagrant defiance of the Report of 1834; and its persistence in spite of the constant efforts of the Local Government Board to supersede it by specialised institutions, are both to be traced to the nature of the Local Authority concerned. The Poor Law Commissioners do not seem, on assuming office, to have intended to set aside, on this point, the clear and emphatic recommendations of the 1834 Report. They had no wish to re-establish the General Mixed Workhouse. There is evidence that they began, in the first Unions that they created, by trying to get organised a series of four or more separate institutions, specialised for different classes of poor. But Parliament had placed the care of all these classes of poor in each Union under a single Local Authority, and had charged that Authority, not with the treatment of any one of these classes, not with the education of the children or the prevention and cure of sickness, but generally, with the relief of the destitution of all of them. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 had substituted, in fact, by combining many parishes into one Union, a new Destitution Authority for the old Destitution Authority, with a somewhat larger district. The Assistant Commissioners quickly discovered that it was quite as much as the new Destitution Authority could do to govern one institution in or near

* "Das Self-Government," etc., by R. von Gneist. Edition of 1871, p. 748.

† "La Loi des Pauvres," by Emile Chevalier, 1895, p. 392.

‡ "The Poor Law," by Rev. T. W. Fowle, 1881, p. 142. The evils of the General Mixed Workhouse are, indeed, officially recognised. "I have," reports an Inspector, "on several occasions in former Reports commented on the evils of mixing up different classes of paupers in the same Workhouse; but I feel compelled to refer to the subject again, because of its great importance, of which I am convinced." (Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–7, p. 284; Mr. Lockwood's Report.)

the market town around which, as a nucleus, the different parishes were grouped. The numbers of persons in the different classes, in the rural Unions of that date, were small. To the Boards of Guardians of 1835, as to their successors in many a subsequent decade, it seemed a wanton waste of money to maintain a series of separate small institutions, all having vacant places. Within a few months we see the attempts given up, and all the classes of poor huddled into a single building.* Presently we see the Assistant Commissioners themselves converted to the General Mixed Workhouse; converting their official superiors to it as the only course practicable with the Local Authorities through which they had to work; and propagating the idea to their Boards of Guardians with all the zeal of converts. "The very sight," argued the ablest of these Assistant Commissioners, "of a well-built efficient establishment would give confidence to the Board of Guardians, the sight and weekly assemblage of all servants of their Union would make them proud of their office; the appointment of a Chaplain would give dignity to the whole arrangement, while the pauper would feel it was utterly impossible to contend against it. In visiting such a series of Unions, the Assistant Commissioner could with great facility perform his duty, whereas if he had eight establishments to search for in each Union it would be almost impracticable to attend to them. I would, moreover, beg to observe that in one establishment there would always be a proper governor, ready to receive and govern any able-bodied applicants, whereas in separate establishments this most important arrangement (the Able-bodied House) during harvesting, etc., would constantly be empty, and consequently would become inefficient in moments of emergency."†

The same Assistant Commissioner, in writing a farewell letter to the Kentish Boards of Guardians at the end of 1835, urges them not only to stick to the dietary, but also to appoint a chaplain "to your central house, which will shortly be the sole establishment in your Union. . . . As soon as this important object has been gained—as soon as you find that the whole of your indoor poor are concentrated in one respectable establishment—under your own weekly superintendence—when you see yourselves surrounded by a band of resolute, sensible, well-educated men faithfully devoted to your service—you will then, I believe, fully appreciate the advantage which you, as well as your successors, will ever derive from possessing one strong, efficient building, instead of having from false economy, frittered away your resources among your old existing houses."‡

What is specially interesting at the present juncture is that it was the existence of a Destitution Authority, charged with the "relief" of all sorts and conditions of men, that has rendered nugatory, decade after decade, every attempt to undo the harm done in 1835. Once the General Mixed Workhouse is established, the ease and apparent economy of the arrangement becomes, in the hands of a Destitution Authority, an obstacle always defeating the efforts of the Central Authority to reverse its own action, and to go back to the policy of the 1834 Report. For the Poor Law Commissioners themselves very soon realised the false step that they had taken in merging all classes of paupers in the General Mixed Workhouse. Their first remedy was to try to exclude the vagrants, and to provide, in London, for their treatment in specialised "asylums for the homeless poor." To this end orders were issued, joint boards established and even sites purchased. But the attempt failed. Nothing would induce the separate Boards of Guardians to relinquish their care, troublesome though it was, of all the classes of the destitute. The Poor Law Board had then to fall back on the imperfectly specialised Casual Ward of the General Mixed Workhouse. But to get any really specialised treatment of the vagrants out of a "Destitution Authority"—even to get carried out the explicit directions of the Local

* This is well seen in the history of the "Model" Union of that time, that of Westhampnett in Sussex, which was presided over by the Duke of Richmond. Here, on the advice of the Poor Law Commissioners, it was originally decided to retain five of the old parish poorhouses, so that, in conformity with the recommendations of the 1834 Report: "Certain descriptions of paupers should be sent exclusively to each, intending to retain the large Workhouse at Westhampnett for the able-bodied alone. . . . The house at Yapton was at first intended solely for the aged, that at Aldingborne for the children, and that at Pagham for the aged and infirm; that at Sidlesham to remain unoccupied till the Board should see what claims were made for admission to a workhouse. . . . It was found that four Workhouses would be quite unnecessary; and after great consideration it was determined to appropriate the house at Yapton entirely to the children, and to make other additions to that at Westhampnett where all the other paupers were to be brought. . . . Some inconvenience, however, was found to result even from the existence of two separate establishments. There could not be the same diligent supervision of the management of the house, the same attention to the treatment of the inmates, nor the same regularity of accounts as there might be if the whole establishment were concentrated under one roof." (Report of Westhampnett Union, March 14th, 1836, p. 23; in House of Commons, No. 108 of 1838.)

† MS. correspondence of Sir Francis Head, 1835.

‡ *Ibid.*

Government Board to that end—has proved quite impossible. Half a century of failure has recently driven the very experienced members of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy to recommend that this class of destitute persons should be wholly withdrawn from the supervision of the Local Authority dealing with the category of the destitute.

Even more disastrous in its results was the merging of the children in the General Mixed Workhouse. As early as 1841 the Poor Law Commissioners had realised their mistake, and had begun the attempt to transfer the children to district schools. Here again it was the very nature of the Local Authority that stood in their way. A Board of Guardians, elected to relieve the destitution of all the poor, refused to consent to cede the children to any other Authority, even to a joint Committee of Boards of Guardians. It needed a cholera epidemic among the Poor Law children at Tooting to enable the Poor Law Board to get even a dozen district schools established, and more than five hundred Unions persisted in keeping their children in their own Workhouses. Right down to the present day the Local Government Board, in spite of unwearied efforts, has failed to reduce the number of children actually living in General Mixed Workhouses below what is really the enormous number of 15,000. And there is no prospect of this number being lessened. There is indeed, in some cases a tendency to reversion. In a Welsh Union that we visited, which, at the instance of the Local Government Board, actually provided a separate building for its children, we found this empty and disused, the number of children having fallen to eight. It seemed more economical and more convenient to the Destitution Authority to take these eight children into the General Mixed Workhouse to live with the forty other inmates, who were mostly either semi-imbeciles and feeble-minded, or senile or paralytic old men and women, with half a dozen tramps, men, women and children, coming in every night.

It took thirty years to convince the Central Authority that it had made a mistake in merging the sick in the General Mixed Workhouse; but, once convinced, its action was, in London at least, decisive. From 1866 onward we see first the Poor Law Board and then the Local Government Board exercising the strongest and most persistent pressure on the Boards of Guardians to get them to provide entirely separate institutions for the sick poor. At first the attempt was to get neighbouring Unions to combine, in "Sick Asylum Districts," to maintain a joint infirmary. This has proved practically a failure. The Boards of Guardians, feeling that it was their function to look after all classes of the poor, and dominated by their one business, as they conceive it, of relieving destitution, flatly refused to remove their sick from the General Mixed Workhouse in order to place them in the infirmary of a joint committee. In the Metropolis the Local Government Board had to take the drastic step of taking the infectious sick and the imbeciles out of the hands of the Boards of Guardians, and entrusting them to a separate body, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, which has become virtually a Public Health Authority. Only in the Metropolis and in a score or so of large provincial towns has the persistent pressure of the Local Government Board now succeeded in inducing the Boards of Guardians to place the sick in separate Poor Law infirmaries; and that only imperfectly. In a majority of the Unions the local Destitution Authority, in the teeth of medical advice, insists on retaining all sections of the sick—the tuberculous, the cancerous, the venereal, the maternity cases, the children, the senile, and even sometimes the infectious—in the General Mixed Workhouse.

The next class which the Local Government Board strove to get out of the General Mixed Workhouse was that of the able-bodied. Again the Boards of Guardians resisted, seeing no advantage in paying for the establishment of specialised institutions, even as "Test Workhouses" for the able-bodied. Presently, at Poplar in 1871, and again at Kensington in 1882, the Local Government Board took the opportunity of there being vacant accommodation to persuade the Board of Guardians to set aside a special building for the able-bodied of their own and of adjacent Unions. Similar experiments were started at Birmingham and Manchester. We shall point out, when we come to deal in Part II. with the able-bodied, how all these experiments, though strikingly successful in their purpose of diminishing able-bodied pauperism, were one and all brought to untimely ends in consequence of being entrusted to a Destitution Authority unable to resist the constant temptation of using the vacant places for other classes of paupers. A similar tendency to reversion is seen in the various experiments that have been tried by individual Unions in segregating their own able-bodied for specialised treatment. Our study of their records shows that these experiments are always breaking down because the Destitution Authority cannot resist the temptation, when its other wards get full, of, first temporarily and then

permanently relegating to their so-called able-bodied block, detachments of such other classes of destitute persons as the men over sixty, the sane epileptics, and even the able-bodied of the other sex.

To complete the survey of the efforts of the Central Authority to break up the General Mixed Workhouse, we have to record its action on behalf of the only class not hitherto mentioned, by its successive circulars, from 1900 onward, urging Boards of Guardians to provide specialised accommodation for the worthy aged. These attempts have met with little result, as the great majority of Boards of Guardians have felt, and sometimes expressly reported, that the structural arrangements of the General Mixed Workhouse did not permit of any such separate accommodation as was suggested. In the whole of England and Wales fewer than a thousand old persons are as yet provided for in the separate Poor Law institutions on which the Report of 1834 insisted.

We need not recount the parallel histories of Scotland and Ireland, where the success of the Central Authorities in inducing the local Destitution Authorities to make specialised institutional provision for the separate classes has been, on the whole, even less successful than in England and Wales.*

We are anxious to make clear that it is not to any inferiority of calibre, or any lack of good intention, in the members of the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and the Parish Councils of Scotland, that we ascribe their almost invariable failure to free themselves from the dominion of the General Mixed Workhouse. It is, we think, inherent in the nature of the Destitution Authority, having to deal with all classes of persons merely because they are destitute, to make this characteristic of destitution their dominant idea. In this connection, it is, we think, highly significant that, in the model Union of Bradford, in which—to use the words of its late Chairman—"the determination to break up the mass of pauperism into its component parts, and to deal separately with each of these parts," has "been the guiding principle of the Guardians in recent years,"† we see how hard is the way and how imperfect is the success of any Destitution Authority that aims at providing really separate institutions, under distinct management, for each of the heterogeneous series of classes committed to its care. The only class, even at Bradford, which has been completely separated off from the rest is that of the children, for whom admirable "Scattered Homes" are provided. Yet even here the Destitution Authority cannot refrain from sending in other destitute persons. "I was sorry," reports our Children's Investigator, in speaking of the St. George's Children's Home at Bradford, "to see a defective girl, aged seventeen, helping in the house work. These defectives are very often to be found in the Children's Homes. They are too old for the schools, they cannot be sent out to service, and are sent to help in the Children's Homes, pending a decision about their destination which the Guardians are very slow to make. They are very much out of place amongst young children. I feel very strongly that they should be sent to proper Homes for Defectives."‡ And it is the same with the other classes. Genuine philanthropic feeling has induced the Bradford Board of Guardians to build, a couple of miles away from the General Workhouse, a charming quadrangle of separate tenements for their most respectable aged. Yet, because it had presently to provide additional accommodation for destitute sane epileptics, and then a place for the destitute able-bodied men to be subjected to the Outdoor Labour Test, this Destitution Authority could not resist the temptation of housing its epileptics in the very quadrangle occupied by the old men and women; of setting the able-bodied men to work on the same site; and of placing all three classes—the most worthy aged, the sane epileptics and the Outdoor

* Though the system of Poor Relief in Scotland is assumed to be mainly one of Outdoor Relief, and though, in fact, four-fifths of the paupers are relieved in their own homes, it should be noted that the Poorhouse population is rapidly rising, having increased 50 per cent. in the last decade, and now amounts to 15,000. The seventy Poorhouses that have gradually covered the country, eight of which are great establishments (accommodating over 500 person seach), do not appear to us to differ essentially from the General Mixed Workhouses of England and Wales, which are, in proportion to population, not much more numerous. In Ireland, where only two-fifths of the paupers receive Outdoor Relief, the 159 General Mixed Workhouses seem to us to have all the characteristics of those of Great Britain, with even greater extremes of size and promiscuity. Many of them are quite small and primitive in their arrangements. On the other hand, seven have more than 500 inmates; and the South Dublin Workhouse, with an average of over 4,000 inmates of both sexes and of all ages, physical states and mental grades, within the Workhouse walls, appears to us, in more than one sense, the most monstrous aggregation of the United Kingdom.

† The History of Poor Law Administration in Bradford, 1838–1906, compiled from the MS. records, by Mrs. Spencer, B.A., D.Sc. (Econ.), p. 13.

‡ Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 105.

Labour Test Men—under one and the same Superintendent. Meanwhile, within the walls of the old Workhouse, we find the blocks of the able-bodied and semi-able-bodied men and women closely hemmed in by new and elaborate hospital blocks for different groups of the sick, the whole within the same curtilage, entered by the same gate, and under the formal superintendence of the same Master and Matron.

(E) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report:—

(1) That the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland, and the Poorhouses of Scotland, whether urban or rural, new or old, large or small, sumptuous or squalid, all exhibit the same inherent defects, of which the chief are promiscuity and unspecialised management.

(2) That these institutions have a depressing, degrading, and positively injurious effect on the character of all classes of their inmates, tending to unfit them for the life of respectable and independent citizenship.

(3) That the institution of a General Mixed Workhouse, whether large or small, was decisively condemned by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834; that it has been repeatedly condemned since that date by a succession of competent critics; that this condemnation has been confirmed by the evidence given before us, by the reports of our own Investigators and by the individual inspections that we have been able personally to make in many different parts of the United Kingdom.

(4) That the institution is everywhere abhorred by the respectable poor, and that, in our judgment, the continued incarceration within its walls of the non-able-bodied or dependent poor, who are admittedly incapable of earning an independent livelihood, cannot be justified.

(5) That the continuance of the General Mixed Workhouse as the main method of institutional treatment, alike by the Boards of Guardians of England, Wales and Ireland, and by the Parish Councils of Scotland, in spite of such long continued and widespread condemnation, is to be attributed to the fact that these bodies are essentially Destitution Authorities, charged with the "relief" of persons of the most different ages, ailments and conditions, in respect only of their destitution.

CHAPTER II.

The Outdoor Relief of To-day.

The common alternative to maintenance in the General Mixed Workhouse, in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, is, for all classes of the non-able-bodied, a small allowance, usually weekly, of money, food, and, less frequently, clothing.* This practice, which is as old as the Elizabethan Poor Laws, was not condemned, and was scarcely even criticised in the Report of 1834. In contrast with the emphatic condemnation of Outdoor Relief to the able-bodied, the authors of the Report of 1834, like the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835–47, seem, in fact, to have acquiesced, so far as the non-able-bodied classes were concerned, in a continuance of the then existing practice of staving off destitution by small money doles, which, in cases of permanent incapacity or old age, became weekly allowances almost mechanically continued during life. There were, however, two requirements made by the Report of 1834 in respect of the administration of relief to the non-able-bodied, as well as to the able-bodied. "Uniformity in the administration of relief," says the Report, "we deem essential, as a means, first of reducing the perpetual shifting from parish to parish, and fraudulent removals to parishes where profuse management prevails, from parishes where the management is less profuse; secondly, of preventing the discontents which arise among the paupers maintained in the less profuse management, from comparing it with the more profuse management of adjacent districts; and thirdly, of bringing the management, which consist in details, more closely within the public control."† And the uniformity of treatment on which the Report of 1834 laid so much stress was held to apply in a special degree to the administration of Outdoor Relief in respect of the character or past conduct of the applicants. "The natural tendency" of the relieving Authority, "to award to the deserving more than is necessary, or . . . to distinguish the deserving by extra allowances" was denounced in that Report as an evil. "The whole evidence," it was declared, "shows the danger of such an attempt. It appears that such endeavours to constitute the distributors of relief into a tribunal for the reward of merit, out of the property of others, have not only failed in effecting the benevolent intentions of their promoters, but have become sources of fraud on the part of the distributors, and of discontent and violence on the part of the claimants."‡

This system of granting doles and allowances to the non-able-bodied poor, accepted by the Royal Commission of 1834, has never been prohibited by the Local Government Board, and has accordingly continued, with its authority, down to the present day. The sum thus distributed is now very large, approaching, in the United Kingdom, no less than £4,000,000 sterling annually. It has, during the past fifteen years, greatly increased, and it is, at present, taking the whole United Kingdom, probably greater than at any time since 1834. More than two-thirds of the whole of the paupers are, in fact, in receipt of Outdoor Relief.

We were surprised to find that, as far as England and Wales are concerned, contrary to the usual impression, no Order has ever been issued regulating or controlling the very extensive provision thus made for the great mass of the non-able-bodied poor. So far as the orphans and deserted children, the aged and infirm, the sick and the mentally afflicted, and the widows with legitimate offspring, are concerned—and these make up nine-tenths of the pauper host—the Boards of Guardians all over England and Wales have been permitted to exercise unchecked their power of awarding doles and allowances, under such conditions as seemed to them fit.§

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* In this chapter we describe more particularly the Outdoor Relief administration of England and Wales. That of Ireland appears to us to be in all respects essentially similar, and to have, in full measure, the same shortcomings and defects. The administration of Outdoor Relief in Scotland—there called aliment—differs somewhat in form, and we shall describe these differences later. But, in our judgment, the criticisms that we make of the administration of England and Wales applies, in the main, also to that of Scotland.

† Report of Poor Law Commission of 1834, pp. 279, 280.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

§ This absence of any rules as to Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied was noticed by the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895 (Vol. II., *Qs.* 2073, 2074, 2124–6, 2420, 3192, 3193), when it was urged that the Local Government Board ought to frame such rules.

(A) Local Bylaws as to Outdoor Relief.

Under these circumstances many of the Boards of Guardians have, for their own guidance, framed Bylaws or Standing Orders as to Outdoor Relief, which afford an interesting vision of their divergent ideals of administration. The most frequent clause in the couple of hundred * such Bylaws that we have seen is one which makes the grant of Outdoor Relief dependent on the character and conduct of the applicant. This is expressed sometimes as excluding those who are actually of "immoral habits,"† or "habitual drunkards and bad characters,"‡ or merely "known to be in the habit of frequenting public houses."§ Some Boards exclude "common beggars"‖ or "persons known to be addicted to begging";¶ others disqualify anyone, whatever his present conduct, who "has wasted his substance in drinking or gambling, or has led an idle or disorderly life;"** or those who cannot satisfy the Relief Committee that their destitution has not been caused by "their own vicious habits"†† or their own improvidence or intemperance in the past. Occasionally a particular form of extravagance is specially penalised by the refusal of Outdoor Relief. In a large number of Unions we find a rule prohibiting the grant of Outdoor Relief to the widows of men who had been provident enough to insure for their funeral expenses, if, in the opinion of the Board of Guardians, such funeral money had been "lavishly or improperly expended."‡‡ The professed aim of these Boards of Guardians is to make the grant of Outdoor Relief not merely necessary relief, dependent exclusively upon the economic circumstances of the case, but (as some of them frankly avow) an indulgence "to persons of past and present good conduct, who require relief by reason of unmerited misfortune;"§§ who "can show a thrifty past,"‖‖ or that "whilst in work they did all they could to make provision against time of sickness or want of employment";¶¶ or "whose destitution has arisen from no fault of their own."*** This conception of granting Outdoor Relief according to the past conduct of the applicant is most fully carried out by the Sheffield Board of Guardians, which deliberately aims in its Bylaws at a "classification of the recipients of relief with a view to the better treatment of those of good character." Thus, those whose past life (which must be combined, by the way, with twenty years' residence within the Sheffield Union) entitles them to the utmost indulgence (Class A), get 5s. per week per adult; those who, *though equally destitute* and presumably costing as much to keep, fall short of this high standard by one or two or three degrees (Classes B, C, and D) receive, to live upon, respectively, 4s., 3s., or only 2s. 6d. per week per adult.††† This determination to discriminate, in the actual amount of Outdoor Relief allowed, between the deserving and the undeserving—which we find everywhere influencing the stricter type of Guardian, and which one of the most strictly administered Unions thus explicitly avows—is, as we have seen, significantly at variance with the recommendations of the 1834 Report.

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* In the course of an inquiry which one of our Committees directed to be undertaken into the policy pursued at different dates by the Boards of Guardians, a collection was made by one of our members of 234 local Bylaws now in force, regulating the administration of relief. About 350 Boards of Guardians stated that they had no such Bylaws, and the remaining sixty, mostly in small Unions, did not reply to the inquiry.

† Rules of Chorlton Board of Guardians; similarly at Salford, Prestwich, Bolton, Rochdale, Wakefield, Dudley, Ashton-under-Lyne, York, Newport, and many other Unions. The Monmouth Board of Guardians excludes also persons of "indolent habits."

‡ Rules of the Chertsey, Colchester, Leighton Buzzard, Llanelly, Reigate, Romsey, Steyning, and other Boards of Guardians.

§ Regulations of the Bristol Board of Guardians.

‖ Regulations of Bath Board of Guardians.

¶ Regulations of the Cheltenham Board of Guardians; also at Dudley and Warwick.

** Rules of the Shardlow Board of Guardians.

†† Rules of Biggleswade and Luton Boards of Guardians.

‡‡ Standing Orders of Bradford Board of Guardians. Similar provisions exist at Anglesey, Shepton Mallet, Norwich, Marlborough, and dozens of other places; sometimes merely suspending the Outdoor Relief of the extravagant widow for one, two, three or six months, or, more vaguely, "for a time."

§§ Rules of Mitford and Launditch Board of Guardians.

‖‖ Rules of Okehampton Board of Guardians.

¶¶ Regulations of the Merthyr Tydvil Board of Guardians; similarly at Halifax, Holbech, Hunslet, Brighton, Horncastle, Bridge, Whitchurch, Farnham, Hartley Wintney, Trowbridge, Bridport, Faversham, Eastry, Garstang, Weymouth, etc.

*** Rules of Narberth Board of Guardians. We have noticed more than a hundred Bylaws or Standing Orders, making the grant of Outdoor Relief dependent thus on conduct.

††† Rules of the Sheffield Board of Guardians; Evidence before Commission, *Qs.* 40854–40868, 40113–40118. Similar rules have now been adopted elsewhere (*see*, for instance, those of the Worksop Board of Guardians). The only justification for this distinction that can be given appears to be the assumption that: "Very often the more indifferent classes are hiding something from us." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 40115).

It is perhaps with regard to wives apart from their husbands, and widows, that the Bylaws relating to Outdoor Relief display the most extraordinary of their diversities. The Langport Board of Guardians professes to refuse all Outdoor Relief to healthy able-bodied widows under any circumstances, however large may be their dependent families.* Most Unions which have rules prohibit Outdoor Relief to widows, whatever their legitimate family, who have had an illegitimate child; indeed, "any person who may have given birth to an illegitimate child" is commonly excluded.† Widows who have only "a small family,"‡ or, if an able-bodied widow "of the working class," not more than two children,§ are made ineligible in some Unions. Far more usual is it to require the widow with only one child to keep herself and child without relief at all, ‖after the first six months—some say after the first three months,¶ after the first two months, ** or even the first month ††—of her widowhood; at least, say some Boards, if the child is a year old,‡‡ eighteen months old,§§ two years old,‖‖ or of school age.¶¶ Many Unions express the same idea by providing that children in excess of one or two should, in preference to any grant of Outdoor Relief—and in face of the present strong objection of the Local Government Board to the presence of children in this institution—be taken into the Workhouse,*** the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described. On the other hand, some Unions expressly provide for Outdoor Relief to a widow with only one child; ††† or without any dependent child at all, ‡‡‡ and even, subject to being considered by the whole Board, to widows with illegitimate children born since their widowhood.§§§ No less diverse are the fates in different Unions of wives deserted by their husbands. Most Boards of Guardians profess to refuse Outdoor Relief to all such cases, owing to the difficulty of preventing collusive desertions. Others withhold it only for six months,‖‖‖‖or for a year,¶¶¶¶ or for three years,**** or even for five.†††† On the other hand, some Unions explicitly provide that deserted wives shall be treated as if they were widows.‡‡‡‡ One island Union does the same if the husband is "beyond the seas,"§§§§ whilst others give relief, notwithstanding their fear of collusive desertions, if there are several children.‖‖‖‖‖ There are several Unions which, apparently without consideration of the effect on the children, make the Outdoor Relief to deserted wives conditional on the women and children first going into the Workhouse—the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described—for such time as the Guardians think fit.¶¶¶¶ If there is any validity in the assumptions of the

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* Rules of Langport Board of Guardians.

† Rules of the Holborn Board of Guardians and many others. But various other Unions only exclude the mothers of young illegitimate children, and one (Norwich) merely forbids Outdoor Relief "until the child is at least three months old." At North Bierley, such cases have to be dealt with by the full Board; and the Board of Guardians of St. Thomas, Exeter, has a regular scale of 1s. 6d. per week prior to the birth of the child, and 3s. 6d. per week for four weeks afterwards.

‡ Rules of Kingsclere, Hartley Wintney, Weymouth and Farnham Boards of Guardians.

§ Regulations of St. Mary Abbot's, Kensington, Board of Guardians.

‖ This was recommended in a Local Government Board Circular of December 2nd, 1871. In Ireland Outdoor Relief to a widow with fewer than two dependent children is forbidden by statute (10 Vict., c. 31, sec. 1).

¶ Rules of Lewisham and Holborn Boards of Guardians.

** Rules of Mitford and Launditch Board of Guardians.

†† Rules of Banbury Board of Guardians.

‡‡ Rules of Monmouth Board of Guardians.

§§ Rules of Ellesmere Board of Guardians.

‖‖ Rules of Cardiff, Merthyr Tydvil, Narberth and Carmarthen Boards of Guardians.

¶¶ Rules of Anglesey and Burnley Boards of Guardians.

*** This was actually recommended in a Local Government Board Circular of December 2nd, 1871.

††† Rules of Marlborough and South Molton Boards of Guardians.

‡‡‡ Instructions to Relief Committee, Prestwich Board of Guardians; Regulations of Docking, Rugby, and Long Ashton Boards of Guardians.

§§§ Regulations of Leicester Board of Guardians.

‖‖‖ Rules of the Glanford Brigg Board of Guardians.

¶¶¶ Rules of the Brighton, Lewisham, Boston, Hinckley, Petworth, Farnham, Clutton, Lymington, Carmarthen, Cardiff, Swansea, Bath, Richmond, Haverfordwest, and Prescot Boards of Guardians. This was recommended by the Local Government Board Circular of December 2nd, 1871.

**** Rules of Horncastle Board of Guardians.

†††† Rules of Aston Board of Guardians.

‡‡‡‡ Rules of Leigh and Rochdale Boards of Guardians.

§§§§ Rules of Anglesey Board of Guardians.

‖‖‖‖ Rules of Wakefield, Worksop, Leeds, Burnley and Alnwick Boards of Guardians.

¶¶¶¶ Rules of Crediton and Tiverton Boards of Guardians. The provision for the wives and families of absentee soldiers, marines, sailors, militiamen and Army Reserve men called up for service is equally diverse. In many Unions, the Bylaws forbid Outdoor Relief to any such cases; in others (*e.g.*, Docking and Medway), the Bylaws provide for it to be given at discretion; at Rugby, and Bristol, it can be given by the whole Board; at Wakefield and King's Norton, only if there is more than one child; whilst at Croydon the scale explicitly allows so much for each child. When in 1877 the Local Government Board was urged to prohibit Outdoor Relief to this class, it refused to do so.

Report of 1834 that an absence of uniformity in Poor Law administration produces discontent amongst paupers and a perpetual shifting from place to place in order to take advantage of the Guardians' laxity, the divergencies in policy in the cases of widows with children, or widows who have had an illegitimate child, or deserted wives or unmarried mothers, would appear to be just those in which these assumptions would be most likely to apply.

Some Boards push their test of conduct beyond the applicant himself; and deny Outdoor Relief to applicants "residing with relatives of immoral, intemperate, or improvident character, or of uncleanly habits."* There are even Bylaws in many Unions—in spite of an express statutory provision that such women should be treated as widows—forbidding the grant of Outdoor Relief to "married women (with or without families) whose husbands, having been convicted of crime, are undergoing a term of imprisonment"; † a common rule sometimes loosely expressed so as to apply to the dependents of all persons detained in prison, even if merely awaiting trial.‡

But Boards of Guardians frequently have further By-Laws or Standing Orders as to Outdoor Relief, which are based on other considerations than the character or conduct of the applicant. More than a dozen South-country Unions, of which we have seen the rules, choose arbitrarily to limit the grant of Outdoor Relief, without reference to the character or conduct of the applicant, to such persons as have completed two years' residence within the Union.§ In Worksop the deserted wife having one or more children, if of good character, and if, in the judgment of the Guardians, her desertion is from no fault of her own, will, if she has resided within the Union for ten years, be granted 4s. a week, and 1s. 6d. for each child. If, however, she has resided there for any shorter period than ten years, she will only get 3s. a week, and 1s. 6d. for each child.‖ Many other Boards of Guardians profess the enlightened policy of insisting on a sanitary home; refusing Outdoor Relief to anyone, whatever his or her character or conduct, who is living in a cottage or a room "kept in a dirty or slovenly condition"; ¶ or "in premises reported by the Medical Officer of Health to be unfit for occupation, either from overcrowding or from being kept in a filthy condition"; ** or "reported by the Sanitary Officer as injurious to health"; †† or "in the opinion of the Relief Committee detrimental to the moral or physical welfare of the inmates"; ‡‡ or merely "premises in which it is undesirable, on account of its sanitation, condition or locality, that they should reside." §§ This restriction on the home is sometimes widened in scope and sometimes particularised. Thus, Outdoor Relief may be refused to an applicant, however deserving, who has the misfortune to live, as so many of the poor do live, "amid insanitary or immoral surroundings." ‖‖ Applicants must not live in common lodging-houses; ¶¶ nor lodge on premises licensed

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* Bylaws of Alnwick Board of Guardians.

† Regulations of West Derby Board of Guardians, and many others.

‡ Rules of Blandford Board of Guardians, and many others. But the Docking Board explicitly allows Outdoor Relief to the wives and children awaiting trial. On the other hand, the Prestwich Board expressly allows Outdoor Relief to prisoners' wives at discretion; the Chelmsford Board, if there is even one dependent child; other Boards, if there are two or more children; whilst only a few comply with the law (7 and 8 Vict. c. 101, s. 25; Art. 4 of Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order, 1844), and expressly treat them as if they were widows. At Merthyr Tydvil they get Outdoor Relief for the first six months only; whilst at Crediton and Tiverton the reverse course is followed, no Outdoor Relief being given until the wife and children have entered the Workhouse for a time. At Stafford only the wives of men who are hardened offenders, having, at any rate, been more than once convicted of crime, are denied Outdoor Relief. The Haverfordwest Board, on the other hand, denies it only to the dependents of men whose offences have been comparatively venial—that is to say, only if the husband has been given a sentence not exceeding six months; whilst the Holborn Board makes a special exception in favour of wives whose husbands are in gaol for assaulting them.

§ Rules of Newton Abbott, Okehampton, East Stonehouse, South Molton, Wells, Taunton, Blandford, Wellington, Marlborough, Wimborne, Wincanton, Shepton Mallet, Yeovil, Chichester and Medway Boards of Guardians.

‖ Rules of the Worksop Board of Guardians.

¶ Rules of the Godstone Board of Guardians.

** Regulations of the Cardiff Board of Guardians; also at Carmarthen.

†† Rules of the Kingsclere Board of Guardians; also at Bridport, Trowbridge, etc.

‡‡ Rules of the Newport Board of Guardians; similarly at North Bierley, Lichfield.

§§ Regulations of the Darlington Board of Guardians.

‖‖ Rules of the Leigh Board of Guardians.

¶¶ Rules of the Stafford, Newport, Willesden, Lichfield, Dudley, Leigh, Rochdale, North Bierley, Ashton-under-Lyne, Skipton, and Halifax Boards of Guardians.

for the sale of drink ; * nor even live in "furnished lodgings," † nor rent "furnished rooms" ; ‡ at any rate, if these are such as the Guardians deem "unsuitable." § On the other hand, too good a home is as fatal a disqualification in some Unions as too bad a home is in others. Outdoor Relief is, in some places, refused to persons, whatever their character and conduct, who live "in cottages rented above the average rent of the neighbourhood" ; || or in a dwelling of "a higher rent than £3 (per annum ?) in a town or £2 in a rural district" ; ¶ or "£5 rent rural and £6 urban" ; ** or "£6 rent rural and £7 urban" ; †† or "at the gross estimated rental of £10 or upwards" ; ‡‡ or who occupy "a cottage and land (small holding)" of any kind ; §§ or more than half an acre of land ; ||| or any tenement "the rent of which is in the opinion of the Board unreasonably high." ¶¶

But the applicant for Outdoor Relief will, according to the particular part of England in which he or she lives, have also to fulfil other requirements. He or she must not be "living alone in a house ;"***or, as it is more usually specified, must be "competent to take care of himself or herself," or be "residing with some person competent and willing to take charge of him or her ;"††† or have "friends or relatives to attend to them."‡‡‡ But such relative or friend must not be a daughter, for Outdoor Relief will be refused to "any parent having a girl at home over thirteen years of age capable of earning her living ;"§§§ or "over fourteen years," or "above fifteen years."|||| At the same time, applicants for Outdoor Relief must not live together or share houses with each other, for Outdoor Relief "shall not be granted to more than one family in the same house ;" ¶¶¶ nor must they even let off part of a house in lodgings without great discrimination ; as "no Outdoor Relief" will be given "to persons who let lodgings or rooms to more than a married couple with children or to more than one lodger ;" **** whilst "no woman on Outdoor Relief" is "allowed to take in a male lodger except by permission of the Relief Committee" ; †††† nor may she have resident with her "any woman with an illegitimate child or children." **** We may add that in some Unions no Outdoor Relief is allowed to any person having a dog in his possession, or "keeping a dog or gun, or holding a licence for either;" ‡‡‡‡ or having an allotment ("except by way of loan" ;) §§§§ or, in one case, "keeping dogs, horses, donkeys, cows or poultry." ||||||

The question of thrift seems to be a puzzling one to Boards of Guardians. As we have mentioned, many Unions require the applicant for Outdoor Relief to "have shown signs of thrift."¶¶¶¶ Yet, as we have seen, the occupation of a small holding, the holding of an allotment, the keeping of a cow or a donkey, or the possession of poultry is, in some Unions, actually a cause of disqualification.***** So is the possession of a cottage, a Post Office annuity, or a tiny investment of any sort, for "no Outdoor Relief" except as a loan, will be given to persons in receipt of money derived from property" ; ††††† or except

* Rules of the Richmond, Stafford, Lichfield, and Leigh Boards of Guardians.
† Rules of Medway Board of Guardians.
‡ Rules of Bristol Board of Guardians.
§ Rules of the Leigh and Skipton Board of Guardians.
|| Rules of the Kingsclere, Beaminster, Richmond, Bridport, Trowbridge, Hartley Wintney, Whitchurch, Merthyr Tydvil, Farnham, and Romsey Boards of Guardians.
¶ Rules of the Aberayron Board of Guardians.
** Rules of the Ellesmere Board of Guardians (limit raised in 1900 to £6 rural. and £7 urban).
†† Rules of Whitchurch Board of Guardians.
‡‡ Rules of the Leigh Board of Guardians.
§§ Rules of Anglesey Board of Guardians.
||| Rules of Ellesmere, Whitchurch, and Langport Boards of Guardians.
¶¶ Rules of the Leek Board of Guardians.
*** *Ibid.*
††† Rules of Hemel Hempstead Board of Guardians ; similarly at St. Neots, Hitchin, Towcester, and St. Albans.
‡‡‡ Regulations of Bristol Board of Guardians.
§§§ Rules of Newport Pagnell Board of Guardians.
|||| Rules of Hardingstone and Luton Boards of Guardians.
¶¶¶ Regulations of the Prescot Board of Guardians.
**** Rules of the King's Norton Board of Guardians.
†††† Rules of the Norwich Board of Guardians. At Ashton-under-Lyne widows may not take in male lodgers at all.
‡‡‡‡ Rules of Hartley Wintney, Mitford and Launditch, and Shardlow Boards of Guardians.
§§§§ Rules of Hartley Wintney Board of Guardians.
|||||| Rules of Farnham Board of Guardians.
¶¶¶¶ Rules of the Forehoe Board of Guardians.
***** "Another practice which I regard as objectionable is that of refusing relief because the applicant may keep a pig or fowls, both of which certainly mean food, and perhaps bring in a little money." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 72681, Par. 23.)
††††† Bylaws of the Alnwick Board of Guardians.

"to the actually destitute." * The only form of saving which Boards of Guardians seem willing to recognise and encourage in the concrete, and not merely by abstract advice, is that of subscription to a friendly society. In one Union, according to its Rules, "no Outdoor Relief" will be given "to any applicant under forty-five" unless he is actually "drawing sick pay from a friendly society."† Apart from the recent statutory direction that allowances from such a society not exceeding 5s. a week are to be altogether excluded from the Guardians' consideration, various Unions arrange for subscribers to "Benefit Societies to receive special consideration."‡ "A person who has been a member of a friendly society for at least ten years and has ceased to be a member through no fault of his own"—or the widow of such person—may even receive 6d. a week above the ordinary scale of Outdoor Relief.§ But even in this matter many Boards of Guardians limit their encouragement in various ways. Only one seems willing to exclude all "club pay . . . . in fixing the amount of relief."‖ Others will not take into account "any sum exceeding 10s. per week received from a Benefit Society," ¶ or even anything in excess of the bare statutory sum of 5s. a week; ** or only half of any such excessive savings.†† Various other Unions so far limit their Outdoor Relief to those who have provided themselves with sick pay, as to insist that the sick pay, together with the Outdoor Relief, must never exceed "the usual rate of wages."‡‡ There are even Unions which profess by their Bylaws to ignore the recent statute; thus one will only leave wholly out of consideration such pay not exceeding 2s. 6d. a week, and will treat any greater provident insurance up to 5s. a week as if it were 2s. 6d., unless the applicant has a wife and family dependent on him.§§ Some other Unions still retain Bylaws providing merely for the supplementing of the sick pay by such Outdoor Relief as may be needed for support.‖‖ And the Runcorn Board of Guardians still defiantly print, in their Yearbook for 1906–7, the old-fashioned rule that "sick money received from a club by an applicant for relief shall be taken at the full value."¶¶

Even more inconsistent one with another are the local Bylaws relating to the earning of wages. Some Boards of Guardians profess to prohibit it altogether, ordaining that "no person in receipt of permanent Outdoor Relief shall be permitted to work for wages,"*** except, say some Boards of Guardians, widows to whom Outdoor Relief has been granted, who are expressly permitted to "work for wages."††† The prohibition is put in another form by Boards of Guardians which forbid Outdoor Relief "in aid of wages or other earnings."‡‡‡ Sometimes it is only earning more than a specified maximum that is made a disqualification for Outdoor Relief—more than 2s. per head per week, at Barton-upon-Irwell; more than 4s. per head per week at York and Halifax; or more than half a crown per head per week after paying the rent, at King's Norton and Bolton.§§§ The Worksop Board of Guardians makes an express exception for widows and deserted wives, who are thus permitted to earn money.‖‖‖ On the other hand, not only is a woman allowed to earn money to supplement her Outdoor Relief, as at Hitchin and Worksop; but various Boards of Guardians so far recognise the earning capacity of their recipients of Outdoor Relief as to lay down regular scales of relief diminishing in proportion to earnings. Thus the Prestwich Board of Guardians explicitly provides that "in case of relief given in aid of earnings . . . . where the earnings amount to at least one-third of the sum named in the scale . . . . the maximum amount of relief, including such earnings, shall not exceed the amount named in the following scale, viz., two persons, 6s. . . . six persons,

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* Rules of Whitchurch Board of Guardians.
† Rules of Romsey Board of Guardians.
‡ Regulations of the Lewes Board of Guardians; similarly at Godstone, Trowbridge, Petworth, Colchester, Chertsey.
§ Rules of the Keynsham Board of Guardians.
‖ Rules of the Worksop Board of Guardians.
¶ Regulations of the Burnley Board of Guardians.
** Rules of the Rugby Board of Guardians; similarly at Swansea and Derby.
†† Regulations of the Bristol Board of Guardians.
‡‡ Rules of the Aylesbury Board of Guardians; similarly at Banbury and Cheltenham.
§§ Regulations of the Leicester Board of Guardians.
‖‖ Rules of the Anglesey, Docking, and Mitford and Launditch Boards of Guardians.
¶¶ Rules of the Runcorn Board of Guardians.
*** Rules of St. Neots Board of Guardians. Analogous rules exist at Hertford, Wycombe, Leominster, St. Albans, Hemel Hempstead, Hitchin and elsewhere.
††† Rules of the Hitchin Board of Guardians.
‡‡‡ Rules of Mitford and Launditch and Whitchurch Boards of Guardians.
§§§ Rules of Boards of Guardians of Unions named.
‖‖‖ Rules of Worksop Board of Guardians.

14s. per week."* Another way of effecting the same result is to say that "the relief granted shall be on such a scale that, with the income coming into the house from other sources the amount shall not exceed 3s. per head."† On the other hand the Leigh Board of Guardians ignores any income or other resources not exceeding one-third of the scale of Outdoor Relief.‡ The earnings from letting lodgings are sometimes systematically computed and deducted from the amount of Outdoor Relief according to the scale in force; thus at Cheltenham, a male lodger boarding in the house is reckoned as equivalent to 2s. a week profit, and a female lodger at 1s. 6d. a week;§ whilst in the neighbouring town of Warwick a male lodger is regarded as worth 3s. per week.‖ Where the applicant lives with relatives, it is provided in the Bylaws of some Boards of Guardians that the aggregate earnings and income from all sources of the whole family group shall be taken into account, whether or not the members are legally liable to maintain the applicant.¶ Sometimes this is put in the form that Outdoor Relief will be refused to a widow "able to do all the usual household duties" who has an unmarried son at home "earning full weekly wages."** The climax is perhaps reached in those Unions in which Outdoor Relief, far from being restricted to the destitute, is explicitly confined, in the case of widows with children, to those who can prove that they are earning not less than three shillings a week.††

This analysis of local Bylaws reveals, we think, a hopeless confusion of policy on the crucial question of how far Outdoor Relief should be restricted to those who have been thrifty in the past, or who are still exerting themselves to earn a partial livelihood. Some Boards of Guardians profess to abide by an entirely contrary interpretation of the Poor Law, and to confine Outdoor Relief to the actually destitute. "It is the duty of a Board of Guardians," says one Board, "to relieve actual destitution, that is to say to relieve the poor who are unable, without support from the rates, to provide themselves with the absolute necessities of life,‡‡ and who have no relations who can be required by law to maintain them; but not to administer charity in the sense of alleviating the lot of those who are poor, but not actually destitute."§§ "Under the Poor Law," says another Board, "destitution, not poverty, gives the only claim to relief from the Poor Rates."‖‖ "Society," says another Board, "owes relief to those only who, by force of circumstances, are rendered unable to provide for the necessaries of life; to distribute relief in any other case is to create mendicity, to encourage idleness, and to produce vice. The function of the Guardians is to relieve destitution actually existing, and not to expend the money of the ratepayers in preventing a person from becoming destitute. Public relief is designed to meet destitution irrespective of the particular person, or of his good or bad character."¶¶

But whatever may be otherwise prescribed, an examination of the scales of Outdoor Relief embodied in these Bylaws makes it clear that these doles and allowances are practically always professedly fixed on the understanding that the applicants have earnings, or other sources of income, without which they must inevitably starve. Indeed, there are only two or three Unions in England in which we have found the case of persons having absolutely no means expressly differentiated in the Bylaws from that of persons

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* Rules of the Prestwich Board of Guardians. Other Boards direct that: "Any earnings of the family shall be taken into consideration in computing the amount of relief"—*e.g.*, Standing Orders of Ashton-under-Lyne, and Skipton Boards of Guardians.

† Rules of Skipton Board of Guardians.

‡ Rules of Leigh Board of Guardians.

§ Regulations of Cheltenham Board of Guardians.

‖ Rules of Warwick Board of Guardians.

¶ "No Outdoor Relief" will be allowed "to persons residing with relatives where the united income of the family is sufficient for the support of all its members whether such relatives are liable by law to support the applicant or not" (Rules of Northwich and Bradford Boards of Guardians).

** Rules of Godstone Board of Guardians.

†† Rules of Chorlton and Salford Boards of Guardians.

‡‡ In another Union, it is "a sufficiency of the common necessaries of life" (Regulations of St. Mary Abbot's, Kensington Board of Guardians).

§§ Bylaws of Richmond (Surrey) Board of Guardians.

‖‖ Rules of Godstone Board of Guardians; similarly at Calne, Luton, Oundle, North Bierley, Hemel Hempsted, St. Neots, Rugby, Hitchin, Farnham, Chard, Bedford, etc. The Williton Board of Guardians, on the other hand, make it a condition of "the *maximum* Outdoor Relief" that the applicants are destitute.

¶¶ Rules of Preston Board of Guardians.

working for wages or having other sources of income.* The lowest scale that we have come across is that of Hertford, which grants for each adult only 1s. a week and 5 lbs. of flour, or its equivalent in bread.† More usual is it to find the scale allowing 2s. 6d. per week for an adult (as at Bedminster, Prestwich, Nantwich, Epping, etc.); or 3s. (as at Cheltenham, North Bierley, Hardingstone, etc.); or 3s. 6d. (as at Warwick); though in a very few Unions it is put at as much as 4s. (as at Newport), and even 5s. (as at Loughborough and Bradford). For each child residing at home one Union still gives only 6d. and 5 lbs. of flour,‡ others 1s. and a loaf,§ occasionally 1s. and two loaves,‖ and in some cases 1s. 6d., ¶ or 2s.**—in most Unions, we understand, without anything additional being allowed for the mother, if she is an able-bodied widow—as compared with the 2s. per week for each child which the guardians of Bradford and Sheffield think necessary in addition to a sum for the mother herself. The scale is put in more complicated form at Derby beginning with man, wife and one child at 5s., and rising to man, wife and ten children at 12s. 6d. or widow and ten children, 13s. 8d.†† being about half what would be allowed at Bradford. One Union has a "summer scale" and a "winter scale," both very low, allowing a married couple with one child 5s. a week in summer and 7s. a week in winter; with 1s. additional for each further child.‡‡ It will be evident that, even allowing for differences in the cost of living, the lowest of these widely divergent scales of relief, can be described only—to quote the words of the Clerk of one of the most important Unions—as "starvation out-relief." §§

(B) The Practice as to Outdoor Relief.

The "Babel of principles" as to Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied, revealed in the foregoing analysis of the Bylaws formulated by the different Boards of Guardians, is in flagrant disregard of the policy of National Uniformity recommended in the Report of 1834. Moreover, we cannot take even these Bylaws as measuring the diversity that prevails. So far as we have been able to ascertain, only two-fifths of the Unions have any rules at all, the remainder professing to deal with each case "on its merits." Even where Bylaws or Standing Orders as to relief still appear in print, they have in many cases become obsolete, or are in practice more frequently transgressed than adhered to.‖‖ Our special Investigators into Outdoor Relief report that "Many Boards have drawn up scales of relief for their own guidance. These are printed, hung up, and often disregarded! 'Each case on its merits' is the formula used to conceal much caprice, prejudice and favouritism. The result is injustice. There is neither the superficial equality of treatment which adherence to a rigid scale gives, nor the deeper equality of treatment according to ascertained need. There is little or no attempt at discovering the whole position of a case and meeting it in a thoughtful fashion. Guardians prefer to give small sums to many persons to thoroughly helping a few. For the last fifty years the deterrent and repressive aspects of the Poor Law have been urged upon them. They have disagreed and rebelled, but instead of attempting a thorough-going remedial policy, they have halted halfway, and settled down to slipshod inquiry and the soothing dole. They are not relieving destitution, but supplementing small and precarious incomes."¶¶ It was in

* "At Bradford, widows with dependent children who are unable to go out to work in consequence of their whole time being required in properly attending to their children; who have no adult male lodgers; whose children do not sell or beg in the streets; who attend to their children's health and cleanliness; and whose habits in every way are satisfactory to the Guardians or their visiting inspector," get 5s. a week for the mother, 4s. for the first child, 3s. for the second child, and 2s. for each of the other children, an exceptionally liberal scale. In other cases, the earnings of each child worker in excess of 1s. are deducted from the scale"—(Standing Orders of Bradford Board of Guardians).

† Rules of Hertford Board of Guardians.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Rules of Cheltenham, Epping, and Warwick Boards of Guardians.

‖ Regulations of Rugby Board of Guardians.

¶ Rules of Derby, Shardlow, Beaminster, Exeter, Prestwich and Loughborough Boards of Guardians.

** Regulations of the Merthyr Tydvil Board of Guardians.

†† Rules of the Derby Board of Guardians. The Medway Board of Guardians gives a widow with three or more children, 1s. 6d. per child; with fewer than three, 2s. per child.

‡‡ Rules of Bucklow Board of Guardians.

§§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 36025. In Kensington, the Board of Guardians directed it to "be assumed that in this parish a single person can live on 3s. 6d. per week *besides rent*, and a man and wife on 6s. 6d." (Regulations of Kensington Board of Guardians).

‖‖ "They are continually evaded." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. CI. (par. 15) of Vol. V.). "Refusals are seldom based upon the rules," reports an inspector, "even in Unions where such profess to be in force." "In practice," reports another inspector, "there is little difference between the Boards which have adopted regulations, and those which have not."

¶¶ Interim Report of Inquiry into the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . . in the Counties of Suffolk and Cambridge, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 17.

view of these facts that we paid special attention to the actual practice in different parts of the Kingdom, with regard to the grant of Outdoor Relief; alike in our oral examination of witnesses, in our personal visits to see Boards of Guardians and Relief Committees at their work, and in the appointment of special Investigators.

We find certain characteristics almost universal, alike in those Boards of Guardians which have formal scales of relief, and those which "treat each case on its merits." The dole given is practically never adequate to the requirements of healthy subsistence. The sums awarded are almost mechanically doled out, according as the Relieving Officer reports the applicant to come into one or other wide category, as widow, sick husband, aged person, etc., without any real consideration of the sum that it would require properly to maintain each household; and without any accurate ascertainment of the other resources. "They do not confess that they have a scale," says one of the Inspectors;* "but the frequency with which 1s. or 1s. 6d. per week will be given for each dependent child, and 3s. for each adult, makes the so-called "treating the case on its merits," really amount to the same thing." The Guardians, reports an experienced Clerk, "get into their heads that 2s. 6d. or 3s. a week is the proper sum, and they give it to a great number."† What weighs with them is that, if they give some such dole, "they have got rid of the case."‡ "As a matter of fact," reports one Local Government Board Inspector, "these half-crowns, eighteenpences and shillings are given because the facts are not ascertained."§ What we have ourselves seen of the practice of Boards of Guardians in different parts of the country completely confirms this testimony. "There are," noticed one of our Committees, "no relief rules or fixed scales, yet all the evils of rules and scales of relief are in existence. It is a rule to give 2s. 6d. to an aged person; sometimes 6d. less, but rarely ever more than 2s. 6d. One case was that of a widow, sixty-seven years of age, living alone; the rent was 2s. 6d. (a week); they granted only 2s. (a week); there was no other known income."‖ Many specific cases of wholly inadequate relief came before the notice of our Investigators. "This inadequacy," they report, "strikes us as being particularly injurious in the case of widows who have young children dependent upon them;"¶ to whom, as we have mentioned, only 1s. or 1s. 6d. a week is usually allowed for the entire maintenance of each dependent child. So important did this allegation appear to us—affecting, as it did, the conditions of life of no fewer than 170,000 children in England and Wales whom the State is maintaining on Outdoor Relief—that we appointed special Investigators to enquire into the conditions under which these children were living. The result of this Inquiry was to prove conclusively that, "in the vast majority of cases," the amount allowed by the Guardians is not adequate. "The children," sums up our principal Children's Investigator, "are undernourished, many of them poorly dressed, and many barefooted. . . . The decent mother's one desire is to keep herself and her children out of the workhouse. She will, if allowed, try to do this on an impossibly inadequate sum, until both she and her children become mentally and physically deteriorated. . . . It must be remembered," adds this medical expert, "that semi-starvation is not a painful process, and its victims do not recognise what is happening. . . . We give relief without knowing whether the recipients can manage on it; we go on giving it without knowing how they are managing on it."**

Along with this fact that the Outdoor Relief given is practically never adequate for healthy subsistence, goes the other fact, which we find almost invariable, namely, that Outdoor Relief is professedly not intended by the Guardians for those who are really destitute but for those who can, in some way or another, see their way to a few shillings a week.†† There has grown up, we are informed, a regular practice of giving Outdoor Relief in order to supplement the assumed other sources of income, whether petty earnings,

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 5092.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 35975.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 35937. The result is, as one witness informed us, that: "Either the spirit of cadging is fostered, and concealment encouraged, or else the people are left in a state of misery, children ill-nourished and ill-clad, old people half-starved on bread and tea." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 32267, Par. 11.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 8870.

‖ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 33 B, p. 82.

¶ Memorandum by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss R. E. Squire, p. 1.

** Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. Ethel Williams, 1908, p. 88.

†† Generally, in cases of Outdoor Relief, says one witness, "The applicants are not, as you might say, really destitute, and they are not actually starving; but their income is such as to necessitate some . . . addition." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 22863.)

charitable gifts * or contributions from relations—to such an extent, indeed, that applicants often fictitiously magnify these resources in order to induce the Guardians to grant the dole of Outdoor Relief; and Guardians will even refuse to grant Outdoor Relief, where the applicant, however worthy, really has no other means of livelihood at all.† We have already seen to what an extent the Bylaws of the different Unions recognise the receipt of sick pay from a friendly society, and even sometimes require it as a qualification for Outdoor Relief. The occasional allusions in the Bylaws to such sources of income as letting lodgings, cultivating gardens or allotments, or keeping a dog "for the purposes of his business," and even working for wages, thus become intelligible. So plain did it become to us that women, in particular, were habitually granted Outdoor Relief in aid of their wages or other earnings that we thought it necessary to appoint special Investigators into this practice all over England and Scotland.‡ These Investigators found many thousands of women who were regularly in receipt of Outdoor Relief, working as charwomen, laundrywomen, and domestic servants (outdoor); in dressmaking, tailoring and all the "needle" trades; in shoe-making and weaving, confectionery and box-making; in factories and workshops as well as in their own homes; holding permanent situations as well as temporary engagements; for weekly, daily and hourly wages as well as at piecework rates. Even the aged persons who are granted Outdoor Relief are habitually assumed to have some other means of support. Those who have absolutely no resources must, nearly everywhere, go to the Workhouse—to the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described. It is, indeed, clear that of the three to four million pounds a year annually given in Outdoor Relief, the greater part is given, not in relief of destitution, strictly defined, but in aid of poverty.§

We do not at this point discuss the debatable question of whether or not this almost universal system of granting Outdoor Relief in supplement of earnings, charitable gifts or the contributions of relations has injurious results upon either the market rate of wages or the flow of charity. We thought it important, however, to ascertain what steps were taken by the Boards of Guardians to satisfy themselves, before granting their manifestly inadequate doles of Outdoor Relief, as to the actual existence of the other resources which they tacitly assumed to exist, and as to whether the amount of such resources, joined with the Outdoor Relief, was sufficient, and no more than sufficient, for the proper maintenance of the household. We regret to say that, excluding a very few exceptionally administered Unions, we found nothing worthy of the name of an ascertainment of even the existence, let alone the amount, of any such resources. "In a great many instances," testifies the Clerk of a great urban Union, "Guardians guess at the amount that is coming in, and think that because there are charities in the neighbourhood these people must be getting some of it, whereas in some cases I fancy they do not get quite as much as the Guardians imagine they do." || The Guardians, in fact, as an Inspector assured us, "leave a good deal to the imagination in cases of that sort." ¶ The Guardians, said another witness, give such inadequate relief "in the hope that there are (other resources); I do not think they give it from definite information at all." ** This testimony is borne out by what we have ourselves seen of the way in which Boards of Guardians deal with the cases. "There was hardly any evidence," notes one of our committees, "that anything more than the statements of the applicants was used in deciding their cases. Very little verification except a visit to the home." †† "Enquiries as to resources," notes another

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* "One reason," said a Guardian, "of the slackness in properly relieving is the knowledge that there is so much charity money. The statement is made that friends will help, which means that the people beg to increase their miserable income." (Report . . . on Endowed and Voluntary Charities in certain places, and the administrative relations of Charity and the Poor Law, by A. C. Kay, and H. V. Toynbee, pp. 62, 110.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 19975–19980.

‡ *See* the several Reports on the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and other Conditions of Employment, by Miss Constance Williams and Mr. Thomas Jones; in London, in England generally, in Shropshire, in Suffolk and Cambridge, in Scotland, respectively; together with the "Final Report," by Thomas Jones.

§ "The Poor Law," sum up our Investigators, "was once supposed to deal with destitution rather than with poverty. To-day, however, the persons helped have few resources rather than absolutely none. . . . The policy of Out-relief throughout the country is one of granting small weekly doles to the aged and infirm, and small allowances per child to the widow with dependents. . . . Some Guardians encourage applicants to earn all they can, and do not reduce the relief. It is unusual to cut down relief when wages rise, except in the case of children beginning to earn." (Final Report of Inquiry into the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 10.)

|| Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 35936.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 12729.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 32217.

†† Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 13, p. 26.

committee, "are practically not made at all. . . . Widows with children receive varying amounts; it seems quite a matter of chance how much."*

The lack of an ascertainment of resources does not always result in too little being given. We are convinced, not only by the testimony of competent witnesses, but also from our own observation, that Outdoor Relief is sometimes granted in cases in which the home could be quite well maintained without it. "It is far from infrequent," one official witness assured us, "to find that the Outdoor Relief paupers are in possession of considerable sums of money, or have other means, which they had not divulged to the Relieving Officer."† Owing to the persistent refusal of the Guardians to allow proper investigation, says the Superintendent Relieving Officer of a large London Union, "we are done every day we rise."‡ "Altogether seventeen cases were heard," notes one of our committees, "and the applicants seen. The majority of these cases were widows and children, the relief being on an unusually adequate scale. Thus, a widow with three children dependent, and earning 14s. a week and some food, was given 7s. a week relief, bringing her total weekly income up to 21s. and food. In another case a widow with four dependent children, and one boy earning 15s. a week, with a total income to the family of 25s., received 7s. a week, bringing their total income up to 32s. a week for six persons."§ We may cite in confirmation some recorded cases. "A widow living with her single daughter . . . aged thirty-nine, who was working at the ——— shoeworks and earning an average weekly wage of 18s. 3d. Two sons gave their mother 1s. each weekly, which made the income 20s. 3d. weekly for two persons. Guardians granted 3s. 6d. and 6d. grocery in addition. The Relieving Officer . . . reported each time the case came before the committee that 'it was not a case of destitution.'"‖ A Local Government Board Inspector "stated that on the morning he was present relief was granted where the united earnings of the family amounted to 34s. per week."¶ Two glaring cases were brought to our notice in which Outdoor Relief, to the extent of 3s. and 5s. a week respectively, was granted to two families, of which the total earnings were, in the one case 40s. 9d., and in the other 51s. 6d. per week.**

It is possibly connected with this general lack of ascertainment of the applicant's resources, combined with the absence of any guiding principle, that we find an amazing diversity in the treatment of similar cases, not only between Union and Union, but even within the same Union. We have ourselves noticed this divergence between committee and committee of one and the same Board of Guardians, uncontrolled by any superior authority.†† Nor is this by any means exceptional. "I have found," sums up one of the Local Government Board Inspectors, "different committees of the same Board dealing quite differently with similar classes of cases, which is obviously wrong." In a town where this habitually takes place, "it is known," testifies a competent witness, "that paupers shift from other districts of the town, where the maximum is not always given, to the more favoured locality and get the maximum."‡‡ Indeed, apart from divergence of practice between different Relief Committees of the same Union, we have ourselves noticed—what is in fact notorious—that the same Relief Committee of the same Board of Guardians will deal differently with similar cases (and even with the same case) at successive meetings, according to the accident of which of the Guardians happen to be present. "It is often a matter," say our Investigators, "of persuading a Guardian to take up the case. If the appeal succeeds, at the next meeting of the Relief Committee, the Guardian will present the claims of 'My Mrs. Smith' much as an outside charity worker will. When such personal relations are established there may

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* *Ibid.*, No. 75, p. 145.
† Evidence before the Commission, Q. 39776, Par. 13.
‡ Report on the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . in London, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, p. 13.
§ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 22, p. 49.
‖ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix XX. (A), to Vol. IV.
¶ *Ibid.*, Q. 49888, Par. 19.
** *Ibid.*, Q. 11889.
†† After seeing the relief work in a certain Union, one of our Committees reported: "There are three Committees which grant relief, but no uniformity is aimed at between them. There are no rules laid down for their guidance, and there is no commonly accepted guiding principle in the minds of the respective Committees." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 96, p. 112.)
‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, Q. 52742. "I have known cases," deposed a Relieving Officer, "where outdoor relief has been refused in one district, but granted readily upon the applicant removing to and applying in another district" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXVIII. (Par. 26) to Vol. V. "There is not a fixed policy . . . each Committee varies . . . it depends who is sitting on the Committee." (*Ibid.*, Q. 50680.)

be as much or as little fraud in the one case as in the other, for in neither is inquiry always thorough."* "It was evident," noticed one of the committees, "that the amount actually given in each case varied according to whether such applicant had or had not a personal advocate among the Guardians. Thus, in one case personally advocated by a Guardian, an old man and his wife, living with their married daughter, and paying no rent, received 6s. a week. In another case, not vouched for by any Guardian, a woman aged fifty-eight, and disabled by debility, paid rent 1s. 9d. a week, and had no relatives able to assist her, yet she only received 3s. 6d., leaving her 1s. 9d. a week to live on after paying her rent."† Such cases of inequality of treatment, owing to the accidental or deliberate absence or presence of particular members of the committee are, we are informed, frequent;‡ and can, we are assured, with an Authority constituted as at present, scarcely be avoided.

We now come to what appears to us the worst feature of the Outdoor Relief of to-day. With insignificant exceptions, Boards of Guardians give these doles and allowances without requiring in return for them even the most elementary conditions.§ They are bound by statute to require that the children of school age should be in attendance at school, and this alone is what the average Relieving Officer sees to.‖ As we have mentioned, many of the Bylaws require the recipients of Outdoor Relief to live in houses that are maintained in a sanitary state, and in homes kept reasonably clean. But whether or not the Union has Bylaws to this effect, it is plain that, in the vast majority of cases, no such condition is enforced.¶ We draw here a distinction between the completely rural Union and that of the great town or urban district. In the former, though the conditions are not ideal, the lowest depths are rarely sounded. So far as the towns are concerned we have ourselves visited the homes of recipients of Outdoor Relief in Union after Union, only to find their condition, in the majority of cases, distinctly unsatisfactory, and in many instances, simply deplorable. We have found innumerable cases of gross insanitation and overcrowding, and not a few of indecent occupation. We have seen homes thus maintained out of the public funds in a state of indescribable filth and neglect; the abodes of habitual intemperance and disorderly living; and this—as it grieves us above all to say—even in families in which the Boards of Guardians are giving Outdoor Relief to enable children to be reared. One of our Committees, after visiting the homes

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* Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . . in London, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, p. 55.

† Report of Visits by Commissioners, No. 43 A, p. 94.

‡ Evidence before the Commission. *Q.* 36263, Par. 2. The Rochdale Board of Guardians appointed a special Committee in 1904 to consider why Outdoor Relief was mounting up. "The chief fact impressed upon us by our investigators," reported this Committee after detailed inquiry, "has been the inequalities of the Orders made, inequalities not only between the Orders of Committee and Committee, but between the Orders of the same Committee. By inequalities we mean variations in the relief allowance to cases of the same class in which circumstances are practically identical. . . . The Relieving Officers when asked what explanations they could give in the matter," alleged "that meetings of the same Committee are not always attended by the same members, and that views on cases, and the resultant Orders, vary with the varying composition of the meetings." The cases adduced indicate that one Committee differed from another in the amount of relief given to apparently similar cases by as much as the difference between 2s. 6d. and 4s.; whilst the same Committee would give, now 3s., now 5s., to seemingly identical cases. (Report of Special Committee appointed to consider the Question of Outdoor Relief, Rochdale Union, 1905.)

§ This has been pointed out to us by the Secretary of a Charity Organisation Society. "I consider," says this witness, "that from the first it should be clearly explained to the recipients that this supervision is a necessary condition of Out-relief. . . . I believe such increased supervision in the home would tend to diminish the desirability of Out-relief and act as a deterrent. . . . It would also ensure a much better result from the expenditure in Out-relief, and tend to diminish pauperism in some degree." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXII. (Par. 16) to Vol. VII. "Out-relief," say our Investigators, "when given under the supervision of an Officer or Guardian with a turn for constructive helpfulness, may improve an applicant's character or industrial position or domicile. Thus pressure from the Ipswich Board forced a woman from irregular sack-sewing at home, to cleaner and more permanent work at the stay factory. But this conception of a constructive function attaching to the granting of Out-relief is very rare, and is only met with in an individual here and there." (Report . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief in England, by Miss Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, p. 8.)

‖ The Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association actually suggested to us that even this minimum of supervision of the household on Outdoor Relief should be dispensed with. "Seeing that school fees are abolished, it is unnecessary that Guardians or their Officers should be compelled to obtain evidence of children attending school." (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.*22535 (Par. 7), 22791, 22792, 22793.)

¶ There is even a contrary tendency. As we have already seen in the by-laws, some Boards of Guardians discourage the habitation, by persons on Outdoor Relief, of rooms or cottages of too high a rental. "If," sum up our Investigators, "Guardians think a woman is paying too much rent, she is told to move to cheaper rooms. Sometimes this hastens deterioration by withdrawing the support of a respectable street and placing the woman and children in an unfavourable environment." (Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . . in London, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, p. 63.)

of the Outdoor paupers in a large urban Union, reported "that the Guardians in distributing Out-relief pay no attention to the sanitary conditions in which the applicants live; that bedridden cases are not properly looked after; that there seems to be serious overcrowding; and that Out-relief administered on these lines . . . must not only lower the standard of public health and hinder the work of the Sanitary Authorities, but must also be really injurious to the recipients."* Another Committee "visited some thirty to forty Out-relief cases. For the most part they are living in houses which reflect most serious discredit on the Sanitary Authority, and on the great companies which have attracted to the district a large population. The overcrowding is of such a kind that ordinary decency is impossible; both sanitary accommodation and water supply are most inadequate."† A third Committee, visiting the Outdoor Relief cases in one of the principal cities of England, "went on to a wretched street; many of the houses stood forsaken with broken windows and doors, dirty, forlorn, and tumbling to pieces. We knocked at one which was inhabited. The door was opened by a big, hulking man, the son-in-law of the recipient of Outdoor Relief. She was blind, and lay on a dirty bed in the front parlour; she looked neglected, and the room was very dirty, the walls dilapidated. Almost the entire space was occupied by the blind woman's bed, and that of her daughter, who lay, I thought, not sober, certainly very dishevelled, though it was mid-day. I wondered how much of the Out-relief went to the blind bedridden mother, and how much to the daughter and her big husband."‡ Another Committee, attending the meeting of the Relief Committee in a great town, reports that "Drunkenness seemed to be considered a venial fault. In one case a widow with children had been receiving relief for two years, although the Guardians had several times been informed that she was drinking. She subsequently became a prostitute, neglected her children, was prosecuted and imprisoned at the instance of the N.S.P.C.C. Her children were taken charge of by the Guardians, and it was on her release from gaol that the case came up . . . as to what should be done with the children. We could not help feeling that the lax grant of Out-relief probably contributed to the moral ruin of this woman's life."§ So much were we impressed by what we had ourselves seen that we requested the Local Government Board to ask their Inspectors for general reports upon the character of the homes in their districts into which Outdoor Relief was being given.‖ These reports unfortunately bear out our own impressions. "The outdoor poor relieved in all large cities," reports one of these Inspectors, "may be broadly classified in three divisions: first, a minority of really respectable and decent folk" whose homes "are generally kept clean and often comfortable"; next, "the bulk of the recipients of out-relief who have sunk into pauperism from various causes or combination of causes, some self-created, such as drink, vice and thriftlessness. Old age, sickness, general inefficiency and lack of industrial training account for many cases. The homes of this class vary considerably according to individual character and circumstances. . . . Taken as a whole, their condition is not very much worse than their neighbours who are not chargeable, and sometimes it is better." But there is, as he adds, a third class to whom Boards of Guardians persist in giving Outdoor Relief without

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* Reports of Visits of Commissioners, No. 43 B, p. 95.

† *Ibid.*, No. 44 B, p. 97.

‡ *Ibid.*, No. 45 C, p. 102.

§ *Ibid.*, No. 19, p. 44. "There is no supervision," the Clerk of one of the most important Unions informs us, "as to how the Out-relief is expended. Many instances have come to the Guardians' notice where it has been ridiculously misapplied." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 39776.) Of one Yorkshire Union we are told that:—"Cases struck off the roll for misconduct are very infrequent, not one per annum. . . . When relief is stopped for immorality, the offenders appeal again to the Guardians and are reinstated." (Report . . . on the Effect of Out-relief in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, p. 83.) In one large town, "the Relieving Officers could recall but one case reported for bad conduct during the last three years." (*Ibid.* p. 63.)

‖ Summary of Reports on the Conditions of the Outdoor Poor by certain of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board. The reports themselves were supplied to the Commission, but it was thought better to print only a summary of them, and to omit references to particular Unions. We therefore omit all names of persons or places. We append a few further quotations from these authoritative Reports. "There is no doubt whatever," says one Inspector, "that a large number of the Outdoor paupers are living in an environment of filth and immorality, and in many cases I fear they are participants in, and abettors of, these foul, insanitary and degrading conditions." Another says, "The conditions are very often bad indeed, and are quite incompatible with decent living for the adults or with a respectable and healthful upbringing of the children where they exist. . . . In the same street the Relieving Officer stated he had four other cases all living in single cellar rooms."

requiring any improvement.* "Too frequently they represent the most demoralised and diseased of the population. They include sane epileptics, imbeciles and cripples of the lowest class. Their homes are nearly always to be found in the poorest quarters where population is densest. Cleanliness and ventilation are not considered of any account. The furniture is always of the most dilapidated kind. The beds generally consist of dirty palliasses or mattresses with very scanty covering. The atmosphere is offensive, even fetid, and the clothing of the individuals, old and young, is ragged and filthy. Bankrupt in pocket and character, this class look to the rates to support them, and are never backward in making application. The children are neglected, furnish the complaints of the N.S.P.C.C. inspectors, and fill the homes of the Guardians. The men are drunkards, gamblers, workshy boys and often criminals. The women are too often immoral as well as unclean and neglectful. *Souteneurs* may be included in this class. . . It is impossible with the present powers to deal satisfactorily with the various sub-sections of (this class). . . . The Guardians feel forced to give relief to bad cases because of the children, or for fear of some allegation of want of consideration to destitute ruffians or drunkards." We wish carefully to guard against it being supposed that this description applies to the bulk, or even to the majority, of the cases on Outdoor Relief. There are among them, even in the large towns, numbers of worthy and decent people of sober and respectable lives. But it is necessary to realise that, under the present administration of Outdoor Relief, there are many recipients who are of the kind described in the foregoing graphic report. And this report, authoritative in itself, is confirmed by those of the other Inspectors. "I found," writes one of them after visiting the Outdoor Relief cases, "far too much intemperance, and sometimes even drunkenness, in cases to which relief was being granted. It was most observable in the overcrowded quarters and slums. Closely allied to it, and as a rule the fruits of it, were filth, both of person and surroundings; and sadder even was the neglect and resultant cruelty to children who were ill-fed and ill-clad. . . . Though the living-room might be fairly clean, the rest of the house was a mass of filth, the bedding dirty, a heap of ill-smelling rags for bed clothes, and the atmosphere vile and vicious. In some instances even the living-room was a disgrace to humanity." We must add that another Inspector reports that "a not inconsiderable proportion of Guardians" take the view, first, that the disposal "of the relief granted by them is a matter for which not they, but the recipients, are responsible; and, secondly, that, however small the relief given to a person with little or no other apparent means of subsistence, it is no one's business to inquire further if the applicant is satisfied." "The first of these views," continues the Inspector, "which I have heard expressed even by a Chairman of a Board of Guardians, is almost an incitement to a careless parent to waste on drink money which should be devoted to the nourishment and clothing of the children; while the second may mean a bargain between a parsimonious Board of Guardians and liberty- or license-loving paupers for the lowest terms on which they will keep out of the workhouse." The same testimony is given, with a special emphasis derived from his professional experience, by our Medical Investigator. "The worst kind of public policy," sums up Dr. McVail, "is that under which an Authority representing a community confers personal benefits without any accompanying requirement of good order or obedience. I heard of a Relieving Officer in an urban Union who, reporting on an application, recommended that relief be refused because the applicant was a lazy loafer, continually to be found at public-house corners, and any money he received would be spent in drink. A Guardian listening to this report indignantly demanded to be told: What right has anyone to interfere with how a man spends his money? The wrong policy is crystallised in the Guardian's query. It is surely obvious that if individuals or their dependants are to be selected for maintenance in whole or in part by local rates or Imperial taxes,

* We give one case as it was reported by our Committee which heard it dealt with. "Widow, 53, two married sons and one son single at work, younger son, and one son, invalid, suffering from early phthisis, and two girls 12 and 9. The widow was a drinker threatened with paralysis. The single sons, the mother, and the two daughters lived together. The single son at work gave all his wages, 16s., to the mother. Half the rent of 5s. 6d. was paid by one of the married sons. The Guardians decided to give 4s. in kind weekly to the widow, and urged by the Chairman she agreed to 'put no obstacle' in the way of the phthisical son being sent by the Guardians to a sanatorium. As the mother was a drunkard, it seemed hardly well to give Outdoor Relief. If the House had been offered, the mother would have been kept from drink, the phthisical son sent to a sanatorium, and the girls cared for at the Cottage Homes. Now one fears the Outdoor Relief will promote the drinking and not stop the infection, from which one of the members of the family had already suffered and, died." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 25 A, p. 66.) Our Medical Investigator adduces the following case:—"A woman with three children, all suffering from itch, refused to go into the workhouse, and received Out-relief without any restriction on their movements. . . . The whole family lived unrestrainedly in the poor part of a town, mingled with others of their class, and had every opportunity to spread the disease." (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. C. McVail, 1907, p. 60.)

they should in their maintenance be duly controlled by the authority which supports them. The principle is so elementary as hardly to require setting forth, but under the Poor Law it is abrogated every day of the year and every hour of the day. . . . Persons suffering from the most serious transmissible maladies are afforded relief without prevention of opportunities to inoculate the healthy or contaminate the next generation. . . . Phthisis cases are maintained in crowded unventilated houses where there is unrestrained facility to convey the disease to their own offspring. Diabetes cases live on the rates and eat what they please. Infirm men and women supported by the Poor Law are allowed to dwell in conditions of the utmost personal and domestic uncleanliness. Widows get money for the upkeep of their family without any advice or requirement as to the spending of it, or as to the healthy rearing of their children. . . . It is not worth while entering on any reform of the Poor Law unless this policy is changed. Beneficiaries must be compelled to obedience alike in their own and in the public interest." *

The gravest part of this indictment appeared to us to be the allegation that thousands of children, whose maintenance was being paid for out of public funds, were being brought up in homes such as have been described. We therefore specially directed the attention of the Investigators, whom we appointed to report on the conditions in which the children on Outdoor Relief were being brought up, to the moral environment in which they found these children to be living. The result was a complete confirmation of the testimony already adduced. The report† of our Investigators, with great wealth of statistical detail, divides the mothers of the 170,000 Outdoor Relief children into four classes: the first good, the second mediocre, the third including "the slovenly and slipshod, women of weak intentions and often of weak health, not able to make the most of their resources;" and the fourth "the really bad mothers; people guilty of wilful neglect; sometimes drunkards or people of immoral character . . . . unfit to have charge of children." The percentages of the different classes were found to vary greatly. In the rural districts, whilst the third or unsatisfactory class is large (19 per cent.), the fourth or unfit is small (6 per cent.). In the towns, conditions are, as a rule, much worse. We may honourably except Bradford, where Outdoor Relief is administered with great discrimination, but even here a few mothers of the fourth class were found in receipt of relief. In other towns the results of the investigation were simply appalling. In one great urban Union, in which every Outdoor Relief child was actually seen and inquired into—to say nothing of those living with "unsatisfactory" mothers—the number living with "really bad mothers—people guilty of wilful neglect; sometimes drunkards or people of immoral character"; all "unfit to have charge of children"—amounted to 18 per cent. of the whole number of children on Outdoor Relief. In another great Union, similarly completely investigated, this terrible percentage rose to as much as 22.‡ To sum up, our Investigators estimate that the number of Poor Law children on January 1st, 1908, in the very unsatisfactory homes of the third class, in England and Wales, is more than 30,000. The number of those in the fourth class where the home is demonstrably wholly unfit for children, is no fewer than 20,000.§ We can add nothing to the force of these terrible figures.

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* *Ibid.*, pp. 148, 149.

† Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908.

‡ It is, of course, only one result of such a way of bringing up the citizens of the future that (as was confidently asserted by the Clerk of an important Union) "there is no doubt that the children of Out-relief cases frequently become paupers themselves" (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 39776, Par. 26).

§ Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, pp. 61–63. It must, moreover, be remembered that all these figures present only the numbers of each class simultaneously in receipt of Outdoor Relief on one day. In 1892 it was found that the number of separate children relieved during the year was nearly two and a half times the total for one day (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix to Vol. I., p. 22); and this proportion was approximately confirmed by the result of the "year's count" that we had made. Thus, the total number of children relieved by the Poor Law during the year, but exposed to improper conditions, must exceed 100,000.

With regard to the 30,820 children under 16 on Outdoor Relief in Scotland (apart from children "boarded out") we have no statistical evidence. But, at any rate so far as the large towns are concerned, we have ascertained that, in many cases, the home conditions are deplorable. One of our colleagues, after watching the administration of relief in a large Scotch town, notes as follows:—

> "What struck me—apart from the procedure—was the complete ignoring of the probable "consequences of the decisions upon the children of the applicants. In phthisical cases, persons "were put on the roll for aliment, or struck off as fit for work, by the decision of the assistant "inspector, without any regard for the probable infection of the rest of the family. When I "suggested that a phthisical patient from whose family aliment had been withdrawn, on his discharge "from the hospital as fit for work, would infect his nine children, the assistant inspector merely "remarked that they were probably already infected. I then discovered that the eldest daughter, "marked on the case-paper as phthisical, had died in the interval of phthisis—a fact which, whilst "bearing out the inference, hardly improved the case." (Reports of Visits of Commissioners, Scotland, not yet in volume form.)

With regard to the 18,000 children on Outdoor Relief in Ireland (apart from children "boarded out") we have practically no information.

(c) The Cause of the Failure of the Present Administration of Outdoor Relief.

It becomes now our duty to state what, in our opinion, is the cause of the disastrous social failure of the present administration of Outdoor Relief. In order that any policy of domiciliary treatment of persons in need of support may be pursued without the gravest social and economic peril, the authority charged with its administration must be so constituted as to ensure the fulfilment of three fundamental conditions. There must be, in each case dealt with, an accurate ascertainment, first, of the particular needs of the applicant; and second, of the economic, sanitary and other circumstances of the household. There must be, further, in each case, an impartial judgment, upon uniform principles, whether, on the ascertained facts, relief or treatment in the home is necessary and desirable, and if so, to what extent. Finally, if the relief is not to become, in many cases, demoralising to the recipient, and injurious to the community as a whole, there must be imposed and enforced conditions as to the manner in which the publicly subsidised household shall be maintained, appropriate to the needs of each case. In our opinion, the Local Authority to which this important duty has been confided in the case of the Poor Law, namely the Board of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and the Parish Council in Scotland, with its staff of Relieving Officers, is, by its very nature, inherently incompetent to fulfil the requirements that we have postulated.

(i.) *The Destitution Officer.*

We must begin with the Relieving Officer, who has to deal with all applicants for relief, whether men or women, children or aged, sick or well, in respect of the one characteristic of destitution. This "Destitution Officer," as he may be called, is, we are told, "very largely the pivot on which the Poor Law works."* And this is specially so in respect of Outdoor Relief. With regard to institutional relief, the Relieving Officer is but the portal; once the pauper has entered any Poor Law institution, the Relieving Officer has no further concern with the case. With regard to Outdoor Relief, on the other hand, this officer is, from first to last, all-important. It is to him that all applications have to be made.† It is he who has to decide, in the first instance, whether the applicant is eligible for relief at all; and in many cases his refusal is conclusive. He alone decides whether the applicant stands in need of immediate succour, and he administers what he judges to be necessary. It is he who visits the applicant's home, in order to form a judgment as to all the circumstances of the case. If there is ill-health, real or simulated, it is the Relieving Officer who decides whether or not to give the applicant access to the Poor Law Medical Officer; and indeed, whether the case is sufficiently grave to send into the Workhouse, or whether it should be treated at home.‡ It is he who decides, on his own responsibility, whether a poor person is sufficiently obviously of unsound mind to be forcibly conveyed, pending judicial determination, to the Workhouse or infirmary; and when, as some guide for this purpose, the "family history" is inquired into, it is upon the same officer that this difficult and delicate duty falls.§ It is on his report that all cases come before the Guardians. It is, in the vast majority of instances, his information alone beyond the applicant's own statement, that is supplied to the Guardians; whether that information relates to the earnings or other resources of the applicant, to the ability of his relatives to assist him, to his past character and present conduct, to the sanitary state of the house and street, to the cleanliness and decency of the home, to the number and conditions of the family, to the state of health and ability to work of the applicant, and even to the infectious or contagious nature of a disease such as phthisis, from which the applicant or some member of his family may be suffering, and to the likelihood of recovery under the conditions of the home.‖ It

* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 22652.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 232.

‡ "I use," testifies a Relieving Officer of twenty years' standing, "an equal amount of care and discretion in deciding what is a genuine and proper case for medical relief, as I do in any kind of case for relief other than medical." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. CXXVII. (Par. 1 (b)) to Vol. IV.) This is complained of by Mr. Sydney Holland, the Chairman of the London Hospital, and by other witnesses of medical experience. "I question," says Mr. Holland, "whether a Relieving Officer is the person to deal with it at all." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 32866.)

§ "The Relieving Officer," deposes a representative Poor Law medical officer, "either upon his own authority in obvious cases . . . or upon the direction of a Justice of the Peace after medical examination in less apparent cases, conveys the alleged lunatic to the Workhouse or infirmary for detention until the Justice decides whether the case is fit to be discharged or to be transferred to the county asylum. . . . The family history is always gone into, but that is gone into by the Relieving Officers." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 26172 (Par. 1), 26199.)

‖ "In this district," reports a Local Government Board Inspector, "there are twenty cases of phthisis receiving Outdoor Relief."

is on the report of this Destitution Officer that the Guardians have to rely in such momentous issues of fact as to whether the character of a particular mother is or is not such as to warrant her being entrusted with the rearing of her children; or whether a particular tradesman is or is not a suitable person to whom to bind a boy apprentice. The Relieving Officer is even required to discover and state what is the cause of the destitution into which the applicant has fallen.

But all this array of duties, varied as it is, amounts only to the ascertainment of different classes of facts. When the case comes before the Board of Guardians, the Destitution Officer has to decide on a policy—has, that is to say, to give to the Guardians his responsible and authoritative advice as to the kind of relief, the amount of relief and the conditions of the relief that, according to the law of the land, the directions of the Local Government Board, and the best economic doctrine, the case ought to receive.* We have been puzzled, indeed, to discover what exactly is assumed to be the right relation in this respect between the Relieving Officer and the Guardians before whom he brings his cases. From the authoritative evidence of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, experienced Clerks to Boards of Guardians and Poor Law experts, it appears that Relief Committees ought to be guided by specific recommendations from the Relieving Officer in each case, and that contrary action on the part of the Guardians calls, as a rule, for official criticism, if not for censure. "The Guardians," complains an Inspector with regard to some of his Unions, "will over-ride the plain facts of a Relieving Officer's statement, and deal with a case contrary to his advice."† "I rather fear," regretfully admits the Clerk of a great Midland Union, "that . . . . the reports of our Relieving Officers are not always acted upon."‡ It is "where the administration is bad" that "the Relieving Officer is set aside," suggests Mr. C. S. Loch, to which an Inspector replies "that is so."§ This being the view taken by their official superiors, it is not surprising to find that the Destitution Officers themselves place a high estimate on their right to pass judgment on the cases,‖ as well as to ascertain the facts. "Relieving Officers," asserts one of them, "should be held responsible for the strict and proper administration (of the Poor Law), and should not be interfered with in any shape or form, and if possible, should be given greater powers. From the time of application the Relieving Officer should see

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* How completely the Destitution Officer may himself adjudicate on his own cases may be gathered from the following description, by one of our Committees, of the procedure of the Relief Committee of a great urban Union. "The Committee sat on one side of a counter, the Relieving Officer on the other, with a pile of money beside him. He took names in order from the Application and Report Book (which seemed to be very fairly kept), summoned the applicant, stated the facts of the case, allotted the relief, and handed it to the applicant, at the same time giving a card to the Chairman of the Committee for endorsement. By this method, thirteen cases were decided in one Committee in four minutes." (Reports of visits by Commissioners, No. 5A. p. 18.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 7599. "Sometimes," says another Inspector, "a Relieving Officer makes a recommendation, and the recommendation is not accepted. . . . Sometimes the people have friends at Court, and the Relieving Officer may be over-ruled." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 5613–4.) "Fortunately," observes another Inspector, "the Relieving Officers as a rule have a sufficient sense of their own responsibility to make them withstand an extreme adoption of this policy, and even on the laxest Board of Guardians a sprinkling is generally to be found, to whom the officer can look for support." With regard to one important Union we have been supplied with a list "of case after case which has been reported by the Relieving Officer as unfit for Outdoor Relief, where the Committees have granted Outdoor Relief in opposition to the wishes of the officers." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 46893–6, and Appendix No. XX. (A) to Vol. IV.

‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. CXXVIII. (Par. 24) to Vol. IV.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 8523. "A Relieving Officer," complains Sir William Chance, "may be thwarted and discouraged in every way by individual Guardians until he gives up his efforts in despair." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 27061, Par. 41.) "The Relieving Officers," remarked an experienced Chairman of a Board of Guardians, "struck me as being very good men, who would administer the relief with greater discrimination if the local Guardians exercised a little less control over them." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 102, p. 169.)

‖ The poor themselves often regard the Relieving Officer, not the Board of Guardians, as their judge. When a new and reforming Relieving Officer came to a great Northern town, he presently found himself persecuted as the oppressor of the poor. "First of all," he relates, "I had my house broken into three times in three months. . . . I prosecuted two men, and one of them got a long term of imprisonment. It culminated in my family being attacked. My daughter was assaulted in the streets; my wife was followed about from the tramcar up to my house, and in the streets she was abused, and life became perfectly intolerable. An attack was made upon my daughter; she was almost stripped in the streets. A crowd of between 200 and 300 persons assembled outside my house, and I had to seek police protection. I came on the scene, and I recognised the ringleaders, who were three women. One was a woman whose husband had been prosecuted for desertion, one who had obtained relief by false pretences, and the other an unsuccessful applicant for relief, who was a drunkard. I prosecuted them, or rather the Board did on my behalf, and they were sentenced to imprisonment; but right the way along I was persecuted to such an extent that I have had to send my wife and children to live outside the boundary of my district." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 40050.) Similar evidence was given by the Superintendent Relieving Officer of West Ham. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 20487–20493.)

the case straight through, viz., kind and amount of relief to be given, recovery of maintenance from relatives, settlement and removal of paupers, etc."*

The function of the Destitution Officer is, however, not exhausted when he has ascertained the facts, and given to the Guardians his judgment upon them. He has also to carry out the course of relief decided on, alike in its responsible and in its mechanical aspects. "When the proceedings of the Guardians are ended," says an Inspector, "the real work of the Relieving Officer commences. He has to pay the new relief which has been granted, as well as the old cases; and he has to be ready to receive fresh applications as well as fulfil other duties and responsibilities which differ in different Unions. . . . To begin with he has his own books to keep. He has to remove pauper lunatics to the Workhouse or Asylum. He is nearly always Collector to the Guardians: in other words, the official who finds out what relatives of paupers are liable and able to contribute to the maintenance, and collects these contributions. For this he is paid a percentage. A good Collector must carry on a large correspondence, and the office, if properly filled, is a very necessary and important one."† It is, moreover, the duty of the Relieving Officer to watch carefully all the cases relieved, and to take upon himself the responsibility of reporting to the Guardians any facts which, in his judgment, ought to cause the relief to be stopped or varied.‡ If any pauper gets drunk, or begins to lead an immoral life, the Relieving Officer must take the initiative. He will himself stop the Outdoor Relief, in bad cases, and inform the Guardians at their next meeting.§ Nor is the work over when all the persons actually in receipt of relief have been dealt with. It is on the Relieving Officer, not upon the Board of Guardians, that rests the legal, as well as the moral, responsibility, in cases in which Outdoor Relief has been refused, and the applicants have not entered the Workhouse, for keeping the family continuously under observation, so as to be prepared to grant instant succour on "sudden or urgent necessity," in the event of any member of the family falling dangerously out of health in consequence of destitution.‖ We shall refer again to this responsibility at a later stage of our report.

The combination in a single Destitution Officer of such heterogeneous functions is, in our judgment, fatal to the establishment of an efficient service.¶ Struck by the imperfect qualification of the Relieving Officers for their varied and responsible duties, we asked what had been prescribed in the matter by the Local Government Board, only

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* *Ibid.*, Appendix No. CXXVII. (Par. 7) to Vol. IV. *See also* the Evidence of the President of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, which gives in a moderate and able manner, the attitude of the good Relieving Officer to his Board of Guardians. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 22532–22906.)

† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XV. (A) (Par. 55) to Vol. I.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 19576.

§ One of our Committees heard a case dealt with in which the Relieving Officer had himself stopped the Outdoor Relief of a widow for a week, merely because her children's attendance at school was very irregular.

‖ We have had it forcibly brought to our notice that it is clearly the law that Relieving Officers are liable to criminal indictment for any negligence in relieving the poor; and that, if a person dies in consequence of such neglect, whether he has made application for relief or not, the officer may be committed to stand his trial for manslaughter (*see* Clark *v.* Joslin, 15 Cox Criminal Cases, 746, and R. *v.* Curtis, 27 *Law Times*, New Series, 762; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 936–72, 1221, 13911–9, 22723–8). Such a case occurred in 1885 in England and one in 1893 in Scotland, where an Inspector of Poor had "thought his duty ended with the offer of the Poorhouse" (Procurator-Fiscal *v.* Sinclair, P.L.M. 1893, 387). "It has," we were informed, "been an official rule for a great many years" that, where an applicant has not accepted the offer of the house, the Relieving Officer should, by visits and inquiries, ascertain the conditions of the case from day to day so as to be able to give instant succour if needed. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 956–7, 3520.) "There is always a criminal responsibility hanging over him." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 41062.) It is interesting to note that in this liability to the criminal law, as in other respects, the Relieving Officer in England and Wales has, in effect, simply succeeded to the old Overseer of the Poor, whose failure was ascribed to "the medley of confidence and menial duty" entrusted to him.

¶ A minor drawback of the combination of functions of the Destitution Officer is that there can be no adequate check on the accounts of an officer who, in his own person, alike receives the application, recommends the amount of relief, communicates the decision to the applicant, reports the facts on which its continuance depends, and week by week pays with his own hands the amounts awarded. It is not merely that the paupers, being still officially assumed to be unable to write, give no receipts. So long as one and the same officer is the sole medium of communication between the Board of Guardians and the pauper, so long will it be impossible, by any system of audit, to prevent a careless or dishonest Relieving Officer from paying the aged or the bedridden 6d. a week less than the Guardians have granted, from continuing such allowances for months after the old people have died, or from omitting to enter some of the shillings contributed by relatives. Such offences have been accidentally discovered in a few instances, and the delinquent officers sentenced to imprisonment. (*See* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 5947.) Only a few Unions have Cross Visitors, and a few others pay clerks, who may be made to serve to some extent as a check upon the Relieving Officers. We cannot regard it as satisfactory that the most helpless of the poor should be no better protected against a particularly mean fraud, or that a sum of more than £3,000,000 sterling should be annually dispensed with no greater security against peculation.

to find that no qualification whatever was required.* Nor could the Inspectors or the Clerks to Boards of Guardians suggest to us any qualification or training that could advantageously be insisted on for the office as it at present exists. "There is no standard," explained to us one of the Inspectors, "there is no college of Out-relief, there is no Faculty."† "You might impose an age limit," suggested another Inspector, "you might do some good by that; you might impose a certain amount of reading, writing and general information as a qualification, but I do not know that that would help you very much. It is very difficult to suggest a qualification which would ensure your having the men you want for the Poor Law work."‡ Even such examinations as those now required in the case of Sanitary Inspectors and Factory Inspectors could not, we were informed, be exacted from Relieving Officers, because "you cannot define a Relieving Officer's work." "You want the Sanitary Inspector to do certain definite work, but the Relieving Officer has no definite work. An Inspector of Factories and an Inspector of Nuisances . . . . have certain definite duties to perform, for the performance of which you can ascertain their competency to a great extent by examination; but with regard to Relieving Officers you cannot do that."§ And this we agree is substantially the case, not because this Destitution Officer's duties are indefinite, but because they are not limited to one specialism, or even to two specialisms. It does not appear to us that one and the same officer can be qualified to obtain accurate and sufficient information on (1) the financial resources and circumstances of the household and its relatives; (2) the sanitary environment, personal health and *prima facie* need for treatment or removal of the various members of the family; and (3) the educational requirements of the children, and the *prima facie* fitness for their nurture of the home and the parents. These three sets of leading facts seem to us to require, in each case, a certain measure of specialised training, which cannot be expected to be found combined in one investigator at between 30s. and £3 a week. The same is true with regard to improving the sanitation of the home, to seeing that the Medical Officer's orders are obeyed, and to giving the necessary advice in matters of personal hygiene, for lack of which, at present, the Outdoor Relief for the infant fails to keep it alive, and that given to the phthisical father too often results in the contamination of the family. Similarly neither the financial officer nor the health visitor can supervise the children's schooling, test the home influence, and see that proper apprenticeship or corresponding training is in due course provided. And if this is true of investigation and execution, still more is it true of the responsible task of recommending what financial assistance, if any, the economic circumstances of the household warrant, and by whom the burden should be borne; or what kind of education and what general regimen each child or each sick person requires.

It will be unnecessary to point out, to those who are conversant with English Local Government, how adversely the absence of any prescribed qualification acts upon the selection of persons for any salaried post. A Board of Guardians, having no definite test of fitness to apply to candidates for a vacant Relieving Officership is apt, at best, to take refuge in the known probity of an entirely inexperienced neighbour or a minor subordinate; and, at worst, to fall a prey to mere favouritism and jobbery or even (as in some notorious recent cases) a squalid corruption. We are glad to find that the first of these alternatives is that which the majority of Boards of Guardians have chosen. The 1,700 or 1,800 Relieving Officers as a class appear to us to be upright and honourable men, hard-worked and poorly remunerated, regular and diligent in the performance of what they conceive to be their duties. But not infrequently, as we regret to have to report, the impracticability of any professional training and the absence of any prescribed qualification, has resulted, in some Unions, in the office being filled, not by the men best fitted for it, but by those who most desire it and have friends at court. "Relieving Officers," says Sir William Chance, "are often appointed for every other reason except that of a knowledge of their duties."‖ "Many have qualified for the work," report our

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1052–6, 1872–3.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 7603.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 8943. The only courses of training and professional examinations for Relieving Officers that have been established are those started by the School of Sociology and Social Economics in London. The training has so far taken the form only of short courses of lectures. The examinations have been confined to the elements of the law relating to the relief of destitution, the special accounts to be kept, and the economic doctrines usually known as the "Principles of 1834." But this is to leave out of account the whole question of the course of life to be required from those to whom Outdoor Relief is granted. Apparently, there has been no thought of the instruction of the Relieving Officer in hygiene and sanitation, none in the methods of investigation, and none in the educational requirements of children, subjects which, however necessary for any proper performance of a Relieving Officer's duties, could scarcely be taught with the rest in the time available.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 9021, 9026, and 9028.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 27061, Par. 41.

own Investigators into Outdoor Relief, "as soldiers in the South African War, as Scripture-readers, or as gate-porters."* "You will sometimes see a man appointed as a Relieving Officer," testifies a Local Government Board Inspector, "simply because he has failed in everything else . . . he may have failed as a farmer; he may have failed as a contractor; he may have failed as a road surveyor; he may have failed in any sort of line of business to which he has devoted himself; but if he be well known and have a quantity of friends they will find something for him."†

But the difficulty of securing the appointment of suitable persons is not the only way in which the mixture of duties injuriously affects this Destitution Officer's service. It is one of the minor tragedies of the present arrangement that, as some of the best Relieving Officers have complained to us, the very heterogeneity of their functions, involving the absence of expert *technique* and the lack of any definite standard of professional efficiency, has a deteriorating effect on their character. Like the Workhouse Master and Matron, and for the same reason, this "Mixed Officer" almost inevitably comes to despair of the preventive and curative side of his task. "Any leaning towards thorough investigation," says our Investigator, "and plan-full relief which he may have had at his appointment, the Guardians will have steadily discouraged. The result is routine . . . The average officer has no policy, he works by rule of thumb."‡ Dealing indiscriminately, as this Destitution Officer must, without specialist training, with the vagrants and the unemployed, the widows and the unmarried mothers, the aged and the infants, the sick and the children, he is driven to ignore the special features of each class—and it is on these special features that its successful treatment depends—in the one common attribute of destitution. The one thing that is clearly expected of these Destitution Officers by their official superiors is to stave off this destitution from becoming pauperism.§ It is for a diminution in the number of unemployed men on the Outdoor Labour Test, in the number of deserted wives relieved, or in the number of medical orders granted, that the "model" Board of Guardians and the zealous Local Government Board Inspector will praise the Officer. "Their work," say our Investigators, "is such as to breed suspicion of their fellow men, and the more efficient the officer the more he comes to pride himself on his acuteness in ferreting out impostors."‖ They are, we fear—to use the words of one witness before us—"expected to make it disagreeable for applicants to apply."¶ "The general feeling," says another witness, "is that Relieving Officers are more in the nature of watch-dogs"** than anything else. The result is that even the kind and humane officer, excluded by lack of professional training from successful curative or preventive treatment of any one of the different classes with which he has to deal, feels it almost his duty to become, as a Medical Officer of Health complained to us, "a sort of detective who keeps out the improper cases."†† In some Unions, as a clergyman testified, "you do decidedly get men whose manner becomes, after years of work of that kind, harsh, and what you termed deterrent, which is fearfully painful to the deserving poor."‡‡ "It seems," said another witness, "as if the Relieving Officer was too

* Report . . . on Outdoor Relief in London by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, p. 53.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 8937. There was, we may remind the reader, a similar succumbing to favouritism and jobbery in the appointments of elementary school teacher and sanitary inspector, until these offices were definitely specialised and safeguarded by examination tests and certificates.

‡ Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . . in Suffolk and Cambridge, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 17.

§ "The officers," reports a Chairman of a well-administered Union, "begin by considering not what a person wants, but whether the case ought not to go without. . . . They do not accept that the person is entitled to relief, but they rather try to see whether they cannot do without it." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 45545. "The ideal Relieving Officer," states an Inspector, "would be a man who had not a pauper in his district. If a man did his work thoroughly well, he would prevent anyone from becoming a pauper." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 8925.) "When he goes to the home, (he) will find out every possible incident connected with the families, what other resources may be available, whether the applicant can be got into an institution, whether work can be found for any of the children, and a thousand and one incidents by which the inquiry may lead to the solution of the case without its becoming a pauper." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 9414.)

‖ Report . . . on the Effect of Out-Relief in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 9.

¶ Evidence before the Commission. *Q.* 32280.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 43700.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 41637. A special Committee appointed by the Willesden Board of Guardians in 1905, to inquire why Outdoor Relief had risen, reported: "That the whole question of Outdoor Relief depends to a very large extent on the manner in which the various Relieving Officers discharge their duties. The only effective way to prevent imposture and unnecessary relief is by a close and searching investigation into every application for relief, and constant and efficient supervision of those who have been granted an allowance by the Guardians." One Relieving Officer was thereupon censured (MS. Minutes, Willesden Board of Guardians, December 13th, 1905).

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 46249.

often tempted to be a bully. The result is to make the refined among the poor frightened, the weaker ones sly and cringing, the bad or strong-minded insolent and defiant."* For the Relieving Officers, as another witness rather despairingly put it to us, "are desperately tried by deceit and trickery on the one hand, by overwork and by the necessity of *not giving* if it can be helped." So the poor "press and fawn and lie"; and there grows on the unfortunate Relieving Officer the invidious habit of feeling it his duty to "resist and deprecate, and disbelieve."† "Thus," says a Local Government Board Inspector, "the best Relieving Officer is the one who keeps fewest paupers," just as "the best Workhouse Master is the one whose establishment is least loved by the able-bodied loafer."‡

To sum up, it is to the combination of heterogeneous functions in one and the same person that we ascribe the failure of the Relieving Officers to prevent the disastrous social failure in the administration of Outdoor Relief that we have described. It is not, as is sometimes supposed, a question of inadequacy in the number and organisation of the staff. It would, in our judgment, be of no avail to reduce the size of the districts and multiply the number of the officers, even up to such a point that every one of them had only to deal with hundreds, instead of thousands of families. It would not cure the evil to raise, as is sometimes vainly done, one of them in each Union to the post of Superintendent Relieving Officer,§ and to set apart others as Cross Visitors, so as strictly to check the work. What has been found impracticable is not to get a sufficient number of these officers, nor yet to get them to work conscientiously and zealously, but to secure, in any one of them, the manifold training that would be necessary for the really successful performance of their present duties. To fit a man to carry out adequately even the subordinate duties of a Relieving Officer in all their different aspects would require an impossible combination of the training and attitude of an accountant and an enquiry agent, a debt collector and an Assessor of Income Tax, a Sanitary Inspector and a Health Visitor, a School Manager and a School Attendance Officer. To fufil completely the higher moral and legal responsibilities of the office in all its ramifications—to qualify, that is to say, a Superintendent Relieving Officer to determine the policy to be pursued in regard to the due measure of financial assistance to be given, the contributions to be exacted from relatives, the health measures to be adopted, the conduct to be insisted on, and the education to be prescribed, for the children, the unmarried mothers, the widows, the phthisical members of the family, the chronic invalids and the acutely sick—would demand the training and intellectual habits of a Medical Officer of Health, a Director of Education and a County Court Judge.

(ii.) *The Many-Headed Tribunal.*

It is, however, to the Boards of Guardians, not to their Destitution Officers, that Parliament has entrusted the ultimate decision as to the grant of Outdoor Relief. We have therefore inquired how it is that these Boards have been so unsatisfactory in their decisions on the evidence presented to them. It was suggested to us by some witnesses that their failure to deal wisely with the problem of Outdoor Relief was to be attributed, in the main, to the character of their membership, and especially to a certain falling-off in social *status* which is alleged to have taken place since the abolition, by the Act of 1894, of the property qualification and the *ex officio* membership of the Justices of the Peace. Putting aside the question as to exactly what changes in social *status* may have taken place in different Unions, we have satisfied ourselves that, broadly speaking, the disastrous social failure of the Outdoor Relief administration neither began in 1894, nor has been increased or appreciably affected by the changes of that year. Moreover, though different Boards of Guardians tend to err in different directions—some granting Outdoor Relief where it ought to be refused, others refusing it where it ought to be given—we cannot say that, in our experience, we have found the so-called "strict" Boards appreciably different from the "lax" Boards, in such fundamental matters as the complete ascer-

* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 32267, Par. 11. This was confirmed by the manager of a large factory, who complained: "That the Relieving Officer, in his eagerness to keep down the cases, bullied the poor, and was so insolent to those who intervened for them that he had ceased to send deserving cases to him" (Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . . in Suffolk and Cambridge, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 17).

† Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. CXLVII. (Pars 12, 13) to Vol. IV. Much evidence as to the harshness of the manners of Relieving Officers was obtained by the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II. *Qs.* 993–4, 1530–2, 6566–70, 7036, 8441, 8557; Vol. III., *Qs.* 15210. 17762–6.

‡ Thirty-Sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–7, p. 306 (Mr. Fleming's Report).

§ "The present Superintendent Relieving Officers," testifies an Inspector of exceptional experience, "are of much the same stuff [as the Relieving Officers]: they have been promoted from one to the other." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 12827.)

tainment of facts, the specialised treatment of the different classes, the enforcement on the recipients of properly considered conditions of life, and, above all, impartial uniformity as between committee and committee, between meeting and meeting and even between case and case. The cause of so general and so prolonged a failure, common to all parts of the country, and to all periods of the past three-quarters of a century, must, we suggest, lie deeper than any personal characteristics of particular Guardians, or even of particular Boards.

We discover the cause of the failure of the Outdoor Relief administration in the very nature of the Local Authority itself. There is, first of all, the inherent difficulty that a "Destitution Authority" finds in providing itself with the varied technical advice necessary to the proper domiciliary treatment of so many different classes of persons. Just as the Destitution Authority, as we have seen, inevitably tends to have one General Mixed Workhouse, so it tends to content itself, for all classes alike, with the unspecialised counsel of the one "mixed official" known as the Relieving Officer. When it becomes conscious of the inadequacy of its staff, the only reform it can conceive is to multiply the number of these Destitution Officers, or to set one above the others as Superintendent, or to have one to check the others as Cross Visitor. It is significant that we have not discovered a single Board of Guardians that has sought to equip itself with a differentiated out-relief staff, in which one officer reported on personal hygiene and the sanitation of the home, another on the educational requirements and progress of the children, whilst a third specialised on the investigation of the financial resources and on the recovery of contributions from relatives. But apart from this lack of specialised officers, which is as inimical to successful Outdoor Relief as it is to successful institutional treatment, the present tribunal for hearing and deciding applications for Outdoor Relief has what, in our judgment, is the fatal defect of being a board—a board, by the way, of as many as twenty, forty, or even 100 members.* The Board of Guardians was established mainly for the purpose of administering the Workhouse. But the work of adjudicating upon individual applications for Outdoor Relief differs fundamentally from that of managing institutions. When a committee manages a school or a hospital, it does not decide what shall happen to each particular pupil or inmate. We recognise at once how fatal to efficiency it would be if the managing committee undertook to decide what should be taught to each particular child or gave orders about the treatment of an individual patient. In the administration of institutions, the resolutions of the committee, which are merely general decisions as to policy, do not become instantly and irrevocably operative in individual lives. In arriving at these decisions the suggestions and criticisms, the experience, and even the idiosyncracies of a number of different persons are all of use. The analogous work in the sphere of Outdoor Relief is the formulation, and from time to time the alteration, of the general rules according to which the relief should be given. This is essentially the work of a representative body.

Most unfortunately, the application of this well-established distinction between the functions of a representative body and those of its executive are obscured in the case of the Poor Law by a strong popular sentiment against officialism, and a general impression that the direct interference of the Guardians interposes a human element between the destitute and the soulless letter of the regulations. The Guardians themselves,jealous of the officers and their powers, and keenly alive to the electoral advantages of being able to oblige individuals and to obtain a reputation for sympathy with the poor in whole neighbourhoods, are naturally altogether on the side of popular sentiment in the matter. Even the educated classes are apt to be under the impression that the Poor Law of 1834 earned the execration of all benevolent men by its sacrifice of human rights to inhuman official theory. It is, therefore, necessary to point out that the restriction of a representative body to its proper function by no means dehumanises that function, any more than the fact that the jurymen in a criminal case are allowed neither to make the law nor to devise punishments according to their own fancy, withdraws from the prisoner the protection of that human element without which legal institutions would be impractical. It is not suggested that the Destitution Authority should not investigate grievances, or should be denied that access to the relieved without which it would remain in ignorance, not only of the grievances actually complained of, but of the far more important short-

* The more numerous the membership the less successful is the Board in its work. "It is a matter of common observation with me," reports one of the most experienced Inspectors, "that unwieldy Boards produce a certain uncertainty and laxity in administration." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XV. (A), Par. 85, to Vol. I.).

comings of which neither the paupers nor the officers are conscious. Apart from grievances, the main work of the Destitution Authority, that of drawing up the regulations and deciding general questions of policy, must depend for its effectiveness on continuous contact with and observation of its effect on the destitute, as well as on the community at large. There is, besides, the work of choosing the officers and, when necessary, dismissing them. In the exercise of duties thus scientifically limited there would be far more scope than at present for the exercise of that intelligent public-spirited humanity which at present is literally crowded out of the meetings of the Destitution Authority by the intrusion of individual applicants for relief, appealing to the short-sighted good nature, to the desire for electoral popularity, and to the inevitable tendency of the ward representative to be regarded by his constituents, and finally by himself, as a patron saint at whose intercession the Authority must either grant the prayer or slight the intercessor. We have ourselves repeatedly noticed the members of Relief Committees and Boards of Guardians, whilst the cases were being heard, paying very different degrees of attention to the evidence that was being given before them; swayed very differently by considerations other than those given in evidence; and governed by quite different views of social expediency. The joint decision of so composite a tribunal on individual cases can never be a good one.* All this is intensified if the Board or Committee is selected by popular vote of the districts in which it has to administer Outdoor Relief.† Moreover, the composition of the Board or the Relief Committee, whether elected or nominated, necessarily varies from meeting to meeting, and even from hour to hour. In some cases, to quote the description given by one of our committees, "the Guardians wander from one (Relief) Committee to the other at pleasure," and "administer relief to their own constituents."‡ When the Board does not divide into committees, the effect is much the same. "Each Guardian's attention," says a witness, "is attracted only by cases from his own parish," and, too frequently, "it is turned, during the rest of the time occupied with the relief lists, to other matters, to the loss of silence or orderly procedure."§ Under such conditions it is not surprising to learn, on the testimony of a Guardian in a large urban Union, that "Outdoor Relief granted on one occasion may on the next be reversed, without there being any change in the circumstances, but owing to different Guardians being present. This matter ought not to depend on the views held by individual Guardians, but upon a general policy of the whole, otherwise preferential treatment is obtained by some and in other cases the reverse."‖ "I find in my own experience," testifies the President of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, "that cases are dealt with differently

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* "Cases," says an Inspector, "are too often decided according to the sympathies of individual Guardians rather than on facts systematically ascertained by Relieving Officers." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. VIII. (A.), Par. 22, to Vol. I.) "The relatively high number of paupers in a parish," says our Investigator, "is sometimes to be explained by the presence of an influential Guardian, whose word carries weight with the Board; not because he is a Poor Law expert, but because he is a prominent county councillor, and very large farmer. He will get cases put on the books much more easily than will an insignificant Guardian, and will obtain a higher scale of relief for them." (Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief in . . . Suffolk and Cambridge, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 16.) It is this consideration which explains the very common hankering, among Local Government Board Inspectors and Clerks to Boards of Guardians, after the grant of more power of deciding cases to the Superintendent Relieving Officer or even to the ordinary the grant of more power of deciding cases to the Superintendent Relieving Officer or even to the ordinary Relieving Officer; and which explains also the relative success in this sphere of the far more influential "Inspector of Poor," who, instead of the English Relieving Officer, nominally "advises" the Parish Councils of Scotland.

† "Men being as they are," observes the Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, "you cannot expect any body of elected Guardians to administer relief in the way which all experience, as I submit, shows to be the one which is in accordance with public policy. The difficulties are too great." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 3249.) We have ourselves come across the gravest instances of electoral perversion of Outdoor Relief. "The pressure at election times," reports our Investigators, "is considerable. 'If the Relieving Officer will not give you Out-relief, come to me' summarises the election addresses of some candidates." (Report . . . on the Effect of Out-relief . . . in London, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 4.) "At the last election," they report of a provincial urban Union, where Outdoor Relief is freely given, "one ward had posters, 'Vote for X. and Out-relief, or for Y. and the Workhouse.'" (Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief . . . in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 68.) "On one occasion," testified an Inspector, "I was pressing very much that a particular Board should inquire into the Out-Relief system, and a very prominent member got up and said: 'We are sent here to give Outdoor Relief to our relations—our fathers and our mothers, and our sisters and our brothers, and our cousins, and our uncles and our aunts—and if we did not do it we should very soon be sent about our business.' That statement was received without dissent from any of them." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 4586.)

‡ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 20. So objectionable is this practice that, in certain Unions, "some of the more conscientious and enlightened of the Guardians refuse to sit on the relief committee dealing with the district which they represent." (Report . . . on the Effect of Out-relief in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 96.)

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 69293, Par. 7.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 36263, Par 21.

according to the absence or presence of certain Guardians. Say my Relief Committee consists of eight persons. If Mary Jones comes one week, with certain Guardians present, she will perhaps get 3s. 6d. in grocery; but if she comes the following week before another batch of Guardians, she will perhaps get 5s." * "At present," says an Inspector, the Guardian "considers every case in his ward as 'my case,' and speaks and acts as if he was the specially appointed almoner of the ward that he represents. . . . When the case comes on the Guardian rises, and pleads the cause of his client. . . . I have observed," continues this Inspector, "that when Guardians have stated their cases, and have indeed acted first as counsel, and then as judge and jury for their client, they too often consider they have done their duty, and leave the room." † All this may be very human; but it is so in the sense in which to err is human; and the notion that such humanity is good either for the destitute or for the community at large must be thoroughly shaken off in reforming our system.

This fatal defect of "many-headedness," combined with that of mutability of membership, has, we need hardly say, no relation to the manner in which the board or committee is constituted. It is not a question of the name of the body, or of the method of its election or appointment, or the number of its members, or of the size of the area for which it acts, or even of the character and capacity of its membership. The business to be done is, by its very nature, unfit for decision by the votes of a board or committee, whether elected or appointed. There is in it absolutely no room for sentiment about an individual case, personal acquaintance or neighbourliness. It is, in fact, "one of the weak points" of the present "system of relief," says an Inspector, "that it gives opportunity for favouritism, or that preferential treatment which a spirit of neighbourly friendship is sure to engender." ‡ To let in any such considerations—still more to allow the decision to depend on the accidental presence or absence of particular members—is to deprive the community as a whole of its power of control, and to risk non-compliance with the general rules which, by its elected representatives, the community has deliberately laid down. Far from the plan of decision of individual cases by an elected Board being essentially democratic, the chance whim or the accidental non-attendance of one member becomes the means of thwarting the popular will. This is none the less the case because the interference has been caused by a member who has been himself elected. When, however, the intervention is that of an *ex-officio* or nominated member, the arbitrary and undemocratic character of this assumption of power by an individual member becomes glaringly apparent. The work of deciding whether or not a given case comes within rules, is, in fact, essentially of a judicial character. As such, the only way to obtain effective democratic control, and the only way to secure a uniform impartiality, is to entrust the detailed application of the popularly-formulated rules to one responsible person, adequately trained for and professionally engaged in the task of hearing and weighing evidence, who can be definitely instructed to apply evenly to case after case the principles laid down by the elected representatives of the people.

(D) The Scotch Inspector of Poor.

We have been able to include in one common description, and to subject to one common criticism the administration of Outdoor Relief in all parts of the United Kingdom, whilst paying attention more particularly to England and Wales, because the systems

* *Ibid.*, Q. 22657. "The worst feature in the system is that so many Guardians consider their responsibility ends when the cases from their immediate neighbourhood are disposed of. Over and over again I have seen them get up and go away after the cases from their own parish had been settled." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XV. (A), Par 53A, to Vol. I.)

† Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1902–3, p. 136. (Mr. Bagenal's Report.)

‡ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XV. (A), Par 86, to Vol. I. The testimony is abundant that, as an Inspector puts it: "Local feeling, sentiment, neighbourliness, and the fear of being called 'hard,' are the elements that fight silently against scientific principles of relief." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XV. (A), Par 53A, to Vol. I. It is for this reason that the Inspectors now advise against local relief committees, and even against Guardians serving on the Committee that deals with their own parishes. "It is very difficult," says a Poor Law expert, "to be impartial in your own district, when you know the people and their friends." (*Ibid.*, Q. 17686.) Thus, personal knowledge by the Guardians of the circumstances of the applicant is a positive drawback, and ought, it is suggested, even to be made a cause of disqualification for voting on the case. It is a special defect of the Unions of Wales that: "The Welsh Guardian," says an Inspector, "is practically the Relieving Officer of his parish." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. X. (A), Par 21, to Vol. I.) "The effect of it is," says one of our Committees, "that the Relieving Officer does not go thoroughly into the circumstances of a case, but relies to a great extent upon the local Guardian giving the particulars to the Committee, and naturally the officer does not press his opinion against that of the Guardian, who possibly knows the applicant better than he does. This system is condemned by the Relieving Officers, as it discourages them in thoroughly sifting their cases." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 96.)

and the practice of Ireland and Scotland are, in our judgment, both in methods and results, not essentially different. The resemblance of the Scotch Poor Law to that of England is obscured by differences of terminology. But from the evidence given to us, and from what we have ourselves seen, we have to report that the "aliment" granted by the Parish Councils of Scotland, though commonly less adversely criticised, is open to nearly the same animadversions as the Outdoor Relief given by Boards of Guardians in England. It is at any rate as completely unconditional. It is given with as little real ascertainment of the economic facts of the case. It is administered, not by a body elected to do what is required in the public interest for any particular class of persons, but by what we have called a Destitution Authority, concerned only to relieve the destitution of all. It is very frequently, if not quite so universally, inadequate for any healthy subsistence. In one respect, however, the working of the system in Scotland appears to us to be more in accordance with the recommendations of the 1834 Report and less open to criticism than that of England, namely, in being given with greater uniformity. We have been impressed with the much greater approach in Scotland to identity of treatment of similar cases in the same parish, and of similar cases in different parishes. We attribute this greater evenness and impartiality of administration to two important differences between the Scotch and English organisations. In Scotland, and not in England or Ireland, there is an appeal from the decision of the Destitution Authority, on some points to the Sheriff, and on others to the Central Authority. Whilst the number of such appeals to the Local Government Board for Scotland is not large, we believe that the effect of the right of appeal in securing general uniformity of treatment is wholly advantageous. But the most important respect in which the Scotch organisation differs from the English is, in our judgment, the existence in each parish of an Inspector of Poor, who occupies a position far superior to that of the English Relieving Officer. Like him, indeed, he is what we have termed a Destitution Officer. He is under the disadvantage of having to deal with all sorts and conditions of men, merely in respect of their destitution; and cannot, therefore, specialise in the appropriate treatment of any one class. But unlike the English Relieving Officer he is himself effectively in communication with the Central Authority, and, indeed, usually acts as Clerk to his Parish Council. This right of direct communication with the Local Government Board for Scotland puts the Scotch Inspector of Poor in a position to prevent the deviations from uniformity which, in England and Ireland, so often proceed from the favouritism or neighbourly sentimentality of individual Guardians. In some of the largest towns, indeed, where the Inspector of Poor is a salaried officer of position and attainments, the Parish Council, whilst retaining fully in its own hands the direction of policy and the formulation of the rules as to relief, in practice largely leaves to the Inspector of Poor the adjudication upon individual cases, with the result, as we believe, of a much nearer approach to an accurate, impartial and even-handed execution of the will of the elected representatives than any English or Irish Board of Guardians can count on.

(E) The Suggested Abolition of Outdoor Relief.

In face of the unsatisfactory results, and, in some cases, the disastrous social failure of the Outdoor Relief administration, some English Boards of Guardians have attempted to pursue the policy of practically abolishing Outdoor Relief altogether—not merely, as was recommended in the Report of 1834, to the able-bodied, but also, as was suggested by most of the Local Government Board's Inspectors of 1871–80, to the non-able-bodied. This prohibition of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied has never been embodied in any authoritative document of the Local Government Board; but it has been, from time to time, practically effected in one Union or another, by the simple expedient of offering, to all applicants for relief, nothing but maintenance in the Workhouse—the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described.* We need not recount the well-known experience in this respect of such Unions as Atcham and St. Neots, Brixworth and Bradfield, St. George's-in-the-East, Stepney and Whitechapel. As has been forcibly represented to us, and demonstrated by repeated statistics, this policy undoubtedly reduces the number of persons maintained at the expense of the Poor Rate. The universal "offer of the House," whilst bringing rapidly to an end the swollen lists of outdoor poor, does not appreciably or permanently increase the number of the indoor poor. To a very large proportion of the non-able-bodied poor, the General Mixed Workhouse is, in fact,

* We were concerned to find that, even down to the present day, the children of widows and other persons to whom Outdoor Relief is refused are usually relegated—as at Bradfield and Atcham—not to any separate school, but to the General Mixed Workhouse itself; and in Atcham Workhouse they do not even go out to day school, but are taught within the Workhouse walls.

so deterrent that, rather than enter its portals, they will try every possible alternative, and even put up with almost any privation and suffering, to the physical and mental deterioration of their children and themselves. It would, however, be unfair to those Boards of Guardians who have adopted this policy, and to those advocates who have suggested it to us,* to imply that they are indifferent to this privation and suffering. They assert, on the contrary, that experience shows, "in the most incontestable manner, that the effective restriction of Outdoor Relief always improves the condition of the poor," and that there is no foundation whatever for the belief that its refusal inflicts any hardship.† The fact that the applicants refuse the offer of maintenance in the Workhouse is held to show that they are able, when pressed, to fall back upon other resources; and to prove that they were not really so destitute as they represented themselves to be.‡ In the Unions in which this policy has been adopted, it is asserted that the "hard cases" that occur have been dealt with partly by contributions from relatives able to assist, and partly by voluntary charities of one sort or another. On the other hand, it has been represented to us that the policy of refusing Outdoor Relief, whilst in some cases unnecessarily breaking up the home, and forcing women, children and the aged into the demoralising atmosphere of the General Mixed Workhouse, has, in others, resulted in failure to relieve destitution virtually equivalent to a local abrogation of the Poor Law, leading to misery, to degeneration, and sometimes even to premature death from want and exposure. We thought it necessary, in order to clear up this conflict of testimony, to supplement the very elaborate investigations that we set on foot as to the effect of Outdoor Relief, by the appointment of a special Investigator to make a detailed inquiry in six relatively "strictly" administered Unions in town and country—including some in which the Workhouse policy has been pursued for many years with apparent success—in order to ascertain what subsequently happened to families to whom Outdoor Relief had been refused, and who had not accepted the alternative offer of the Workhouse. Such an inquiry, involving personal investigation some time after the cases had been before the Board of Guardians, was beset with difficulties. Our Investigator was able, however, to trace out and report upon altogether forty-nine families in two Metropolitan Unions, one large provincial town, and three rural Unions.§

The results of this investigation, unfortunately, do not bear out the assertions that the refusal of Outdoor Relief is unattended with hardship to the poor, and that it is, if not actually beneficial, at any rate without injury to them. Our Investigator—herself an experienced Poor Law Guardian—sums up her conclusions as follows:—

> 1. "In no case was the support by relatives increased through the refusal of Out Relief. In practically all the cases they were so poor themselves that they were not in a position to give systematic assistance. If such additional help had been given it would have been at the cost of the physical efficiency of the younger generation.
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> 2. "In no case has any charitable agency effectively dealt with the destitution. Occasionally, I found that spasmodic gifts were made, but with one exception, no effort was attempted definitely to place the family upon a sound economic footing.
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> 3. "There was no evidence to show that the applicants themselves had been stimulated by the refusal of relief to greater personal efforts. On the contrary, the denial of assistance appeared to have discouraged and disheartened many whose energy might have been roused by wise guidance accompanied by sufficient temporary aid to enable them to maintain physical efficiency.
>
> 4. "Two of the cases (out of forty-nine) found work. In one of these the man went back to his old employment straight from prison, and in the other the man got some irregular and possibly only temporary employment.
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> 5. "In more than half the cases the refusal of Out Relief led to a gradual dispersal of the household furniture and wearing apparel, often not even excepting the most necessary clothing. There were also unmistakeable signs of a marked physical deterioration of the members of the families, owing

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* Evidence before the Commission, Mr. A. G. Crowder, *Qs.* 17387–18037; Sir W. Chance, *Qs.* 27106–27108; Mr. T. Mackay, *Qs.* 29843–30173; Mr. H. V. Toynbee, *Qs.* 30719–30725, 30782, 30799–30802, 30821; Sir George Young, *Q.* 31258; Miss M. Baines, *Q.* 39541, Par. 8; Mr. H. G. Willink, Appendix No. CCXI. to Vol. VII. Mr. Russell Barrington, Appendix No. XX. (Par. 1) to Vol. VII.

† Evidence of Mr. H. G. Willink, Bradfield Board of Guardians, Appendix No. CCXI. (A) to Vol. VII.

‡ "It is said that the restriction of Outdoor Relief is a hardship to the poor, because it drives them into the Workhouse. It does nothing of the kind. It drives them into thrift and independence. How can it drive them into the Workhouse when it has reduced the number of the inmates of our Workhouses to less than one-half, when we have done away with all Outdoor Relief you may say?" (The Story of the Bradfield Union, by T. Bland Garland; Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. CCXI. (G) to Vol. VII.)

§ Report . . . of an Inquiry in Six Unions into Cases of Refusal of Out-relief, by Miss G. Harlock.

to lack of food, warmth, and proper clothing. If eventually the applicants are forced to enter the workhouse, they will do so with health gone, home gone, and spirit and courage shattered. This deterioration is, from the national standpoint, probably most serious in the case of the children. The homes which were being broken up were of two classes: firstly, respectable homes which have been in the past thoroughly comfortable; secondly, homes which possibly have never reached a high standard of comfort."*

These conclusions are of grave import. Moreover, it must be remembered that the effects of a policy of "offering the House" are not confined to the families to whom Outdoor Relief is actually refused. The policy of the Board of Guardians soon becomes known to the poor, and if nothing is to be obtained except an order of admission to the General Mixed Workhouse, even the destitute do not care to apply for relief. "They had very few cases of the refusal of Out-Relief," said one Clerk. "The people in the district knew the policy of the Board and did not apply for relief unless they thought they had a strong case."† "The applicants know the policy of the Board and rarely apply for relief," reports our Investigator, "in the circumstances when the only thing given would be an order for the house."‡ "Great hardships are undoubtedly borne in many cases by poor persons," reports one of the Diocesan Committees whose assistance we have sought, "because of their extreme unwillingness to enter the Workhouse. It is alleged that in some cases 'the House' is offered by the Relieving Officers where they know it will not be acceptable, in order to avoid giving Outdoor Relief, and thus to keep down the expenditure of the Guardians."§ "A sickly man will not go in," reports another Diocesan Committee, "because he is helpless when he comes out; the mother will not appeal because she may be separated from her children . . . Many would starve first."‖ The result is that, as one official witness candidly put it, "the very poor are sometimes very badly looked after . . . . . when they are ill."¶ The same witness adduced case after case in which grave injury had been caused, in some cases leading to death, owing to the lack of prompt Poor Law relief; the sufferers in most cases neglecting or refusing to apply to the Relieving Officer, because they did not want to enter the Workhouse; and the Relieving Officer not becoming aware of their need.** It is, in fact, not regarded as any part of the duty of this Destitution Officer to search out destitution as a School Attendance Officer searches out cases of non-attendance at school, or as a Sanitary Inspector searches out nuisances. As a general rule, the Relieving Officer neither discovers, nor is informed of, any case of want, otherwise than through the application of the sufferer. If—deterred by the known policy of the Board of Guardians—the poor do not apply

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* *Ibid.*

† *Ibid.*, p. 5. These conclusions, it may be said, are in accordance with the general impressions of our other Investigators into the effect of Outdoor Relief. Whilst believing that the "offer of the House" staves off a number of "bogus applications," and also elicits contributions from "the more benevolent children and relatives," the Investigators conclude that: "In the majority of cases where relief is refused because of the bad habits of the applicants, the bad habits continue. There is no direct and inevitable connection between a refusal of help by the parish and a reformation of character, or a search for work. The number of this class who 'float off and become independent,' or who seek better paid work, as a result of refusal, is infinitesimal. They are only independent of the Poor Law; they are dependent on everything else, on pawnshops, on shelters, on missions, on landlords, on neighbours in the East End and on servants in the West End. . . . Where institutional relief is offered, it is sometimes accepted, but oftentimes after a considerable interval has elapsed, during which the family is going from bad to worse. The furniture is sold bit by bit; rent falls into arrears, and the landlord becomes obdurate; the energy required for successful begging proves too much; and sooner or later they enter the House." (Final Report of Inquiry into the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment, by Thomas Jones, p. 18.) In the Bradford Union, where the administration, though on strict principles, appears to us to have been conducted, not only with exceptional ability, but also with an intention of genuine humanity, our Special Investigator traced out forty-seven cases in which Outdoor Relief had been refused, including seven women with children dependent on them. Out of these forty-seven cases our Special Investigator reported: "That the refusal of relief has involved the applicants in suffering either mentally, physically or both, in the following (nineteen) cases. . . . I was particularly struck with the hardship of women with children, who are expected to be at the same time both the breadwinner and the housewife of their families. . . . These women so often go under in their struggle to perform this impossible task, dragging their children down with them. . . . From the lowest standpoint, that of a merely commercial one, would it not be a better investment of the national resources to help these women (*adequately*) while they are performing their duties as mothers, in order to assist them to bring up their children decently, instead of crushing them, and postponing the help until both the mother and the children are reduced to such a low state of mental and physical efficiency that no relief, when given, will ever be able to restore to them a decent home and their self-respect? The alternatives, then, are starvation or the Workhouse." (Inquiry into Cases of Refusal of Out-relief by the Bradford Board of Guardians; Report by Miss G. Harlock.)

‡ Report . . . on an Inquiry in Six Unions into Cases of Refusal of Out-relief, by Miss G. Harlock.

§ Report of the Durham Diocesan Committee on Poverty and its Relief.

‖ Report of Ripon Diocesan Committee on Questions of Poverty and its Relief by the Church.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 41489, Par. 25.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 41489, Pars. 25–47; *Qs.* 41629–41630.

for relief, they may, and sometimes do, sink gradually lower and lower in semi-starvation and misery until they are found actually dying, and are then removed to the Workhouse or infirmary in such a state that they survive their admission only a few hours or days.* It is clear that, in a few cases, they die of starvation.†

We may believe that, in particular instances, in small Unions, where persons of influence and means make a point of privately relieving every "hard case," the strict refusal of Outdoor Relief, to the non-able-bodied as well as to the able-bodied, may not actually increase the misery of the poor, or lead to death from starvation. But viewed from a national standpoint and having regard particularly to the children and to persons in the early stage of disease, we cannot say that the policy of refusing Outdoor Relief, even as described by those who believe in it, appears to us to be, in practice, any more satisfactory than the laxer policy that we have described. It appears to us, in fact, to fail at least equally in the two fundamental requirements of ensuring appropriate treatment to those in need of it and of enforcing suitable conditions of life upon those of irregular habits or improper surroundings. And the policy of refusing Outdoor Relief has the added drawback that—as is vividly shown by the Parliamentary Returns of deaths from starvation in the Metropolis—the cases do not usually come to the notice of any public officer until they have become hopeless. "I was much struck," reports our Investigator, "with the hopeless condition of some of the cases at the stage at which I visited them. With these, an earlier commonsense treatment would have prevented the development of destitution (and in some cases of degradation also) to its present acute form . . . . *To effectively suppress pauperism, cases of destitution should be dealt with at an earlier stage.*" And the earlier treatment must be, not deterrent but curative. "There are many cases," continues our Investigator, "which cannot suitably be met either by the grant of a Workhouse order or by"—the only alternative which most Boards of Guardians seem able to conceive, namely a money dole of—"out-relief. Some require curative treatment, others merely sound advice. *No case which has ever touched the Poor Law should be left to drift unaided.*"‡ We may cite as an example of the being "left to drift unaided" the case of one family, which was refused Outdoor Relief by an able and strict Board of Guardians, and in which, as our Investigator observes, "there were possibilities of development which were not taken. James, a lad of fourteen, when his parents first applied to the Board, was *allowed to remain untrained*, and now, at the age of twenty-four, is selling flowers in the streets instead of being employed at a good trade. The Relieving Officer calls the attention of the Guardians to the daughter Margaret, a girl of nineteen (a cripple) and suggests that she be taught some occupation by which she can earn her living, but nothing is done; and we now find her sometimes in the Workhouse and sometimes living with her mother, entirely untrained and incapable of supporting herself. In all probability she will be a source of expense to the State as long as she lives, and her happiness in life will be curtailed by her limitations. Yet when she first became chargeable she was only a child of eleven."§

(f) The Substitution of Charity for Outdoor Relief.

It is sometimes suggested that, if all Outdoor Relief were refused, voluntary charity of one sort or another would come forward to deal with the cases that would not really be better in the Workhouse.‖ Without discussing the probability of this happening in country and town, all over the Kingdom—for we have found no evidence whatever on which to base so optimistic an assumption—we were struck with the allegations that were made as to such voluntary charities as already exist. It was asserted that the work of these charitable agencies, whether individual or corporate, was open to the same

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* "The worst cases of distress due to reluctance to accept Indoor Relief," reports the Durham Diocesan Committee on Poverty and its Relief, "occur among the sick and aged who live alone, and do not receive adequate attention, medical treatment, or nourishment in consequence."

† See the Returns annually presented to Parliament of the number of deaths in the Administrative County of London, in which a verdict of death from starvation, etc., has been returned. The number varies from thirty to fifty annually. The Return for the year 1906 (House of Commons, No. 313 of 1907) contains forty-eight cases.

‡ Report . . . on an Inquiry in Six Unions into cases of Refusal of Outdoor Relief, by Miss G. Harlock.

§ *Ibid.*

‖ "There are occasionally—not often—cases of very worthy though destitute people who do not wish to go into the Workhouse; these may be proper objects of charity, and if so, should be given a small pension by their neighbours." (Reply of the Bradfield Board of Guardians to a Memorial from the Ratepayers of Pangbourne, December 3rd, 1889; Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. CCXI. (E) to Vol. VII.

criticisms as those made against the Poor Law Guardians' administration of Outdoor Relief. We therefore thought it necessary to have a special inquiry made into the results of the charities and charitable endowments in a dozen different towns and villages.*

The outcome of this investigation was very largely to confirm these allegations. It was found that, in place after place, the charitable gifts—whether of individuals or the churches, of benevolent associations or of endowed trusts—are distributed without any complete ascertainment of the recipient's resources, and with even less inquiry and protection against overlapping than is practised by the Relieving Officer.† There was evidence that many of the grocery tickets are sold at the public-house,‡ and that, in one case, they had even been taken in payment at the local theatre.§ "Charity givers," said a witness who had for thirty-eight years been a Local Government Board Auditor, "are more imposed upon than the Guardians, and the cases would not be sifted, and the gifts would go by favour." ‖ "I do not consider," says a rural clergyman, "it would be practicable to substitute charity for Out-relief. There could not be quite the same efficient investigation by the trustees . . . . as there is by Poor Law Guardians." ¶ So experienced a Poor Law official as Mr. A. F. Vulliamy informed us that he considered "it would be very mischievous indeed to substitute charity for Out Relief; because . . . the administrators of charities have seldom" the necessary training, "and would be apt to relieve, in the majority of cases, without system or proper investigation." ** "Of the two" (charity and Poor Law Relief), testifies the Secretary of a provincial Charity Organisation Society, "I consider here that the Poor Law relief has the less demoralising effect, because there is careful inquiry by an excellent relieving officer, and a certain amount of supervision which acts as a deterrent." †† "In a few cases," says another witness, "it was very beneficial, but as a rule it was rather the contrary, because so many ladies, young ladies especially, would take a district and deluge it with charity, get very tired of it and then say: Well, you must now go to the Poor Law, which they would not have done in the first place." ‡‡ The Taunton Union is adduced by an Inspector as an example of "rigid and good administration," by means of the strict limitation of Outdoor Relief. The Relieving Officers are vigilant and efficient, if not, as some say, "hard and somewhat brutal with the people." On the other hand the town is over-run with charities, administered by trustees. Here there is canvassing of individual trustees, and "the usual wirepulling. . . . The applicants are not seen by the trustees at their quarterly meeting when pensions and grants are awarded. There is no officer corresponding to a Relieving Officer or a Charity Organisation Society agent to investigate the circumstances of the applicants." §§

With regard to the no less important point of the recovery of the cost of relief, when the recipient or some of his relatives are in a position to repay it, the evidence goes to show that voluntary charitable agencies are far more remiss than the public authority. In fact, our Investigators report that they "rarely came across a case in which relations had been approached with a view to enlisting their assistance." ‖‖ There is the very minimum of attempt, except in the case of almshouses, to enforce among the recipients better conditions of living; often indeed, there is practically no discrimination according to character. In the practice of one society "for relieving the sick poor," which dis-

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* Report . . . on Endowed and Voluntary Charities in certain places and the Administrative Relations of Charity and the Poor Law, by A. C. Kay and H. V. Toynbee.

† This overlapping among charities is reported by many witnesses. "The difficulty now is," says one of them, "that the clergymen and the ministers and voluntary and philanthropic societies in various parts of the town deal with the sums, and some of these people get doles from three or four, and they overlap." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 45392.)

‡ "An instance was given of a publican cashing thirty tickets at one time" (Report . . . on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, by A. C. Kay and H. V. Toynbee, pp. 120, 121).

§ The relief tickets of another society, of which we are told that the organisation "is excellent on paper," were not only passed freely from hand to hand, but also "sold for drink," and even "taken in payment at the theatre" (*Ibid.*, p. 97).

‖ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXIV. (Par. 14) to Vol. VII.

¶ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXXVIII. (Par. 8) to Vol. VII.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 73237, Par. 9.

†† Miss Marsland, Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, Torquay; Appendix No. LXII. (Par. 14) to Vol. VII.

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 34165.

§§ Report . . . on the Effect of Outdoor Relief in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. Thos. Jones, pp. 74, 75. It is impossible not to feel, in 1909, the force of the recommendation of the Poor Law Report of 1834 that: "Charitable foundations call for the attention of the Legislature because, in the districts where they abound, they may interfere with the efficacy of the measures recommended by the Commissioners with regard to poor relief." (Report of 1834, p. 300.)

‖‖ Report . . . on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, by A. C. Kay, and H. V. Toynbee, p. 65.

tributes above £800 annually, we are told that "poverty rather than character would appear to constitute a claim. . . . A lady who had been a visitor for the Society for three or four years said she had never rejected a case. . . . No attempt is made to co-operate with other societies in the weekly allowance cases, and there is a great deal of overlapping. . . . In a large number of cases the assistance is given in supplementation of Poor Law relief. For instance, out of twenty-five cases taken at random, it was found that ten were receiving Outdoor Relief." * This overlapping with the Poor Law, and with other charitable agencies was found to be almost universal.† Our Investigators report that "in the case of . . . almshouse and pension charities," not under revised schemes, "the beneficiaries are very commonly chosen from among persons receiving Outdoor Relief, and in the case of the Dole Charities it is only in the rarest instances that any attempt is made to discriminate between those who are and are not in receipt of Poor Law relief."‡ In one town, they state, "when lists . . . of the recipients of the charities were submitted by us to the Relieving Officers, over sixty cases of people receiving Out-relief were at once, *much to their surprise*, recognised by them." § As if to complete the parallel with the laxest Poor Law, there is even a practice "especially in country districts," of giving "charity to agricultural labourers and others in supplementation of the ordinary wages current in the district, and not at times of exceptional need or distress."‖ Above all, there is practically nothing in the nature of providing for each case exactly the treatment appropriate to its needs. "The work," reports our Investigators, "of providing assistance suitable to the varying circumstances of each case demands an amount of knowledge and interest in charitable work, and an expenditure of time and trouble which can rarely be found under the conditions of charitable administration . . . It is . . .much easier to find a body of trustees who will make good appointments of almspeople and pensioners than one which will satisfactorily perform the difficult work of from time to time giving appropriate assistance in cases of special need and distress."¶

It is interesting to find one small community in which organised charity has taken the place of the Poor Law. There are three small parishes in Herefordshire, adjoining each other, Letton, Bredwardine and Staunton on Wye, with an aggregate population of fewer than 200 families, which enjoy an honestly and, on the whole, ably directed charitable endowment producing (for almshouses, medical attendance and doles alone, besides boarding and day schools,) over £1,000 a year. Indeed, in these villages, the Trustees of Jarvis's Charity act instead of the local Board of Guardians. They relieve all temporary distress, distribute winter coals and blankets, educate and clothe and apprentice the children, provide gratuitous nursing and free medical attendance by their own doctor, pay for serious cases in the nearest hospitals, give regular weekly allowances to the aged, and accommodate those who need it in almshouses. The result is that there are practically no paupers in these villages,the total out-relief expenditure for them all being under 12s. a week. The Poor Law has, in fact, been superseded by organised charity. The result is significant. "There can be no doubt," say our Investigators, "that the Charity is doing the work of the Poor Law, *only on easier terms, and people get help from the Charity who would be refused by the Guardians*. For instance, no steps are taken to see that children do their duty by their parents and contribute to their support when able. On looking through his books, one of the Relieving Officers for the Weobley Union found that out of 107 cases he had on hand, in thirteen he had secured payments from children. As regards the Jarvis Charity there was not a single case in which the trustees had communicated with the children." It is interesting to note that the wages current in these villages are distinctly low for the county in which they are situated, and that "the cottages . . . are very poor." Practically no other charitable agencies exist, so that there is no overlapping, and none of that competitive philanthropy so much deplored in large towns. There are friendly societies,

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* *Ibid.*, p. 96.

† "Nearly all persons on Out-relief," says a Guardian with regard to one great town, "receive charity as well, as, indeed, some of our charities practically refuse to help people unless we give them parish money first. The idea is that the parish keeps the people from destitution, and the charities then come in and make their lives comfortable in a small way." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 35693, Par. 67.) "It may happen, and, no doubt, does frequently happen," says the Clerk to another Union, "that relief is being given to the same family by more than one society, in addition to what is allowed by the Board of Guardians." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 36693, Par. 17.)

‡ Report . . . on Endowed and Voluntary Charities, by A. C. Kay and H. V. Toynbee, p. 73.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 118. "The overlapping is not confined to endowed charities. Out of thirty recipients of help from the York Benevolent Society . . . nine were found to be on the Outdoor Relief List, and five in receipt of occasional relief." (*Ibid.*, pp. 62, 127.)

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¶ *Ibid.*, pp. 78. 79

but it is doubtful whether their membership is up to the average, as "many young men who ought to be members . . . neglect to join . . . with the idea that the Jarvis Charity will be available should sickness overtake them." In short, in these three villages in which a relatively well-administered charity is "doing the work of the Guardians," and the Poor Law is practically non-existent, we have exactly the same complaints as those made against a lax Poor Law. It "does away with thrift," ; it "creates a great tendency to laziness and dependence" ; "it is difficult to get work done in the parish ; men prefer to loaf about, and there is plenty of drinking going on" ; it makes "the people careless, lazy and unthrifty ;" "there is no demand at all for small holdings or land for allotments, while there is a growing demand in all the adjoining parishes"; yet "you could not find a more discontented lot of people in any parish in England." * It is interesting to observe that the failure of the various voluntary agencies administering charitable doles and allowances—whether individuals or societies, churches or endowed trusts—to avoid shortcomings and defects exactly similar to those of the Poor Law, is to be attributed to the same imperfections in the dispensing authority. We have examined the constitutions and rules of dozens of charitable agencies up and down the country, including Charity Organisation Societies and Guilds of Help ; and we have not discovered one in which there is any requirement of specialist training in the "helpers," "visitors" or other workers, by whom the service is performed. The persons engaged, whether as paid officers or as volunteers, to inquire into the cases, to recommend the policy and to carry out the course of treatment decided on, have, in fact, no more specialist training in their complicated task—either in the ascertainment of economic circumstances, or in personal hygiene and sanitation, or in the educational requirements and progress of the children—than the Relieving Officers themselves. Indeed, they have usually less competence than the Relieving Officers, as they have not the advantage of being continuously employed on investigation and relief. They are, in fact, for the most part, merely amateur "Destitution Officers," without the professional experience which serves, at any rate, to enable the Relieving Officers to protect the community from imposture. Moreover, the voluntary committees before whom the cases are brought are as "many-headed" in their composition and at least as shifting in their membership as are the Boards of Guardians. And whilst there is only one Poor Law authority in each Union, there are often, besides uncounted individual donors, dozens of separate charitable agencies—in large towns hundreds, and in the Metropolis, nearly two thousand †—each spending "its income without any relation at all to the spending of its neighbours, guiding its policy solely with a view to its own individual interest, neither knowing or caring, as a rule, what is done by any other agency, and almost inevitably creating extensive overlapping with its consequent waste and demoralisation." ‡ It is therefore not surprising, that a majority of the witnesses to whom we put the question, regarded the substitution of charitable agencies for Poor Law relief as neither practicable nor advantageous.

(G) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report :—

1. That the abolition of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied is, in our judgment, wholly impracticable, and, even if it were possible, it would be contrary to the public interest. There are, and, in our opinion, there always will be, a large number of persons to whom public assistance must be given, who can. with most advantage to the community, continue to live at home ; for instance, widows with children whose homes deserve to be maintained intact, sick persons for whom domiciliary treatment is professionally recom-

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* *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 217–221. This interesting case appears to exemplify the statement repeatedly made to us that : "By substituting charity for Out-relief there would be an enormous increase in pauperism, and a corresponding less degree of self-help and self-respect." (Evidence be fore the Commission, Appendix No. LXXIII. (Par. 15.) toVol. VII. As it was put to us by a Guardian : "The poor, in a large number of cases, seem to look at the receipt of money and gifts from private benefactors in quite a different light from that in which they regard relief from the pockets of the ratepayers as a body. While they will fight very shy of seeking help from a Board of Guardians, even when they are in dire necessity, some of them will not be above accepting assistance in money or kind from half-a-dozen charitable persons at the same time, without intimating that they have other friends. I have found this to be the case in my experience in town and country. . . . The effect of private charity, I fear, is at times to induce persons to lay themselves out to get the better of those . . . whom they know to be kindly disposed. The effect of Outdoor Relief, on the other hand, does seem to be *far less harmful than that of private charity.*" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 72681, Pars. 27–30.)

† *Times*, January 13th, 1908. "There are," it is there said, "between 1,700 and 1,800 charities in London receiving among them £10,500,000 yearly."

‡ *Ibid.*

mended, the worthy aged having relatives with whom they can reside, and such of the permanently incapacitated (the crippled, the blind, etc.) as can safely be left with their friends. Nor can the community rely on voluntary charity providing for these cases. In many places such charity does not exist, and in many others there is no warrant for assuming that it would ever be adequate to the need. Moreover, our investigations show that voluntary charity, in so far as it exists in the form of doles and allowances to persons in their homes, has all the disastrous characteristics of a laxly administered Poor Law.

2. That so long as the alternative is admission to the General Mixed Workhouse, the policy of systematic refusal or restriction of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied, pursued by a few Boards of Guardians in England, cannot be recommended for general adoption. We are unable to resist the evidence that this policy of " offering the House " even to the non-able-bodied, results, in not a few cases, in unnecessarily destroying the home and breaking up the family, in separating child from mother, and in exposing young and innocent persons to the demoralising atmosphere of the General Mixed Workhouse. Such a policy, moreover, by deterring the poor from applying for relief, leads, in far too many cases, to semi-starvation and physical and mental degeneration, from which the women and children especially suffer, and in a small number of cases, even to death from want and exposure. The proposal made to us by some witnesses that, in order to obviate this latter danger, the Destitution Authority should be granted powers of compulsory removal appears to us—in view of the character of the General Mixed Workhouse in which these poor people would be incarcerated—wholly out of the question.

3. That the present system of administering Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied in England, Wales and Ireland, and, to a lesser degree, also in Scotland, is open to the gravest criticism. The large sum of nearly four millions sterling which is now expended in this way annually—a burden on the community that is steadily increasing—is being dispensed, without central inspection or control, in doles and allowances, awarded upon no uniform principle, and differing widely from place to place. This lack of common principle is observable even in the Bylaws or Standing Orders by which the best administered Unions in England profess to guide their action. But in the actual practice the diversity between one place and another, in large districts between one Relief Committee and another, and sometimes even between one meeting and the next, according to the accident of which members attend—a diversity applying alike to the persons to whom Outdoor Relief will be given, to its amount and to its conditions—is still more extreme. It can, in fact, be described only as a total absence of principle.

4. That amid all this diversity of principle and practice, we find certain evil characteristics practically universal. Except in an insignificant number of well-administered districts in England and Scotland, the doles and allowances given are manifestly inadequate for healthy subsistence. They are given, not in relief of destitution, strictly so-called, but in supplement of other resources that are assumed to exist. In many cases, such other resources—whether earnings, charitable gifts or the contributions of relations—do exist, but are insufficient. In some cases, on the other hand, the total income of the household is such as not to warrant any relief from the Poor Rate. But no Destitution Authority that we have seen succeeds in ascertaining what other sources of income exist or whether any such exist ; and the majority of them do not seriously attempt to do so. The result is that there are a great many cases in which, whilst Out-relief is given on the assumption that other resources will be forthcoming, none such are found ; so that the dole of Poor Law relief—upon which thousands of old people, sick people and even widows with young children are steadily degenerating—is a starvation pittance.

5. That an equally grave defect in the Outdoor Relief of to-day, at any rate from the standpoint of the nation, is the unconditional character of the grant. With a few honourable exceptions, no attempt is made by the Destitution Authority even to ascertain how the household is actually being maintained upon the Outdoor Relief that is granted, still less to effect any necessary improvement in the home. The result, as we have grave reason to believe, is that a large part of the sum of nearly four millions sterling is a subsidy to insanitary, to disorderly or even to vicious habits of life. The saddest feature of all is that no small proportion of the 234,000 children whom, in the United Kingdom, the Destitution Authority elects to bring up upon Outdoor Relief—in the course of a year, probably, as many as 600,000 different children—are to-day, without any interference by these Authorities, chronically underfed, insufficiently clothed, badly housed, and, in literally thousands of cases, actually being brought up at the public expense in drunken and dissolute homes.

6. That we do not ascribe the disastrous social failure of the Outdoor Relief of to-day to any personal shortcomings of the individual members of Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, or of Parish Councils in Scotland. We have found no evidence that the corrupt and criminal practices which have unhappily occurred in certain places, are at all frequent or widespread. Nor have we reason to suppose that the evil influences of electoral or social pressure have been otherwise than exceptional. We have, indeed, been impressed by the vast amount of zealous and devoted service, unremunerated and unrecognised, that is being rendered in all parts of the Poor Law administration of the United Kingdom, by men and women of humanity and experience. We ascribe the defects and shortcomings of the present administration of Outdoor Relief to the very nature of the Local Authority to which this duty is entrusted.

7. That we attribute the almost universal failure of the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and of the Parish Councils in Scotland, in the matter of Outdoor Relief, in all districts, and in every decade, partly to an illegitimate combination, in one and the same body, of duties which can be rightly done by a board or committee, and those which can be efficiently discharged only by specialised officers continuously engaged in the task. The "many-headed" body is exactly what is required, whether for Outdoor Relief or for the management of institutions, for arriving at decisions of general policy; for prescribing the rules that are to be followed in determining particular cases; and for examining grievances and preventing the abuse of their powers by the officers. But if the administration is to be democratic in its nature—if, that is to say, the will of the people is to prevail—it is absolutely necessary that the application to individual cases of the rules laid down by the board or committee, should be determined evenly, impartially and exactly according to the instructions, by a salaried officer, appointed for the express purpose. We recognise this at once in the management of a school, a hospital or an asylum, where the most democratic committee finds the best guarantee for the execution of its will in ordering its salaried officials to apply the rules that it lays down. But in the dispensing of Outdoor Relief the same "many-headed" body that makes the rules, has also attempted to apply them to individual cases; and in doing so inevitably brings in personal favouritism, accident and the emotion of the moment, to thwart the will of the community as a whole. The relative success of the Outdoor Relief administration of some of the best governed parishes of Scotland, is due, we think, to the fact that, whilst the Parish Council makes the rules, their application to individual cases is not left to the chance membership of a particular meeting, but is in practice largely entrusted, as a judicial function, to the Inspector of Poor.

8. That it is, however, not merely that "many-headedness" of the existing tribunal that is the cause of the failure of the Outdoor Relief administration of to-day. We ascribe that failure quite as much to the fact that the duty is entrusted to a Destitution Authority, served by subordinates who are essentially Destitution Officers. To entrust, to one and the same authority, the care of the infants and the aged, the children and the able-bodied adults, the sick and the healthy, maids and widows, is inevitably to concentrate attention, not on the different methods of curative or reformatory treatment that they severally require, but on their one common attribute of destitution, and the one common remedy of "relief," indiscriminate and unconditional. And just as this Destitution Authority tends always, in institutional organisation, to the General Mixed Workhouse, with its promiscuity and unspecialised management, instead of to the appropriate series of specialised nurseries, schools, hospitals and asylums for the aged that are needed, so it tends also, with its general "mixed official," the Relieving Officer, to provide, alike for widows and deserted wives, the sick and the aged, infants and school children, one indiscriminate unconditional dole of money or food, instead of the specialised domiciliary treatment, according to the cause or character of their distress, that each class requires.

CHAPTER III.

Birth and Infancy.

We find the care of maternity, and of the infants under school age, undertaken in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, by two Local Authorities, both spending public funds upon this service, without co-ordination, and almost without communication with each other. Everywhere the Destitution Authority is providing maintenance and medical treatment for expectant mothers, and for mothers with infants, applying for relief in respect of their destitution. Besides this, and apart from this, the Local Health Authority is, in a rapidly increasing number of areas, affording medical advice, and sometimes food to necessitous mothers and infants in the poorer districts. These rival Local Authorities are influenced by diametrically opposite conceptions of what is the public duty in the matter. Boards of Guardians, priding themselves on "good administration," restrict their relief of expectant mothers and of mothers with infants, by deterrent devices, with the object of reducing to a minimum the volume of "pauperism." The more "enlightened" of the Public Health Authorities, on the other hand, are perpetually striving to extend their ministrations to every necessitous mother and infant within their areas, with the object of diminishing infantile mortality. What is remarkable is that both policies are, at the present time, simultaneously receiving the encouragement of the Local Government Board. The result is that the Public Health Service, though in this department of very recent growth, and still only imperfectly sanctioned by Parliament, is creeping over the whole country; and will, in the near future, if not checked, practically supersede much of the work of the Poor Law. Meanwhile, the partial and uneven duplication of the service, together with the fragmentary and entirely unco-ordinated provision made by voluntary agencies, is undermining parental responsibility, and causing wasteful expenditure, whilst failing to prevent excessive infantile mortality.

(A) The Provision for Birth and Infancy made by the Destitution Authority.

The Report of 1834 gave practically no directions as to the provision to be made for infants, who were assumed to follow the father (or, in his absence, the mother). If the father of a legitimate child was able-bodied, or if the child was illegitimate, the infant however young or sickly, was to be relieved only by admission with its parents to the Workhouse, where no special arrangements were made for it. The legitimate infants of fathers who were not able-bodied, and those of widows whether able-bodied or not, would, it was assumed, continue to be maintained on Outdoor Relief, without any direct responsibility for the infant's welfare being undertaken by the Local Authority. What would be the best course for the infant does not seem to have been considered.

These two methods of provision are still in use. The expectant mother, or the mother with her infants, may receive either a Medical (including midwifery) Order, with or without other Outdoor Relief; or may be provided with maintenance and medical treatment in a Poor Law Institution.

(i.) *Domiciliary Treatment of Expectant Mothers and Mothers with Infants.*

We find to-day an extraordinary diversity of policy between one district of England and Wales and another with regard to Domiciliary Treatment of mothers—a diversity which bears no relation to the character of the district, to the needs of the mothers or to the rate of mortality among the infants. This diversity is even prescribed and insisted on by the Local Government Board for England and Wales; though for what reason and with what object we have been unable to discover. In those parts of England and Wales, (comprising two-thirds of all the Unions, scattered quite indiscriminately up and down the country) which are under the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, expectant mothers and mothers with infants may be lawfully treated in their own homes, whether they are married or single, whether their husbands are able-bodied or not, and whether or not they have already had illegitimate children. In other parts of England and Wales, comprising about one-fifth of the Unions, where the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order is alone in force, expectant mothers and mothers with infants cannot lawfully receive

Domiciliary Treatment, whatever their character or circumstances, if they have able-bodied husbands, or if (being unmarried) they are themselves able-bodied. In yet other parts of England and Wales where the Outdoor Labour Test Order or the Workhouse Modified Test Order is in force along with the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order, the expectant mothers or the mothers with infants, having able-bodied husbands, may lawfully receive Domiciliary Treatment, but only if the husbands fulfil the conditions of work in the Labour Yard or residence in the Workhouse. But the diversity of usage with regard to Domiciliary Treatment thus prescribed for mothers and infants by the Local Government Board for England and Wales, according to the geographical situation of their homes—whatever may be its reason—is thrown into the shade by the still more extraordinary diversity of policy among the Boards of Guardians that we have already described. We need refer here only to the fact that whereas many Unions in England refuse Outdoor Relief altogether to expectant mothers who are unmarried, and to the mothers of illegitimate children,* other Unions grant it frequently in such cases. Sometimes, as at Norwich, the Board of Guardians will withhold it until the infant is at least three months old;† on the other hand, the Board of Guardians of the little urban Union of St. Thomas, Exeter, not only grants Outdoor Relief to the mothers of illegitimate children, but even provides expressly in its standing rules, without objection by the Local Government Board, for the expectant mothers of such children, at a regular scale of 1s. 6d. per week prior to the birth and 3s. 6d. per week for four weeks afterwards.‡

Quite as important, however, to the community, as the diversity of treatment of expectant mothers and of mothers with infants, is the almost invariable inadequacy of the provision made under Domiciliary Treatment for the proper nourishment of the child. An expectant mother, if granted Outdoor Relief at all, is seldom given more than 2s. or 3s. per week, no consideration being given to the special needs of her condition. "It is unfortunate," says a Medical Officer of Health, "that in Poor Law administration (so far as I know) no particular instructions are issued to Relieving Officers to grant special food to women who are about to become mothers."§ In due course the Midwifery Order, if granted, provides the attendance of the District Medical Officer, or (in a few districts) of a salaried midwife; but it is seldom accompanied by any nursing; and the doctor does not by any means always recommend the grant of "medical extras." When the infant is born, the Outdoor Relief granted is, as we have described, usually only 2s. or 3s. per week—often, indeed, only 1s. or 1s. 6d. a week for the child, and nothing for the mother! Only in one or two Unions, such as Bradford, is care taken to see that the Domiciliary Treatment, if decided on, is accompanied by really adequate provision for subsistence.

Combined with this inadequacy is the wholly unconditional character of the treatment afforded. We cannot discover that, when a Board of Guardians decides thus to maintain on Outdoor Relief a destitute expectant mother or a mother with infants, it ever occurs to anyone to accompany the money with any sort of instructions as to prenatal conduct and health; ‖ or with any sort of directions as to how the child should be reared.¶ In view of the fact that the mothers are, in the great majority of cases, extraordinarily ignorant on these points, it does not seem to us economical that so large an expenditure should annually be incurred from the Poor Rate in order to provide for the birth of infants, without any precautions being taken to prevent these infants from dying within a few days or weeks of birth. Nor do we find the Destitution Authorities in any part of the Kingdom taking any heed whatsoever of the conditions under which the 50,000 infants

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* Rules of the Holborn Board of Guardians, and many others.

† Rules of the Norwich Board of Guardians.

‡ Rules of the Board of Guardians of St. Thomas, Exeter.

§ "Report on the Prevention of Infantile Mortality," by Alfred E. Harris, Medical Officer of Health, Islington, 1907, p. 25.

‖ "It is very doubtful whether we shall ever be able to influence materially those [deaths] occurring in the first month of life, except by advising the mother as to the conduct of her life while pregnant, most of these deaths being primarily due to the debilitated condition of the child at birth." (Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Salford, 1906, p. 19.)

¶ "There is," says a Medical Officer of Health, "probably no ignorance so profound as is that associated with the care of infants, and no lack of knowledge attended by such disastrous results as is that of the feeding of babies." (Report on the Prevention of Infantile Mortality, by Alfred E. Harris, Medical Officer of Health, Islington, 1907, p. 10.)

under five years of age, whom they have always on their books as Outdoor paupers,* are being reared. The mothers may nurse their infants themselves, or may use the most insanitary bottles; they may feed their infants properly, or give them potatoes and red herrings; † they may lock them up in a deserted room all day (since the Guardians make it necessary for the mothers to go out to work), or they may leave them (with dummy teats or "comforters") with the most careless neighbours; ‡ they may overlay them in bed; they may even insure their little lives with one of the Industrial Insurance Companies, and so use some of the Guardians' Outdoor Relief money thus hideously to speculate in death—all without the slightest instruction, without any warning or prohibition, and without even any attention by the Destitution Authority, out of whose funds these infants are being maintained. Under these circumstances we cannot but regard it as unfortunate that the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, should never have procured any statistics as to the mortality among the 5,000 infants under one year whom the Destitution Authorities are now maintaining on Outdoor Relief.§

Some Boards of Guardians, as we have seen, solve the problem by refusing Outdoor Relief and even a Midwifery Order, to expectant mothers, or to the mothers of infants, unless under exceptional circumstances, or with deterrent restrictions. We are indebted to Mr. Theodore Dodd‖ for pressing on our attention the fact that the rate of infantile mortality appears to be specially high in some Unions in which Outdoor Relief is practically always refused; and that no attempt is made by the Boards of Guardians actively to prevent such grave results of the destitution in their districts which it is their statutory duty to relieve. Mr. Dodd's statistical data are admittedly very imperfect, but the general purport of his evidence receives confirmation in other quarters.

> "A distressing element of the work," we read in the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Kensington, "is the poverty which, during the lying-in period, reduces many a mother to a state of destitution, rendering it impossible for her properly to nourish her infant in the natural way. . . . I think," adds the Health Visitor, "I must have seen quite fifty mothers who, I have every reason to believe, were in a state of dire need, with their babies of a few days old lying beside them. . . . Appeals to the Relieving Officer for Out-relief in such cases, unless the District Medical Officer is in attendance, result in the 'offer of the House,' of which the mothers of families are unwilling to avail themselves."¶

With regard to the very common restriction of Midwifery Orders, many of our medical witnesses attributed serious consequences, in the low standard of health of working women, in the excessive infant mortality, and in various defects in the children who survive, to the frequent lack, in poor families, of qualified attendance at childbirth.** "In many emergencies," we were told by a great Medical authority, "there is no time to obtain a Medical Order from the Relieving Officer; and by the time medical help is secured

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* In England and Wales alone, on March 31st, 1906, 40,344 under five years of age; in Scotland, 6,460; in Ireland, 3052.

† "No milk is given," we were informed (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 25373, Par. 142), by the Relieving Officer, in some Unions, when he gives relief in kind, unless it is an express recommendation of the Medical Officer, even where there are infant children and the mother is starving. We have it in evidence that, in one case in 1905, where application for relief was made by a man who was out of work, for his starving wife and infant twins of seven weeks old, the Relieving Officer gave, as a case of "sudden or urgent necessity," some rice and flour, bread and treacle (!); but no food for the babies beyond two tins of condensed milk in the course of six weeks, and no money to buy it with. One of the babies died; and the Coroner elicited the fact that the mother had tried to keep it alive on biscuits dipped in condensed milk. On the facts being subsequently represented to the Board of Guardians, the action taken by the Relieving Officer was not disapproved of (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 25531–25542); nor did the case lead to any Circular by the Local Government Board directing proper food to be supplied to infants, when they were relieved in kind, on the plea of "sudden or urgent necessity."

‡ At Woolwich, so great was the infantile mortality from these causes, that the Medical Officer of Health was driven to remonstrate with the Woolwich Board of Guardians, asking them "to allow sufficient Outdoor Relief to mothers with young infants, for whom the Guardians were responsible, so that the mothers would not be obliged to go out to work and leave the baby to be fed with a bottle by some neighbour." (Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Woolwich, for 1905, p. 22.)

§ In England and Wales alone, on March 31st, 1906, 4,616 under one year old; in Scotland, 590; in Ireland, 251.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 25625–25682; and Appendix No. III. (A) to (G) to Vol. III.

¶ *Ibid.*, Q. 25373 (Par. 90); Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for the Royal Borough of Kensington, for 1905.

** *See* especially the Evidence before the Commission of Dr. E. J. Maclean, Senior Gynæcologist at the Cardiff Infirmary, *Qs.* 49492, 49623.

the opportunity for successful treatment may have passed."* We were, for instance, confidently informed that a fourth or one-third of those blind from childhood—a large proportion of whom become permanent paupers—are blinded shortly after birth by *ophthalmia neonatorum*, which can usually be prevented by simple medical care.† Under these circumstances we have been surprised to find that—apparently without objection by the Local Government Board—many English Boards of Guardians have rules restricting the grant of Midwifery Orders—not, as might be supposed, to mothers in their first confinements—but to the experienced mothers only who have already had three children ;‡ or four children,§ or sometimes even to those only who have had five children, who have all lived.‖ Our Medical Investigator happened himself to see the working of this restriction.

> " Application was made to the Relieving Officer for an order for the doctor to attend a labourer's wife in her fifth confinement. But it turned out that only two of the four children previously born were still alive, and the Relieving Officer declined to grant the order, but promised to mention the matter to the Guardians, though without much expectation, as I understood, that they would break through their rule. Necessarily under the Poor Law, the point of view in these cases is solely the financial circumstances of the applicant, not the future health of the prospective mother. Manifestly for her health the most important confinement is not the fifth, but the first. If not properly guided in it, illness may result which will lead to permanent ill-health. But a labourer, it is held, should be able to pay for the doctor for the first confinement, and so it is only when the family has increased to four that relief is given."¶

We feel compelled, at this point, very seriously to draw attention to a diversity of treatment of these cases in Scotland, which results in no little preventible suffering and mortality, if it does not also have consequences gravely affecting domestic morality. Under the Scotch Poor Law, as it has been interpreted by the Law Courts, an expectant mother, or a mother with infants, who is the wife of an able-bodied man, may not, however dire her necessity, lawfully be granted by the Destitution Authority, whether in the Poorhouse or in her own home, either medical or midwifery attendance, or food or other necessaries, *so long as she is living with her husband*. In fact, the grant of any relief whatever to such a woman, even to save her or her infant from immediate death, and even with the sanction or consent of the Parish Council or the Local Government Board, would be an illegal payment, liable to be surcharged at audit. On the other hand, the expectant mother, or the mother with infants, who is unmarried, or whose husband has deserted her, may, if destitute, not only be granted adequate medical attendance and maintenance, whatever her past or present conduct or character, but can actually claim it as of legal right, whatever the Parish Council may decide in the matter, and can enforce this claim by summary appeal to the Sheriff.

We think that this extraordinary law should be at once amended, so as to give the necessitous married woman and the legitimate child at least as good a position as the unmarried or deserted mother, and the illegitimate child. At present, the Scottish Poor Law—we could scarcely have believed it if it had not been testified to us by the Legal

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 49492, 49623. This is confirmed by the Poor Law Medical Officers themselves. Their Council, we were informed, " think that much suffering is likely to accrue to poor lying-in women, owing to friction arising between District Medical Officers and Poor Law officials, owing to the refusal of midwifery orders by the latter, where cases of urgency have been attended by the former without first getting these orders. It is believed that the tendency will be more and more for the District Medical Officer to decline altogether—as he is legally entitled to—all pauper cases where a midwifery order is not forthcoming." (*Ibid.*, *Q.*, 33391, Par. 12.)

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 28169 and 49516 ; *see also* Report on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and the Public Health Departments, p. 21.

‡ Rules of Chertsey, St. Thomas, Exeter, Beaminster, Romsey, Williton and Lymington Boards of Guardians.

§ Rules of Godstone, Eastbourne, Bridport, Warwick, Lewes, Whitchurch, Lewisham, Trowbridge, Merthyr Tydvil, and many other Boards of Guardians.

‖ In a Norfolk Union we read that : " An ordinary labourer earning not more than 2s. per head per week, may have an order (for the attendance of the midwife) for the fifth child." (Resolutions of the East and West Flegg Board of Guardians.)

¶ Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, p. 110. We notice that the Medical Officer of Health of Hawarden (Cheshire) where the rate of infantile mortality is excessive, and actually increasing, expressly attributes it, apart from maternal negligence, to the want of medical attendance at child-birth and during lying-in, and in the inadequacy or unsuitability of the food afforded to the infant. (Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Hawarden Rural Sanitary District, for 1905.)

Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland *—deliberately puts a premium on irregular sexual intercourse, on permanent unions without marriage, and on the desertion of wives and children by their husbands and fathers. The grave results of this law are, we are informed, familiar to those acquainted with the lives of the poor in the great cities of Scotland. One of the least of these is the simulation of wife-desertion which is frequently practised, with the wife's connivance, by respectable husbands who find themselves unable to pay the expenses incidental to another birth. But there are more serious evils. We cannot help connecting the continuance in Scotland of a high rate of illegitimacy, the prevalence of irregular unions, and the increasing frequency of wife-desertion,† with the state of mind that has permitted this disqualification of the married woman living with her husband to remain on the statute-book, and even to find defenders.

We are aware that the more humane Parish Councils seek to evade this extraordinary provision of the Scotch Poor Law, by directing their Medical Officers, when wives or legitimate children are patently starving, to find some excuse for certifying the husband or father as non-ablebodied, however ablebodied he may in fact be.‡ We are not satisfied that this "subterfuge" as it was described §—we prefer to say this demoralising evasion of an immoral law—is sufficiently universally practised by Parish Council Officers, or is sufficiently widely known among respectable working-class families, destitute through lack of employment, to check the preventible suffering and mortality entailed by the law itself. "In point of fact," admitted the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, "many cases of serious hardship do arise."‖

It has been urged that the community has no reason to regret the large and unnecessary infantile mortality, which evidently results from the restriction of Domiciliary Treatment in England and from the refusal of all relief in Scotland to the dependents of ablebodied men, and from the ignorance and the suffering of the poorest class of mothers. It is suggested that this preventable mortality is but one aspect of the "survival of the fittest," by which the community is actually strengthened and the race improved. We prefer to say nothing as to the demoralisation of character which, in our judgment, attends upon any such deliberate condemnation of thousands of human beings to death or any such reasoned acquiescence in their preventable deaths, in order that the survivors may somehow be benefited. What will appeal more to those who take this view is the unmistakable evidence that there is no scientific justification for the assumption that the preventable deaths of infants either result in the survival of the fittest—whatever definition may be given of that term—or tend to the improvement of the race. The competition for the means of subsistence does not take place among the infants themselves. There is no evidence that the babies who perish in the first year of life, owing, not to their own physical or mental characteristics, but to the ignorance or the poverty of their mothers, are in any way mentally or morally inferior to those who survive; or even that they are physically inferior to the infants of other families who survive only by reason of elaborate and continuous care. We have to remember that, according to the best scientific evidence, "between 80 per cent. and 90 per cent. of the babies born in this country are born healthy. The greater part of the disease and mortality among infants is *not* due to ante-natal conditions; it is due entirely to the fact that a large number of babies cannot obtain food,"¶ and this virtual starvation of the infants is quite independent of their own physical fitness or strength. We cannot even assume, merely because the mothers are poor, that these children come of stocks in any way inferior to the average.** What is, however, more

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 53068 (Par. 97), 53448–53454. *See also Qs.* 56605 (Par. 24), 57054–57059, 57126–57131, 57449, 57636 (Par. 13), 58904, 58905, 58944–58951, 59627 (Pars. 56–61), 63374 (Par. 16), 63582, 63583, 65280–65283.

† It "puts a premium on wife-desertion and to the consequent disintegration of family life." (Evidence of Dr. Leslie Mackenzie, Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, *Q.* 56605, Par. 26).

‡ The Medical Officer, we were told by the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, "may, for instance, take into account not only the applicant's physiological fitness to maintain himself but also the mental distress (!) caused by the destitution of his dependants, *e.g.*, a starving wife and children. Some Medical Officers habitually take this into account in their estimate of an applicant's health or fitness." (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 56605, Par. 23.) "I know that is done." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 56626.) *See also Qs.* 57054–57059, 57131, 57449, 58087 (Pars. 137, 138), 58944–58951, 59356, 59362, 65019 (Par. 3), 65103–65108, 65183–65186, 65280–65283.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 56917.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 56605, Par. 24.

¶ The Infants' Hospital and its Work: a lecture delivered by Ralph Vincent, M.D., B.Sc., M.R.C.P. March 6th, 1908, p. 19.

** Even illegitimacy is no proof of inferiority of stock. In visiting Poor Law institutions it has been noted that, whilst in some districts the illegitimates seemed mostly the backward and badly formed children, those in Hampstead, Kensington and Chelsea were often the most refined, well-built and promising.

important to those who have to consider (and perhaps to bear the expense of) the future maintenance of all the children is that the premature deaths of these infants imply a disastrous weakening of those who just escape death.

> "The infantile mortality question," says a high medical expert, "is one, therefore, of extreme importance . . . in regard to the physique of the nation. While thousands perish outright, hundreds of thousands who worry through are injured in the hard struggle for existence, and grow up weaklings, physical and mental degenerates. *A high infantile mortality rate, therefore, denotes a far higher infantile deterioration rate*, and this unwelcome fact must not be lost sight of."*

Sir John Simon, Chief Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, pointed out a generation ago that—

> "A high infantile mortality almost necessarily connotes a prevalence of those causes and conditions which in the long run determine a degeneration of the race."†
>
> "The more we investigated," significantly declares a scientific expert on the disease of children, "the more we were struck with another factor, which we regard as even more serious, and that is the *condition of the infants that do not die*. The statistics of infantile mortality at the present time afford a very important index of the serious conditions that affect infant life. This mortality is not by any means the worst result of the conditions as they are found in this country. By far the most serious matter, affecting the commonwealth in every possible way at the present time, is the condition of the babies who do not die, but who are reared in a condition of hopeless malnutrition. Let us consider, for instance, one disease—rickets. Its effects on the nervous system are of the most far-reaching character. Of the 'convulsions' which cause the death of babies at about twelve months of age, rickets is practically the sole cause. At a later stage of life the manifestations of the injuries caused by this disease are seen in epilepsy and in insanity. The lunatic asylums are largely occupied at the present time by cases of insanity arising from injuries of the nervous system by rickets. Adenoid growths, one of the common troubles of childhood, are practically caused entirely by deformed structure due to rickets. If you go to the chest hospitals and select the patients who are under treatment for pulmonary tuberculosis, you will find the majority of them are suffering from deformities of the chest due to rickets. The pulmonary disease is simply a secondary result of the injuries to the chest, and of the injuries to the tissues arising from rickets. All sorts of deformities which go to make up the number of cripples that we are acquainted with are caused by the same disease. And in addition to specific disease and deformities, rickets is responsible for a general and permanent enfeeblement of mind and body."‡

In short, we do not feel sure, in view of the scientific evidence that has been adduced, whether, in a final analysis, the excessive infantile death-rate caused by maternal poverty and ignorance, is not really intimately connected with the annual recruiting of able-bodied destitution and the "Unemployed." Has not Dr. A. K. Chalmers § said: "The dead baby is next of kin to the diseased baby, who in time becomes the anæmic, ill-fed and educationally backward child, from whom is derived later in life, the unskilled 'casual' who is at the bottom of so many of our problems"?

(ii) *The Workhouse as Maternity Hospital.*

But a large and increasing part of the Poor Law provision for child-bearing women takes the form of Indoor Relief. Few persons realise the extent to which, in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, the Workhouses or Poorhouses are being used as Maternity Hospitals. In Glasgow the number of births in the Poor Law Institutions of the city has doubled in five years.‖ The Workhouses in the smaller rural Unions of England, Wales, and Ireland, and the Combination Poorhouses of Scotland, have perhaps only half a dozen confinements each in a year. In the town Workhouses they are numbered by dozens, or by scores. And in such populous Parishes or Unions as Liverpool, West Derby, Belfast, and Glasgow, a baby is born in the Workhouse nearly every day. We regret that the Local Government Board was unable to furnish us with any statistics as to this subject. From such statistics as are available we gather that the annual number of

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 25373 (Par. 81); "The High Infantile Mortality Rate, the Far Higher Infantile Deterioration Rate, and the Means to Check it," by George Carpenter, M.D., Physician to the North-Eastern Hospital for Children, and Medical Officer of Health for Beckenham, p. 2.

† Infantile Mortality, by Dr. George Newman, 1907, p. v.

‡ The Infants' Hospital and its Work: A lecture delivered by Ralph Vincent, M.D., B.Sc., M.R.C.P., 6th March, 1908, pp. 3–4.

§ Medical Officer of Health for Glasgow.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 58087 (Par. 93). At Glasgow, the Destitution Authority has gone so far as to provide a well-equipped modern maternity section of its new buildings.

births in the Poor Law institutions of the United Kingdom probably exceeds 15,000. In the thirty-four lying-in wards of the Poor Law institutions of the Metropolis, nearly 3,000 births occur annually.* In the Irish Workhouses the number actually reported was, in 1906–7, 2,012. From exact returns obtained by one of our members from 450 out of the 645 Unions in England and Wales, we estimate that of the 11,000 children thus born in the Workhouses of England and Wales, about 30 per cent. were described as legitimate and 70 per cent. as illegitimate, the latter amounting to about 18 per cent. of all the illegitimate births.‡

It is interesting to notice from the statistics that a large, and, as we have some reason to believe, an increasing proportion of these mothers, do not appear to be, in the ordinary sense of the term, destitute persons. They are usually not in receipt of Poor Relief of any kind prior to their lying-in; and they voluntarily take their discharge, with the infant, within a few weeks of its birth. In the Workhouses from which exact statistics were obtained, more than half the mothers in 1907 discharged themselves within a month —one-eighth of them, indeed, within a fortnight. In comparatively few cases are these women noted as being re-admitted to the Workhouse during the ensuing twelve months. In fact, they resorted to the Workhouse simply in order to be delivered.

The women who thus resort to the Workhouse in their hour of need are, we find, of all nationalities, all grades of character and conduct, and all degrees of intelligence. In the Metropolis especially there are many domestic servants, laundresses and the humbler members of such nomadic professions as that of the theatre and music-hall.§ "Poor girls refused the shelter of their own homes in time of trouble; syphilitic patients; women who have been knocked about, neglected, and ill-treated up to the last minute; cases actually in labour when admitted; in fine, all sorts and conditions of poor women who have nowhere else to go, find their way to the Poor Law maternity wards where," optimistically observes an Inspector, "they receive the most skilful and tender care for themselves and their little ones."|| Some of these are "Ins and Outs" of a peculiar type, recurring at something like twelve months' intervals. An examination made by one of our members showed that in many cases the same woman's name will be found occurring several times at varying intervals in the maternity ward register. In one case a name was pointed out as that of a person who had been in for three confinements, it having been verified that the woman in question had been in for three other confinements in the neighbouring Union, thus having been delivered of six illegitimate children at the public expense.

We were surprised to find that there is no system of classifying those who come in for confinement, a defect which, from the evidence of Matrons and Midwives, as well as of Poor Law Guardians, leads to the moral deterioration of many of those women who might otherwise have been induced to lead respectable lives.¶ This is true of the Workhouses and Poorhouses of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike. "In a large number of Workhouses," reports the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, "can be found in the same ward young girls awaiting the birth of their first baby, unmarried mothers with an infant or a child under two years of age, and unmarried mothers with two or more illegitimate children. These girls and women are also employed throughout the Workhouse as scrubbers, attendants, and laundresses, and continually have opportunities for conversation with one another and with other female inmates. The result

* *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 5, to Vol. I.

† Annual Report of Local Government Board for Ireland, 1907–1908, pp. 446–67.

‡ It has been suggested that the mother's description of herself as married or unmarried is not to be relied on. From inquiries made of Poor Law officials, we are inclined to believe that the great bulk of the mothers describe their condition correctly, and that, where a false statement is made, it is, perhaps, as likely to err on one side as on the other. Some unmarried women will describe themselves as married, in order to hide their shame; or because they have really been living in durable (though unlegalised) union. A check upon this is the obstacle it places in the way of obtaining from the father any subsequent contribution towards the child's maintenance. On the other hand, some married women describe themselves as unmarried, in order to prevent any attempt by the Poor Law Authorities to recover the cost of their relief from their husbands, or to prosecute these for allowing their wives to become chargeable. In Scotland, it is only by some such subterfuge that a destitute wife, living with her husband, can lawfully receive relief.

§ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 13, to Vol. I.

|| Thirty-Sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–1907, p. 303; Mr. Fleming's Report.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXV., Par. 26, to Vol. IX. "It invariably undoes them altogether" (*Ibid.*, Q. 35478), deposed the Superintendent Relieving Officer of one of the most populous Unions.

is that in most cases girls lose a sense of shame and become more and more degraded." * "Nowhere," declared to us the Lady Inspector for the Local Government Board for England and Wales, "is classification more needed than in the maternity wards. The unavoidable and close intercourse between the young girl, who often enters upon motherhood comparatively innocent, and the older woman who is lost to all sense of shame and who returns again and again to the maternity wards for the birth of her illegitimate children, constitutes a grave danger. Too often the older woman invites the friendless girl to share her home on leaving and so leads her on to further ruin." † "We believe" declares the Vice-Regal Commission, with regard to Ireland, "that in the enormous majority of cases a Workhouse life debases such girls, who get used to their companions and surroundings; and they leave and return to the Workhouse as necessity compels or as their own blunted feeling inclines them."‡ And the demoralisation becomes, we might almost say, a matter of inheritance. "We have frequently found in the Workhouse," declares the same Commission, "an illegitimate baby, its mother and its grandmother; and in one case we were shown in the same Workhouse a baby, its mother, its grandmother and its great-grandmother, or four illegitimate generations in the female line." §

We find that it is generally assumed that the women admitted to the Workhouse for lying-in are either feeble-minded girls, persistently immoral women, or wives deserted by their husbands. Whatever may have been the case in past years, this is no longer a correct description of the patients in what have become, in effect, Maternity Hospitals. Out of all the women who gave birth to children in the Poor Law institutions of England and Wales during 1907, it appears that about 30 per cent. were married women. In the Poor Law institutions of London and some other towns the proportion of married women rises to 40, and even to 50 per cent. It has in some districts become common, we are informed, for the wives of unemployed but respectable working-class men to resort to the Workhouse for their lying-in, in order to escape the ordeal of another confinement with no money coming in.‖

The majority of these mothers, as we have mentioned, whether married or unmarried, stay only a short time in the Workhouse,¶—sometimes as little as ten days—and no arrangements seem to be made for usefully occupying those who remain longer in a convalescent ward, or for affording any of them any kind of instruction in the management of their own health, or in the rearing of their infants.** "In their time after working hours they are compulsorily idle." Expectant mothers are not even allowed to prepare for the coming event by making any clothes for the infant; still less are they instructed how to do so. "It is," we were informed, "against the Workhouse rules," for expectant mothers to make the baby clothes, which "are made in the sewing-room by the older women." †† "No instruction or help of any kind," observes a lady Guardian, "is given to young mothers. There is no one to give it." ‡‡ We have observed in our own inspections of Workhouses that even the part taken by the mothers in the management and upbringing of their children is decided more from the point of view of what is convenient to the institution, than from the idea of developing any sense of responsibility in the mother. The nursery is usually in charge of a paid attendant, not a trained nurse, but a woman of some experience in the care of children, who is aided by "grannies" or old pauper women who nurse the

* Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., pp. 41–42.

† Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 14, to Vol. I.

‡ Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 42. It is not unimportant in this respect to note that the sanitary accommodation in Workhouses for women and girls is sometimes so arranged, as women Guardians have brought to our notice, as to render impossible all delicacy or refinement (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXV., Par. 26, to Vol. IX.).

§ Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 42.

‖ At Glasgow, for instance, "a considerable number of married women" are confined in the Poor Law institutions (Evidence before the Commission. *Q*, 57087, Par. 96); more than one-third of the births being legitimate. (*Ibid.*, Par. 93.)

¶ "The usual habit now in Workhouses is that after three weeks or twenty-eight days the girl very often takes her discharge, and also that of her child, with the consequence that the mother may be in a good physical condition of health, but she has very little notion of what her duties as a mother are. The ultimate result is that before the child is six or eight months old, we very often get the child back in a practically crippled condition, and the child has not very much further chance in life." (*Ibid.*, *Q*. 26735.)

** *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14507–14512.

†† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXV., Par. 26, to Vol. IX.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXV. (B), Part II. (letter 24), to Vol. IX.

babies, and younger pauper women who do the scrubbing and charing. These are not usually mothers of children in the nursery. The matron finds that the children of such mothers cry after them, and it delays the work, and she prefers to employ the mothers elsewhere.* If mother and infant remain in the institution for nine months or a year the separation between them becomes complete. This being the organisation of the Workhouse, those mothers who come in for a temporary period, to whom some real training in responsibility, etc., would be valuable in their future life, have necessarily to fall in with the existing arrangements. When they leave the Workhouse with their babies, they pass officially quite out of the ken of the Destitution Authority, which takes no heed of how they are going to live, or whether, under the circumstances, the baby born at so much expense to the Poor Rate, is likely to live or die. The unmarried mother who takes out her infant finds on her no sort of pressure to take the trouble to keep it in health, or even to keep it alive.† There is not even any notification of the cases to the Local Health Authority, which is often simultaneously going to great expense in endeavouring to watch over all the infants in the district. "We have all births reported to the Health Department," said one Medical Officer of Health, "and it is the business of the Women Inspectors to visit and advise the mothers as to the feeding and rearing of infants. The infants who are particularly likely to die are the illegitimates. The mothers of these infants are to a large extent confined in the Workhouse Hospitals; and it is difficult for us to get the addresses of these children when they leave the Workhouse Hospitals, in order that they may be supervised." The result is, so far as can be gathered from those who come in contact with the facts, that the illegitimate babies whom their mothers take out with them after their two or three weeks' stay in the Workhouse lying-in ward only rarely survive. Many of them are dead within a few weeks. Here as elsewhere, in fact, we see the costly provision made by the Destitution Authorities so organised as to break down any sense of personal obligation on the part of the recipient, and so narrowly restricted as to avoid any stimulus or incentive to parental responsibility.

The only remedy for this grave social neglect that has been suggested to us on behalf of the Destitution Authorities is that they should have power to detain the mothers in the Workhouse for a certain period after childbirth.‡ We have been unable to ascertain how far this compulsory detention is advocated for the purpose of educating the mothers; how far for that of deterring them from "coming on the rates"; how far for that of punishing them for having caused expense; and how far for that of preventing them from further breeding. Whatever may be the value of compulsory detention as a remedy, it is, we think, clear that no such power can properly be granted to a Destitution Authority. In no case is the General Mixed Workhouse a place in which persons ought to be compulsorily immured. If the object of the detention is education, all our evidence goes to prove that the Destitution Authority, from its very nature, cannot be an efficient teaching body. If the object be deterrence or punishment, we cannot imagine any justification for its infliction without judicial trial and sentence for some definite offence. But we apprehend that the suggestion is really intended to apply only to those unmarried mothers who are so feeble-minded or so mentally or morally defective as to be unable to take proper care of themselves in the competitive world. We doubt whether, in practice, it will be found possible, with any sort of responsible medical and judicial discrimination, to bring any large proportion of women into this category. We agree with the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded that all such cases, whether few or many, ought to be wholly removed from contact with the Destitution Authority; and that they should be dealt with according to their condition, whether by detention under proper certificate or not, by the Authority responsible for all grades of the mentally defective.§

But the aspect of the Poor Law maternity hospital with which this chapter is primarily concerned is that relating to the infant. Early in our evidence our attention was drawn by Dr. Fuller, Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board for Poor Law Purposes, to the apparently excessive infantile mortality prevailing in Poor Law institutions. In the course of an inquiry into the care of infants made some years ago, he had

* "The discipline of the nursery is difficult," says the Lady Inspector of the Local Government Board, "owing to the number of mothers who return periodically [from other parts of the workhouse] to visit their babies, and who sleep with them in the night nurseries." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 22, to Vol. I.)

† We desire, however, to recognise the admirable work unofficially done by the Ladies' Committees in connection with some Boards of Guardians, in seeking to befriend the young mothers, and to find them suitable situations on discharge. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVI. (B) to Vol. I.).

‡ *Ibid, Qs.* 14044, 14243, 15619, 22136 (Par. 6), 22164–22166, etc., etc.

§ Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908.

obtained incomplete returns from 546 workhouses, which showed that out of an average total of 3,719 infants under two years of age always in the nurseries and lying-in wards, there had been an average number of deaths per annum during five years of 1,315,* or more than one-third of the average infant population annually. This very alarming proportion of deaths among a constantly changing stream of infants is, however, not statistically comparable with any standard death rate ; and the Local Government Board does not seem to have followed up the subject by more exact inquiry. We were, therefore, interested in the mortality statistics of the 8,483 infants who were born during 1907 in the Workhouses of the 450 Unions responding to the inquiry made by one of our members. Out of these 8,483 infants, no fewer than 1,050 actually died on the premises before attaining one year. The Registrar-General, as is well known, gives, for the whole population, the number of babies, out of every 1,000 born, who die before the expiration of certain days, weeks and months of the first year of life. Similarly, there has been worked out for these 8,483 babies born in 450 of the Poor Law institutions in England and Wales during 1907, taking only the deaths actually occurring in the institutions, the proportion dying within corresponding periods of their first year—making the assumption, for the purpose of comparison of death-rates, that those who left the Workhouse within the year had a death-rate equal to those remaining in the institution. We append the result in the following table:—

NUMBER OF INFANTS, OUT OF EVERY 1,000 BORN IN THE POOR LAW INSTITUTIONS OF 450 UNIONS IN 1907, WHO DIED WITHIN THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE PERIODS SPECIFIED ; TOGETHER WITH CORRESPONDING STATISTICS FOR THE WHOLE OF THE BIRTHS IN ENGLAND AND WALES AND IN LONDON RESPECTIVELY FOR 1906.

TABLE I.

Infantile Deaths out of every 1,000 Born.

Age at Death.	In Workhouses outside London.		In London Workhouses.		Experience of England and Wales, 1906 (Legitimate and Illegitimate).	Experience of London for 1906 (Legitimate and Illegitimate).
	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.		
Days.						
0	18·9	7·9	13·0	11·4	11·8	–
1	23·7	32·2	28·0	23·5	13·2	–
Weeks.						
1	8·6	13·5	6·2	11·2	6·1	–
	51·2	53·6	47·2	46·1	31·1	37·6
2	15·0	13·9	11·7	11·6	6·2	–
3	6·4	10·7	26·6	9·0	4·6	–
	72·6	78·2	85·5	66·7	41·9	37·0
Months.						
1	45·2	55·1	23·8	67·2	14·3	13·4
2	27·6	30·8	33·3	49·0	11·4	11·2
3	31·0	27·6	42·4	54·0	10·2	10·1
4	33·1	16·5	22·6	30·3	8·7	8·6
5	12·7	12·3	5·9	23·3	8·1	8·6
6	10·0	11·9	18·2	31·6	7·4	7·7
7	13·7	7·9	18·4	20·2	6·8	7·3
8	7·1	8·9	12·3	20·4	6·6	6·7
9	28·9	6·4	31·4	16·7	6·1	7·0
10	18·5	4·6	6·3	12·6	5·6	6·1
12	11·3	8·4	19·5	–	5·4	6·2
	311·7	268·6	319·6	392·0	132·5	129·9
Number of Infants at risk	1,479	4,421	1,002	1,581		

* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (C) to Vol. I.

TABLE II.

Summary of Table I.

Ages at death.	Workhouses outside London.		London Workhouses.		England and Wales.	London.
	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.		
Under 1 month -	72·6	78·2	85·5	66·7	41·9	37·0
1 to 3 months -	72·8	85·9	57·1	116·2	25·7	24·6
3 to 6 „ -	76·8	56·4	70·9	107·6	27·0	27·3
6 to 9 „ -	30·8	28·7	48·9	72·2	20·8	21·7
9 to 12 „ -	58·7	19·4	57·2	29·3	17·1	19·3
	311·7	268·6	319·6	392·0	132·5	129 9
Number of infants on whose experience from birth the above rates are based -	1,479	4,421	1,002	1,581		

This result appears to us somewhat startling. The infantile mortality in the population as a whole, exposed to all dangers of inadequate medical attendance and nursing, lack of sufficient food, warmth and care, and parental ignorance and neglect, is admittedly excessive. The corresponding mortality among the infants in the Poor Law institutions, where all these dangers may be supposed to be absent, is *between two and three times as great*. Out of every 1,000 babies born in the population at large, 25 die within a week and 132 are dead by the end of the first year. For every 1,000 children born in the Poor Law institutions, 40 to 45 die within a week, and, assuming the mortality among those who are discharged to be the same as those remaining, no fewer than 268 or 392 will be found to have died by the end of the year, the number varying according to whether we take the experience of the Poor Law institutions for legitimates or for illegitimates, in the Metropolis, or elsewhere.*

Corresponding statistics were obtained from the Poorhouses of eight great urban parishes in Scotland. In these institutions the births were only 391, but of these no fewer than 56 died on the premises before attaining the age of one year. Making exact allowance for the varying periods at which the other infants left the Poorhouse in the same way as has been done for England and Wales, these figures indicate that if none of the infants had been discharged, more than half of them would have been found dead before the expiration of one year. The infantile mortality for these eight large Scottish Poorhouses appears, in fact, to be much worse than that of the English Workhouses. For Ireland, statistics were obtained only for one large Workhouse, and in this case the results were as bad as those of the Scottish Poorhouses.

* We are fully aware of the shortcomings of the statistical data here analysed. It is never quite satisfactory to compare the mortality rates of institutions, having only limited numbers of inmates, placed under exceptional circumstances, and having peculiar antecedents, with those of the population at large. Moreover mortality statistics for a single year are always apt to be accidentally misleading. But there can be no doubt that, out of these 8,483 born in the Workhouses, 1,050 did die on the premises within twelve months of birth, notwithstanding that most of the infants were taken away long before a year had elapsed. Whatever caution may have to be exercised in drawing conclusions from the data, they are, we suggest, amply sufficient to warrant careful official inquiry; and we put them forward with no further claim. We only regret that the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, respectively, do not obtain annually, as a matter of course, properly corrected mortality statistics for the preceding five or ten years, with regard to each Poor Law institution. We have not been able to obtain exactly corresponding statistics for the infants born in voluntary maternity hospitals. But their annual reports give the total number of births and infantile deaths within the institution; and the stay in those of the Metropolis is so very generally a fortnight, that these statistics may be compared roughly with the deaths in the Poor Law institutions during that period after birth. The proportion of infantile deaths to the births during 1907 was, in the City of London Lying-in Hospital, 20·49 per 1,000; in the East End Mothers' Home, 21·07 per 1,000; in the Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, 26·1 per 1,000; and in the General Lying-in Hospital, 59·3 per 1,000; or taken together, out of 3,414 births, 30 per 1,000—to be compared with the 46 to 53 per 1,000 recorded of the Poor Law institutions as a whole. In the well-known Rotunda Hospital at Dublin, out of 2,262 births in 1906, there died in hospital only 30 infants; in 1907, out of 2,318, only 21 infants. The usual stay in hospital is, however, apparently only seven days; so that the extraordinarily small proportion of infantile deaths—13 or 9 per 1,000 must be compared with the 25 per 1,000 for England and Wales, and the 40·1 to 44·9 per 1,000 of the Workhouses for the first week. We have not been able to obtain statistics as to the comparative mortality of the mothers in the maternity wards of Workhouses and voluntary hospitals respectively, and under domiciliary treatment. This too, we think, calls for inquiry.

It is interesting to observe that these heavy infantile death-rates in the Poor Law institutions do not seem to bear any exact relation to legitimacy or illegitimacy. Taking particular ages or particular districts, the death-rate among illegitimate infants is sometimes below and sometimes above that for legitimate children. Thus, for the Poor Law institutions of London taken together, the death-rate is, for the whole year, much higher among the illegitimate than among the legitimate. For the institutions outside London, on the other hand, the death-rate for the year is actually lower among the illegitimates than among the legitimates. The variations in this respect as between the different ages, whether in London or elsewhere, are apparently quite without connection with legitimacy. It would seem as if the protection and food enjoyed by the infants in the workhouse, legitimate and illegitimate alike, removed the presumption against the survival of illegitimate infants.

Equally interesting is it to notice that the excess of infantile mortality in the Poor Law institutions is actually greater at the ages between one and six months, than during the first month of life. Whatever allowance should be made for the fact that the Poor Law institutions receive many cases in which the mother has been exposed to adverse conditions,* it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the arrangements of the workhouse nurseries—to which Dr. Fuller so pointedly drew our attention—need serious examination.

This inference seems to receive some confirmation from the fact that the excessive infantile mortality in the Poor Law institutions is not universal; and that some have apparently a much higher death-rate than others. We do not wish to attribute too much importance to the statistics of particular institutions for so short a period as one year; but it cannot be right that there should be Workhouses in which 40 per cent. of the babies die within the year. When we find that out of the 493 infants born in ten Workhouses (having each not fewer than twenty births in the year) there were only fourteen deaths in the year, or 3 per cent., whereas out of the 333 infants born in ten other Workhouses (having each not fewer than twenty births in the year) there were as many as 114 deaths, or 33 per cent. we think it is high time for systematic enquiry. For these startling infantile death-rates, whether in all the Poor Law institutions, or in the worst of them, do not appear to result from epidemics, in the ordinary sense of the word. We do not find the deaths occurring in bunches, or even in excess in summer as compared with winter. It has been suggested to us, by persons experienced in the peculiar dangers of institutions for infants of tender years, that the high death-rates—especially the excessive death-rates after the first few weeks of life, right up to the age of three or four—may be due to some unnoticed adverse influence steadily increasing in its deleterious effect the longer the child is exposed to it. In the scarlet fever wards of isolation hospitals, it has been suggested that the mere aggregation of cases may possibly produce, unless there are the most elaborate measures for disinfection, a dangerous "intensification" of the disease. In the Workhouse nursery there is practically no periodical disinfection. The walls, the floors, the furniture must all become, year after year, more and more impregnated with whatever mephitic atmosphere prevails. The very cots in which the infants lie have been previously tenanted by an incalculable succession of infants in all states of health and morbidity. It may well be that human infants, like chickens, cannot long be aggregated together, even in the most carefully devised surroundings, without being injuriously affected.

A grave question arises on these statistics whether the policy of restricting out-door medical relief to expectant mothers, refusing Midwifery Orders, and offering only "the House" for lying-in, ought any longer to be allowed. If the effect of compelling the mothers to come into the Workhouse for their confinements is that twice or three times as many of their babies will die, as if they had been delivered in their own homes, we do not think that the community will, or should permit, such a policy to continue. We have not had time to give the matter the statistical investigation that it imperatively demands. But one of our members obtained, for the purposes of comparison, exact statistics of all the babies born during the same year (1907) under the care of the Plaistow Maternity Charity, an organisation for providing gratuitous midwifery attendance at birth, and for the first fortnight afterwards, *in the mother's own home*, in one of the most poverty-stricken districts of West Ham. Statistics were thus obtained for no fewer than 3,005 infants, all of them born in households having incomes of no more than twenty-one shillings a week. Of these, there died within the first fortnight only 47, or 15·33

* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 8, to Vol. I.

per 1,000 births.* In the four large voluntary maternity hospitals in the Metropolis, of which we have statistics, the infantile mortality taken together was, for the first fortnight, 30 per 1,000 births. This, too, was nearly the infantile death-rate for the first fortnight among the whole population (viz., 31·1). In the Poor Law institutions of the Metropolis the corresponding death-rate was, among legitimate children, 47·2, and among illegitimate children, 46·1 per 1,000 births. In the Poor Law institutions outside the Metropolis, the corresponding death-rate was, among legitimate children, 51·2, and among illegitimate children, 53·6 per 1,000 births. The three thousand infants attended to in their homes, poor and wretched as were these homes, by the competent nurses of the Plaistow Maternity Charity had, therefore, a death-rate, during the first fortnight after birth, considerably less than that in the most successful of the voluntary hospitals, and *less than a third* of that in the Poor Law institutions.†

(iii.) *The Workhouse as Infant Nursery.*

Some of the mothers who have come into the Workhouse to be delivered do not immediately take their discharge, but remain in the institution with their infants. Other infants of tender years are always being brought into the Workhouse by their destitute parents, or as orphans or foundlings. One way or another the Destitution Authorities accordingly find themselves having to provide in their institutions for a steadily growing number of children under school age—an infant population under five years old that amounts, in the United Kingdom, to about 15,000.‡ For this gigantic "State Nursery," there is practically no other place at present than the General Mixed Workhouse.§

We regret to report that these Workhouse nurseries are, in a large number of cases—alike in structural arrangements, equipment, organisation, and staffing—wholly unsuited to the healthy rearing of infants. It is in vain that the Local Government Board has for more than a decade laid it down that: "In every Workhouse where there are several children, too young to attend school, a separate nursery, dry, spacious, light, and well ventilated, should be provided. . . . In no case should the care of young children be entrusted to infirm or weak-minded inmates. . . . Unless young children are placed under responsible supervision they cannot be said to be properly taken care of."‖ The Boards of Guardians have not obeyed. We have visited many Workhouse nurseries in the different parts of the kingdom; and we have found hardly any that can possibly be regarded as satisfactory places in which children should be reared. The mere fact that the infants are almost universally handled by pauper inmates, many of them more or less mentally-defective, makes it impossible for a Workhouse nursery to be a proper place. The infants, deposed one lady Guardian, "are left to the paupers to look after them," and this has a bad effect, both on the infants and on the mothers.¶ "*I have*

* These figures include the sixty-seven cases received into a small maternity home, as being cases of difficulty, among which there were two deaths of infants.

† We have ascertained that in the births attended by the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Nurses in 1907 (over 15,000 domiciliary cases in all parts of the country) the infantile mortality during the first ten days was under 19 per 1,000; a remarkable confirmation of the Plaistow experience.

‡ On March 31st, 1906, 11,424 under five years of age; in Scotland, 750 only; in Ireland, as many as 3,185.

§ The age at which the infants are transferred (if at all) from the Workhouse nursery varies. The Local Government Board forbids them to be sent to the Poor Law schools until after three years of age (General Order of February 10th, 1899). On the other hand, we were informed that the Manchester Board of Guardians transferred its infants to its large school at Swinton at two years old. In 1878, when the North Surrey District School decided to refuse admission to any under four, the Local Government Board acquiesced. (*Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board*, Vol. I., 1880, p. 178.) The period of residence in the Workhouse nurseries has actually been increased. "The separate schools," states the Senior Medical Inspector for Poor Law purposes, "formerly were allowed to admit children from two years and upwards, but they were a few years back brought into line with the district schools which have always been limited to three years, on the ground that the very young children are more liable to introduce infection than the older ones." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 23090.) It is extremely rare for a child under five to be sent to a certified school or home, and it is contrary to regulations to send such a child to an industrial school. In England and Wales it is also quite exceptional for children under five to be boarded-out, though this is done in Scotland and Ireland with orphan children (315 under five are thus boarded-out in Scotland). Hence the General Mixed Workhouse is, in England and Wales, the officially recognised place for infants up to three years of age, at least; and in most Unions until four or five. The City of London Union sends its infants to its Poor Law infirmary at Bow. In a few cases, latterly, in Unions having Cottage Homes, some of the infants have been placed in the homes with the elders.

‖ Memorandum on the Duties of Visiting Committees, June, 1895. (*See* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (C) to Vol. I.)

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 44973, 44974.

frequently seen," declared to us another competent witness, "*a classed imbecile in charge of a baby.*"* The whole nursery, says a lady Guardian, has often been found "under the charge of a person actually certified as of unsound mind, the bottles sour, the babies wet, cold, and dirty."† There are, of course, occasionally fatal results. The Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded draws attention "to an episode in connection with one feeble-minded woman who was set to wash a baby; she did so in boiling water and it died."‡ This state of things is not unknown to the Local Government Board.§ We were supplied by Dr. Fuller, the Medical Inspector for Poor Law purposes with a copy of a Report that he made to the Board in 1897, showing that:—

> "It is not an uncommon thing to find suckling mothers acting as ward-attendants, which means they rarely, if ever, get into the open air for exercise, and their infants rarely or never go out of the sick wards, except in the arms of a convalescent, into the airing courts. . . . In *sixty-four Workhouses, imbeciles or weak-minded women are entrusted with the care of infants*, as helps to the able-bodied or infirm women who are placed in charge by the matron, without the constant supervision of a responsible officer. In 370 Workhouses the inmates (a very large proportion of whom are aged or infirm women) have the charge of infants without any officer other than the Matron to supervise them. In 113 Workhouses, able-bodied or aged and infirm inmates are entrusted with the charge of the infants, with the occasional supervision of either the Assistant Matron, trained nurse, assistant nurse, industrial trainer, portress or labour mistress, in addition to the Matron, who visits twice a day."‖

We recognise that some improvement has since taken place. But, as we have ourselves seen, pauper inmates, many of them feeble-minded, are still almost everywhere utilised for handling the babies; and the Workhouse nurseries, so far as paid officers are concerned, are still so inadequately staffed as to make pauper help indispensable.¶ The sanitary arrangements are nearly always so primitive, and so far below the standard of the best day nurseries of the present time, that a very large amount of personal service is necessary, if the nursery and the babies are to be kept in a proper state of cleanliness and purity.** As things are, the visitor to a Workhouse nursery finds it too often a place of intolerable stench, offensive to all the senses, under quite insufficient supervision, in which it would be a miracle if the babies continued in health.

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* *Ibid.*, Q. 69293 (Par. 8).

† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXV. (B), Part II. (letter 20) to Vol. IX.

‡ Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VI., p. 221, Vol. VIII. p. 22.

§ Ten years ago an Inspector officially reported that, in his district, in order "to avoid the cost of a competent official, the infants are, too frequently, left practically to the charge of the inmates. I say 'practically,' because there is an official nominally in charge, but the other duties attached to her office claim most of her time. The women placed in charge of the nurseries are, at the best, ignorant and often careless. The feeding bottles are not always properly cleaned, and the milk turns sour. The atmosphere of the nurseries is seldom fresh, and the light not always what could be desired. The infants are kept too much in these rooms and are not taken into the fresh air to the extent they should be. The result of this false economy is that the children so often grow up delicate. This leads me," he continues, "to consider the infant children of wards-women in infirmaries. There is generally a difficulty in obtaining women for the duties of wards-women, and the most able-bodied are those who enter the Workhouse to be confined; these are mostly young women with illegitimate children. Consequently, when the child is a month old, the mother is transferred to the infirmary and becomes a wards-woman. I cannot but think that, in some cases, the infants suffer from the effects of this work on the mother; but my special point is that the infant suffers in health from being too much confined in the atmosphere of the infirmary." (Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, 1898–1899, Mr. Wethered's Report, pp. 143–144.)

‖ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (C) to Vol. I. Another Inspector drew attention to the subject four years later. "Nothing has been said," observed Mr. Jenner-Fust in 1901, "about the nursery children, at present retained at the Workhouse till three years old, or even more, though the care of these requires attention as much as that of the older ones. They are almost always largely under the care of inmates and the conditions are seldom improved, even when these inmates are their own mothers. . . . I cannot but think that nursery homes with trained nurses as foster-mothers should form part of the equipment of all Cottage Homes, or if a separate receiving home be established, the nursery children might conveniently be placed there, the removal from the Workhouse not being delayed beyond the period when a child is able to walk." (Thirtieth Annual Report of Local Government Board for England and Wales, 1900–1901, p. 147; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 96.)

¶ It is apparently not even now required by the Local Government Board that there should be a paid nursery officer for six children. "It *should* be a compulsory regulation," Dr. Fuller suggested to us, "that where there are on an average six infants under three years of age, a suitable paid officer should be appointed whose sole duty is the care and control of them." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (A), Par. 79, to Vol. I.)

** Even so elementary a requirement as suitable clothing is neglected. "The infants," states one lady Guardian, "have not always a proper supply of flannel, and their shirts are sometimes made of rough, unbleached calico. . . . The infants of twelve months and thereabouts have their feet compressed into tight laced-up boots over very thick socks doubled under their feet to make them fit into the boots." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXV., Par. 26, to Vol. IX.) "In some Workhouses the children have no toys." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXV., Par. 26, (viii.) to Vol. IX.); and we have heard of cases in which the toys remain tidily on a shelf out of reach, so that there may be no litter on the floor!

A further evil, to which practically no attention seems to have been paid, is the extent to which these Workhouse nurseries are continually being decimated by the admission of infants bringing with them incipient measles or whooping cough; "and that, just at an age," to quote the words of Dr. Downes, the Senior Medical Officer for Poor Law Purposes, "when the common infections are most fatal."* We were surprised to find, in Workhouse after Workhouse, practically no arrangements for quarantining the new-comers, or otherwise preventing "the great danger of the introduction of infection among them."† In all but a few quite exceptional Workhouses, the constant stream of entering infants, of all ages between a few weeks and five years, many of them coming straight from the most filthy and insanitary homes—some of them, indeed, the dependents of "ins-and-outs"—passes instantly into the midst of the nursery population. The very least that ought to be provided, to use the words of the Senior Medical Inspector for Poor Law Purposes, is "a sort of duplication of their nursery so that the newcomers could be kept apart from the main body of the children."‡ But, as the Lady Inspector of the Local Government Board for England and Wales observed to us, the Workhouses of the great towns "always more or less crowded, *do not admit of probation nurseries.* . . . The present mixture of all the children under three years of age, those who are more or less permanent and the 'ins-and-outs,' varying in age from the infant of three weeks old to the children between two and three who can run about, appears, speaking generally, to be an insuperable difficulty."§ What exactly is the result of this extraordinary exposure to infection, in the prevalence of measles and whooping cough in the Workhouse nurseries, is unfortunately not recorded. "In some cases," euphemistically observes the Senior Medical Inspector for Poor Law Purposes, "epidemics of measles and whooping cough have been very troublesome."‖ We have already mentioned the excessive mortality which Dr. Fuller found generally to prevail in England and Wales among the Workhouse children under two.¶ We have reason to believe that the mortality between two and five years is also excessive; and we regret that the Local Government Board has obtained no statistics on the subject.

We can add nothing to the gravity of the authoritative indictment of the Boards of Guardians, as managers of infant nurseries, with which Dr. Fuller and Miss Stansfeld —witnesses whose official position gives weight to their testimony—have thus supplied to us. But we may mention, as illustrative of the total incapacity of the Destitution Authorities to provide for even the most elementary requirements of an infants' nursery, three incidents that we have ourselves witnessed.

In one large Workhouse, our Committee noticed that the children

> "From perhaps about eighteen months to perhaps two and a half years of age, had a sickly appearance. These children were having their dinner, which consisted of *large platefuls of potatoes and minced beef*, a somewhat improper diet for children of that age, and one which may partly account for their pasty looks. The attendants did not know the ages of the children; the children are not weighed from time to time and a record kept."**

In another extensive Workhouse nursery, our Committee found

> "The babies of one to two years of age preparing for their afternoon sleep. They were seated in rows on wooden benches in front of a wooden table. *On the table was a long narrow cushion, and when the babies were sufficiently exhausted, they fell forward upon this to sleep!* The position seemed most uncomfortable and likely to be injurious. We were told that the system was an invention of the Matron, and had been in use for a long time."††

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* *Ibid*, Q. 23090.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.* What is really required is a double probationary ward, the one half of it receiving the entering stream of babies day by day, and the other half taking them over in batches every three weeks, so that every child would have at least three weeks quarantine in the second half before passing into the general nursery.

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par 21, to Vol. I..

‖ *Ibid.*, Q. 23090.

¶ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXI. (C) to Vol. I.

** Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 20, p. 45. Elsewhere we were informed the "infants weaned, but unable to feed themselves, are sometimes placed in a row, and the whole row fed with one spoon . . . from one plate of rice pudding; the spoon went in and out of the mouths all along the row." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix Nos. LXXXV., Par. 26, viii., and LXXXV. (B), Part II. (l), to Vol. IX.)

†† Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 24 D., p. 65.

Finally, in the great palatial establishments of London and other large towns, we were shocked to discover that the infants in the nursery *seldom or never got into the open air.** We found the nursery frequently in the third or fourth storey of a gigantic block, often without balconies, whence the only means of access, even to the Workhouse yard, was a lengthy flight of stone steps, down which it was impossible to wheel a baby carriage of any kind. There was no staff of nurses adequate to carrying fifty or sixty infants out for an airing. In some of these Workhouses it was frankly admitted that the babies never left their own quarters (and the stench that we have described), and never got into the open air, during the whole period of their residence in the workhouse nursery.†

(iv.) *The Cause of the Failure of the Destitution Authority.*

We do not attribute this failure to any personal shortcomings of the members of the Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils ; still less to any lack of humanity among them. The fact that these bodies, almost alone among Local Authorities, include women in their membership, is a confirmation of this inference. In our visits up and down the country, we have been much impressed by the high social standing, the sympathetic character and the superior intelligence of the great majority of the women members of the Boards of Guardians. It is they, almost alone among our unofficial witnesses, who have brought to our notice many details of the extraordinarily defective provision now made for women and children.‡ But the attention of the Boards of Guardians has never been directed to the evils that we have mentioned *as problems to be solved by appropriate treatment.* To them, there is in the Workhouse no "Maternity Hospital," no "Rescue Home," no Infant Asylum." What they believe themselves to be doing—what they are charged to do—is merely to "give relief" ; and relief which, as a Destitution Authority, they are authoritatively told must neither be insufficient to support life, nor more than will just suffice for that purpose, to the good as to the bad—relief which may begin only when "destitution" sets in, and must suddenly cease when "destitution" ends. So long as the task set to a Local Authority in this service of Birth and Infancy is merely the "Relief of Destitution," no body of men and women is likely to do better than the present Board of Guardians or (in Scotland) the Parish Council. If they were removed from popular control they might—however carefully selected—easily do worse. Nor is there any reason to assume that an enlargement of the area for which the Destitution Authority acts would cause any improvement in this particular service. On the contrary, our own opinion is that the provision actually made for Birth and Infancy at the present time in the smaller Unions of England and Wales is both less demoralising to the mothers, and less fatal to the infants, than the promiscuous lying-in wards and the crowded nurseries of the palatial Poor Law Infirmaries and mammoth Workhouses of the Boards of Guardians administering districts of a population of more than a quarter of a million. We cannot escape the conclusion that a Destitution Authority, whatever its area, whatever its method of appointment, and whatever the character of its membership, is, by the very nature of its task, unsuited and positively disabled for making whatever provision for Maternity and Infancy is, in the interests of the community as a whole, deemed desirable.

B. Voluntary Agencies for Providing for Birth and Infancy.

We are supported in our condemnation of the use of the Workhouse as a Maternity Hospital or as an Infant Asylum by the emphatic conclusions of the recent Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, which paid special attention to this subject.§ That Commission recommended that the General Mixed Workhouse should absolutely cease to be used, either for the reception of expectant mothers, or for lying-in, or as a nursery for infants of any age. It was proposed, in accordance with an overwhelming concurrence of testimony, that girls on their first lapse should be placed, both before and after their confinement, in suitable voluntary institutions devoting themselves to this service :—

* "Until lately there was no perambulator," observes one lady Guardian, "so they could not go out at all." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXV. (B), Part II. (letter 104), to Vol. IX.).

† We have heard it remarked by officers of Poor Law schools that the children transferred to them from the Workhouse nurseries were no better in health and strength than those entering direct from the homes of parents driven by absolute destitution to apply for relief. The officers expressly attributed this to the insanitary conditions of a Workhouse nursery, and to the fact that the infants seldom got out of doors.

‡ *See* the very cogent "Statement of Evidence by the Women's Local Government Society," (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXV. to Vol. IX., in which is tabulated and summarised the testimony of 141 women Guardians of the Poor.

§ Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, Cd. 3202, 1906.

"In this way," it was suggested, "there would be a hope that the life of the girl would not be wrecked owing to her fall, but that she might, as far as practicable, be restored to the possibility of living a good and useful life. When the time for the girl's confinement arrives, we contemplate that she should be sent to the nearest district or other hospital, from which she would return with her baby to the special institution after the usual period for remaining in a lying-in hospital. We would rely upon kind and prudent treatment of the girls individually, and to the placing of each of them as far as possible, in suitable situations after they had spent a year or thereabouts nursing their babies, and after spending such additional time, if any, as the managers of the institution might think necessary for the strengthening of their character. As soon as a girl-mother could be provided with a situation, and the sooner the better, we think, after the nursing period, we suggest that her child should be boarded-out unless it should be kept for medical reasons in the institution a little longer. We would make such institutions open, as regards adults, only to girls after their first fall."*

In view of this authoritative recommendation, and of suggestions made to us on similar lines as regards Great Britain, we deemed it necessary to inquire how far voluntary agencies were available and suitable for undertaking this important work. We were unfortunately unable in the time allowed to us to make anything like a complete survey, but one of our members has placed at our disposal the results of inquiries into the provision that is actually being made for Maternity and Infancy by voluntary agencies in two important areas of England, the Metropolis and the West Riding of Yorkshire, which together comprise nearly a quarter of the whole population of England and Wales; and in one or two other areas. These voluntary agencies may be classified, roughly, into :—

(1) Rescue Homes.

(2) Maternity Hospitals.

(3) Domiciliary, Midwifery and Nursing Agencies.

(4) Day Nurseries; and

(5) Infant Asylums.

(i.) *Rescue Homes.*

The Rescue Homes usually receive unmarried expectant mothers for a few months before confinement, and for a few weeks afterwards, nearly always sending the woman to a Maternity Hospital for lying-in.† Such Institutions exist at present only in a few towns, and on a comparatively small scale relative to the total number of cases requiring attention. The information obtained with regard to twenty-four Rescue Homes in the Metropolis, half-a-dozen in the West Riding, and half-a-dozen elsewhere,‡ shows that they are supported by voluntary contributions, and to a small extent by payments made by the patients or their friends. In nearly every case they are managed by small committees, often connected with a religious denomination. They nearly all limit themselves to girls with their first illegitimate child, § and they can usually admit only ten or twenty cases a year each, hardly any among them having accommodation for as many as fifty at a time. The length of the girl's stay varies from three months to one year, during which she is trained in domestic service, and at the end of which a suitable situation is found for her. Foster-mothers are found for their infants, the mother being required to pay, from the time she gets a situation, 5s. per week for the support of her child. The idea that the girl must necessarily be ashamed of her child is fast disappearing, and she is encouraged to work for it and

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 42. Hardened offenders, it was recommended, should be dealt with in the same way, there being voluntary institutions devoting themselves specially to these cases. Married women needing institutional care in their confinements would go straight from their own homes to the maternity ward of the county or municipal (non-pauper) hospital, the cases being as far as possible segregated there in the three classes.

† The number of Rescue Homes in England and Wales appears to be nearly 300 (Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 175). Of these, 100 had received 14,725 inmates in the three years, 1902–4 (*Ibid.*), or an average of nearly fifty per annum each. A few of the homes have accommodation for a small number of lying-in patients. It is significant that many of them used to send their patients for lying-in to the maternity ward of the Workhouse (as some do still); but that most of them have relinquished this practice, as it was found that if the girl once entered the Workhouse for lying-in, she was so hardened and deteriorated as only too likely to return to it again for a similar purpose.

‡ Some evidence as to these homes was taken by the Commissioners. (*See* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 44924–44969, 45124–45128, and Appendix No. XX. (A) to Vol. IV.; also Appendix No. xxvi. (D) to Vol. I.).

§ With regard to one such home, however, it was given in evidence by the promoters that they were "very anxious not to take only first cases, because among the cases that we have helped, according to experience, sometimes the second cases have done better than the first." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 44946, 44947.)

to take a pride in its well-being, instead of placing it in an institution such as the Foundling Hospital, where the primary condition of admission is that the mother must be willing to cede all claims over her child and never see it again.

The most extensive of these agencies is, perhaps, that administered in connection with the Salvation Army, with Rescue Homes in various parts of the country. We have been much impressed by what we have learnt from various sources of the invigorating and restorative effect of the treatment of the large number of girl-mothers annually dealt with in these Homes, and by the practical wisdom and administrative skill displayed in all the details of their management. We think that the methods adopted in these Homes merit careful study by those who may be responsible for dealing with the problem at the expense of public funds.

We are impressed—as was the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland—with the admirable social work done by the various Rescue Homes, and by their far greater success in reclaiming the best class of unmarried mothers, and enabling them to make a fresh start in life, than can be claimed by any Poor Law Institution. We regret that more use is not made of these Homes by the Boards of Guardians.* We suggest, however, that they require official inspection and supervision, especially from the standpoint of the welfare of the infant. At present, they concentrate their attention almost entirely upon the mother, and her future welfare. Comparatively little thought is given to what happens to the babies; and no information is available as to the rate of mortality among them. In view of the supreme interest of the community in the coming generation, the arrangements made for the rearing of these infants ought clearly to be under special supervision by the Public Health Authority.

(ii) *Maternity Hospitals.*

Special Maternity Hospitals seldom exist, we believe, except in London (which has less than a dozen), Dublin (three, including one large one), Edinburgh and Glasgow,† though there are sometimes maternity wards in the general hospitals.‡ Such Maternity Hospitals date from the middle of the eighteenth century. They do not appear to be a popular form of charity, and they exhibit a much smaller growth than other institutions for the treatment of the sick—perhaps because they have suffered in the past from a high rate of mortality among the mothers. This drawback, we gather, has now been overcome. Nevertheless, so far as we have been able to estimate, only 5 or 6 per cent. of the births in London, and only an insignificant percentage elsewhere, take place in voluntary institutions. Only in Dublin does the proportion rise to a high figure; and there it appears to reach 20 per cent. Nor are these institutions always accessible to poor women. Most of the Maternity Hospitals in London admit only women who obtain "letters" from one of the hospital governors or subscribers. This "letter" system doubtless facilitates the work of the hospital; it regulates the number of patients; and absolves the hospital authorities from the difficulties of selecting cases; but on the other hand, it reduces a woman's chance of admission to a question of luck, and it frequently means that only those directly in touch with district visitors and clergy, who are given letters for use in their parish, can hope to obtain the benefits of the hospital. Such a system may become very demoralising, for by making people dependent on the favour or goodwill of the rich, it is apt to create a worse form of pauperism, with more disastrous results upon character, than any to be found in a public institution. It is impossible, moreover, to avoid the conclusion that these hospitals are run more for the sake of affording opportunities for the instruction of doctors and midwives than with any consideration of what is best for the mothers and infants. Under the present arrangements a woman is received only when actually in labour, and is usually retained only for fourteen days (occasionally only for eight days, rarely for three weeks). At the end of that time she has to return to her home, or to find a lodging; weak, quite unfit for the work of trying to make both ends meet, with an infant on her hands, and very little knowledge of how to look after it. The Maternity Hospitals, indeed, usually disclaim all responsibility, and refuse to make any domiciliary provision, for either mothers or infants, after they leave the wards. To some small extent this care and educational training before and after confinement is, as we have seen, supplied by the Rescue Homes. From the Public Health standpoint, however, it is clearly objectionable that any of the cases should disappear from ken, without instruction

* For such use, *see Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14240–14242, 14453, 14454, 14500–14506, 44942–44949, and Appendix No. XXVI. (B) to Vol. I.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 58087 (Par. 95), 59988 (Par. 5).

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 32579, 37102–37104.

how to rear the baby, and without the stimulus to maternal responsibility that is given by the consciousness of being kept under observation. As it is, we are in the dark as to the rate of infantile mortality among the babies for whose birth the Maternity Hospitals are incurring so much expense. These hospitals, indeed, like the Rescue Homes, seem to pay comparatively little attention to the infants. Though the infant death-rate inside the best of the institutions is now far less than it used to be, and far less than that for the first fortnight in the lying-in wards of the Workhouses, there are some Maternity Hospitals which appear to lose three or four times as many babies in the fortnight as others. Here, too, there is clearly urgent need for supervision and inspection by the Local Health Authority.

(iii.) *Domiciliary Midwifery Agencies.*

There appear to be at least a score of large "out-patient" midwifery charities in the Metropolis, and there are others in connection with the general hospitals of the provincial towns, besides some smaller agencies in connection with missions and settlements. The most important of these are the out-patients' departments of the Maternity Hospitals, and of the General Hospitals having medical schools. The large number of medical students and midwives in training in London, Edinburgh, Dublin and the dozen other centres of medical education, each of whom has to attend a certain number of midwifery cases as a condition of obtaining a qualification to practice, renders the problem of public provision, as it does that of provident medical insurance, essentially different in these towns from that elsewhere. It was given in evidence that one hospital alone in this way provides medical attendance for 4,000 confinements annually.* The total number of confinements in the United Kingdom thus gratuitously attended to by voluntary agencies in the patients' own homes must, in the aggregate, run into many tens of thousands. The work is, however, confined to London and a score or two of other large towns. It is limited to the attendance of the doctor or midwife at birth, occasional subsequent visits by the midwife and sometimes daily visits by the nurse during ten days. No provision is made for the mother's instruction, or for subsequent care.

We can do no more than call attention to the extent of the domiciliary midwifery provision thus thrown, so to speak, gratuitously at the heads of the poor, practically without inquiry as to character or need, without any sort of co-ordination with other agencies, without connection with the provision for necessitous mothers both before and after child-birth, and without the cases being brought under the supervision of the Local Health Authorities.

(iv.) *Day Nurseries.*

For the children under the lower limit of school age—which may be three, four or five years—of mothers who are unable to look after them during the day, practically the only organised provision is that of Day Nurseries, or *crèches*.† In view of the fact that the Outdoor Relief afforded to mothers of young children is practically never adequate to allow them to forego earning money, and that many Boards of Guardians, as we have seen, actually incite the mothers to go out to work, it is important to inquire what becomes of the young children whilst the mothers are away. We found that in very few places was any systematic provision made for the care of these infants, or others in like case. Neither the Destitution Authority, which was assuming to maintain so many of these infants, nor the Local Health Authority, in its crusade against infantile mortality, has done anything in the matter. Voluntary charity has done very little.‡ We were supplied by one of our members with reports as to the charitable Day Nurseries of the Metropolis, the West Riding of Yorkshire, and a few other places. These institutions are far more prevalent in London than elsewhere; and even in London they appear to number only seventy or eighty, each accommodating between twelve and sixty infants; or, for all London's million families, not more than 2,000. They are managed by philanthropic

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 32578, 32579.

† "The word 'crèche' . . . has a fluctuating meaning. It is sometimes used for places where children are only retained to the end of their third year—which is the technical meaning of the word in France—and sometimes for places where children are kept to a later age, say, to the end of their fifth or even sixth year." (Report of the Consultative Committee upon the School Attendance of Children below the Age of Five, 1908, p. 16.)

‡ "At present, there are seventy-seven known crèches in London, and 103 in Great Britain." (*Ibid.*, pp. 107, 108.)

committees on voluntary contributions, but they make a charge to the mothers (usually 3d. or 4d. per day) which about covers the cost of the infant's food. These institutions, which are at present under no sort of public supervision or official inspection, are scattered most irregularly over the Metropolis. A few of them have excellent buildings, good sanitary arrangements, competent staffs, and well-contrived provision for all the infants' requirements. Most of them were found to be faulty in some of these respects; and more than a third were distinctly open to grave criticism. These showed an utter lack of knowledge of the most elementary principles of the hygiene of child life. Many of them were overcrowded, ill-ventilated, dark, dirty and foul-smelling. The babies were in charge of totally inexperienced women. The milk and the bottles were often wholly unsuitable.*

We do not wish to offer any opinion upon the vexed question of how far Day Nurseries are desirable. But it is clear that, wherever the Destitution Authority incites the mother to go out to work and leave her babies, or where it gives Outdoor Relief so inadequate as to compel the mother to go out to work, it becomes responsible for seeing that the little children whom it is thus maintaining as Outdoor Paupers are properly provided for.† We cannot regard it as satisfactory that no attention should, at present, be paid to this matter; and we cannot help attributing some of the very high infantile mortality among Outdoor paupers to the neglect of the Destitution Authorities to consider what effect their policy is having on the children. It is plain that any Day Nurseries that exist, in which there ought to be no large aggregation of children, need to be under the supervision and inspection of the Public Health Authority.

(v.) *Infant Asylums.*

We cannot pass over without mention the fact that there exist extensive voluntary institutions providing maintenance for infants, which might be made use of by Local Authorities unable satisfactorily to provide for their younger children. Some of these institutions admit babies from the very earliest age, and appear to surmount very satisfactorily the difficulties in nursery administration experienced by the Destitution Authorities. These institutions are proud of their success, and many of them would welcome a voluntary inspection, which could not fail to be of use in suggesting methods of improvement. It would be an additional advantage of a supervision of these institutions by the Public Health Authority that their rates of mortality and their valuable experience would become available for comparison.

(vi.) *The Insufficiency of the Voluntary Agencies.*

We are much impressed, as we have already mentioned, with the value of voluntary agencies in dealing with the problems of birth and infancy, especially with that presented by the young unmarried mother with her first child. We think that suitable agencies of this kind might, with great advantage, be far more extensively utilised by the local authorities for particular cases than has yet been done. "The mothers of illegitimate children," emphatically declares the Vice-Regal Commission with regard to Ireland, "should never, it is suggested, be in future admitted or retained in any Workhouse or institution where they would have freedom of ingress or egress, and where they could associate with other classes. Unmarried mothers should, in our opinion, be provided for in special institutions under religious or philanthropic management, *their infants being kept with them until weaned.*"‡ Any philanthropic institutions thus made use of should be placed on the list of "Certified Schools and Homes" at present issued by the Local Government Boards for England and Ireland, and the Local Government Board for Scotland should frame a similar list. It would, of course, be necessary for every such institution to be periodically inspected by duly qualified officers of the Local Government

* An association entitled the National Society of Day Nurseries was established in 1907 for the purpose of raising the standard among them, and of securing their legal registration. "At present," deposed the Secretary, "such institutions are not liable to inspection, and there are a large number of very inferior ones, which do more harm than good. It is thought that the aim of the Society would best be achieved through the establishment of a system of compulsory inspection. Witness suggested that the inspectors for this purpose should be women appointed by the Board of Education; but she would not mind what Government Department controlled the work so long as it was done thoroughly. It is desired to bring the public to see that unless crèches are kept up to a proper standard and are open to inspection, they ought to be abolished. Grants will be given by the Society to recognised institutions; and it is proposed to issue a magazine which will contain a list of crèches, indicating those which the public are advised not to maintain." (*Ibid.*, p. 107.)

† There is a like responsibility in those Unions, unhappily numerous, in which Outdoor Relief is systematically refused to mothers having one child only, or two children only.

‡ Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 61.

Board; and it should be a condition of such certification, and of the receipt of any patients, or of any payments, from any Local Authority, that the institution should come also under the regular inspection of the Local Health Authority.

But whatever may be the case in Ireland, there is in Great Britain no provision by Voluntary Agencies—whether Rescue Homes, Maternity Hospitals, Domiciliary Midwifery Charities, Day Nurseries or Infant Asylums—at all adequate to the need. This deficiency shows itself alike in amount of accommodation and in its geographical distribution, in the quality of the service and in its limited duration. As we have seen, none of the five forms of voluntary provision that we have described comes anywhere near being able to cover all the cases. What is done is limited to London and a comparatively small number of large towns. The efficiency of the service rendered is extremely unequal, and much of it would have to be very drastically reformed before it could be utilised by a Public Authority. Finally, all these Voluntary Agencies—the Rescue Homes being in this respect least open to criticism—share with the Destitution Authorities the drawback that they deal with these cases only during a narrowly limited period of time. Their patients come to them out of the unknown, and after the briefest of treatment, disappear again into the unknown, having received temporary physical advantage but the very minimum of mental or moral improvement. To be of any real value to the community, the temporary physical improvement afforded by these Voluntary Agencies to their patients must be set in a framework of more continuous preventive and educational activity, brought to bear on the character and intelligence of these persons both before and after the acute crisis of their distress.

We are, therefore, unable to share, so far at any rate as Great Britain is concerned, in the optimistic assumption of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland that Voluntary Agencies are in a position adequately to deal with the problems of Birth and Infancy. Whatever use of them by the Local Authority may prove possible, it is clear that they will need stimulating and supervising by public officers, and, in nearly every district, they will require to be supplemented by public provision at the expense of the rates, both in the form of institutions for specific classes of cases left wholly or partly undealt with by the philanthropist, and in that of more extended, more systematic and more continuous domiciliary treatment than is afforded by any Voluntary Agency.

(c) The Supervision of Birth and Infancy by the Local Health Authority.

The continuance of a high rate of infantile mortality in spite of a steadily falling mortality among persons of other ages has, within the last two decades, forced itself upon the attention of the Local Authorities. Whilst the general rate of mortality has fallen in the United Kingdom during the past forty years by at least one-sixth, the proportion of deaths under one year per thousand births has, until lately, remained almost undiminished.* The result has been a great outburst of sanitary activity in new directions. "The question of how we are to prevent so large an infantile mortality," says a recent report, "is now engaging the attention of every Medical Officer of Health throughout Great Britain, and more or less of every Sanitary Authority, and the great factors . . . . which they are to combat are ignorance, carelessness, and neglect of the hygienic laws. It, therefore, becomes necessary to instruct the people in these matters."† At first, "the efforts of Health Committees" were "directed chiefly towards reducing the deaths among infants from epidemic diarrhœa." But "statistics have clearly shown that the practice

* "It may safely be said that the health of the community at large, especially that of adults, depends upon many factors, some of which have been beneficially influenced by Public Health legislation; but the health of the infant population depends chiefly upon home and maternal influences, *i.e.*, upon the mode of feeding, clothing, etc., which Public Health legislation has only slightly touched. The general mortality reacts most quickly to sanitary measures of a municipal character, the infant mortality to domestic hygiene, and this, in my opinion, is the explanation of the different behaviour of the general death-rate and the infantile death-rate, during the last half-century. The fact is that personal and domestic hygiene, and in this I include all that relates to the proper care of infants, has been neglected in the past; it may be said in this respect we are very little better on the whole than a quarter of a century ago. With the exception, perhaps, of a nebulous idea that when an individual is known to be suffering from an infectious disease, such person should be separated from those who are healthy, the public, especially in crowded localities, may be said to possess no ideas on domestic hygiene, with the result that the community at large still suffers from an unnecessarily and preventably high infant death and sick rate." (Report of the Medical Officer of Health, on Hackney, for 1905, p. 105.)

† Report on the Prevention of Infantile Mortality, by Alfred E. Harris (Medical Officer of Health for Islington), 1907, p. 30.

of feeding infants with artificial food is chiefly responsible for the terrible wastage of life at present going on."* Thus the Local Health Authorities have found their work taking the novel forms of giving advice to mothers how to treat their babies—advice which it was difficult to distinguish from that given by the private practitioner or the District Medical Officer; and in some places of actually supplying the mothers with suitable food for their babies—food that might otherwise have been sought as Outdoor Relief from the Destitution Authority.

(i.) *Provision of Midwifery.*

We must first notice a small, and, we think, undesigned responsibility assumed by the Local Health Authority in some places, in connection with the provision of medical attendance on women in child-birth, who are destitute of the means of providing it for themselves. Under the Midwives' Act of 1902, and the rules framed by the Central Midwives' Board, the 12,000 practising midwives in England and Wales are legally required instantly to call in a qualified medical practitioner in cases of difficulty or danger.† No provision was made for the remuneration of the doctor thus imperatively summoned; and, in a large proportion of the cases, the patient is quite unable to pay him. Under these circumstances, the Local Government Board has permitted the payment to be made, sometimes by the Destitution Authorities, sometimes by the Local Health Authorities. In some places the Boards of Guardians have demurred to making any payment in such cases to a private practitioner, considering that the duty should fall exclusively on the District Medical Officers.‡ In some places the Boards of Guardians make the payment, provided that the doctor—summoned perhaps in the night—has first obtained a note from the Relieving Officer authorising his attendance, § or provided that it is proved that application was first made, and made in vain, to the District Medical Officer, or provided that the case is, after inquiry, considered by the Guardians to be destitute. In some places (as at Manchester, and Liverpool) the Town or District Council is, with the approval of the Local Government Board, making the payments under the general terms of Sec. 133 of the Public Health Act.‖ There is nothing to prevent both Local Authorities paying for the same service. For instance, both the Manchester Town Council and the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians have actually resolved to make such payments under certain conditions.¶ On the other hand, in other places, the doctor fails to get his fee from either Local Authority.

(ii.) *Provision of Hygienic or Medical Advice.*

Whilst the provision of midwifery by the Public Health Authorities is, at present, occasional only, the provision of hygienic or medical advice for infantile ailments has already become an organised service. The most remarkable feature of this development has been its educational aspect. The Local Health Authority found the bulk of the poor mothers—those in receipt of Outdoor Relief no less than the others—totally unaware how to rear their babies in health. They were both unable and unwilling to pay for the private practitioner's advice, at any rate so long as the babies were not actually ill, and the Destitution Authority provided no instruction even for the mothers whom it was relieving. It was argued by the Local Authorities that: "No education in school is likely to have much practical result in lessening the vast amount of preventible mortality and sickness among young infants. Very few of the mothers in the working classes have either the time or the ability to understand books or leaflets on the management of children. What is required is that they should have actual practical instruction from some properly trained and tactful visitor soon after the child's birth, who would be able to show them that it would save them trouble in the long run if they spent a little pains in preparing for their child's food, in the event of their not being able to nurse it themselves."** The result has been the creation of a remarkable organisation, partly paid and partly ††voluntary, by

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* Report upon the Infantile Death-Rate at Newport, by J. Howard-Jones, M.D.,D.Sc., Medical Officer of Health for Newport (Mon.), 1907.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 21665–21673, 22981–22985, 38380 (Pars. 41, 42), 38573–38582.

‡ As at Lewisham, Southwark, Camberwell, Wolverhampton, Totnes, Derby, West Ham, etc.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 38324, Par. 12.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 36931 (Par. 2), 37103, 38380 (Par. 42), 38573–38582.

¶ Statement by the Midwives' Committees of the London and Counties Medical Protection Society, *Ibid.*, (not yet in volume form.)

** Report of Medical Officer of Health for Margate, 1905, pp. 14, 15.

†† There appear to be already between 200 and 300 salaried Health Visitors in the United Kingdom, and at least ten times as many regularly engaged volunteers; or, in the aggregate, more than the total number of Relieving Officers.

which the Medical Officer of Health attempts to keep under observation during the whole of the first year of life, all the babies born in the poorer families, including those who are on the Outdoor pauper roll of the Destitution Authority, and those among them who are actually under the attendance of the District Medical Officer. This organisation has already gone very far. It may be said that Parliament has sanctioned the new development by expressly legalising the appointment of paid Health Visitors by the Metropolitan Borough Councils; * and by passing the Notification of Births Act of 1907, the avowed object of which was "to give Sanitary Authorities the opportunity of effecting improvements in Infant and Domestic Hygiene by means of Health Visitors."† Accordingly, at the present time, in the poorer districts of many towns of Great Britain, every house at which a birth occurs, or at which a child under two years has died (even those at which the District Medical Officer is in attendance) is visited by an officer from the Medical Officer of Health's Department—in some places by a lady volunteer, in others by a semi-philanthropic paid agent, in others again by a trained professional Health Visitor, qualified by a sanitary certificate or a nurse's experience. Including the organised volunteers, there are already more Health Visitors than there are Relieving Officers in England and Wales. At Huddersfield and elsewhere some of these Health Visitors are even qualified medical practitioners. They interview the mother and inspect the baby; they advise how it should be fed, washed, clothed, and generally treated; they criticise what is being done wrong or unskilfully; they keep a sharp eye for the presence of disease to be reported to the Medical Officer of Health; they suggest hygienic improvements in the household; if the baby is ailing they are often able to suggest the cause and remedy; and, finally, if the case looks serious, they urge the obtaining of further professional advice either by the calling in of a doctor for payment, or by application to the Relieving Officer for the attendance of the District Medical Officer.‡ The adoption of this system of domiciliary "health visiting," as applied to the 2·45 per cent. of the population which is under one year of age, has apparently resulted in a great improvement in its health; although the proportion of those visited to the total population has not yet risen to a sufficient height to have any marked statistical result on the whole.

Three features stand out in this expansion of the work of the Local Health Authority, all of them in significant contrast with that of the Destitution Authority. The first is its humanising and educational character. The poverty-stricken mother, tempted to regard the newly-born infant only as an additional burden, finds herself reminded of the importance of the child's life, finds its welfare a matter of interest to the visitor, and finds herself gradually acquiring a higher standard of child-rearing. The second significant feature of the work is the extensive use made of volunteers in an altogether new relation to the official machinery. Such volunteers, numbering in towns like Huddersfield several scores, visit the poor in a friendly, unofficial way, and yet serve systematically as the eyes and ears of the Local Authority, working always under the supervision, guidance and control of the responsible salaried officer, and his representative Health Committee. The third feature is the stimulus given by the action of the Local Authority to parental

* London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1908.

† Report upon the Infantile Death-Rate at Newport (Mon.), by J. Howard-Jones, M.D., D.Sc., Medical Officer of Health, Newport, 1907. "The Local Government Board, as stated in their Circular of September 27th last, to the Councils of the Metropolitan Boroughs, however, are of opinion 'that there is no occasion for imposing upon parents and others, the obligation of notifying births, unless steps are taken to carry out the ultimate object of the measure, viz., the giving of advice and instruction to those who have charge of the infants, and in ordinary circumstances they would not be prepared to consent to the adoption of the Act unless it appeared that arrangements would usually be carried out by local agencies under the Medical Officer of Health. The Board trust the Council will consider the question of adopting the Act, and of co-operating with any agency that may exist, so as to secure its successful operation.'" (Report on the Prevention of Infantile Mortality, by Alfred E. Harris (Medical Officer of Health for Islington), 1907, pp. 31, 32.)

‡ Evidence ibefore the Commission, Appendix No. LVI. to Vol. IV., (as to Huddersfield); Appendix No. CXXXVIII. (Par. 2) to Vol. IV. (as to Birmingham); *Qs.* 41685–41689, 42546 (as to Leeds); *Q.* 41888, Par. 1 (d (as to Sheffield); *Qs.* 37605 (Par. 29), 37616–37618, 37801, 37802 (as to Blackburn). In Huddersfield, for instance, all "newly-born children are visited as soon as possible by the official Health Visitors. Each Saturday, a list of the cases in her district is sent to a Lady Superintendent, who distributes the cases among her lady-helpers. These keep the cases under observation, and where it appears necessary, invoke the aid of the Department. Great care is exercised to avoid touching upon the domain of the family doctor, and also to avoid any action which even might have the appearance of diminishing parental, and particularly maternal, responsibility." (Report of the Medical Officer of Health of Huddersfield, for 1905, p. 30.) In particular, the Health Visitor keeps a "watchful guard over the illegitimate children who are nursed in the District, much to the advantage of these little unfortunates." (Report of Medical Officer of Health for Walthamstow, 1905, p. 5.)

responsibility, personal self-control and regularity, and self-help. The Destitution Authority, grudgingly giving its dole of Outdoor Relief to the destitute mother, leaves her not only without instruction how to make the best use of it, but also free to neglect her infant, to endanger its life by irregular hours, and even to let it starve quietly to death if she chooses. What the Local Health Authority does is to persist in inquiring after the health of that baby; to send its Health Visitors to see its condition; to make the mother feel that she is being helped; to induce her to take some pride in the infant's thriving; and to show her how she can make it thrive. We have been much impressed by the evidence afforded to us of the beneficial results of this kind of State action in positively increasing self-respect, a sense of personal responsibility and maternal care.*

(iii.) *Provision of Milk.*

In a dozen towns (St. Helens since 1899; also Liverpool, Battersea, Finsbury, Lambeth, Woolwich, Glasgow, Leicester) the Health Authority has gone a step further. It provides a municipal milk depot, or rather a "milk dispensary," at which babies requiring artificial feeding are supplied with pure milk (and hygienic feeding teats) on payment of a small sum.† At Liverpool this has developed into an elaborate organisation with branch depots in various parts of the city, supplying "humanised sterilised milk" of seven different grades, for infants of various ages (in addition to the babies brought to the depots) to many hundred families by direct delivery. But the special interest of the "milk dispensary" to the sanitarian is the personal supervision which it enables the Medical Officer of Health to exercise over these ailing babies. At Finsbury the supply of the milk is made conditional on the babies being brought regularly for inspection, accurate weighing, and hygienic advice. Those who cannot be brought are visited in their homes. At Glasgow a qualified medical practitioner (lady) visits every home as a matter of course. Practically, though not avowedly, the Medical Officer of Health becomes the medical attendant of each of these infants; to whom, indeed, he not infrequently supplies the milk gratuitously rather than let them die or compel the destitute parents to "go through the rigmarole" of obtaining Poor Law relief for them. "During the hotter portion of the year," reports the Medical Officer of Health for Norwich, "and to a lesser extent since, with the sanction of the Health Committee, I have distributed (through the lady health visitor) a considerable quantity of dried milk powder to necessitous mothers and, on the whole, have been well satisfied with the results."‡ "It is clear," says Dr. Newman, now Chief Medical Officer to the Board of Education, "that such a specialised milk supply does not meet the whole problem of infant mortality. . . . Nevertheless it is true that a *properly equipped and controlled* Infants' Milk Depot is part of the solution at the present time and under present conditions and is a practical step in the right direction."§

Here, too, as with the advice given to the mothers by the Health Visitors, the most prominent features of the work are the education of the persons aided, and the stimulus to their sense of responsibility. When the baby has to be regularly brought to be inspected and weighed, the mother's interest in its physical condition is not allowed to slacken; there is praise and approval if the baby goes on well; there is blame and warning if it sickens. The connection between irregular hours, dirt, carelessness about the food and other forms of neglect, and the ups and downs of the baby's physical development are brought home to the most ignorant and apathetic of mothers. In marked contrast with the practice of the Poor Law, the actual gift of material relief is made only an incident—for the most part only an occasional incident—in the process of education and inspection. The self-respect, the power of will, the sense of personal responsibility, instead of being weakened, as it is under Outdoor Relief, is, with a Milk Dispensary, actually strengthened.

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 42664–42671, 56933, 56934, 56961–56964, 94589.

† As to these municipal milk dispensaries, *see Ibid.*, *Qs.* 47191, 47266, 47501, and Appendices Nos. CXVI. (Par. 3), CXLIV. (Par. 5), and CL. (Par. 1), to Vol. IV. (for Leicester); *Qs.* 41489 (Par. 35), 41492–41514, 41585, and 41700 (for Leeds); *Qs.* 94287 (Pars. 23 (b), 25 (h)), 94335–94343 (for Finsbury); *Qs.* 95100 (Pars. 13–16), 95106–95116, 95228–95243 (for Glasgow); Appendix No. xliv. to Vol. IX. (for Woolwich). Small as is the sum charged, it is sufficient to prevent the poorest mothers (those in receipt of Outdoor Relief) from obtaining the advantage of the municipal milk depot. At Liverpool and Finsbury, we have been informed that attempts have been made by the Town Council to get the Boards of Guardians to give orders for the milk, in lieu of other food, where there are young or delicate children; but so far with little success. At Battersea, the Board of Guardians sometimes give orders for milk instead of money.

‡ Report on the Health of Norwich, 1905, by the Medical Officer of Health, p. 10.

§ Report of the Medical Officer of Health on the Infants' Milk Depot, Finsbury, 1905, p. 7.

(d) The Need for a Unified Service dealing with Birth and Infancy.

The rapid up-growth of the organised supervision of Birth and Infancy undertaken by the Public Health Authorities, and the confusion and overlapping with the work of the Destitution Authorities to which this is giving rise, compel a consideration of the question whether the whole of the public provision for Birth and Infancy—whatever that provision may be—ought not to be placed in the hands of a single Local Authority. If, on the one hand, the Local Health Authorities have trespassed on the domain of the Destitution Authorities in paying midwifery fees, and in supplying medical advice and milk to necessitous mothers, the Destitution Authorities are administering certain other services with regard to Birth and Infancy, which form indispensable parts of the Public Health machinery. Our attention has been called, by the Boards of Guardians themselves, to the fact that, owing to historical accidents, it is upon them and not upon the Local Health Authorities, that has been cast the administration of the registration of births and deaths, of vaccination, and (outside the Metropolis) of the inspection of "baby-farms." Throughout England and Wales it is the Board of Guardians which chooses and nominates the Registrars of Births and Deaths; and the Local Health Authority has absolutely no official contact either with these officers or with the indispensable registration which they conduct. The result is that the system of registration itself is less effective from the Public Health standpoint than it might easily be made; * and the Medical Officer of Health has no means of getting the instantaneous information as to every birth and every death within his district that should be automatically at his disposal. It is equally anomalous that the machinery for vaccination, a compulsory and universal provision against an infectious disease, should be entirely in the hands, not of the Local Health Authority, but of the Destitution Authority. We have found no one to defend this arrangement. All our witnesses recommend the immediate and complete transfer of both these duties of the Destitution Authority to the Local Health Authority, especially if that Authority acts for an area of adequate extent. It has been represented to us as no less anomalous that the administration of the Infant Life Protection Acts should, in England and Wales outside the Metropolis,† be entrusted to the Destitution Authority. This service is at present very imperfectly performed by the Boards of Guardians, several of which strenuously opposed the Infant Life Protection Bill in 1902; and it is by most of them wholly neglected.‡ The transfer of the three services of the registration of births and deaths, vaccination, and the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act—now the Children's Act, 1908—from the Destitution Authorities to the Local Health Authorities, which is necessary in the interest both of economy and efficiency,§ would, in our opinion, by concentrating in the department of the Medical Officer of Health all the available knowledge as to the local facts, make it inevitable that the whole responsibility for whatever public provision is made for Birth and Infancy should be concentrated in the Local Health Authority.

This suggestion receives support from another consideration. What is needed, for a treatment of Birth and Infancy from the standpoint of the community, is *continuous* observation of the household both before and after birth. The Destitution Authority, by the very nature of its work, has, and can have, no such continuity of knowledge. The expectant mother, or the mother with infants, only comes within its ken when "destitution" sets in, and disappears the very moment that "destitution" ceases. The Local Health Authority, on the other hand, is—by its ubiquitous machinery of Health Visitors, and house to house visitation—continuously observing the circumstances of the household, irrespective of temporary destitution. By its staff of Sanitary Inspectors, it knows the character of the street, and even of the house, in which the expectant mother is living, and is therefore in a position to gauge the probable risk to mother and infant in domiciliary confinement. Above all, the Local Health Authority is primarily concerned with the

* For instance, we are told that "The law now allows a Registrar, almost always a layman, to accept a certificate from an unqualified person, provided that he, the Registrar, is persuaded that no deception is being practised. The proper course is, without doubt, to hold an inquiry in every such case, and, where needful, a post-mortem examination. These steps will probably be taken only when the registration of the cause of death is placed under the control of the Sanitary Authority." (Report of the Medical Officer of Health, Norwich, for 1905, p. 21.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 434, 9820–9826, 40475 (Par. 5a), 40481, 45922 (Par. 5), 45957, and Appendix No. LI., to Vol. IV.

‡ *See*, for examples, *ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXV. (Pars. 19–23) to Vol. IX.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 9827. Curiously enough, the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act is under the Home Office. In the Metropolis the work already forms part of the County Health Service, under the London County Council.

prevention of disease and death, and has, for its responsible adviser, not a clerk or solicitor but a medical expert. Thus, if the Local Health Authority were responsible for the whole of the public provision for Birth and Infancy, it would decide the question of whether institutional treatment should be afforded to a confinement, upon grounds of the risk to health and life, and the chance of survival of mother and infant. Under the Destitution Authority, the decision is made, irrespective of considerations of health, or even of the character of the mother, according to the dominant policy of the Guardians against or in favour of "Outdoor Relief." As a matter of fact there is much evidence that, for the normal case, it is in many respects better, as well as less costly, to provide midwifery attendance in the home, than to require the mother to enter a Maternity Hospital. As we have seen, the statistics of infantile mortality in the lying-in wards of Workhouses and Maternity Hospitals alike, compared with those of domiciliary confinements where adequate food and attendance are provided, are such as to make us pause before we establish any more Maternity Hospitals at the public expense.* But there are other reasons, founded on the results upon personal character, and the integrity of the home, which make institutional treatment undesirable. For a poor mother to leave her home and family means often the abandonment of her children to most inadequate care, and an additional temptation to her husband to seek amusement elsewhere. Though her confinement in a crowded, poverty-stricken home may cause much inconvenience, she feels that she can still watch over her children, direct the elder ones what to do for the household, and (as it has been graphically put) "keep the purse under her pillow." We have been much impressed by the experience in this respect of the Plaistow Maternity Charity, to which we have already referred, a voluntary organisation for supplying midwifery attendance gratuitously to the homes of a very poor part of the West Ham Union. Here a great feature is made of the hygienic advice and instruction given to the mother. Those responsible for its organisation are firm in the belief that domiciliary treatment of confinement cases is the only sound one, for they consider that the nurse may leave behind her lessons of health which will long be remembered. This, however, is at present very imperfectly undertaken, owing to the absence of any co-operation with the Local Health Authority. The nurse only attends a case for ten days at the most, and it may require many months of simple instruction before a woman has the desire or knowledge for fighting against the overwhelming odds of a "slum" existence sufficiently well to obey even the simplest laws of health. It is here that the continuous supervision and friendly counsel of the Health Visitors—continued, as we have described, quite irrespective of whether or not the mother continues to be destitute—becomes of so much value. No such machinery is, or can be, at the disposal of a Local Authority concerned with the mere relief of destitution.

There are, however, a number of maternity cases which—whether on medical or social grounds—cannot properly be treated in the home. It is a powerful argument for entrusting the whole service to the Local Health Authority that such an Authority has, in its qualified staff, the means of discovering these cases in advance; and of arranging for their admission, not at the moment of labour, but in due time. It is clear that the Maternity Hospitals supported from public funds must be either supervised or administered by the Local Health Authority, which is already charged with the duty of dealing with puerperal fever. By its ability to exercise the necessary medical supervision, such an Authority would be able to do what the Destitution Authority never feels itself able to do, namely, make full use of philanthropic or charitable institutions undertaking the reclamation of girl-mothers. Above all, the Local Health Authority would be in a position, with regard to each case, to deal with it by the desirable combination of domiciliary and institutional treatment—to watch the patient at home, to arrange for admission to the appropriate institution just for the crisis, to continue the treatment at home, and to follow this up by the instructional care which goes far to strengthen and enforce personal responsibility. Whilst the good mother would be stimulated and encouraged, the bad mother would be kept under observation and, if necessary, prosecuted for letting her baby die.

It has been strongly represented to us that the special supervision of the Local Health Authority should not be confined to the first year of life; but should be continued until, at whatever age may be fixed, the children pass under the supervision of the Local Education Authority. "There is no doubt," testified the Clerk of the Glasgow School Board, "that the absence of public provision for children under five, so far as the poorest classes

* *See*, in confirmation, *Ibid.*, *Q.* 37104.

are concerned, is a crying evil. The evils of slum life in relation to these children cannot be minimised. Probably the evil influences of the slums upon them affect their whole lives and make the whole question of education right up to fourteen more difficult."* "Young children in poor districts," said an important London witness, "who do not attend school are often locked up in one room for hours without attention, while the mothers are out at work. Either they are in danger from a fire in an open grate, or there is no fire and they suffer terribly from cold. When not locked in a room they are left to run about alone in the streets. In either case it frequently happens that no attempt is made to keep them clean, this being done only when they go to school. Under such conditions it is hopeless to expect children to acquire good and clean habits."† The Destitution Authority, as we have seen—even with regard to the considerable proportion of these children which it is maintaining on Outdoor Relief—exercises no supervision over such cases. It is, we think, clear that it is the Local Health Authority that should be charged with the responsibility for the whole of the public provision that is made for the child under school age,‡ whether this takes the form of supervision, from the standpoint of Public Health, of infants at large, or the maintenance of infants discovered to be in a state of destitution. We are supported in this assumption of the proved necessity for a systematic supervision of infants up to school age by the recent authoritative Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education. "The first three years of a child's life," states that Committee, "are the most critical of all, and . . . if the State acknowledges the duty of providing care and training for certain children after the age of three there is even greater reason for extending that care to children below that age. As to the permanent effect of proper care during the first three years of life, the Committee entirely agree. . . . They would like . . . to record their conviction that the improved treatment of such children depends almost entirely upon the improved conditions of their homes, and this opinion strengthens them in urging that in making provision for children over three nothing should be done which might arrest the development of the idea that the best place for all children under five is a good home."§

This unification in the hands of the Local Health Authorities of whatever public provision is made with regard to Birth and Infancy seems to us as desirable in the interest of economical expenditure of the public funds, as it is in the interest of efficiency of service. We do not agree that the assumption by the Local Health Authority of the work now done by the Destitution Authority in providing medical attendance and maintenance for sick or destitute mothers and infants, would involve any extension of gratuitous service. It has been found, in practice, easier for the Local Health Authority to obtain repayment of the cost of the milk that it now supplies to necessitous mothers and infants, than for the Destitution Authority to recover the cost of the "relief" doled out in the homes, or of the fortnight's sojourn in the maternity ward of the General Mixed Workhouse. The greater willingness of the poor to pay for the food thus obtained from the Local Health Authority arises from the fact that it is tendered in a spirit of helpfulness to persons discovered to be in need of it, with no accompaniment of humiliation, and conditional only on their making a right use of it; instead of being, like Poor Relief, grudgingly granted, without consideration or counsel, to such applicants as brave the deterrent tests, and submit to the humiliation of pauperism and the stigma of civil disability. But apart from this effect on the recipient, encouraging in him responsive effort, there is, in all the range of operations of the Local Health Authority, an even greater safeguard to the rates in the fact that this Authority prevents destitution, and is not confined to merely treating it when it arises. In all these cases, prevention is far more economical, as well as more efficient, than cure. The Destitution Authority has not, and never can have, any cognisance of the fact that an expectant mother, or mother with infants, is, owing to the neglect of her husband properly to maintain her, getting into such a state of weakness that she will shortly become chargeable to the rates. The Local Health Authority, by its machinery of Health Visitors and

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* Report of the Consultative Committee upon the School Attendance of Children below the Age of Five Years, 1908, p. 127. (Evidence of Mr. J. Clark, Clerk to the Glasgow School Board.)

† *Ibid.*, p. 116. (Evidence of Miss H. L. Pearse, Superintendent of the London County Council Nurses.)

‡ "This system," said the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, "of sanitary inspection, supplemented by the system of health visiting which is springing up in our Scotch towns, and under our Medical Officers of Health, your milk depots, and so on . . . are all tending to complete the supervision from infancy up to school age." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 56955.)

§ Report of the Consultative Committee upon the School Attendance of Children below the Age of Five Years, 1908, pp. 55, 56.

Sanitary Inspectors, can discover the approach of destitution, and by moral pressure and, if need be, by legal prosecution, can enforce on husband or parent the responsibility for maintenance, before actual destitution or chargeability arises. We see the superior economy of this preventive activity of the Local Health Authority in the work which it has already accomplished. The great improvements in town sanitation of the past half-century, which have so enormously diminished among adults both the death-rate and the loss by preventable sickness, have been effected quite as much by enforcing on owners and occupiers their obligation to keep their own dwellings in a sanitary condition, on traders their obligation to sell only wholesome food, and on employers their obligation to provide healthy workshops, as by expensive street improvements effected at the cost of the rates. It is only in default of private action that the Local Health Authority does the work itself; and then it is often enabled to recover the cost from the individual in default. This principle it is that we seek to extend from the sanitation of the environment to the personal hygiene of the mother and infant. At present, as we shall show in our chapter on "Charge and Recovery by Local Authorities," the law and practice of recovering the cost of maintenance from the persons benefited, especially in the present sphere of the Destitution Authority, is in a state of utter confusion and futility. In that chapter, and more definitely in the chapter giving our "Scheme of Reform," we shall point out how these financial responsibilities of husbands and parents may be really enforced.

(E) Conclusions.

We have, therefore, to report:—

1. That the Boards of Guardians of England, Wales and Ireland, and the Parish Councils of Scotland have proved themselves to be, by their very nature as Destitution Authorities, wholly unsuited to cope with the grave three-fold problem as to Birth and Infancy with which the nation is confronted. Alike in the prevention of the continued procreation of the feeble-minded, in the rescue of girl-mothers from a life of sexual immorality, and in the reduction of infantile mortality in respectable but necessitous families, the Destitution Authorities, in spite of their great expenditure, are to-day effecting no useful results. With regard to the first two of these problems, at any rate, the activities of the Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils are, in our judgment, actually intensifying the evil. If the State had desired to maximise both feeble-minded procreation, and birth out of wedlock, there could not have been suggested a more apt device than the provision, throughout the country, of General Mixed Workhouses, organised as they now are to serve as unconditional Maternity Hospitals. Whilst thus encouraging irregular sexual unions and the procreation of the feeble-minded, the Destitution Authorities are doing little to arrest the appalling preventable mortality that prevails among the infants of the poor. The respectable married woman, however necessitous she may be, can, with difficulty take advantage of the free food, shelter and medical attendance provided at great expense by the Destitution Authority for maternity cases. In Scotland she is—if living with her own husband, he being in good health—absolutely debarred from relief by law. In England and Wales she is, as far as possible, deterred.

2. That in view of the fact that the Destitution Authorities of the United Kingdom have constantly on their hands more than 65,000 infants under five years of age, and that there is grave reason for believing the mortality among them to be excessive, alike among the 50,000 who are maintained on Outdoor Relief and among the 15,000 in Poor Law Institutions, careful statistical enquiry ought immediately to be made, in order to discover where the mortality is greatest, and how this loss of life can be prevented.

3. That, in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, those unmarried mothers who come on the rates for their confinements and are definitely proved to be mentally defective, should be dealt with exclusively by the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective.

4. That, whatever provision is made from public funds for maternity, whether in the way of supervision, or in domiciliary midwifery, or by means of Maternity Hospitals, should be exclusively in the hands of the Local Health Authority.

5. That, in accordance with the recommendations of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, the fullest possible use should be made, under the inspection and supervision of the Local Health Authorities, of such Voluntary Agencies as Rescue and Maternity Homes, Midwifery Charities, and Day Nurseries.

6. That the system, which has already proved so successful, of combining the efforts of both salaried and voluntary Health Visitors with the work of the Medical Officer of Health and his staff, should be everywhere adopted and developed so as to extend to all infants under school age.

7. That the Local Health Authority should, in all its provision for birth and infancy, continue to proceed on its accustomed principles of :—

(*a*) The provision, free of charge, of hygienic information and advice to all who will accept it ;

(*b*) The strict enforcement of the obligation imposed upon individuals to maintain in health those who are legally dependent on them ; and

(*c*) Where individual default has taken place in this respect, the immediate provision of the necessaries for health, and the systematic recovery from those responsible, if they are able to pay, of repayment according to their means.

CHAPTER IV.

Children under Rival Authorities.

The authors of the Report of 1834 found only one Local Authority dealing with poor children, namely, that acting under the Elizabethan Poor Law. In 1909 we find the work shared among three distinct Local Authorities expending rates and taxes, the Destitution Authority, the Education Authority, and, in England and Wales, also the Police Authority. Each of these Local Authorities acts under its own set of Statutes, and is, in England and Wales, subject to the control of a different Government Department—the Poor Law and other Divisions of the Local Government Board, the Board of Education, and the Home Office. Of these three Local Authorities dealing with poor children, the Education Authority (which now often provides maintenance as well as instruction) has become, within the last few decades, by far the most extensive in its operations, now spending at least £25,000,000 annually. The total expenditure of the Destitution Authority on all its 237,000 children between five and sixteen,* including instruction as well as maintenance, may be estimated at nearly two millions sterling annually. The Police Authorities, the County and Borough Councils, which have sometimes established industrial schools of their own, take rank with the Voluntary Committees which, alongside of them, administer other schools of this kind at a cost of £600,000 a year, met partly by substantial grants in aid from the Home Office. All the three kinds of Local Authorities provide, in a certain proportion of cases, both maintenance and instruction; all three deal with children who, whatever else they may be, are certainly destitute; and, as a matter of fact, it is not uncommon to find the different children of one and the same family being treated by two, or even by all three, separate Local Authorities simultaneously.

(A) Children under the Destitution Authority.

We need not again recur to the fact that the authors of the Report of 1834 recommended that, for the destitute children of school age, there should be provided entirely separate residential institutions under schoolmasters; and that this recommendation applied, not merely to orphan or deserted children, but also to the families of all the able-bodied persons who were in any way relieved from the rates. The only children aided from the rates whom the authors of the 1834 Report would have left with their parents were those of sick or infirm persons, for whom alone Outdoor Relief was contemplated. This recommendation was ignored by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835, who relegated to the General Mixed Workhouse the children of all those who received institutional relief; and left in the homes, on small weekly allowances without any education at all, the children of the constantly increasing number of parents—widows, the sick, the aged and the infirm, men on Outdoor Labour Test, etc.—who were excluded from the operation of the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order.

From 1841 onward, as we have already described, the Central Authority in England and Wales has been persistently striving to induce the Boards of Guardians to reverse the policy with regard to the children of school age which it unfortunately pressed on them in 1835. It has done its best to get the Guardians to provide efficient education for the children; to establish separate schools for them; to obtain trained and qualified teachers for them at adequate salaries; to get the children of school age out of the General Mixed Workhouse into which they had been driven; and to diminish the number of children who, on Outdoor Relief, were left without either adequate education or proper supervision.

Unfortunately, the Destitution Authorities have, nearly everywhere, shown themselves very slow and reluctant to adopt the new policy. At the present day, out of the 186,000 children between five and sixteen maintained by the Poor Law Authorities in England and Wales alone, there are 130,000 on Outdoor Relief, and about 3,000 in the ordinary wards of the General Mixed Workhouse, apart from several thousands more

* The number of children between five and sixteen among the paupers of England and Wales was, on March 31st, 1906, 186,105; those of Scotland, 32,075; and those of Ireland, 19,020.

who are in the sick wards of General Mixed Workhouses, and several thousands in addition who are in separate Infirmaries, usually without separate wards for children.

We have already described the treatment meted out by the Destitution Authorities of England and Wales to the 130,000 children of school age, whom they elect to maintain on Outdoor Relief. After the elaborate report of our Special Investigators into the conditions of these children, as well as from what we have ourselves witnessed, we are unable to resist the conclusion that the great bulk of these children are growing up underfed, wrongly clothed, and housed under insanitary conditions. They are demonstrably being stunted in their growth and physical development, falling, as they grow up, year by year, farther behind the average in height and weight.* What is even more deplorable is that, *with regard to ten or twenty thousand of them*, it is, as we have seen, only too probable that they are being subjected to the influences of parentage and homes of dissolute or immoral character. The condition of the children on aliment in the large towns of Scotland is, in these respects, quite as bad as that of the Outdoor Relief children in England and Wales.† "The out-relief children," emphatically sums up our Children's Investigator, "are definitely and seriously suffering from the circumstances of their lives."‡

With regard to the 3,000 children between five and sixteen (not including the 7,000 others who are in the sick wards or infirmaries) who are still living in the General Mixed Workhouses of England and Wales, we need do no more, after our description of the evil promiscuity of that institution, than emphasise the universal condemnation of such a method of providing for the rearing of the young. "The retention of children in Workhouses," reports our own Children's Investigator, "is always unsatisfactory. Even where they have special attendants they are never completely separated from the ordinary inmates. . . . In York certainly the children were dull and inert; they stood about like moulting crows, and did not seem able to employ themselves with any enthusiasm or vigour. The arrangements for their tendance and training are never as good as in an establishment wholly given up to them; the separation from the ordinary inmates of the Workhouse was very incomplete in each case I saw."§ Despairing of being able to induce the Destitution Authorities to send the children away to proper residential schools, the Local Government Board for England and Wales has, during recent years, contented itself with pressing the smaller Unions to let the children in the Workhouses attend the public elementary day schools.‖ This is doubtless an advance on the old school within the Workhouse walls; but we cannot too emphatically express our disagreement with those who accept this as any excuse for retaining children in the Workhouse at all.¶ The day school accounts for only about one-third of the child's waking life. The Local Government Board Inspectors themselves point out that it leaves the children, in practice, exposed to the contamination of "communication with the adult inmates whose influence is often hideously depraving."**

> "It is a serious drawback," says the Inspector, "that every Saturday and Sunday, to say nothing of summer and winter holidays, have, for the most part, to be spent in the Workhouse, where they either live under rigid discipline and get no freedom, or else if left to themselves are likely to come under the evil influence of adult inmates. The Workhouse is at best a dreary place for children to

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* "At three years the Out-relief children are as tall and as heavy as the averages (for all England and Wales); after that age they are at every age smaller and lighter, and the defect becomes greater with increasing years. . . . The defect is greater in weight than in height. The Out-relief children are unduly light, even for their defective height." (Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 115.)

† Report . . . on the Condition of the Children . . . in Scotland, etc., by Dr. C. T. Parsons. No fewer than 24 per cent. of the children investigated in the Scotch towns were found to be living with "bad" mothers (*Ibid.*, p. 44).

‡ Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 116.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

‖ These efforts have been so far successful that on January 1st, 1907, it could be said that only 565 children of school age were being taught in the workhouses. (Report to the President of the Local Government Board, by T. J. Macnamara, p. 6.)

¶ "When sent out to school," observes our Children's Investigator, "they did not enter into the play or out-of-school life of the other children. I have often felt, as I have watched the little groups of workhouse children drawing off from the others, that, to certain natures at any rate, this must painfully emphasise their position." (Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 103.)

** Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1898–1899, Appendix B., p. 136; Mr. Preston Thomas's Report.

spend their lives in, and I should like to see them quite cut off from it."* "The most unpleasant feature of this system," says another Inspector, "is that in some of the small rural Unions there are so few children that the Guardians cannot reasonably be expected to pay additional officers to look after them. There are but few Unions where there is no paid officer in charge of the children, but there are many where there is only a female officer, and where a pauper inmate is placed with the boys and sleeps in their bedroom. The male pauper selected for this purpose is generally the best man available, but too often he is not the sort of character which it is good for the boys to associate with."†

We paid special attention to this point of the provision for children on our visits to Workhouses, large and small, in town and country, in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. We saw hardly any Workhouse or Poorhouse in which the accommodation for children was at all satisfactory.‡ We unhesitatingly agree with the Inspector of the Local Government Board who gave it to us as his opinion that "no serious argument in defence of the Workhouse system is possible. The person who would urge that the atmosphere and associations of a Workhouse are a fit upbringing for a child merely proves his incapacity to express an intelligent opinion upon the matter."§

From what we saw of the Poorhouses of Scotland, great or small, we came to the conclusion that the residence of children in those institutions was no more to be justified than it was in the Workhouses of England and Wales. It does not seem to be realised in Scotland to what a large extent the Poorhouse is used for children. Disregarding the infants under five, with whom we have already dealt, there were in the Scottish Poorhouses on March 31st, 1906, no fewer than 1,095 boys and girls between five and sixteen; or actually one-third of the corresponding number in England and Wales, which has seven times the population. Nor does this represent the whole story. The number of children found in the Poorhouses on any one day is less than half the total that passes through these institutions in the course of the year; so that we may infer that at least 3,000 boys and girls of school age came under the evil influences of the Scottish Poorhouse during last year. We do not think that it is generally known in Scotland that the General Mixed Poorhouse harbours at least twice as many children of school age, in proportion to population, as the General Mixed Workhouse does in England and Wales.

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* Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1899–1900, p. 115; Mr. Preston Thomas's Report. "On my last visit," notes the same Inspector as to a particular Union, "out of a total of 91 inmates there were no less than 15 boys, 22 girls, and 17 infants—a total of 54—for whose supervision no officer had been appointed, and who were left to the care of two women who are themselves inmates because unable to maintain their own illegitimate children. It is not hard to imagine the sort of influence which such persons would be likely to exercise on those under their charge. As stated in a previous Report, I have repeatedly remonstrated without success against this arrangement, as likely to affect injuriously the future of children for whom the Guardians are responsible, and last year I again brought the matter before them, but once more a majority decided, on the score of supposed economy, to make no change. I am glad to learn, however, while this Report is going through the press, that they have now reconsidered their decision, and that a paid caretaker will be appointed forthwith. Whether one officer will be able to supervise (out of school hours) nearly forty boys and girls, and to keep them entirely apart from adult inmates, is a point which will have to receive attention." (Thirty-second Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1902–1903, p. 103; Mr. Preston Thomas's Report.)

† Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1904–1905, pp. 202, 203; Mr. Fleming's Report.

‡ "During their stay in the Workhouse," notes one of our Committees, "the boys are placed with the infirm old men, and the girls with the infirm old women." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 12, p. 25.) "Though they had separate day-rooms and dormitories," says another Committee, "there was practically no attempt to keep them from contact with the other inmates. Thus, for instance, the boys' playground opened directly into the yard for able-bodied and other men, and in the dining-hall both boys and girls sat close by the other inmates." (*Ibid.*, No. 57, p. 126.) "The boys' day-room," notes another Committee, "is absolutely dreary and bare; and they share a yard and lavatories with the young men. . . . An old man sleeps with the boys." (*Ibid.*, No. 82, p. 153.) Another Committee notices that "there seems no real attempt to separate them from the inmates. They dine together in the hall with the adults, and so far as we could see, on the girls' side female inmates were constantly going in and out, and on the boys' side there was no serious attempt to keep the lads from contact with the male inmates." (*Ibid.*, No. 83, pp. 154, 155.) We found that, even where the arrangements for segregation were least imperfect, the Workhouse children nearly everywhere had their meals in the presence of the other inmates, of both sexes and all ages, including the imbeciles and idiots. "There were," notes one of our Committees, "fifty-nine children resident in the Workhouse. I saw them just as they were coming to the dining-room to have their midday meal, seated along one side of the hall, the adult inmates occupying the centre and the other side. One could not help thinking that this must have a demoralising and deleterious effect." (*Ibid.*, No. 93, p. 163.)

§ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXIII. (G) to Vol. I. One witness only defended the maintenance of children in the Workhouse itself, namely, the Rev. Canon Bury, late Chairman of the Brixworth Board of Guardians, so long noted for its "strict administration." "I see no way," he said, "of treating them less eligibly than the independent labourer's child except by bringing them into the Workhouse." (*Ibid.*, Q. 48221.)

As to Ireland, we have been able to obtain only imperfect statistics. But we gather that, of children between five and sixteen years of age, there are over 6,000 in Poor Law Institutions. We infer that there must be, in the General Mixed Workhouses of Ireland, something like 5,000 boys and girls of school age, who are mostly being educated within the Workhouse walls.*

Turning now to the specialised treatment provided by the Destitution Authorities of the United Kingdom for about 60,000 out of the total of 237,000 children between five and sixteen whom they maintain, we are confronted with six different methods of provision varying greatly in the amount and quality of what is done, and therefore in the cost. The expense in fact, shows the most extraordinary variation—some children being maintained on eighteenpence or half-a-crown a week, whilst others run up to as much as twenty-five shillings a week. Without at present attempting to estimate the comparative advantages of these six methods, we proceed first to describe them in the order of their apparent cheapness, taking first that which is apparently the least costly.

(i.) *Boarding Out within the Union.*

Of the method of providing for children known as Boarding-Out, there are, in England and Wales, two varieties existing under very different conditions. Under an Order of 1889 Boards of Guardians may board out children "within the Union," which means, in practice, no more than paying a small sum weekly to a foster parent residing within the same Union, who undertakes to maintain the child. "In point of fact the cases boarded-out within the Union are cases with regard to which the Guardians would ordinarily give Outdoor Relief, and . . . did give ordinary Outdoor Relief prior to the . . . Order being sent out."† It is a system "which extends automatically," stated the Senior Boarding-Out Inspector:—

> "For many persons who might maintain children related to them, but for whom they are not legally responsible, will not do so if they see that their neighbours receive parish pay for children under similar circumstances. Also, though there are now about 107 committees within the Unions for which they act, there is no official inspector to report on, and help their work; while the rest of the children are only under the supervision of the relieving and medical officers, who cannot make the thorough inspection of the homes and bodily condition of the children which a woman can. It is, therefore, probable that many of the homes are accepted in ignorance of what the treatment of the children really is, and that many of the foster-parents would decline to receive them at the low rates of payment often given if official investigation were made into the nature of that treatment and their expenditure of those payments."‡

We regret to report that we have been unable to find any official information as to the condition of the 6,806 children thus dealt with in England and Wales, children who, though placed out at sums varying from eighteen-pence to five shillings per week, to persons not their parents,§ are not under the inspection of any officer of the Local Government Board, and usually, indeed, have in a majority of Unions not even the protection of a Boarding-Out Committee.‖ Because the foster-parents happen to live within the geographical boundaries of the Union to which the children belong, the theory of the Local Government Board is that the inspection and supervision of the Guardians themselves, the Relieving Officer and the District Medical Officer¶ will suffice to ensure that the children are being properly cared for, much as if they were children on Outdoor Relief. As we have seen, the Guardians, in the majority of cases, give no supervision at all, and there is evidence that the prescribed inspection of the children by the District Medical

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* "A child of ten had not been to school at all" and others not "for seven months" (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 99400–99402).

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 9689.

‡ Thirty-third Annual Report of Local Government Board (Report of Senior Inspector of Boarding-out), 1903–4, p. 264. *See also* Miss Mason's evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 9648–9655, 9688–9690, and Appendix No. XX. to Vol. I.

§ In some cases, by what is almost an evasion of the Boarding-out Orders, the child is "boarded-out" with a relation, who thus sometimes receives several shillings a week for providing for a niece or a sister; or even for a grandchild whom the grandparent is legally obliged to maintain (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 52556). This is permitted by the Local Government Board (*Decisions of the Local Government Board*, p. 78, Par. 5).

‖ Frequently a Boarding-out Committee, for children within the Union, is well-organised and efficient *see*, for instance, the Extracts from the Rules of the Bristol and Clifton Certified Committee for Boarding-out Union Orphans and Deserted Children, 1905, a pamphlet printed by the Local Government Board as a model to others.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 3982, 52552.

Officer is seldom adequately carried out ; * and it is remarkable that where a Boarding-Out Committee exists, the official regulations enable such medical inspection to be entirely dispensed with.† The only responsible person is, in that case, the Relieving Officer. This "Destitution Officer" does not think it his duty minutely to inspect the children ; and even if he were a desirable person with whom to bring the child in contact, he can hardly be expected to be expert in ascertaining and enforcing the physical and mental requirements of healthy child life. The children are, in fact, often under no supervision at all. In one Union our committee heard of "Thirty-one children boarded-out within the Union at a cost of from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per child. There is no list of boarded-out children except the entry in the Application and Report Book ; in fact it is really Out-relief. There is no superintendence and inspection except such as the Relieving Officers give." ‡ One of the Local Government Inspectors informed us that he had himself become aware of several cases of neglect, and even of cruelty to these totally uninspected children ; and he suggested to us the desirability of "an absolutely independent inquiry . . . to see how they do fare, and whether they are well treated or badly treated. All the people who take them want to make money out of them. The worse they treat them the more money they make." § Such an inquiry we found ourselves without time to undertake. But our Special Investigator into Children inquired into the condition of the children boarded-out within the Union in six different districts of England and Wales. The results of this sample inquiry are, in our judgment, very disquieting :—

> "It is clear," sums up our Investigator, "from the accounts of these six Unions, that effective supervision of boarded-out children and their homes is not obtained under the ordinary Poor Law administration. . . . Supervision of homes and children by Guardians and Relieving Officers was never found to be satisfactory. Relieving Officers have too much the standard of the ordinary Out-relief family ; also a man cannot investigate the sleeping accommodation, beds and clothes of girls in any effective fashion. He cannot discuss with the foster-mother the girl's health and temperament in the way a wise woman can do." ‖

In view of these statements and of the very grave facts that are constantly being discovered by the lady Inspectors of the Local Government Board among the other boarded-out children who are inspected in England and Wales, we cannot but regard the total absence of official information with regard to these 6,806 children as unsatisfactory. This is the more important in that it is only this section of boarded-out children that, in England and Wales, shows any sign of increasing in numbers. Without waiting for any systematic reform of the Poor Law, they ought, in our opinion, to be at once made the subject of a special inquiry, and placed for the future under the same official inspection as the children boarded-out beyond the Union.¶ This, we may observe, would need no legislation, and could be instituted next week by a stroke of the pen.

(ii.) *Boarding-out in Scotland, and "Boarding-out without the Union" in England and Wales.*

But the system of boarding-out "within the Union" in England and Wales is but an anomalous offshoot of the general plan of placing out the children, far from Poor Law associations, with carefully chosen foster-parents who should care for them as for their

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* "The customary three-monthly examination by the Poor Law Medical Officer within the Union is," reports our Children's Investigator, "in my experience, mostly very perfunctory." (Report on the Condition of the Children, by Miss E. Williams, 1908, p. 95.)

† Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. C. McVail, 1907, p. 75.

‡ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 47, p. 118.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 12362–12369 ; *see also Qs.* 4594–4597. "My impression is that a good many bad cases would be found" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 4594). In 1888, a special inspection was made, which revealed a number of instances of neglect and cruelty (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 5960–5962), which led to new regulations, but not to any regular inspection. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 5417, 12363.)

‖ Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. Ethel Williams, 1908, pp. 91–92 ; *see also* the incidental references in the Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. C. McVail, 1907, pp. 76–78.

¶ "I do think," said to us a representative of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants, "the boarded-out [children] within the Union want the same inspection exactly, by trained inspectors, as children who are boarded-out without the Union. It seems to me unreasonable to deny it to the children. We have had painful cases." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 33922.) This proposal was supported by the representative of the Association of Poor Law Unions (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 24860, 24861), and by other witnesses. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 39555, 39556.) We may add that we were informed that the system had been found so unsatisfactory by many Unions as to be abandoned.

own offspring. We need not recount the well-known story of the immemorial practice of the Scotch Kirk Sessions in boarding-out orphan and deserted children, which became, after 1845, the regular system of the Scotch Poor Law.* Nor need we describe the adoption after 1862 of a similar system for Ireland, and after 1870 also for England and Wales. To those who had become conscious of the terrible promiscuity and evil associations of the General Mixed Workhouse, or of the machine-like routine of the great "barrack schools," the plan of boarding-out the children in the cottages of foster-parents in the country promised the best substitute for the home life which the orphan or deserted child had irrevocably lost. "The testimony" of many witnesses, as the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools reported in 1896, "is emphatically in favour of the boarding-out of pauper children as the best system, and that which secures to them the healthiest and most natural life, and gives them the best chance of . . . becoming absorbed into the respectable working population." † Accordingly, there are at present over 10,000 children "boarded-out" in the United Kingdom (apart from the anomalous "boarding-out within the Union" already referred to), namely, about 6,000 in Scotland, 2,100 in Ireland and 1,800 in England and Wales; out of the total of about 305,000 infants and children under sixteen whom the Destitution Authorities are maintaining.

The provision for children in Scotland by means of boarding-out, though commonly assumed to be the principal, if not the only method there adopted, is made use of only for orphan, deserted or "separated" children, and is applied, in fact, only to one-sixth of the pauper children. But it is estimated that of the orphan and deserted children over 80 per cent. are now boarded-out. Of the 7,552 infants under five in receipt of Poor Relief on March 31st, 1906, 315 were boarded-out; of the 32,075 children between five and sixteen, 5,700 were boarded-out. There are, it must be remembered, in Scotland no Poor Law schools, Cottage Homes or Scattered Homes, and little use is made of institutions under voluntary management.

We have to report that the plan of boarding-out, as applied in Scotland to the orphan and deserted children, appears to be endorsed by Scottish public opinion.‡

It has, however, been observed to us that these thousands of children are entrusted for money to stranger foster-parents—sometimes four or five to one person, and a score or two to a single Highland village §—without any sort of independent official supervision or inspection. The work of selecting the foster-parents, and bringing the children, is left to the Destitution Officer of the Destitution Authority from whose district—often far distant—the children come.

Our own Investigator reports that—

> "When a child is once boarded-out, the supervision exercised over it is not very close. The Inspector of Poor for the parish in which the children are placed has no legal responsibility, and sees little of the children, unless, as in Lanark, he gives part of his time to visiting them just as he visits his own. The formal inspection by the parish to which the children belong is always the same, and consists of two visits a year by an inspector, once alone and once accompanied by two members of the Parish Council. These visits have little value in advice to, or control over, the foster-parent, but they may afford opportunities for gaining information as to the condition of the child. Parish Councils seem to rely a good deal on the informal supervision of neighbours, ministers and school-

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* The Boarding-out of Pauper Children, by J. Patten MacDougall, in Transactions of the Fourth International Home Relief Congress, 1904.

† Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, 1896. The recent Commission on the Irish Poor Law strongly supports this view. "We think that nearly all children can and ought to be boarded-out, from (say) one year old up to whatever age it may be thought best to fix as a maximum limit of age for boys and girls, respectively. Those children, few in numbers according to our view, who, for any sufficient reason, cannot at once be boarded-out, might be placed temporarily in certified or industrial schools, according to circumstances." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 61.)

‡ Memorandum on Boarding-out in Scotland (Visits: Scotland. Not yet in volume form); the Boarded-out Children in Iona (*Ibid.*, also not yet in volume form); the Boarding-out of Pauper Children, by J. Patten-MacDougall.

§ From Edinburgh, there were sent, to thirty-five of the foster-parents, no fewer than 159 children, five of them taking six apiece. From Glasgow, there were sent, to 130 of the foster-parents, no fewer than 540 children, twenty of them taking five apiece. (The Boarding-out of Pauper Children, by J. Patten MacDougall, p. 13.) In the Island of Iona, with a total population of 216 (thirty-two being children) we found no fewer than twenty-nine children boarded-out from Glasgow, practically all families eagerly competing for them. (The Boarded-out Children in Iona, by Professor Smart.)

masters for bringing abuses to light, but people are not usually inclined to give information against their neighbours, especially in a small place where everyone knows everyone else, and a good deal of neglect and injudicious treatment, if not actual cruelty, might easily go on without anyone feeling it his business to bring such matters to the notice of those in authority."*

Such cases, we were informed, have been known to occur.† It appears to us, moreover, somewhat remarkable that there is no systematic medical supervision of the boarded-out children.

"There is," notes our Investigator, "no medical inspection of these children at all. The foster-parents are expected to take them to the doctor when necessary, and have a right to his attendance for them, but they are themselves the only judges of the necessity. One child, boarded in Saltcoats, was attending an eye hospital in Glasgow, on the advice of the inspector given at one of his half-yearly visits. There was a boy of ten in Lanark who had a tubercular knee, and ought to have been kept in bed. Indeed, when the doctor visited him he was there, but at other times he was found hopping about the room. Another girl (one of those belonging to Lanark itself) was feverish and obviously ill. When she was medically examined at school, she was sent home with a message that she was to be put to bed. She was found subsequently playing in the street, and though again advised to do so, her guardian did not put her to bed, apparently through sheer carelessness, and did not send for the doctor. It was afterwards found that this child had been in hospital for some time, and discharged because she had phthisis, and such cases were not treated there. She was under no kind of medical supervision."‡

We note that the practice of Scotland is to include as "boarded-out," children who would not, according to the English terminology, be so described. A certain proportion of the children said to be "boarded-out" are merely placed in institutions under voluntary management, some of which are of large size. Thus the Edinburgh Parish Council has always a score or two of children in a large Roman Catholic orphanage, and fifty or sixty in other voluntary institutions, which would, in England and Wales, be inspected by the Local Government Board, and "certified" as suitable for the reception of the children. Various other Parish Councils in Scotland dispose of children in this way, the total number amounting, apparently, to about 750; without, so far as we have been able to gather, any systematic inspection of these private institutions being conducted, either by the Local Government Board for Scotland, or by the Parish Councils concerned. We cannot approve of considerable sums of public money—amounting, as we understand, to thousands of pounds annually—being thus paid to private, and often denominational, institutions, without official inspection or public representation on the governing bodies.

There is also another practice disguised under the term "boarding-out." One of the General Superintendents under the Local Government Board for Scotland speaks "most emphatically of the success of the system . . . when the children are really boarded-out," but he goes on to say that: "In some cases the children have been left with relatives—a grandmother, elder sister or brother or aunt—who have probably offered to take the children at a reduced aliment, say 1s. 6d. a week each. In these cases I have not found the children so well accommodated and cared for." The proportion of children dealt with in this way, even in the poor "slums" of the great cities, appears to be sometimes considerable. In Aberdeen, for instance, where there were, on July 1st, 1907, altogether 1,557 pauper children, 1,297 were simply on Outdoor Relief and no fewer than 75 were living in the General Mixed Workhouse; 185 were nominally "boarded-out," being nearly 12 per cent. of the whole. But we found that of these 9 were in various private institutions, 29 were living with relatives on a low aliment, and only 147 were really boarded-out with strangers, and these by no means all outside the city itself. Of the whole 6,710 children reported as "boarded-out" in Scotland on May 15th, 1907, whilst about 750 were in institutions, 1,929 were boarded with relatives, and only about 4,000 with stranger foster parents.§

We hesitate to express an independent opinion on the Scottish plan of boarding-out. But we cannot escape the feeling that so extensive a system of "farming-out" the children

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* Report on the Condition of the Children . . . in Receipt of Poor Law Relief . . . in Scotland, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 66.

† It was stated that the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had proceeded against some foster-parents for cruelty to boarded-out children (Evidence before the Commission, not yet in volume form; *see* the report of the discussion at the meeting at Edinburgh in 1904 in Transactions of the Fourth International Home Relief Congress, 1904).

‡ Report on the Condition of the Children . . . in Receipt of Poor Law Relief . . . in Scotland, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, pp. 66–67.

§ Thirteenth Annual Report of Local Government Board for Scotland, 1907, p. xiii.

of the poor, great as may be its advantages in the best cases, ought not to continue without systematic medical inspection once a quarter, and regular visitation of all the cases at least once a year by trained lady inspectors under the Local Government Board for Scotland.

Very different are the conditions under which the Destitution Authorities in England and Wales have been permitted to board out their children beyond the limits of their own districts. There must be a Voluntary Committee* of local residents, individually and collectively approved by the Local Government Board, each of whom must engage in writing to undertake the responsibility of choosing the foster-parents, supervising the homes, visiting them at least every six weeks, making the payments for the children's maintenance, and reporting periodically on the children's condition. The master of the local Public Elementary School must report quarterly on each child on an official schedule. A definite contract must be made with a local medical practitioner for the attendance of the children in sickness. And over and above this local supervision, which is strictly insisted on, the Local Government Board maintains three trained and specialised lady inspectors who do nothing else but travel up and down the country examining the homes, the health, the food and clothing, and the physical and mental condition of these 1,800 children.† On the other hand—in sharpest contrast with the arrangements which content the Local Government Board for Scotland—the Relieving Officers, whether of the Union from which the child goes, or of that in which the foster-parent lives, have absolutely nothing to do with the case. The Board of Guardians into whose district the child comes knows nothing of it. And what is the more remarkable, the Board of Guardians which pays for the child, and is responsible for its welfare, is strongly discouraged, if not even actually forbidden, to send any of its officers or to depute any of its members to visit the child's new home or personally inspect its condition.‡ Any such visitation or inspection would, it has been officially stated, be objectionable, "as keeping up associations of pauperism which it is one of the objects of the boarding-out system to remove,"§ and expenses incurred for this purpose would, it has been intimated in at least one Union, be liable to be disallowed and surcharged by the District Auditor.

The vigilant and incessant supervision of the three lady inspectors of boarding-out in England and Wales—not extended, we must repeat, to the 6,000 children "boarded-out within the Union,"—has, we gather, resulted in these carefully watched children being, on the whole, kindly treated. Many of them, it is clear, receive the great advantage of a first-rate working-class home. "Boarding-out," states our own Children's Investigator, "when properly supervised, and with an active and wise Boarding-out Committee, is, I believe, the ideal system both for boys and girls, but especially for girls."‖ But we have some doubt whether the system can, under present circumstances, be greatly extended in scope. We do not think, for instance, that it can be used for children who have mothers of their own, not being such as deserve to be completely and permanently deprived of their offspring. Nor is it applicable to the not inconsiderable number of children who, from mental or physical peculiarities, have to be dealt with by persons skilled in the treatment of the abnormal child. Thus the percentage of children who can be made eligible for boarding-out cannot, we think, appreciably exceed the present class to which the Boarding-Out Order applies, which probably comprises only about one-tenth of the total number of Poor Law children. Further, the number of foster-parents who are both able and willing to receive boarded-out children and who possess suitable homes is, in England even more than in Scotland, plainly very limited. We have regretfully to admit that, good as it is as far as it goes, "boarding-out can only touch the fringe of the problem of the training and upbringing of pauper children."¶

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 3977.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 3978; *see also* the able Statement of Evidence and other documents handed in by Miss Mason, the Senior Lady Inspector of Boarded-out Children, and the evidence given by her, *Qs.* 9574–10174, and Appendix No. XX. to Vol. I.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 9771.

§ Local Government Board to West Ham Board of Guardians, July 23rd, 1906; MS. Minutes of West Ham Board of Guardians, August 30th, 1906.

‖ Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, pp. 95, 103.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Moreover, amid all the advantages of the foster parent's home, we have felt uncomfortable, in such personal inspections as we have been able to make, in Scotland, Ireland and England alike, as to whether sufficient care was being taken to see that these boarded-out children were in all cases being fed, clothed, educated and medically attended *in such a way as to make them into healthy and productive citizens.* The official inspection in England, and local public opinion in Scotland, may, in cases of open abuses, protect them (in all but a few exceptional cases) against wilful cruelty, or gross neglect. But it ought frankly to be recognised that the standard of efficiency of the average mother in the rearing of children is a low one, often not consistent with the continued health and adequate training even of her own children, to which she brings the incalculable compensating advantage of instinctive care. It cannot be said that the present occasional inspections protect the boarded-out children against a foster parent's low standard of knowledge of how to bring up a child, or against a foster parent's lack of means. Practically nothing can be done by the Local Government Board Inspectors to ensure that the children get continuously sufficient food of the proper kind, or the right sort of clothing, or even adequate sleep.* The amount usually paid for their maintenance—3s., 4s. and occasionally 5s. a week, with 10s. a quarter for clothes—is, with the usual limited knowledge as to how best to lay out this sum, insufficient for adequate food and clothing of a growing child and ordinary remuneration for the very real labour of attending to it.† We do not feel any assurance that the boarded-out children, if properly weighed and measured, would be found to be much more nearly equal to the average weight and height for their years than the children on Outdoor Relief. Unfortunately the boarded-out children are, as a rule, not medically inspected,‡ or even periodically weighed and measured at all; and we have it in evidence that this lack of medical inspection results in many minor ailments remaining untreated.§ "I believe," sums up our Medical Investigator, with regard to these Boarded-out Children, "the main reason for present defects to be that the children are regarded as belonging to the Poor Law system of the country, are under charge of the Poor Law Authority, and that their whole management is pervaded by the Poor Law spirit. They are a burden on the rates; no more should be done for them than the absolute minimum demanded by necessity. It is the duty of the Guardians to keep down expenditure, and to see that pauper children shall not be better cared for than the children of the poorest labourer. Proposals as to better treatment, better feeding and better control hardly belong to the sphere of Poor Law work." || And, seeing that the very object of the system is to free the child from any connection with the Poor Law, so that neither the members nor the officers of the Board of Guardians responsible for the child's maintenance and welfare can properly be allowed to visit or inspect it, lest this should keep up "associations of pauperism," we fail to see why the Destitution Authority should continue to have anything at all to do with the boarded-out child. Such a child might, it would seem, just as well be entrusted to the care of the Local Education Authority—"an authority," to use the significant words of our Medical Investigator, "whose special duty would

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* "Nearly a dozen cases came under my notice where children were suffering from not having sufficient sleep at night, owing to not going to bed in good time." (Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1905–1906 (Report of Inspector of Boarding-out), p. 548.)

† "The payments made by Guardians for clothes do not nearly cover the cost with older children. Boots and shoes for girls and boys over ten cost at least 15s. to 25s. a year, especially in the country where they have a long walk to school." (Report on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 96.)

‡ It is a strange anomaly that whilst the Local Government Board insists that every child boarded-out within the Union where there is no Boarding-out Committee, should be regularly inspected once a quarter by the District Medical Officer, who is paid a fee of half-a-crown for this medical overhauling, there is no such requirement for children boarded-out beyond the Union, *who are accordingly not medically inspected at all.* "Where," says our Children's Investigator, "a small regular payment is made by Guardians for medical attendance for children boarded-out without the Union, this is often regarded as of the nature of a provident payment to ensure attendance in sickness, and not to provide medical inspection and supervision." (*Ibid.*, p. 95.)

§ "Regular medical inspection of all boarded-out children is," says our Children's Investigator, "essential. These are often children of poor physique who need special care. In almost every case I saw, the child's teeth needed attention. I saw several cases of very much enlarged tonsils, enlarged glands and adenoids, also defects of vision, all needing attention. *I saw no set of boarded-out children amongst whom there were not untreated defects.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 95.) "The Medical Officer," notes our Medical Investigator, "is not expected," with regard to boarded-out children, "to suggest the calling in of dental aid for the right ordering of the growth of the teeth. Operations for removal of enlarged tonsils, or adenoids, are not so regularly done among labourers' children as to yield a good precedent for their performance among pauper children." (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. C. McVail, 1907, p. 88.)

|| *Ibid.*, p. 87.

be the proper guidance and control of these children . . . so as to fit them for a useful life, and to remove as far as practicable the evil effects of their mental and physical heritage" *—an authority which is now to have systematic arrangements for medical inspection by doctors having special knowledge of children's physical needs, and which has its own staff of School Attendance Officers, and its own voluntary bodies of School Managers or Children's Care Committees, free from any of the "associations of pauperism."

(iii.) *Certified Schools and Institutions.*

Closely connected with the system of boarding-out the children with foster-parents, is that of placing them in schools and homes under the management of voluntary philanthropic committees, to which, in England and Wales, the Destitution Authority pays a sum, approved by the Local Government Board, of from 3s. to 10s. 9d. per child per week.† Other institutions, not certified, are made use of by special permission of the Local Government Board in each case.‡ This method of providing for the children is now resorted to by about half the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales, who place out in this way over 11,000 children, mostly of school age; 8,171 being sent to the 269 certified homes and schools,§ and about 3,000 to uncertified institutions.‖ About a score of Unions have each more than a hundred boys and girls so disposed of. In a large number of cases, these are children of Roman Catholic parentage, for whose reception about fifty-five Roman Catholic certified schools, homes and orphanages are maintained, having altogether about 5,000 Poor Law inmates. There are a score of certified institutions for the blind, deaf and dumb, crippled or idiotic, with about 700 inmates. There are three certified training ships, having about 250 Poor Law boys. The other 191 certified institutions, containing about 2,200 Poor Law children (or, on an average twelve apiece) include a great variety of "homes" and "schools" and "orphanages," mostly small in scope; frequently undenominational, but sometimes definitely Anglican, and occasionally Wesleyan or Jewish in character; established, as a rule, by little groups of philanthropists; almost invariably unincorporated, unendowed and supported partly by voluntary contributions; and administered by Voluntary Committees, largely composed of benevolent ladies. "They are," somewhat optimistically deposed the Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, "perhaps the best illustration of charity working in co-operation with the Poor Law. Good people start these homes; we certify them; the Guardians pay for the children going there; and we inspect them." ¶

The striking feature about this method of providing for over 11,000 of the "Children of the State" is the lack of official knowledge of what is happening to them. Of the 3,000 in the uncertified institutions—which include other training ships, sanatoria of various kinds, schools for epileptics, blind asylums and farm colonies—we have found no information at all. But even of the officially certified institutions little is apparently known. Some of them are large,** ably administered and apparently very successful. Others are small and obscure places, with indefinite variations according to the personality and means of the persons who happen, for the time being, to be taking an interest in them. Some that we happened to visit seemed to leave nothing to be desired. Others were much less satisfactory.†† The first question that is naturally asked with regard to children

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* *Ibid.*, p. 88.

† This method of provision dates from 1859, and was formally recognised in 1862, when the Certified Schools Act authorised the certifying of such institutions by the Central Authority, for the purpose of receiving Poor Law children. *See* The Children of the State, by Florence Davenport Hill, pp. 86–117.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 3461, 40151.

§ List of Schools and Institutions certified by the Poor Law Board and the Local Government Board etc., January 24th, 1908, *Ibid.* (not yet in volume form).

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 3461.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 3460.

** There are a dozen certified as accommodating 300 or upwards, one taking 697, and another over 900.

†† One of our Committees visited a small "home" for boys, and reported that "the impression left on our minds was of dirt, discomfort and inefficiency." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 22 D., p. 52.) We notice that, from one large certified school containing hundreds of Poor Law boys, the Local Government Board in 1902 withdrew its certificate, presumably because the conditions were not satisfactory. The school was re-organised, and afterwards re-certified. In the case of a children's "home" in the Midlands, the certificate was withdrawn, because it was found that adult women suffering from acute disease were also being received.

of school age is what are the arrangements for their education ; but there are no official Reports published as to either the educational attainments or the physical condition of these eleven or twelve thousand children, most of whom are of school age, and nearly all the others are supposed to be still under educational training of one sort or another. The Local Government Board presumably obtains, at the outset, all the necessary evidence before certifying that an institution is in all respects fit to receive Poor Law children ; but we gather that it relies on a visit by one of its General Inspectors, who "satisfies himself that the children are properly fed and clothed, and that the cubical and superficial space is sufficient," for the number for which the place is then certified.* We understand that no Report is obtained from any educational expert as to the sufficiency and suitability of the education provided—in fact, we have been unable to discover that the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board even knows which of these places are themselves schools and which of them merely board and lodge the children.† Down to 1871 they were not inspected. Those which are certified are now subject to an annual visit by the General Poor Law Inspector in whose district they happen to be situated, but no reports of these visits are published or were supplied to us ; it is no part of the duty of the Inspector to estimate the efficiency of the children's education ;‡ and we have been unable to ascertain whether the inspection extends nowadays to more than it did in 1888, when it was officially stated to relate to no more than seeing that the children had enough food and clothing, and were not overcrowded.§ Representations appear from time to time to have been made as to the desirability of some inspection being made of the educational work by qualified inspectors. In 1883 a London Board of Guardians inquired, with some anxiety, whether there was any Government inspection at all of the education in these certified schools for which the Boards of Guardians were paying large sums. In consequence of this inquiry arrangements were made, in the course of the next few years, for getting twenty-three out of the fifty-five Roman Catholic institutions—*but no others*¶—regularly inspected by the Inspectors of Poor Law Schools. In 1904 the duty of inspecting the education in these twenty-three schools (and in these only) was transferred to the Board of Education, who have communicated to us an interesting report on the results of the recent visits to them of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.** So far as we can ascertain, the education given in the other Roman Catholic schools, some of which have over a hundred boys or girls,†† and that given in the schools and homes belonging to other denominations or to no denomination‡‡—apart from a score of institutions which happen to receive grants also from the Board of Education as being public elementary schools—is, to this day, not subject to any inspection whatever.

We gather that in many of the smaller "homes" no schooling at all is provided, and it is assumed by the Local Government Board that in these cases the children of school age are sent out to the local public elementary school. We find that it is not generally known to the Boards of Guardians concerned, any more than it is to the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board, which institutions provide schooling and which

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* *Qs.* 430, 431, in Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief, 1888.

† Owing to the courtesy of the Poor Law Inspectors, we have ascertained that at least 80 of the total of 269 certified institutions are themselves schools, and about 180 are merely residential homes, not professing to provide instruction for children of school age, though often undertaking the domestic economy and other education of older girls.

‡ In the official form on which the Inspector is required to make his report, the various points to which his attention should be directed are specially set forth under seventeen heads. *Among these education is not included*, though "industrial training" is. The Inspector has to report the number of Industrial Trainers employed, but nothing about the teachers of elementary school subjects. As one of the Inspectors pointed out, "there is not a word said about my having to make inquiries or report on schooling. As a matter of fact that is not part of my business at all."

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 452.

¶ We have been unable to discover why this particular selection was made.

** Report upon the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, and in the twenty-three schools certified under the Poor Law (Certified Schools) Act, 1862, which are inspected by the Board of Education, 1908.

†† Thus, the Paul's Roman Catholic Home at Coleshill (Warwickshire) has 161 Poor Law boys ; and the St. Clare Roman Catholic Orphanage at Pantasaph (Flint) has 146 Poor Law girls, both without educational inspection ; and there are others.

‡‡ Many of these are themselves providing the schooling of several scores of boys or girls.

are merely homes; and there is no arrangement for ensuring that the managers of the institutions of the latter kind cause the children entrusted to them to attend school at all, still less that they attend regularly and continuously up to the age for legal exemption. It has been suggested that it may be assumed that the Local Education Authority should see to this matter; but there is, we find, no arrangement for informing the Local Education Authority when Poor Law children are sent into its district; it has no power to inspect residential institutions which are not public elementary schools; and we do not feel sur- that children in residential institutions are always included in any systematic scheduling of children that may be undertaken by the School Attendance Officers.

Moreover, we fear that the annual visit of the General Poor Law Inspector to the certified institutions does not necessarily ensure, even in respect to the matters which he attends to, that every one of these 8,171 children that have been sent to these institutions will be seen by him. The Inspector is not supplied with any list of names of the Poor Law children who ought to be presented to him in each institution, and does not even know how many ought to be seen by him. There is accordingly nothing to prevent some of the Poor Law children from being withheld from his inspection, either because they were not in a fit state, or because they had been sent out to work, or because they were in excess of the maximum number for which the institution was certified, or because they had been, without the knowledge of anybody concerned, illegally boarded-out.

We feel bound to call attention to this remarkable laxness, because—though we have no further information on the subject—it has been given in evidence, by an officer of the Local Government Board, that cases have been accidentally discovered in which children, entrusted by a Board of Guardians to a home duly certified by the Local Government Board, were found to have been illegally boarded-out in cottages with foster-parents, for payments less in amount than those which the certified home was receiving.* And it must be remembered that these children have no other protection than that which official inspection affords. "The Guardians," reports one of our committees, "practically wash their hands of them entirely."† Some Boards do visit a few of the institutions they make use of,‡ but such visits are officially discouraged; and in at least one Union they have been discontinued on a threat from the District Auditor that he would disallow and surcharge the expenses. It has been held, in fact, that it is the duty of the Guardians to rely on the certificate of the Local Government Board. We cannot feel that it is either right or convenient that the power of placing children of school age in these voluntary institutions—which thus receive about £200,000 a year from public funds—should continue to be exercised by Destitution Authorities, who cannot be expected, any more than the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board, to be qualified to form any skilled judgment as to the efficiency of the training given at the public expense.§

(iv.) *Scattered Homes.*

In view of the fact that it was impracticable to board-out more than a fraction of the children who had to be maintained from the poor rates, the Sheffield Board of Guardians, in 1893, started what has since been termed the system of "Scattered Homes":—

> "The Guardians set themselves the problem of how to procure for children, unsuited for boarding-out, the best available conditions for health and education, with such supervision as would prevent abuses. They began by renting houses—such as are generally occupied by families of the working-class—in which they placed from fifteen to eighteen children with a motherly woman as housekeeper. They aimed to retain, as much as possible, the original character of the house, taking pains, however,

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 9634, 9638, 9639, 9797, 9930–9932. This has also been officially reported. "In more than one case," reports the Senior Inspector of Boarded-out children, "I have discovered that children sent by the Guardians to certified homes under such an association had been illegally boarded-out in cottages in the neighbourhood without the knowledge or sanction of the Local Government Board or Guardians." (Thirty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1903–1904 (Report of Senior Inspector of Boarding-out), p. 266.)

† Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 48, p. 103.

‡ Thus, the Whitechapel Board of Guardians appoints two of its members to visit once a year each of five institutions only, out of eighteen to which it sends children. (Annual Report for 1907–8.)

§ The Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board himself appears to have some doubts as to the quality of many of these institutions. "These homes vary very greatly in efficiency, and it may be hoped that ultimately they will be put under the management of some Central Committee who should be able to classify the children in them, and to provide for a more efficient training than is possible at some of the smaller institutions." (Thirty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1903–1904, p. 156.)

that the drainage should be good, and the air-space sufficient for children. At the same time, they established an administrative centre, for the reception of all children who might be thrown on the rates of their Union, which centre, unconnected with any other Poor Law institution, was designed to lodge each child during the few weeks necessary for the observation of its health and character, until it could be sent, without any Workhouse memory, and with fair security of success, to one of the houses. All the houses are under the supervision of a superintendent and his wife, who keep the necessary accounts, report to the Guardians on the state of the homes, form a necessary link between the various homes, and generally secure that order which is essential in the expenditure of public funds under the control of the Local Government Board."*

This system, which " has the advantage over all the others [except boarding-out] that there is less capital expenditure,"† costs only a few shillings a week more for maintenance than boarding-out itself; and has now been adopted by about sixty Unions, for nearly 5,000 of their children, practically all of them being of school age.

There are many persons of knowledge and experience who regard this system as, on the whole, the best yet devised for the normal child whom the community has to maintain. It has distinct advantages over boarding-out, in that it is applicable to children whose parents are themselves in the Workhouse; the food, clothing and housing are always adequate; the foster-parent is more carefully selected and is a salaried officer; regular medical inspection is provided for; and there is continuous skilled supervision of the home. It is claimed that it is superior to the system of Poor Law Schools and Cottage Homes, presently to be described, in that, whilst being much less costly, the children are less " institutionalised," and mix naturally with other children at school and at play. But, in our opinion, it is a drawback that the children in the Scattered Homes are still in contact with the Poor Law. They usually pass through the Workhouse‡ or some other Poor Law institution before admission to the Scattered Homes, or on discharge from them; § they are officially visited by officers of the Poor Law, and by the Poor Law Guardians, || instead of, like other children, by the officers of the Local Education Authority and members of the Children's Care Committee; and they are classified as being in the category of the destitute, rather than according to their several talents and requirements. As we have mentioned, " defectives are very often to be found in the Children's Homes,"¶ merely because they are destitute like the rest. " In one of these Homes," deposed the father of the system at Sheffield, " we had a girl of feeble mind, now about fifteen. . . . She grew worse as her womanhood developed. . . . She corrupted the other girls in the Home. . . . There are two or three other girls in our Home who look to me to be going in the same way."** Moreover, it is impossible not to admit that, as compared with the most modern of the Poor Law Schools or Cottage Homes, the children in the Scattered Homes do not, under the administration of the Destitution Authority, get such good opportunities for manual instruction, for learning swimming, for domestic economy and generally for industrial training, as can be afforded in the more highly organised institutions. All this, however, merely comes to the fact that the children in the Scattered Homes are the wards, not of the Local Education Authority, but of the Destitution Authority, which cannot be got to think of much beyond their board and lodging. They suffer, in fact, from not being specially provided for by the Local Education Authority, which, if the Scattered Homes were within its jurisdiction, might well arrange for the children to share, over and above the ordinary schooling, ending at thirteen or fourteen, in the necessary industrial training and domestic economy instruction which the wisest parent wishes to secure for his family, and which the most advanced among Local Education Authorities are already beginning to provide.

(v.) *The Boarding School of the Destitution Authority.*

All the systems for the specialised treatment of Poor Law children that we have so far described have arisen since 1870, and depend on the ubiquitous provision of public

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* The Sheffield or Scattered Home System (State Children's Association).

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 6937.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 40676–40679.

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XV. (A), Pars. 110*a* and 111, to Vol. I.

|| It is the Poor Law doctor who comes to inspect them; it is the Poor Law superintendent to whom they have to look for protection; it is this Poor Law officer who gives permission for them to receive visits, even from their own parents. (*Ibid.*, Par. III.) " The Local Government Board insists," we were told, " that ladies [Guardians] shall visit all the homes once a week if possible " (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 39557–39559).

¶ Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 105.

** Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. II., *Qs.* 11318, 11320.

elementary schools by the Local Education Authorities. Prior to 1870 the only method of withdrawing Poor Law children from the General Mixed Workhouse or the unconditional Outdoor Relief that we have described, was to establish the separate boarding schools recommended in the Report of 1834. As we have mentioned, this policy, though rejected by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835, became, from 1841 onwards, the favourite policy of the Central Authority,* and in the course of the next forty years, several dozens of such schools came into existence in England and Wales and two in Ireland.† Some of these, serving combinations of Unions, were of huge size, accommodating over 1,000 children.

We need not describe the change in opinion that has taken place during the last twenty years, and the consequent arrest of this policy, leading to the breaking up of two of the largest of the "barrack schools," and to the adoption, for all new boarding schools, of the plan of building the children's residences in detached blocks, which sometimes take the form of the separate villas known as "Cottage Homes," grouped into "Village Communities."‡

Of these boarding schools of the Destitution Authority, of the old type or the new there are, we gather, at present about 100, containing just over 20,000 children, all between three and fourteen years of age.§ Whether this plan of providing for the children who have to be maintained by the community is or is not superior to that of placing them in Scattered Homes or in Certified Institutions, or of boarding them out with foster parents, is a matter of great controversy. The last official examinations of the problem are those made by the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools of 1896,‖ the conclusions of which were generally adverse to these boarding schools, and the suggestively critical report on the industrial training that they afforded to girls, by Miss Stansfeld in 1899.¶ On the other hand, such scanty evidence as we have received on the subject has been, on the whole, in their favour; ** and it seems as if great improvements had taken place in the last decade, alike in the organisation of the institutions and in the education provided.††

The issue between those who advocate and those who oppose the extension of these boarding schools for Poor Law children seems to have been obscured by a constant intermingling of two separate considerations; whether boarding schools furnish an advantageous method of bringing up some or any of the "Children of the State"; and whether schools of any sort are, or are ever likely to be, from an educational standpoint, economically and successfully administered by a Destitution Authority. The advantages of corporate life among equals and the incalculable mental and physical education of organised games have caused the boarding school to be preferred for their own children by the majority of parents who are in a position to choose what they think best for them. On the other hand, no middle or upper class parent would dream, if he could avoid it, of immuring his child in a boarding school for the whole twelve months of the year. We

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* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, pp. 23–24, 54–55; Report of Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, 1896, Vol. I., p. 6; Vol. II., *Qs.* 15967–15988.

† None were ever established in Scotland.

‡ We class together the separate school, whether in a single building or divided into blocks, and the Village Communities of Cottage Homes with their partially independent housekeeping, as they all partake of the institution type, as compared with the Scattered Homes already described. In a few cases, the Cottage Homes (though grouped together under a single superintendent) do not include provision for schooling, and the children go out to the neighbouring Public Elementary School. This, though in some respects a beneficial arrangement, runs the risk of falling between two stools, and of securing for the children neither the advantages of the everyday home, nor those of the boarding-school.

§ These figures do not include the boys and girls, nearly 2,000 in number, in the schools (for ophthalmic or ringworm children, etc.), of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

‖ Report of Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, etc., Cd. 8027 (of 1896).

¶ Report to the Local Government Board on the Industrial Training of Girls in the Separate and District Schools of the Metropolitan District, by Miss Ina Stansfeld (Cd. 237, of 1899).

** Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 3485–3493, 10807–10809, 14276–14281, 14394–14581, 14611, 14612, 23108, 23594, 23620, 28470–28774, 33911, 36628, 39421, etc.

†† On this point we have the Report by Mr. T. J. Macnamara, when Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (Cd. 3899, 1908); and, most recent of all, a valuable Report on the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard, His Majesty's Inspector, and Miss M. B. Synge (July, 1908), published by the Board of Education.

regret the almost universal practice of the Destitution Authority,* of making no provision to enable the children whom it places in its boarding schools to spend a month or two in every year, by way of holidays, *in the home of everyday life*; either boarded-out with suitable relations or friends, or provided for in country cottages.† It is to this lack of holidays out of school, to this absence of experience of home life, to this extraordinary immuring of the child continuously for seven or ten years in an institution, that nearly all the cogent objections to the "barrack schools" are to be attributed.

One solid objection to the boarding school as a system of providing for poor children is its great expense, compared with the actual cost of maintenance of the child in a working-class home. The various Poor Law schools and Cottage Homes established during recent years show that it costs from £100 to as much as £250, in capital outlay, to accommodate one Poor Law child,‡ and from £30 to £55 per annum for its maintenance. To deal at this cost with all the 237,000 Poor Law children of school age up and down the kingdom appears to us out of the question. And whilst part of the expenditure on this or that costly new institution may have been an unnecessary extravagance, it is clear that, alike in capital outlay and annual maintenance, the cost of the boarding school must always greatly exceed the five or six shillings a week for food and clothing, and the four or five pounds a year in the public elementary school which is all that is spent on the average child, even in the most prosperous sections of the wage-earning class. The boarding school run "on the cheap" has no good points. We are far from suggesting the discontinuance of the existing residential schools, but we think that these boarding schools, by whatever Authority administered, should be specialised for particular classes and reserved for those children who cannot be successfully provided for in their parents' homes on adequate allowances, or in Scattered Homes, or in suitable certified schools or homes, or by boarding-out.

We are, however, of opinion that such boarding schools cannot, from the educational standpoint, be economically and efficiently administered by a Destitution Authority. We may pay an ungrudging tribute of admiration and respect to the managers and staffs of the Poor Law schools, and to the officers of the Local Government Board who have been concerned, for the success with which they have, in the main, overcome the difficulties formerly experienced by these schools in maintaining the children in health and vigour; and in protecting them from the "blight" which in former times too often devastated the young lives whom the community was in this way rearing.§ Indeed, the majority of the Boards of Guardians, having such schools, have certainly not spared

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* Various enlightened Boards of Guardians have lately instituted holiday excursions. The West Ham Board of Guardians sends the children from its schools for a fortnight's sea-side holiday at Clacton; but does not disperse them in cottages. (Minutes of West Ham Board of Guardians, September 6th, 1906.) On the other hand, our own Investigator found, in the Poor Law school of the Glasgow Parish Council that "the children go to church in the grounds, and practically *never go outside until discharged*. When it is remembered that some of the children have been in the hospital" (Stobhill Hospital, Glasgow) "for years, this arrangement cannot be too much condemned." (Report on the Condition of the Children . . . in receipt of Poor Law Relief . . . in Scotland, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 94.)

† It would probably be easy to arrange to utilise for this purpose some of the Cottage Homes already used by the Children's Country Holiday Fund, either before or after the August holidays.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1634–1637, 1863, and Appendix No. V. (4) and (5) to Vol. I.

§ "Whatever may have been the case in the past," reports the late Parliamentary Secretary of the Local Government Board, "there is no doubt that to-day the Barrack School is usually conducted in such a way as to secure that the children shall leave it physically well set up; and every care is taken to anticipate the spread of those contagious diseases to which children are particularly liable." (Report by Mr. Macnamara, Cd. 3899, 1908, p. 20.) The Board of Education Inspectors bear testimony to the fact that "the training in cleanly habits, the regular feeding, good clothing and housing, and all the healthy physical surroundings provided in Poor Law schools have a wonderful effect in transforming half-starved weakly children into strong and healthy boys and girls. As long as they remain in these schools, they are protected from the evil influences of home, from bad language and violent and debasing scenes. Not only are they hedged in from evil, but every care is taken that they may be as far as possible exposed to positive influences for good. They are watched over and encouraged, trained to be useful and obedient. Games, too, are organised for them; physical training, gymnastics and swimming still further improve their health and strength. Teachers of Public Elementary Schools which are attended by Poor Law children testify to their superior habits of cleanliness and obedience. In the best of schools *esprit de corps* is developed, which is worthy of comparison with that of a public school, so that children are proud of their school, and jealous for its good reputation." (Report upon the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard, His Majesty's Inspector, and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, p. 18.) Many of them have now "old boys' clubs" and similar societies.

expense. We have frequently noticed, in personally inspecting the Poor Law Schools and Cottage Homes, that these institutions—like the Poor Law Infirmaries—tend to be needlessly elaborate and extravagant in buildings, ornament and arrangements, without really securing the highest technical efficiency. Neither the Destitution Authority, nor any of its officers, nor yet the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board which sanctions the plans, has any continuous experience or expert technical knowledge of what a modern educational building requires to be. Even the largest Destitution Authority only builds a school once in half a century, whereas the Local Education Authority for the same area may be building one a year, or even (as in London) one a quarter. The Destitution Authority, is, in fact, for any such building, almost necessarily at the mercy of an architect casually selected for the job by persons having no experience of educational buildings.* In the same way, we have found that the Destitution Authority, even if willing to spend largely on buildings, seldom realises adequately the importance of obtaining a sufficiently large and sufficiently highly qualified teaching staff. The salaries to the headmasters of the large Poor Law Schools, like those of the assistants, are habitually "very appreciably lower" than those paid by the Local Educational Authorities around them for work of equal magnitude and difficulty ; † whilst the holidays in the Poor Law service are shorter, and the teachers are usually expected to perform much of the work "which properly belongs to paid attendants."‡ It is, in fact, almost impossible for a Destitution Authority to free itself from the feeling that the teaching of pauper children,—still more the responsible duty with regard to his pupils that falls to the headmaster of a boarding school—is a matter on which it would be unreasonable to spend as much as upon the same duties with regard to other children. Yet it is plainly work of at least equal difficulty and importance. Nor is it easy for a Destitution Authority, even if it seeks to do so, to get the best teachers. The Poor Law Schools do not form part of the educational service of the country ; and the teachers in that service cannot pass into that of the Boards of Guardians without encountering pecuniary loss.§ The separateness of the service prevents the Boards of Guardians attracting the best of the certificated teachers ; ‖ and stands in the way of their getting the utmost out of such teachers as they do attract into their service. It gives rise, the Board of Education Inspectors report :—

> "To a special difficulty in dealing with weak teachers in Poor Law schools. Guardians have no choice of schools, and are, therefore, unable to move worthy but weak teachers from places for which they are unsuitable to places where, by means of stronger support and guidance, they may become passably efficient. Their only alternatives are to dismiss a weak teacher, or to let him stay on in a place for which he is unfit ; and being human, they usually choose the latter course.¶

Even if the legal difficulties were removed which at present impede free circulation of teachers between the educational and the Poor Law services, there would still remain the drawback, in the latter, of professional isolation and aloofness.** "Poor Law teachers," as the Inspectors of the Board of Education report, are :—

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* Thus, the Board of Education reports, of a new Poor Law school, built at a huge cost, that "it is most disappointing in many respects. . . . The class-rooms are all built along a corridor, so that supervision is very difficult ; in the infants' room the teacher stands facing the light, and there is a large high gallery." "Again at the —— Cottage Homes," which were erected regardless of expense, "the school has been placed in a remote corner of the site, so far from some of the houses, that in rough weather the infants can hardly go to school. In this school, too, there are serious defects of lighting, and no attempt has been made in planning the school to admit the sunshine, even to the rooms occupied by the infants." (*Ibid.*, p. 9.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 28308, Par. 4.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ They have to sacrifice any growth of their prospective superannuation under the Elementary School Teachers (Superannuation) Act, 1898 ; whilst, once in the Poor Law service, they are not only debarred, in practice, from chances of better appointments in the Elementary School Service, but they cannot even pass back again into that service without giving up all growth of their accrued rights to Poor Law superannuation. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXII. to Vol. V. *Q.* 28470, Par. 54.) Moreover, promotion in the Poor Law schools themselves is slow, and seems scarcely to exist. There are Superintendents who have come from one school to another, but, in general, each school acts as a single independent unit, seldom exchanging officers with another, and usually not promoting its own but taking in for higher posts teachers from the Elementary Education service or Voluntary Schools.

‖ Report upon the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, p. 10. "The teachers in Poor Law schools," states the Headmaster of one of them, "are not equal in training or attainments to the teachers in the ordinary Public Elementary Schools in which I worked for twenty years." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXII. (Par. 8) to Vol. V.) "The teacher in the Poor Law school, as a rule, is a teacher of lower grade and lower qualifications than the teacher in the Council or Board School." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 28320.)

¶ Report upon the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, p. 10.

** Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXII. to Vol. V.

> "A class apart from teachers of Public Elementary Schools, and each Poor Law school is a water-tight compartment. The teachers miss the stimulus to self-improvement, and the interchange of ideas on their work, which do so much to refresh their fellow-teachers outside, and to extend their views; nor do they share in the friendly rivalry which grows up when many people are working under one large Authority."*

Nor is the influence of the Destitution Authority any better upon the curriculum of the Poor Law School than it is upon the teaching staff.

> "The average Guardian," it has been said, "has but little opportunity of seeing other schools at work, and his consequent inexperience of what is good in education, and what is merely fustian has been the origin of the 'show work,' which is still so prominent in the Poor Law schools. . . . As a result of the visits of inexpert managers, there is to be noticed in many Poor Law schools a desire to make a display, whether it be by means of a 'showy' piece of needlework or drawing, or by 'pretty' groupings and posings in physical exercises or recitations by a few 'show' infants. It is not unlikely that teachers have discovered that the average Guardian is impressed more by these trifles than by solid work, of which it is not easy to make an attractive display."†

This backwardness in "booklearning" is sometimes supposed to be compensated for by the superior industrial training. Boys and girls in the Poor Law schools spend a large part of their time—in some cases, it is reported, at an earlier age than is legally allowed under the Education Acts ‡—in industrial and domestic work, from which they doubtless derive some training. But we doubt the educational value of much that, in these schools, is called industrial training. What is most evident is the desire to utilise the elder boys and girls in digging and scrubbing and turning the handles of the machines used in the laundry, partly out of a vague feeling that the children have got to be "taught to work," but principally with the object of reducing the expenses of the establishment. Even where boys are supposed to be taught a trade, such as shoe-making or tailoring, the work is of little value as industrial training.§ The latest report shows that:—

> "The work that is done in the shops is generally of a utilitarian character, and consists of making and mending for the institution. As its aim is so different, it is unfair to compare it with the handicraft instruction of the Public Elementary School. It is felt by many of the Board of Education Inspectors, with much reason, that it would be possible, without serious interference with the present system, to make industrial instruction more intelligent and educative; but no effective reform can be expected in this department unless the training of the boys themselves on educational lines, and in ways that will develop their intelligence and skill, and give them a thorough technical training is given precedence over the merely industrial work of the Institution. *This is now organised mainly with a view to saving the poor-rate, by causing the young lads in the institution to do as much as possible of the various jobs needed in its daily working.*"‖

The girls are employed in the kitchen, the scullery and the washhouse, but in many of the schools it cannot be said that they are taught cookery or laundrywork.

> "We found," say the Board of Education Inspectors, "that, while all the girls did a certain amount of washing and ironing, their work was incomplete; that is to say, they would iron collars they had not learnt to starch, and wash articles they never learned to iron, exactly in the same way in which they peeled potatoes that they could not cook. They assisted as 'hands' in the work of

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* Report upon the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, p. 10.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 15. "In a large number of cases," it has been said, the educational work of "the school seems to be regarded as little more than a 'side-show' by the Guardians, who, while taking the greatest interest in the bodily comforts of the children, or the economics of the Institution, were disposed to rest content with a comparatively low standard of efficiency in all matters appertaining to the schoolroom and its work." (*Ibid.*, p. 6.)

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

§ The Departmental Committee of 1896 reported: "The industrial trainers . . . are, as a whole, poorly qualified. Very often they are good people who are doing a great deal of work in their shop, but they are not teaching the children the foundation of a trade, because the physical labour of the child is employed for the purpose of keeping the institution at the lowest cost. This . . . is the great difficulty, and until we get over that we shall never get the best results out of the schools. The result of this inadequate training is that the boys are not interested in their work, and are rarely able, when they leave the school, to take good positions in the trades for which it was supposed they had been trained. Indeed, the Educational Inspector went so far as to say that masters who had had experience of boys trained in Poor Law schools preferred to engage those who had not received any instruction in the particular branch of trade for which they were intended. . . . They say: 'No, I will choose a boy out of the general school. If I take any of these others, I shall have to unteach him all that he has learned here, he only learns to botch and cobble.'" (Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, 1896, p. 46.)

‖ Report upon the Educational Work in the Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, p. 21.

> a large laundry; but for that very reason, they failed to acquire any practical knowledge of the complete art of washing clothes." *

Indeed, "many Boards of Managers," of Poor Law schools, made up, as these are, exclusively of members of the Destitution Authorities, "have so little experience of the value of improved methods" of industrial training, "that expenditure on such methods often seems to them to be to the loss rather than to the gain of the ratepayers." †

Hence, alike with regard to buildings and equipment, to teaching staff and to curriculum, "it is difficult to avoid the conclusion," to which the Inspectors are driven, "that the educational part of the work, which is now done by Guardians, would, in the majority of cases, be much more efficiently performed by the local bodies, whose primary function is to deal with schools, and which are, or might be, composed of persons who are interested in and conversant with educational matters." In view of the enormous importance of "giving an efficient education (both general and technical) to girls and boys who are in the public care, very often up to sixteen years of age, and of the many difficult problems involved in planning and working a good system of education for children of such varying ages and capacities, it seems deplorable that the experience and knowledge which have been and are constantly being acquired in these very matters by the members and officials of Local Education Authorities should not in some way be brought to bear upon the problem." ‡

There remains, however, a further drawback to the Poor Law school. However well the members of a particular Board of Guardians might happen to be qualified for the task of educational administration, however wisely they might select the school architect, their headmaster, their specialist teachers and their industrial trainers, and however educational might be the curriculum upon which they decided, they would still be baffled, in their desire to build up a really successful school, by the extraordinarily inept selection of the children for which they had necessarily to provide. In visiting some of the best administered Poor Law schools, we have been struck by seeing, side by side in the same class, doing the same lessons, under the same teacher, a bright child of "scholarship" capacity, a child of criminal type, the anæmic child of defective circulation and dull wits, and the ordinary normal child. All these children of the same age are being taught together, not by reason of anything in themselves, but merely because their parents happen to be destitute and to have their legal settlements in one and the same Union. The attempt to remedy this mixture of capacities by sorting the children into classes of equal attainments leads to groupings even more injurious to educational efficiency. There may be seen "in infant classes . . . elder children, admitted in a state of almost absolute ignorance. Thus it is not uncommon to find children of ten and eleven learning to read and write by the side of children of five and six. Such big children sit in small desks with evident discomfort, they are depressed at finding themselves among much younger children, and they apparently learn little under the circumstances. The situation becomes absolutely grotesque when the infant classes turn out for organised games, and well-grown boys of eleven years old are required to play infantile games. Thus we found such boys playing 'Who killed Cock Robin?' with the infants, and a boy of thirteen reading aloud from a primer (already read twice) 'What Dottie did,' before a class of children half his age." § In one Union no

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* *Ibid.*, p. 23. "As a rule, though we saw many boys working in the garden, we saw little evidence of any systematic instruction in gardening. . . . Girls who are capable of scrubbing are taught to scrub, not with a view to improve their domestic capacity, but in order that the floors may be kept clean. . . . They have had no definite industrial training in the real sense of the words. And, somewhat reluctantly, we must add that, with a few exceptions, they leave the institution at the age of fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen, with little or no training of that nature. . . . Not only is the needlewoman too busy, but she is untrained to teach, so that here again the girls receive no training of real educational value." (*Ibid.*, pp. 22, 24.)

† *Ibid.*, p. 48. Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, 1896.

‡ Report upon the Educational Work in the Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, pp. 7, 28.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 17. "The great difficulty," sum up the Inspectors, "is that the Poor Law school has to deal with children of all grades of intelligence in the lump, and the existing circumstances as regards administrative areas, finance and management are very unfavourable to discrimination and to the employment of different methods of instruction for different classes of children. Thus, on the one hand, children of special ability, who might profit by an opportunity for higher education, and, on the other, children of stunted mental development, who require to be taught by methods approaching those used in schools for the mentally defective, are all placed and dealt with in one school. This difficulty is almost insurmountable so long as children belonging to a Union are all placed in the same school, and, where any classification is now attempted, it is apt to be too much determined by age. If, on the contrary, all the children of school age in a town, irrespective of whether they were destitute in the Poor Law sense or not, were placed under the charge of the Local Education Authority (at all events for educational purposes), the classification of them all could be properly organised. The defective or seriously unfit children could then, even though technically destitute, be given a share in the benefits already provided from public funds for such children; the ordinary children could be graded suitably; the cleverest children could be fitted into the local system of Higher Elementary Schools, or possibly the scholarship system leading to Secondary Schools; and so forth." (*Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.)

fewer than fifty-one mentally defective children were found intermingled with the other children in a very costly Poor Law school, to their mutual detriment. None of the fifty-one appeared to the skilled investigator to be beyond the reach of special training, but they were getting none. *

Finally, there is, in this association of the school with the Destitution Authority, the insuperable objection that the child never does get absolutely free from the evil influence of pauperism. Because they are built by Destitution Authorities, these schools are, in too many instances, actually within the curtilage of, or closely adjacent to, the workhouse.† In nearly all Unions the children are taken to the Workhouse first, and spend some time there, before going to the separate school or Cottage Homes.‡ When they leave the school they are usually taken to the Workhouse, or at any rate to the porter's lodge,§ before passing out into the world. Whilst at the school, they see constant comings and goings of children to and from the Workhouse, || frequent comings and goings of Poor Law officials, and occasional visits of Poor Law Guardians. "These arrangements," as one of our committees noted, after inspecting one of the best administered of the Poor Law Schools, "to a large extent defeat the object of removing children from the evil associations of Workhouse life." ¶ It was in recognition of these inevitable consequences of the connection of these schools with the Poor Law Authorities that the Departmental Committee of 1896 was emphatic in declaring that "all children should be cut off absolutely from the first from all association with Workhouses and their officials, and that no child of three years old or upwards should, under any circumstances, be allowed to enter a Workhouse." It was for this reason that it recommended that all "children over three years of age should be immediately handed over," to an authority other than that of the Boards of Guardians, "which should have the absolute care of them so long as they remain chargeable to the State." ** The experience of the last twelve years, and the latest reports of the Educational work in the Boarding Schools of the Destitution Authorities in England and Ireland alike, appear to us, for all the improvement that they reveal, only to confirm the validity of this decisive judgment.

(vi) *The Receiving Home.*

The undesirability of admitting and discharging children through the Workhouse has led some Boards of Guardians, during the past decade, to establish Receiving Homes or Probationary Schools. This course was, after the Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, suggested by the Local Government Board, who thought it "most undesirable that children should be . . . detained in the Workhouse, and also very desirable that those who ordinarily continued in receipt of relief for very short periods should be kept separate from the children of the more permanent class in the District or Separate School."†† Twenty-four Unions in the Metropolis, and several in other parts of England and Wales, have now provided such Receiving Homes for children at an expense, for the Metropolitan Unions alone, of about £200,000.‡‡ In respect of these Receiving

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* Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 20.

† As at West Ham (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 21141). We are informed that the Local Government Board sanctioned, as recently as 1905, the erection of a new school in the Sunderland Workhouse grounds; and another in 1908 at Bromley.

‡ "The usual method is for the children to go into the Workhouse with their mothers, and remain there until the Medical Officer of the Workhouse is able to certify them as being fit to be removed to the Cottage Homes" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 50555). In some Unions they are always deliberately retained in the Workhouse—the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described—until the Guardians are satisfied that they are "likely to be permanently chargeable." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 43341–43343.)

§ Even in such a well-administered Union as Bradford, where a special Receiving Home for Children has been erected, all the children are brought in the first instance to the porter's lodge of the General Mixed Workhouse, and there examined by the Workhouse doctor, before entering the Receiving House or the Scattered Homes. The clerk explained in 1906, that "in every Workhouse there is a small building at the entrance gates called the porter's lodge. [The children] do not go beyond the lodge. They are there seen by the Resident Medical Officer." (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Q.* 17566.)

|| Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 50561–50563.

¶ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 4B., p. 17. *See also* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 50560–50563.

** Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, 1896, p. 144.

†† Local Government Board to Paddington Board of Guardians, March 28th, 1898; in Annual Report of Paddington Board of Guardians, 1897–1898. A similar letter appears in the records of other Unions.

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 13514.

Homes, England is in advance of either Scotland or Ireland, where every child who comes under the complete care of the Destitution Authority has to enter the General Mixed Workhouse or Poorhouse, and reside there for a longer or shorter period, before it can be boarded-out.

But even the best of the English Receiving Homes for children suffer from their connection with the Poor Law. We note that, where the Boards of Guardians have, on the incitement of the Local Government Board, incurred the expense involved in establishing these separate Homes, in order to free the children, as far as possible, from association with the Workhouse, the mere fact that it is the Destitution Authority which has undertaken this task has gone far to nullify all that has been done. Thus, more than one Board of Guardians has insisted on establishing its Receiving Home as near to the Workhouse as possible, sometimes actually within the curtilage of the Workhouse, entered by the Workhouse gate, and guarded by the Workhouse porter's lodge, through which every tramp and pauper passes.* Moreover, even when the Receiving Home is quite away from the Workhouse premises, the children are—by an arrangement for which there seems to us no rational excuse whatever—actually sent to the Workhouse, or the Workhouse lodge, whenever they have to be reunited with their parents, on these taking their discharge from the Workhouse.† The usual practice is for children to go from the Workhouse to the Receiving Home in charge of the porter or one of his messengers—often an elderly pauper—or a paid officer who assists in that part of the Home. From the Receiving Home children go to the schools in charge of one of the Receiving Home attendants, either the Matron, one of the nurses, or even the cook. If they are discharged with their parents they usually return to the Workhouse to be clothed in their own garments again, and then discharged. In such cases they are taken by a Receiving Home Officer to the Workhouse; or an officer may come from there with the notice of discharge and take the child back with him. The business of discharge is very rapid. A message or messenger comes from the Workhouse, and within a few minutes the child has been found and despatched in return. They seem even to be taken when half way through their meals. We strike here one aspect of the most baffling problem of child life with which the Destitution Authority finds itself forced to deal—the problem of what to do with the child of parents unwilling or unable to afford it a proper home.

(vii) *Children of Unfit Parents.*

This problem, so far as the Destitution Authority is concerned, takes three main forms—the children of "Ins-and-outs," the children of vagrants, and the children in the Workhouse of parents who have deserted them or definitely proved their unfitness to have the control of them.

(a) *The "Ins-and-Outs"*

We deal first with the children of the so-called "Ins-and-Outs." There are, among the Workhouse inmates in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, especially

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* In one of the most recent cases, the clerk to the Board of Guardians, as he himself informed us, advised that it should be built "so that access would be provided to it from the front road, without going through the porter's lodge. That was agreed to, but I am sorry to say that a week or two ago, a Committee upset that, and they would have the access for all and sundry through the porter's lodge." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 52660.) The Receiving Wards (of the Metropolis) in several Unions are in charge at night of a pauper attendant, not necessarily selected for his or her respectability of character, and it is not to be expected that there should be any restraint on lewd talks and actions. The customary pauper is the kind who will be up to the tricks of the place and is usually ready enough to put the children up to them too, and instruct them in all the little meannesses and lies which gain petty advantages in such institutions.

† Some Boards of Guardians used actually to send the wife and children of a man in prison to be formally handed over to him at the prison gate, on his discharge at the completion of his sentence, before he could possibly have provided a home or even a night's lodging for them. This inhuman and irrational practice—which was defended as being the only way to prevent the discharged prisoner from leaving his family on the Guardians' hands—was expressly forbidden by the Local Government Board for England and Wales. It is still customary in Scotland. "When," it was given in evidence, "a woman, usually accompanied by a child, is arrested for vagrancy or begging, she is committed to prison, and the child (if over twelve months old) is handed over to the parochial authorities. In the Poorhouse it is taken care of, washed and fed, but just when beginning to benefit an officer is sent off with the child to the prison, to hand it over to its dissolute mother on her discharge. When the child sees its mother, it frequently screams and clings to the official. This may seem incredible, but for proof of this statement I refer you to the officers at the Calton Prison. They could testify to some painful scenes of this kind. No questions are asked or information sought as to whether the parent can provide the child with food, or even shelter for the night." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 62808, Par. 2 (b)).

in the large towns, a certain number who are not permanent residents, but who are perpetually claiming their discharge, going away for a few days or weeks or months and then returning to the shelter of the institution.* There is even, in Scotland and Ireland, as well as in England, the habitual "week-ender," who makes a practice of entering the Workhouse or Poorhouse for a few days' rest whenever he finds himself absolutely penniless or exhausted by debauch or inanition.† These "Ins-and-Outs," or—to use an American term—these "revolvers," are sometimes able-bodied men or women, sometimes feeble-minded or half-witted, or more or less incapacitated or crippled. What is important is that they very often have dependent children, whom, as the law at present stands, they have the right to take with them when they leave the Workhouse, and of whom, in fact, they are required to assume the custody on being discharged, whether or not they wish to do so, or have any means of providing a home or even a night's lodging for them. "Children of this class give great trouble to the Guardians everywhere. They are sometimes discharged and readmitted several times in the year; they often bring back disease, dirt, and bad habits, and though permanently belonging to the pauper class, are unable to receive the regular instruction and discipline in either the district or the separate school."‡ Such children are, indeed, the despair of those in charge of Poor Law schools.§ As was graphically said by Miss Florence Davenport Hill, they "come and go like buckets on a dredging machine," passing in and out of "all sorts of horrible places and scenes of vice," and periodically mixing "with the children in the school and . . . . turning their moral filth on them."‖ To protect the more permanent children from this contamination and this perpetual interruption of their studies, some Boards of Guardians turn their Receiving Homes into regular "schools for Ins-and-Outs." Thus the Kensington and Chelsea Guardians have a "school for 'permanent' children at Banstead, but the 'Ins-and-Outs' are kept and taught at Marlesford Lodge, Hammersmith, until the Managers are satisfied that their parents will remain in the workhouse permanently or, at any rate, for some considerable time. The children are then drafted to Banstead. In this way Banstead Cottage Homes are to a great extent immune from the trouble and interruption caused by 'Ins-and-Outs.' The same system has been adopted at Olive Mount, Liverpool."¶ One of our colleagues has extracted the following tables from the Admission Books to show the extent to which the Receiving Homes are made use of for the children of "Ins-and-Outs."

Name of Receiving Home.	Number for which it is certified.	Number of Families who are Ins and Outs.	Greatest number of times any family has been admitted within five years.	Average number of times, etc.
Camberwell - - - - - - -	† 60	35	76	33
Paddington - - - - - - -	35	12	20	10
St. George's, Hanover Square - -	70	25	36	10
St. Marylebone - - - - - -	†	21	35	14
Shoreditch - - - - - - -	77	15	111	42
Stepney - - - - - - -	108	12	15	7
Wandsworth - - - - - -	103	63	70	29
Whitechapel - - - - - -	69	60	43	10

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 3084, 3085, 3935–3959, 4120–4151, 7572–7574, 8553–8556, 9542, 11557, 12479–12482, 13225, 14073, 15413, 15679, 16624 (Par. 12), 16793, 17978–17985, 18041 (Par. 17), 18330, 18492, 19466 (Par. 23), 19535, 22249, 22396–22773, 23785 (Par. 4), 23796, 28470 (Par. 16), 28577, 28657, 33856 (Par. 31), 33880–33891, 33977, 35693 (Par. 39), 36128, 36696–36698, 40519, 40643–40645, 45464–45467, 48811, 49303, 50050–50096, 50127.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 3956–3959.

‡ Report of the Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, 1896, p. 8.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 43432, 45467.

‖ Miss Florence Davenport Hill, in Report of Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools, Vol. I., p. 72, Vol. II., *Q.* 3081.

¶ Report on the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge, 1908, p. 19; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 28657, 36014, and Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 69, to Vol. I.

The returns of the Kensington and Chelsea School District Receiving Home (certified for 137) show, with 680 to 820 admissions yearly, the following percentages of re-admissions, the large majority of which are "Ins-and-Outs."

——	Kensington.	Chelsea.
1903–4 - - -	28%	15%
1904–5 - - -	38%	12%
1905–6 - - -	31%	13%
1906–7 - - -	30%	20%
1907–8 - - -	39%	14%

Out of twenty special cases of which details have been obtained, twelve families have been in and out ten or more times. One child has been admitted thirty-nine times in in eleven years; another twenty-three times in six years.

The Wandsworth Union has a large number of dissolute persons in the Workhouse with children in the Intermediate Schools. The parents never go out without taking the children and seem to hold the threat of doing so as a rod over the heads of the Guardians. Any quarrel or strictness of discipline at the Workhouse, or even a refusal on the part of the Matron at the Receiving Home to let the children receive presents of sweets from their parents in the Workhouse, is followed by a demand for a discharge and the children in the Home must be sent for at once. One mother frequently had her child brought out of his bed to go out into the cold winter night. It must be remembered that children who are discharged are sent out in their own clothes unless these are hopelessly ragged or too small. There is also the fact that parents of this class have some feeling against the children going to the District Schools, which are further away; and whenever the children are transferred to the schools the parents discharge themselves at once. One boy, who had been re-admitted twenty-five times in ten years, had been sent more than once to the Banstead Schools, but had never stayed there long. Whenever he knew that he was to go there he used to write to his mother in the Workhouse, and she would apply for her discharge and go out with him.

This plan of using the Receiving Home as an Intermediate school protects the Poor Law school from what a Board of Education Inspector calls the "aggravating influx and exodus," which, in other Unions, goes far to render nugatory the expensive provision of schooling, especially in the junior classes.* But it affords this protection at the cost of largely depriving the Receiving Home of the character of a strictly temporary probationary ward, and even to some extent unfitting it for this use.† It does nothing to protect the children from being dragged in and out, as it suits their parents' whim or convenience. The man or woman may take the children

* At the magnificent "Village Community" of Cottage Homes built by the Chorlton Board of Guardians at great expense for the children of that Union, the Board of Education's Inspector notes that the school, which has an average attendance of 260, is perpetually disorganised by the coming and going of "Ins-and-Outs," many of whom stay less than a week, and who make up, at all times, *from one-fourth to one-third of those under instruction*. The Wandsworth Board of Guardians informed the Local Government Board in 1906, that "from a return prepared by the matron it would appear that during the last twelve months 422 children were sent to school, and 310 brought back, to be discharged to parents, etc., at a cost of £58 1s. 2d., and the Guardians feel that it is simply useless to try to educate children when parents have the power to claim them the moment they are sent to the District School, and they would be glad if the Board would advise them of the best way of dealing with the difficulty." (Wandsworth Board of Guardians to Local Government Board, December 7th, 1906.)

† Evidence before the Commission, Q. 28093, Par. 2. "There are many Boards of Guardians," deposed a witness who was himself a Poor Law Guardian, "who keep children of ins-and-outs for nine or twelve months consecutively in the Workhouse or Receiving House." Cases have been brought to our notice in which parents have deliberately contrived to prevent their children being sent away to the Poor Law school. The Wandsworth Board of Guardians informed us that: "Upon the last admission day, a child who had been resident in the Intermediate School for over a month, and, therefore, could hardly be classed as one of the "ins-and-outs" was sent to Anerley, but before the Officer had left the school, a telephone message was received, stating that the parent was taking her discharge, and the child must be brought back. It would almost appear, on the face of it, that certain parents, the moment their children are sent to Anerley, decide to take their discharge, and then return to the Workhouse the same evening, so that their children shall remain at the Intermediate School." (Wandsworth Board of Guardians to the Local Government Board, December 7th, 1906.)

to a succession of Casual Wards or the lowest common lodging-houses; there may be no prospect whatever of an honest livelihood or a decent home; the parents may go out with the intention of using the children, half-clad, and blue with cold, as a means of begging from the soft-hearted; or they may go out simply to enjoy a day's liberty from workhouse restrictions, and find the children only encumbrances, to be neglected and half-starved. One family of children at Wandsworth used to be taken to the Common in rain or shine and left there without food for the day. Another family of children used to go out with their father and follow him from one public-house to another till evening when he would hand them his Workhouse admission order and send them back with it. As the Porter would not admit them without their father they would wait about until late and then find a policeman, who would take them to the gates and have them admitted. The father would return later when the public-houses were closed. All this misuse of liberty is, to the Destitution Authorities, a matter with which they have and can have no concern. As Destitution Authorities their jurisdiction ends absolutely as soon as a person ceases to be chargeable to the poor rate. They have neither the legal power nor the official machinery for following the children from the Workhouse or the Poor Law school to the lodgings to which they are taken, and for seeing that they are provided with a home, food and clothing, and a continuous education. The Local Education Authorities, on the other hand, do not become aware of the children's existence unless and until they are discovered by the School Attendance Officers in their periodical schedulings of their districts. Between these two Authorities—the one dealing with children only as destitute persons, the other responsible only for the education of children resident within a given district—the unfortunate boys and girls who are dragged backwards and forwards by parents of the "in-and-out" class practically escape supervision. They pass the whole period of school age alternately being cleansed and "fed up" in this or that Poor Law institution, or starving on scraps and blows amid filth and vice in their periodical excursions in the outer world, exactly as suits the caprice or the convenience of their reckless and irresponsible parents. The class of "in-and-out" children is a large and, we fear, an increasing one.

(b) *The Children of Vagrants.*

The children of the Vagrant are, even more than the children of the "in-and-out," excluded from the benefits provided and the protection given by the Local Health and Education Authorities to the children who are known to be resident in one locality. Dragged along the roads by day and spending night after night either in the common lodging-house or the Casual Ward, they may never, in practice, come within the ken either of the School Attendance Officer or of the Sanitary Inspector. For such vagrant children —who number at any one time in the United Kingdom at least several hundreds, and probably several thousands*—the Destitution Authority does nothing except provide a night's lodging and food in the Casual Ward in England and Wales, in the Workhouse in Ireland, and (whatever may be the strict law on the subject) in the Poorhouse or "Casual Sick House" in Scotland. Yet the Destitution Authority is the only organ of the State with which these unfortunate children come in contact.

For their attitude of official indifference to the fate of the children of the "ins-and-outs," and the children of the Vagrants, the Boards of Guardians can plead that the policy of opening and shutting the door of the Workhouse and Casual Ward simultaneously upon parent and child alike—unconcerned as to what happens to the child—is strictly in accordance with the principles on which the 1834 Report proceeded. Throughout that Report it was laid down that the able-bodied man, if married, and the able-bodied woman, if unmarried, should be considered as alone responsible for maintaining their offspring. Unless the able-bodied parents consented to enter the Workhouse, no child of theirs was to be admitted; and whenever they decided to leave its shelter, their dependents were

* "Children represent a proportion varying from about 2 to 5 per cent. of the total" vagrant population, or they may sometimes even be as much as 6 per cent. (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., pp. 19, 113, Vol. II., *Qs.* 265–270, 10931). This vagrant population varies, in Great Britain, from 30,000 to 80,000, according to "the conditions of trade, weather and economic causes." (*Ibid.*, p. 22.) The number of children thus "on the road" in Great Britain, at any one time may, therefore, vary between 600 and 4,800. *Only a small proportion of these will be found in the Casual Ward.* Very frequently the man will go to the Casual Ward, and send the woman and children to a common lodging-house (*Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Qs.* 1461, 5557), or a shelter (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 5922–5925). Similar conditions obtain in Scotland and Ireland. In one Scotch parish, where "the Parish Council has a Casual Sick House for tramps," an average of 112 children have been admitted (with their parents), in each of the last ten years, or more than two a week. (Evidence before the Commission, not yet in volume form).

to go out with them. The only way by which they could get Poor Relief for their children, without entering the Workhouse themselves, was to desert the children, a proceeding which, whilst it threw the children on the rates, exposed the parents to criminal prosecution. Omitting, for a moment, the effect upon the child of this policy of 1834, we may note that its advantage to the ratepayer depends upon continuously maintaining the deterrent character of the Workhouse to the particular class concerned. Now, in spite of all the horror which the General Mixed Workhouse excites among the respectable poor, this institution, as it exists in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, is found, in fact, to offer distinct attractions, as a place of temporary residence, to the dissolute and worthless men and women who comprise the growing class of "ins-and-outs" or "week-enders." When such persons have children, this periodical use of the Workhouse becomes even more advantageous to them. At some ages, and at certain seasons of the year, children are necessarily a burden on their parents; at other ages, especially at particular seasons, they may be made sources of actual profit. For the Destitution Authority to follow in this respect the policy of 1834—to maintain the whole family in the Workhouse whenever the parents think fit to come in, and to let the whole family go out whenever the parents see any advantage in going out—is, at the cost of the rates, to offer the maximum of subsidy to a particularly disreputable and injurious perversion of parental rights.

Passing from the effect of the present policy on parental responsibility to its results on the children concerned, it is plain that the existing arrangements are about as bad as they can possibly be. Imagination fails to picture the evils of the life of the child of the "in-and-out" or habitual Vagrant, during the periods when it is outside the Workhouse or the Casual Ward. It is the smallest part of the injury thus done to no trifling proportion of the coming generation of citizens that such children, as we have already mentioned, usually get practically no schooling. These children might be properly brought up if their parents remained in the Workhouse; they might conceivably be passably brought up if their parents were refused all relief whatsoever. But the present arrangement of letting them pass alternately in and out of the Workhouse or Casual Ward combines all possible disadvantages to the unhappy children thus dragged in and out, and to the other children whom they are perpetually contaminating.

(c) *The Abandoned Child.*

The third class of children belonging to unfit parents are those who are left on the hands of the Destitution Authorities, either because the parents have simply deserted them or because the surviving parent is in prison, in a lunatic asylum or in an inebriates' home.

In respect to the class of deserted children we have again to draw attention to the demoralising provision of the Scotch Poor Law which makes it impossible for an able-bodied man, however destitute, to get food or shelter for his children without deserting them. We have been informed that child desertion, especially in Scotland, is becoming steadily more frequent.* It is not uncommon for parents who have thus voluntarily or perforce abandoned their children subsequently to appear and claim them as soon as they attain an age at which they can be made to earn money.

(d) *The Assumption of Parentage.*

To meet this threefold problem of the unfit parent—the child of the Vagrant, the child of the In-and-Out, and the deserted child—the only expedient afforded to the Destitution Authority has been to give it power itself to "adopt" any child that it found in the Workhouse by reason of parental neglect. By Acts of 1889 and 1899 the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales are authorised to assume, up to the age of eighteen, complete rights and responsibilities of parentage in respect of orphan or deserted children, in respect of the children of parents in confinement, and, in certain cases, also in respect of the children of parents of vicious life or habits. This expedient of adoption gets over the difficulty presented by the deterioration of the child, at the cost of depriving the parents of their parental rights and responsibilities, and at the expense of placing the child wholly on the rates. Some Unions have already made considerable use of this power of adoption, there being now, in England and Wales alone, no fewer than 15,000 children so taken away from

* *See*, for instance, *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 61481, 61482. We have been unable to verify this by statistics.

parental control. It has, however, so far been used most largely with regard to children who are orphans or whom their parents have deserted.*

It has been represented to us that, by the Acts of 1889 and 1899, Parliament has laid down the principle that, whenever there is reason to believe that a child is being habitually and seriously injured in body or mind by the evil or disorderly life of its parents, it is desirable, quite apart from any punishment meted out to the guilty parents, that the community, in the interests of the child, should itself assume full parental duties and responsibilities with regard to it. It has been forcibly pointed out to us that all the considerations that lead to the adoption of the deserted child, or the prisoner's child, or the cruelly treated child, apply equally to the child of the habitual Vagrant or "In-and-Out." The recent Departmental Committee on Vagrancy did not hesitate to recommend that the present power of adoption should be explicitly extended to the children now found in the Casual Ward. The Local Government Board itself has suggested its application to the children of habitual "Ins-and-Outs." † Other witnesses pressed us, in the children's interest, to extend the advantages of adoption to larger and larger circles.‡ The extension of the law to Scotland has been demanded.§ The Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland has made still larger proposals of the same nature.‖ These authoritative proposals for the increased use or legal extension of the power of adoption open up serious considerations. To many persons it is a matter for grave concern that the community should thus relieve parents of all financial and other responsibility for their offspring. And the further question arises whether, if there is to be any such assumption of parentage by the community, the power and obligation should not be entrusted to an Authority charged with the education and care of children, rather than to a mere Destitution Authority.

We think it is clear that, in view of the paramount importance of protecting the children from deterioration, the policy of the Assumption of Parentage must be continued, and that it must be extended to all cases in which leaving the child under the control of its natural parents can be plainly shown to lead to its grave physical or mental injury. From the standpoint of the ratepayer, there is even more reason for this power of taking the children away from their parents, when these are "Ins-and-Outs" or Vagrants, than when the children have been deliberately deserted. For it has been given in evidence that a large proportion of the parents who now come in and out of the Workhouses and Casual Wards would, if they ran the risk of having their children permanently taken from them, hesitate thus wantonly to throw themselves and their families periodically on the rates—partly because these parents often retain a real affection for their children, and partly because they find them profitable.¶ But we see grave objection, not merely with regard to any extension, but also with regard even to a continuance, of the present

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 15413, 15459, 28572, 36128, 46104, 46105. Regret has, for instance, been expressed that the power of adoption is not used with regard to the children of Vagrants, however unfit may be the lives that they are leading. (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. II., *Q.* 5011.) From statistics obtained as to the action of the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians under the Act of 1899, it appeared that three-fifths of children adopted were orphans or deserted; and two-fifths the offspring of parents unfit to have their custody.

† "I think the Guardians ought to adopt them," said the present Chief Inspector (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 3943). And when the advice of the Local Government Board was sought by a Board of Guardians as to the course they should adopt when a woman with illegitimate daughters habitually discharged herself and her daughters from the Workhouse in the summer months, and went on tramp with a man whose character was notoriously bad, the Board referred the Guardians to this power of adoption. (Decisions of the Local Government Board, p. 45, Par. 3.)

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 244, 23778, 28605–28758, 46000 (Par. 13*a*).

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 61832 (Pars 22, 23), 61866–61873, and the evidence on behalf of the Society of Inspectors of Poor, *Q.* 57038, Pars. 9, 49 (10).

‖ "In our opinion the test for permitting such a woman to remain in charge of her children should be a formal determination by the Local Authority in each case whether she is fit to have charge of children If it be decided that she is not fit, we think she might be dealt with like the mothers of two or more illegitimate children, but in any case of separation of parent and child, we think a parent should have the right to appeal to some Court of Justice, clear indication being given by Statute as to the grounds upon which separation between parent and child might be enforced." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 51.) "If the mother could satisfy the local body managing the institution, of which she is an inmate that she could properly maintain herself and her child, we think she might be permitted to take her child with her on her discharge. Otherwise we think that the child ought to be boarded-out, but that the mother should have no right to resume possession of the child until she could satisfy the local body in charge of the child that she was in a position to support it, and that her conduct since the birth of the child had been good." (*Ibid.*, p. 50.)

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 46086.

power of adoption, alike in its procedure and in the Authority to which it is entrusted. At present the parent may be deprived of his child without notice, by a mere resolution of the Board of Guardians, arrived at on the mere opinion of such members as happen to attend,* without necessarily hearing any evidence, and without any kind of judicial decision. Moreover, if the child is adopted, the parent is, in practice, wholly relieved of the cost of maintenance,† and, apart from particular criminal acts, he is not made liable to prosecution and punishment for the fact of having so conducted himself as to make it necessary to take his child from him. Whenever it is deemed necessary in the public interest that the community should deprive the parents of their control over a child, and that the full responsibilities of parentage should be permanently assumed by a Local Authority, the case ought to be properly dealt with, however contemptible and unworthy the parents, by a judicial authority, and that authority should, in our judgment, be empowered at the same time to make such an order for a contribution towards the cost of maintenance, and to inflict on the parents such a punishment as the circumstances may require. And when adoption by the community is decreed, a Destitution Authority is, in our judgment, the very last to which the responsibilities of parentage should be transferred. The object clearly is to free the new "Child of the State" from evil associations and bring it up as a healthy, independent citizen. It stands to reason that such a child should be kept as scrupulously clear of association with the Workhouse as with the gaol; that it should never see the Destitution Officer or be brought into any kind of contact with pauperism. What the community undertakes is to watch over the child's life up to the age of eighteen; and the Destitution Authority has normally no jurisdiction except over persons actually in receipt of relief, and no machinery, other than the Relieving Officer, for continuously watching over the life of the young person. It is, in our opinion, plain that all such rights and duties in connection with the adoption of children ought to be entrusted to the Local Education Authority, which is specially charged with dealing with children, which has its own officers looking after children, which is experienced in children's requirements, and which would find no difficulty in including all necessary provisions for the adopted child among those which it already makes for the other children in its special residential schools. Moreover, if the full responsibility for the well-being of the children, including the power of adoption in default, were entrusted to the Local Education Authority, it would, in our opinion, probably become less frequently necessary to make use of so extreme a measure. At present the Destitution Authority must either do all or nothing. When a child is discharged from any of the institutions of that Authority, it has no further control over it, and ceases, in fact, to be cognisant of its existence. If, however, the child were discharged from one of the residential institutions of the Education Authority, that Authority, with its School Attendance Officers, could follow that child to his home, even after the destitution of the parents had ceased. The Education Authority, in fact, is rapidly developing, in the most advanced districts, in its highly differentiated series of schools and scholarships, its continuation classes, its technical institutes, its medical inspection, its attendance officers, its systematic house-to-house visitation and scheduling, and its local managers and Children's Care Committees, all the machinery for following up all the children coming in any way within its ken, even those of migratory or worthless parents, and for bringing a duly graduated pressure to bear on all the parents, so as to induce them continuously to fulfil their parental responsibilities. By this constant supervision of the children of unfit parents, before and after the crisis of destitution, it would be possible, in many cases, to prevent, at an early stage, any such flagrant neglect or ill-treatment of children by careless or vicious parents, as might otherwise be continued to the point of making necessary the extreme measure of public adoption.

(B) Children under the Police Authority.

The first rival to the Destitution Authority in its work of maintaining the children of poor persons was not the Local Education Authority, but the Home Office, acting through the magistrates and the police. Under a series of statutes extending from 1854, and now consolidated in the Children's Act of 1908, there grew up, before there existed any Local Education Authority, a number of so-called Industrial and Reformatory Schools, to which

* The procedure of Boards of Guardians in this important matter is sometimes very lax. "Children," said an experienced Poor Law official, "are adopted at one meeting of a committee, and at the next Board Meeting I shall find an order to discharge them to their parents." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 46066.)

† "As for getting the money from the parents afterwards, the powers might very nearly as well not exist." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 9531); *see* also *Qs.* 19224–19226.

poor children might be sent by the magistrates,* quite irrespective of the Poor Law, and in which they were maintained at the expense, partly of such contributions as could be extracted from their parents, partly of voluntary contributions or the County Rate, but mainly of a substantial Government Grant administered by the Home Office. The Reformatory schools began as alternatives to the prison, and were designed for juvenile offenders. The Industrial Schools were the direct heirs of the Ragged Schools founded in the first half of the nineteenth century. But the inclusion in the Ragged Schools and in Industrial Schools of children whose destitution, among other circumstances, placed them in danger of growing up to be criminals, caused them to infringe on the sphere of the Poor Law. At first the schools were sharply divided into Reformatory Schools, to which young criminals alone were sent, and Industrial Schools, to which perfectly innocent but neglected children were sent. Gradually, however, this line of demarcation has become obscured; and in the latest classification, though the original names are maintained, these schools are divided principally according to the age of admission and discharge. Thus, the 30,000 boys and girls now under detention in these schools belong to many different categories, the majority of them falling distinctly within the sphere of the Poor Law.†

These Industrial and Reformatory Schools have in common the characteristic of being mainly places of compulsory detention, to which children, though not necessarily criminals, are committed by judicial authority. But "voluntary cases" are now also received, amounting in 1906 to one-tenth of the whole.‡ The 211 separate schools are now managed either by voluntary committees or by County or Borough Councils, at a total expense of over £600,000 annually, of which amount about five-twelfths are contributed by the Government and more than five-twelfths from local rates whilst one-twelfth only is derived from voluntary subscriptions, and one-twentieth is extracted from the parents of the children.§ They are controlled, not by the Board of Education nor by the Local Government Board, but by the Home Office, which certifies them, inspects them, and controls their Grant-in-Aid.

We have not had time to inspect many of these schools, although they constitute no small proportion of the public provision for destitute children;‖ and although, of the 30,000 children whom they maintain, a large proportion would otherwise have to be maintained in Poor Law institutions. They even contain a number of pauper children, sent to them by the Destitution Authorities.¶ We received a certain amount of evidence

* *See* the Report of the Departmental Committee on Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Cd. 8204, 2 vols. 1896; the fifty Annual Reports of the Home Office Inspector, 1856–1906; and the interesting evidence by Mr. J. G. Legge before the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. I., *Qs.* 1159–1316.

† The children who can be sent to industrial schools may be thus classified:—(1) *Destitute children*, if orphans; if found wandering; if surviving parent is in prison; if mother is in prison having been twice convicted of crime. (2) *Mendicants*. (3) *Vagrants*, if destitute; if not having proper guardianship. (4) *Paupers from workhouses*, if refractory; if either of the parents has been convicted of crime punishable with imprisonment. (5) *Truants* from Public Elementary Schools, if education neglected; if found habitually wandering; if found not under proper control; if found in company of rogues; also truants from day industrial schools. (6) *Incipient criminals*, viz., those charged with offences or found associating with thieves. (7) *Children of bad parents*, viz., children taken from disorderly houses; children not having proper guardianship if found wandering; children not under proper control; children having a surviving parent in prison, if destitute; children whose mother, having been twice convicted of "crime," is in prison, if they are destitute; workhouse children either of whose parents has been convicted of crime punishable with imprisonment. (Home Office Circular to County Councils, December 30th, 1903; Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. III., p. 186.) Truant schools are industrial schools which have been certified solely for the reception of boys committed by the magistrate for persistent non-attendance at the public elementary school. The day industrial school is one providing industrial training, elementary education and one or more meals a day, but not lodging. Reformatory schools are for older children, over twelve or fourteen, who have been convicted of criminal offences.

‡ Fiftieth Report . . . on Industrial and Reformatory Schools, 1906, p. 162.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7.

‖ "Destitution," says the report of the first of these industrial schools to be established in London, "is the primary condition of a boy's admission." (The Report of the Boys' Home Industrial School Incorporated Society, 1907.)

¶ Thus, the residential industrial schools received in 1906, from the various Destitution Authorities in Great Britain, £6,230; representing payment for over 300 boys and girls. (Fiftieth Report . . . on Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1906, p. 22.) Especially in Scotland have the Industrial Schools been used for Poor Law children; and about half the money now collected by the Home Office in respect of children in the Scottish Industrial Schools is collected from Parish Councils; a sum which will be, under the Children's Act, 1908, largely increased. We shall recur later to the extent to which, in Glasgow and Liverpool the Destitution Authorities send Outdoor Relief Children to the Day Industrial Schools.

about them, and we made special inquiries of the London County Council, from whom we have received three valuable statements on the subject.* What has most particularly struck us is the overlapping and confusion which results from the division of authority. The Industrial Schools have so essentially the same object and task as the Boarding Schools of the Destitution Authorities and the Certified Schools made use of by these Authorities, and they deal to so large an extent with the same classes of children, that we see no reason for any separation or distinction between them. The Destitution Authority themselves make no such distinction, sending boys, for instance, indiscriminately to those training ships which the Local Government Board has "certified" as schools or homes,† and those which the Home Office has "certified" as Industrial Schools.‡ Indeed, in half a dozen cases, at least (including one out of the seven English training ships), the same institution is certified both by the Home Office and the Local Government Board; § receives, in respect of identical children, grants from the former and payments by the Boards of Guardians under the authority of the latter; and is presumably visited by the Inspectors of both departments who do not communicate to each other their several reports. In Scotland, where the device of "certifying" is unknown to the Local Government Board, we gather that suitable children (who are usually returned among those "boarded-out") are sent by the Destitution Authorities indiscriminately, and the weekly payments made at the same normal rates, to the Industrial Schools to which the Government is paying grants, and to other institutions unconnected with the Home Office, the Government Grants being paid in respect of pauper and non-pauper children alike.

What stands out is the extraordinary lack of co-ordination, or even of mutual consciousness of each other's existence, between the operations of the Destitution Authority and of the Authorities administering the Industrial and Reformatory Schools Acts. Both Authorities are admittedly dealing to a large extent with children of the same class. "The fact of children being sent to one kind (of school) or to the other, is," we are informed, "largely accidental;" || depending, as we gather, when no offence against the criminal law has been committed, chiefly on which Authority gets hold of the case first. It was expressly stated that: "There is at present no co-operation between the Council," acting under the Industrial and Reformatory Schools Acts, "and Boards of Guardians." ¶ "There is no record," we are informed, "as to whether any of the families from which children are sent to Industrial Schools are in receipt of Poor Law relief. No inquiry is made . . . upon this point, and the fact of such relief being granted would not disqualify a child for admission to an Industrial School." ** "The parents of many of the children" in the Industrial Schools of the London County Council "are . . . persons who frequent Workhouses and Casual Wards." †† No fewer than 113 cases were brought to our notice in which, within a single year, in London alone, the same family had been relieved out of the same fund of rates and taxes, by one or more children being sent to Industrial Schools, whilst other children, together with the parents, were being maintained (often as "Ins-and-Outs") in one or other Poor Law institution. Many parents who have already been relieved by having some of their children placed in Industrial Schools are subsequently relieved under the Poor Law, by admission to the Casual Ward or Workhouse, and even, occasionally, by Outdoor Relief. It not infrequently happens that different children of the same family will be simultaneously maintained in Industrial or Reformatory Schools and in Poor Law Schools.‡‡ We have even come across a case in which the mother was in receipt of

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 3549, 39993–40002, 45157, 46000, 46070, 93187, and Appendices No. LXXXII., Par. 12, to Vol. IV., and Nos. IX., LXXIII. and LXXIV. to Vol. IX.

† The "Indefatigable" at Birkenhead, the "Mercury" at Southampton, and the "Wellesley" at Newcastle.

‡ The "Clio," the "Mount Edgecumbe," the "Wellesley," at Newcastle, the "National Nautical" (late "Formidable"), and the "Southampton."

§ These doubly certified schools, under both the Home Office and the Local Government Board, appear to include the St. Joseph's Home at Darlington, the Northumberland Village Homes at Whitley, the Princess Mary Village Homes at Addlestone, the St. Elizabeth School of Industry at Salisbury, and the Training Ship "Wellesley" at Newcastle. The Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, which has between 700 and 800 children "boarded-out," and about 2,700 in 100 "Homes" of various grades, has some of these Homes certified by the Local Government Board, and some (as industrial schools) by the Home Office. (Report of Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. II., *Qs.* 12994, 13003–13004, 13009.)

|| Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. IX. (Par. 23) to Vol. IX. *See Q.* 93187.

¶ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. IX. (Par. 23) to Vol. IX.

** *Ibid.*, Par. 22.

†† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXIV. (Par. 3) to Vol. IX.

‡‡ A case was adduced to us in which, three daughters being already in a Poor Law school, a fourth daughter was sent to an industrial school. In another case, one child was sent to an industrial school and another, simultaneously, to the Workhouse. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXIV, (A) to Vol. IX.).

Outdoor Relief in respect of some children, another child was in a Poor Law School, and another in an Industrial School; and we may here add, though it anticipates a future section of this Report, that some of the children are being fed at school during the winter under the auspices of the Local Education Authority.

There is one development of the Industrial School which comes very near indeed to the work of the Destitution Authority. In a score of towns in England and Scotland there have been established Day Industrial Schools. "The first idea of a preventive institution," we are informed, "seems indeed to have been a day feeding school which, planted in the thick of the slums, was to fight at close quarters against parental neglect and the evil association of which the children were the victims."* At the Day Industrial School the child attends from 6.0 a.m. or 8.0 a.m. in the morning till 6.0 p.m. at night, having provided for him not only instruction, but also properly supervised recreation and three meals of plain wholesome food. The children may be committed by the magistrate, or ordered to attend by the Local Education Authority, or merely admitted on the application of their parents. In every case the law has required a payment of at least 1s. to be made by or on behalf of the parents, whilst the Government Grant is limited to 1s. per week. For these and other reasons the Day Industrial Schools have not made much progress, and in half a dozen towns they have even been discontinued. Such schools, however, especially under the wider powers given by the Children's Act, 1908, appear to us to have a very distinct use for the large class of parents—usually widowed mothers—who can earn a livelihood only by being absent from home for the whole day, and who are quite unable properly to look after their children. We have already described in what an enormous proportion of cases the children whom the Destitution Authorities are maintaining on Outdoor Relief are demonstrably suffering in body and mind, and growing up to be themselves weaklings, paupers and criminals, from the inability or neglect of the parents, to whom the Destitution Authorities are entrusting the scanty dole of Outdoor Relief for the children, to give them the necessary amount of care and attention.† It is, we think, a most unfortunate consequence of the separation of the provision for the children who come under the Poor Law from that made for other children in the same locality, that only in two towns does it seem to have occurred to the Destitution Authority to make use of the Day Industrial Schools as a means of providing for the children on Outdoor Relief. At Liverpool the Board of Guardians pays 9d. a week to the Local Education Authority for each child admitted with their approval, the cases being "the children of poor widows whose means are insufficient to provide the children with adequate food, or of women who have been deserted by their husbands, both of which classes have to earn what living they can in employment which very frequently requires them to leave home early in the morning." In Glasgow, too, the Parish Council arranges with the Local Education Authority for a number of children of widows on Outdoor Relief to be sent to one or other of the four Day Industrial Schools which the Joint Delinquency Board, a municipal authority, maintains; and the Parish Council pays 1s. a week for each child so sent. It has been suggested to us that such "day feeding schools," to use the old phrase, are apparently exactly what is needed for the children of those widowed mothers who cannot be trusted to expend wisely on their children the full amount necessary for their maintenance, and yet who are not morally bad enough, or mentally defective enough, to warrant their children being completely taken out of their control.‡ If the children attend the Day Industrial School from morning to night, it is possible absolutely to ensure their being properly fed, clothed, taught and supervised, without running the risk of subsidising the mother in careless or irregular habits of life. The mother, in fact, may be set free to earn her own living, and, if possible, provide the rent, without Outdoor Relief in any ordinary form, and without the family home being broken up. Such a "Day feeding School" has, we believe, once or twice been started by English Boards of Guardians, only to be abandoned.§ The Day Industrial School stands, in a score of towns, ready to hand,

* Fiftieth Report . . . of the Inspector . . . of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1906 (Cd. 3759), p. 15.

† We asked one doctor, with reference to the insufficient relief allowed to widows with children, Is that bringing up the children to be good wage-earners and healthy men and women? And he replied: "No, I am afraid it is not . . . the next generation will suffer." (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 75939, 75940.)

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 30622 (Par. 44), 43441–43446, 43649–43654, 44215, 45157, 46502, 46503; Appendix No. LXXXII. (Par. 12) to Vol. IV.; Appendix No. LXXIII. to Vol. IX.

§ Under its Local Act of 1831 the Birmingham Poor Law Authority had power to establish such a school (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 43653). The Manchester Board of Guardians actually maintained such a school, including three meals a day, for its Outdoor Relief Children, for some years between 1856 and 1866.

offering exactly what is needed. Yet so strong is the influence of the separate existence of the Destitution Authority, and so intense is its jealousy of any other Authority, that only in two towns have any children been sent to what apparently seems to the Board of Guardians the institution of a rival Authority.* In Edinburgh, the Parish Council, rather than send the children whom their widowed mothers could not look after in the middle of the day to the Day Industrial School which the Edinburgh School Board maintains, where they would be properly supervised, has preferred to start a feeding scheme of its own, distributing to such Outdoor Relief children as desired them, tickets entitling them to cheap meals in eating-houses, where (as we ourselves noticed) the conditions as to the serving of the meals, and the manners of the children—entirely without supervision—are anything but civilising.† Everywhere else the children of the widowed mother on Outdoor Relief are left, so far as the Destitution Authority is concerned, in the condition that we have described.

It has, however, come to be regarded as an anomaly that children should be dealt with by a Police Authority; and the maintenance of the Industrial Schools of Borough or County Councils in England and Wales has now, on the pressing advice of the Home Office itself—possibly even to a stretching of the law—been transferred to the Education Committees of those Councils.‡ This transfer has been emphasised by the modifications in the law effected by the Children's Act of 1908. The provision for the children now in these schools has accordingly become part of the work of the Local Education Authority, which we have now to describe.

(c) Children Under the Education Authority.

The principal public body in England and Wales dealing with children of school age is, of course, the Local Education Authority. Beginning originally as the School Board, a mere supplementary organisation, established only where required, to supply elementary schooling only for those poor children for whom their parents and the various churches and voluntary agencies had failed to provide, it has become definitely the Local Education Authority, necessarily existing in every district of England and Wales, empowered or required, not merely to supply deficiencies, but to see that all the children of the locality whatever their social grade, have provided for them all the education, whatever its kind or degree, which is, in the public interest, deemed necessary. Thus, in place of the "common school," of uniform type, provided in sufficient numbers as required, we have the Local Education Authority systematically laying itself out to equip its area with the varied array of different kinds of schools that the multifarious needs and idiosyncrasies of its children demand—elementary schools and secondary schools; day schools and boarding schools; schools for the precocious and schools for the mentally defective; schools for the blind, the deaf and dumb, and the crippled; trade schools and domestic economy schools; schools for the children who are well, and schools for the children who are suffering from anæmia or incipient tuberculosis, favus or ringworm. In Scotland the School Boards are at least keeping pace in development with the Local Education Authorities of England and Wales. Only in Ireland are there yet no Local Authorities for Education.

(i) *Medical Inspection and Treatment.*

But the Local Education Authorities do not stop at the provision of schooling. Many of the children attending the public elementary schools were found to be suffering from lack of medical attendance and treatment: they had upon them untreated cuts and sores; they had adenoid growths requiring surgical removal; their glands and tonsils were

* The Children's Act of 1908 removes all possible doubt as to the competence of the Destitution Authority to pay the necessary shilling a week for the child's voluntary admission to a day industrial school (Secs. 75, 78); and both to punish drunken parents, and to enforce committal to a residential industrial school of their neglected children (Secs. 11, 56).

† "A feeding scheme, whereby the children of paupers residing in Edinburgh, who apply for its benefits, are supplied with hot dinners daily (except Sunday) has now been instituted for some years, and is very successful. It is under the charge of a lady inspector, who reports to a committee monthly. The dinners to the children are supplied at restaurants near the several schools in the city. The outlay is not large, £60 per month or thereby; and the average number of children daily supplied is about 390. The class for whom this scheme is specially meant to apply is the children of widows who are employed at work all day, such as charing, etc., and who have little time to attend to the wants of their children." (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 61371 (Par. 12), 61552–61563, 61832 (Par. 9).

‡ Home Office Circular, 1903.

swollen and inflamed ; they had incipient curvature needing remedial drill ; their eyesight was often defective, sometimes rapidly degenerating for lack of proper spectacles ; they had discharges from the ears, and inflamed eyelids, and skin diseases of various kinds—to say nothing of such gravely contagious conditions as ringworm and favus, and " dirty heads." * In the large towns of Scotland the condition of the children in these respects was found to be, if anything, even worse than in England.† These tens of thousands of children were, from one cause or another, plainly destitute of the medical attendance that was necessary for them. According to law it was the duty of their parents to provide this needed medical attendance, and, in case of inability to pay for it, to apply to the Relieving Officer for a medical order. It was the duty of the Board of Guardians to grant that medical order whenever necessary, and to prosecute the parents under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act if they failed to apply. It is difficult at the present day to understand how the Destitution Authorities, even from their own standpoint of keeping down pauperism, can ever have reconciled themselves to allowing so great a mass of destitution (with respect to medical attendance) to remain unrelieved. So far as we can ascertain, they do not seem either to have taken any steps to furnish the medical treatment of which these children were clearly destitute ; nor yet, in the majority of cases, to have acted upon their statutory duty of proceeding against the parents who were thus guilty of neglect of their children. We find them even complaining of the action of the School Boards in pressing that every child detained at home through illness should be seen by a doctor. Thus the Chairman of the Atcham Board of Guardians—so widely known for its strict administration—complained in 1890 of the steps taken by the Local Education Authorities. " The action of School Boards," he writes, " is telling upon the question of Medical Relief, as some School Boards insist upon medical certificates being obtained when the reason for non-attendance of the child at school is alleged to be sickness ; and thus many poor people, who would be able to provide for slight ailments by warmth, care and attention, are driven to the District Medical Officer for the sole purpose of obtaining this certificate, and thus becoming pauperised. This might be avoided by the School Boards engaging a medical man to visit, examine and certify for these purposes, if not satisfied with their existing officers. It appears to be necessary for the Guardians to watch this most closely so as to prevent Medical Relief being abused. It is desirable to study what steps can be taken for this end." ‡ In Scotland, where the services of the Poor Law doctor are seldom, if ever, granted to persons not already on the pauper roll, even less is done than in England. The Parish Councils have, of course, the excuse that the Scottish Poor Law does not permit the grant even of medical relief to the dependents of able-bodied men, however destitute the men and however ill their dependents might be.§ But the law does not prevent the Scottish Parish Councils from providing medical treatment for the children of widows or for those of disabled men ; and we do not find that any better provision has been made for the relief of the glaring destitution of these children than for those of the able-bodied men.

What is even worse, we do not find that the Destitution Authorities have even troubled, in this respect, to look after the children whom they were themselves maintaining. The Reports || of our own Children's Investigator, as to the physical condition of these Outdoor Relief children in London, at Liverpool, and elsewhere bring to light innumerable cases of untreated sores and eczema, untreated erysipelas and swollen glands, untreated ringworm and impetigo, untreated heart disease and phthisis. " There was," she reports, " one exaggerated instance. . . . The children," whom the Board of Guardians were maintaining on Outdoor Relief, " were in so filthy and neglected a state that the School Nurse herself interviewed the mother. Later the mother was formally warned "—*not by anyone sent*

* We may give two testimonies out of many. At Wimbledon, which is not a " slum " district, the Medical Officer of Health found, in 1904, " out of an average attendance of 5,430 in the total of schools, 358 cases of defects of sight have been detected in the year . . . 216 affections of the nose, throat and ear . . . and the total number of notifications sent to parents in the year from the 5,430 is 852, which works out at 15·6 per cent. of the total number of children." (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, Vol. II., Cd. 2784, p. 200, *Q.* 5582.) Out of 2,378 children in Worcestershire Schools examine dby the Schools' Medical Officers under the new Act, 1,660 were in such a condition that it was necessary to call the attention of their parents ; 545 had neglected heads ; 254 had neglected teeth ; 279 had enlarged tonsils and adenoids there were 44 cases of external eye diseases ; 120 cases of defective eyesight ; 70 children were consumptive and 115 were anæmic.

† *See* the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Trair ing (Scotland), 1903, *Qs.* 56943, 56945–5695C. and the special investigations into the physical condition of the children in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee.

‡ Report of Chairman of the Atcham Board of Guardians, June 24th, 1890.

§ In Scotland, as we were informed by the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, " an able-bodied applicant as such is not entitled to relief, even if he is destitute, and it does frequently happen that he has sick dependants. These, if not in desertion, cannot receive medical or other relief, although they may be dying of disease." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 56605, Par. 24.)

|| Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908.

by the Guardians—but by "the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, whose Inspector visited her and examined the children." * The state of things is the same in the large towns of Scotland. In the elaborate investigations that have been made into the condition of the school children in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee, the fact is brought to light that a large proportion of the children who are found to be suffering from lack of medical attendance, with all sorts of untreated ailments, are children whom the Parish Councils are maintaining on Outdoor Relief.†

Owing to this widespread failure of the Destitution Authorities in England and Scotland alike to relieve the destitution of children in the matter of medical attendance, and to the equal failure of voluntary agencies,‡ we find the duty gradually undertaken—even to the stretching of their legal powers §—by one of two other authorities. In the smaller Boroughs we see the Local Health Authority permitting the Medical Officer of Health to accede to the express or implied invitation of the Local Education Authority to institute a medical examination of all the children in the public elementary schools; sometimes on the plea of detecting infectious disease, sometimes frankly to discover physical defects rendering the children unfit to profit by the instruction. In town after town we see the MedicalOfficer of Health advising on the children's diseases, as well as on defective eyesight and hearing, sometimes systematically weighing and testing all the children.‖ We see the Town Council's Health Visitors following the children back to their homes, and giving advice to the parents how to treat the defects discovered.¶ Occasionally a special nurse is engaged by the Town or District Council,** to visit the homes, in order to offer her services gratuitously for actual treatment of the cases as well as to advise the mothers how to remedy the trouble and prevent its recurrence. In this way the Local Health Authority has, in many towns, undertaken a proportion of the Medical Relief of poor children, which the Destitution Authority, dominated by its desire at all hazards to restrict its work, had failed to provide.††

In London and the larger Boroughs we see the work which the Destitution Authorities refused or neglected to do undertaken by the Local Education Authorities themselves. School Medical Officers and School Nurses have been appointed, whose business it is to examine all the children; to discover all physical defects; to test eyesight and hearing, and advise what steps should be taken as to treatment; to instruct the mothers how to remedy the evils; to supply gratuitously or at a nominal charge the spectacles required by the child's defective eyesight;‡‡ and, in not a few cases, even systematically to provide the treatment required.§§ "In Liverpool . . . over 50,000 dressings have been done in the

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* *Ibid.*, p. 155.

† Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland), 1903.

‡ Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., Cd. 2779, Par. 7, p. 2; Report of Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland), 1903.

§ As lately as 1905 it could be said that "there is no specific statutory provision for Local Education Authorities to conduct the medical inspection of the children attending the Public Elementary Schools." (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., p. 2.) School doctors and school nurses were appointed as being "necessary officers" to schools, under the general powers of the Education Act (*ibid.*, Vol. II., *Q.* 99.)

‖ Thus at Salford, we learn, "children suffering from ringworm are excluded from school, and parents [are] advised what to do. . . . Children suffering from pediculosis are pointed out to the teachers, who interview the children and give instructions as to treatment. Where the teacher's influence is insufficient, the parents are seen by the Medical Officer. In this way a considerable improvement has been effected." (Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health, Salford, 1904, p. 9.)

¶ Thus, to give one example out of many. At Liverpool, the female Inspectors of the Public Health Authority "visit children suffering from ringworm, sore eyes, sore heads, skin diseases, etc." (Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for Liverpool, 1905, p. 89.)

** As at Reading and Widnes and Wimbledon (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., p. 6; Vol. II., pp. 161–166).

†† For the extent to which the Medical Officers of Health, had, even by 1904, carried the medical inspection and treatment of school children, *see Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 89–99.

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 38758 (Par. 8), 38766.

§§ Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., pp. 89–99; *see also* *Q.* 3744 of Vol. II. of the same. At Croydon, the Local Education Authority itself cures ringworm, free of charge to all children attending the Public Elementary Schools, by the Röntgen-ray process, at an expense of about £100 a year. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 22952; Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for Croydon, 1905, p. 90; Annual Report to the London County Council of the Medical Officer (Education) for 1906–1907, p. 34.) In various towns, as at Glasgow (under its Police Act), and in several of the Metropolitan boroughs, verminous children are treated free of charge by the Local Health Authority, under the Cleansing of Persons Act, 1897. (Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health for Glasgow, 1905, p. 132.)

course of 1904. In Birmingham there have been in four schools over 20,000 dressings in twelve months. . . . At Reading a nurse is employed . . . to attend to the heads of verminous children where the parents fail to do so."* In 1907, by statute and by order of the Board of Education, these duties were not only sanctioned, but were even made obligatory on all Local Education Authorities, with regard to all the children in attendance at public elementary schools.† Nor are the Local Education Authorities to stop at mere inspection. "It is important," declares the Board of Education "that Local Education Authorities should keep in view the desirability of ultimately formulating and submitting to the Board for their approval under Section 13 (1) (*b*) of the Act, schemes for the amelioration of the evils revealed by medical inspection, including in centres where it appears desirable, the establishment of school surgeries or clinics, such as exist in some cities of Europe, for further medical examination, or the specialised treatment of ringworm, dental caries or diseases of the eye, the ear or the skin. It is clear that to point out the presence of uncleanliness, defect or disease does not absolve an authority from the consequent duty of so applying its statutory powers as to secure their amelioration, and to prevent, as far as possible, their future recurrence or development."‡ Accordingly, a "school clinic" has already been established by the Bradford Education Committee.

This deliberate invasion of the sphere of the Destitution Authority by the Local Education Authority, so far as concerns the medical attendance of the 20 per cent. of the population who are of school age, has been unfavourably commented on.§ It has been represented that should the action taken by some Local Education Authorities become universal—as seems now to be required by the Board of Education as a condition for its Grants—there can be, in respect of the medical attendance of this large section of the population, no destitution left to be relieved by the Destitution Authorities. On the other hand, it is urged that the medical inspection, and consequent medical treatment, of school children is not only financially advantageous to the Local Education Authorities by securing a higher average attendance, but also vital both to national health and national wealth production, and has been, by the virtual abdication of the Destitution Authorities, too long delayed. Nor can we altogether blame the Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils for this abdication. They have never been told to search out destitution in the matter of medical attendance. They have been called upon only to provide such medical relief as was actually applied for. They have been praised for deterring people from applying for medical orders by means of inquisitorial inquiries, giving such orders "on loan" and recovering the cost, and even making it a condition that the head of the family should enter the workhouse when his child was ill. In Scotland, as we have seen, the Poor Law does not permit even the visit of the Parish Doctor to the sick child of any able-bodied man.

We are of opinion that it is, on the whole, advantageous that the medical attendance of poor children of school age should not be undertaken by the Destitution Authority. If that Authority does the work, it does it as "Medical Relief"; such relief, as we have seen, is afforded grudgingly; granted only to those who apply to the Relieving Officer; almost necessarily made to depend, not on the gravity of the illness of the child, but on the *status* of the parent; withdrawn as soon as the parents wish to be without it; and, when given, given wholly unconditionally and usually without even the necessary hygienic advice. On the other hand, the medical examination and treatment of school children by the Local Education Authority (or by the Local Health Authority at its instance) is never of the nature of relief, but rather of hygienic discipline. It is systematically applied without any implication of pauperism to all children who are found to need it, without waiting for application to be made. It is continued so long as is found necessary, whether or not the parents actively desire it. And it always takes the form, to a very large extent, of hygienic advice, obedience to which is strongly pressed both on the child and on the parent. This medical inspection, it has been given in evidence before us, has actually a tendency to increase parental responsibility. When, for instance, under the London County Council, the School Nurse visits a school to put in force the cleansing scheme, "she examines every child, noting all that have verminous heads. The parents are notified by a white card, on which is also printed directions for cleansing. . . . At the end of a week, if not

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* Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., p. 6.

† Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, Sec. 13; Memorandum on Medical Inspection of Children (Board of Education Circular, No. 576), November, 1907.

‡ Memorandum on Medical Inspection of Children (Board of Education Circular No. 576), November, 1907.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 22952–22953.

cleansed, the child is made to sit separately from the rest of the class, and the School Attendance Officer serves a more urgent warning 'red card' at the home. The Nurse, too, often visits to offer advice; and then, if in another week the child is still unclean, it is excluded, after having been seen by the Medical Officer; and the parent is prosecuted for not sending the child in a fit state to school." * Under the influence of such a system, the obligations of the parents in this one matter of cleanliness have, in the course of the last few years, been so greatly increased that the proportion of verminous children has, through the exertions of the mothers, steadily diminished. The expenditure incurred from public funds, far from being "relief" to the parents, has been actually the means of compelling the less responsible among them to devote more time and money to their children's welfare.

(ii) *School Feeding.*

We come now to the most remarkable, and, it must be admitted, the most controversial, of the invasions by the Local Education Authority of the sphere of the Destitution Authority. During the past two or three decades, in London and more than 100 other towns, in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, there has grown up a system by which, under the auspices and with the active assistance of the Local Education Authorities, many thousands of destitute children are provided with food.† In some towns a larger number of children are now, each winter, fed in the schools of the Local Education Authority, than are maintained as paupers by the Destitution Authority. The statistics for the Metropolis are specially remarkable. Between the ages of five and fourteen the various Boards of Guardians in London relieve on any one day some 14,000 children as indoor paupers and some 10,000 children as outdoor paupers. But in March, 1908, the London County Council was organising the simultaneous feeding of no fewer than 49,000 children between these ages,‡ or more than twice as many as those relieved by all the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians put together. The cost of this new service of school feeding has hitherto been largely provided from voluntary donations; though the organisation, most of the paid service, nearly all the plant and even some of the fuel, have long been provided from the Education Rate. During the year 1906, however, Parliament not only directed the formation by the Local Education Authorities of England and Wales of "School Canteen Committees" definitely to undertake this service, but also empowered them, subject to the approval of the Board of Education, to supply the necessary food at the cost of the Education Rate.§ In the very first winter under the Act, though London still relied on voluntary donations, no fewer than fifty such Authorities—nearly one-sixth of the whole—obtained the necessary sanction to feed their necessitous school children out of the Education Rate.‖ The number has already grown to more than seventy. We cannot but anticipate that this action will become general throughout the towns of England and Wales. The nation is thus superseding the Destitution Authorities, so far as the provision for destitute children of school age is concerned, not merely in such specialised services as schooling and doctoring, but actually also in the simplest and most primitive of all needs, that of food. This paradoxical situation compels us to consider the reality of the alleged child destitution which the Local Education Authorities are relieving, the character of the relief given, and the advantages and disadvantages of so important a supersession, so far as regards the children of school age, of the Destitution Authority by the Local Education Authority.

We have made no inquiries of our own as to the number of children who were, in the winter of 1907–8, so far destitute as to be provided with meals under the auspices of the Local Education Authorities; though it is clear that the total for the kingdom must have

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* Report of Medical Officer (Education) to London County Council, 1905, Appendix III., p. 17. During the year 1906–1907, 81,629 children were thus examined, 12,975 white cards were issued, 6,090 red cards, and there were 277 prosecutions, at which fines were imposed. (*Ibid.* for 1906–1907, pp. 32, 33.)

† Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., Appendix II; Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Qs.* 5–7.

‡ Report of the Sub-Committee on Underfed Children to the London County Council, 1907–1908.

§ Education (Provision of Meals Act), 1906. The Act does not apply to Scotland or Ireland.

‖ Annual Report of the Board of Education for 1907–1908. Among the towns so feeding their children are London, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Hull, Bradford, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Birkenhead, Bootle, Coventry, Norwich, Nottingham, Swansea and Cardiff; residential centres such as Bath, Brighton, Hastings and York; suburbs of London such as Tottenham, Walthamstow and West Ham; and even non-municipal parishes in the Counties of Durham, Kent, and the West Riding, administered by the County Councils. In a majority of cases, the amount applied for and sanctioned was the maximum of a halfpenny rate.

risen, at its maximum, to over 100,000, and that this number must be largely exceeded during the winter of 1908–9.* Nor have we taken any systematic evidence as to the reality or the cause of the destitution in these cases. The subject had been so recently investigated by no fewer than four successive Commissions or Committees,† within five years, that we thought ourselves justified in utilising their evidence as our own, and in accepting their statement of the facts. We received, however, some important independent testimony on the subject, which was generally in support of that already given.‡ Moreover, the general conclusions of the four official inquiries as to the nature and extent of child destitution have since been confirmed and illustrated by an elaborate investigation, undertaken by the Sub-Committee on Underfed Children of the London County Council, into the actual family circumstances of a large sample of the 49,000 children whom it was feeding as necessitous in March, 1908; the sample being carefully chosen so as to be accurately typical of the whole number. This latest inquiry, which was carried out by paid investigators who had been specially trained for such work, appears to us conclusive as to the facts. Taking what seems to be the low "Poverty Line" of a family income, after the rent was paid, at the rate of 3s. per week § per adult unit, or a little over 5d. per day, the Investigators found that by no means all the necessitous children had been reported by the teachers; that of the whole 3,334 children whom they investigated, 78·88 per cent. were genuinely necessitous "in the sense of lacking sufficient food and 21·12 (per cent.) non-necessitous; and that school meals will be required by the former until effective Care Committees are able to check the diseases attendant on partial employment, bad housing and other evils." || Such information as has been supplied to us of the proceedings in Liverpool, Manchester,¶ Leeds,** Blackburn,†† West Ham, ‡‡ Swansea, §§ and other places, indicates that the lines on which action has been taken do not differ essentially from those followed in London. We find it, therefore, difficult to resist the conclusion that, estimating the total of children fed by Local Education Authorities throughout the kingdom to be 100,000, at least three-fourths of these were genuinely "destitute," that is, in want of food, and lacking means to obtain it, whilst it is probable, on the analogy of the London cases,

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* "The proportion of children in utter want in London," deposed an experienced Divisional Chief Inspector of the Board of Education, "is certainly not greater—I am inclined to think it is smaller—than in Birmingham or Liverpool and Manchester." (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Q.* 2818.)

† See the Report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) 1903; Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904; Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children attending Public Elementary Schools, 1905, Vols. I. and II.; Report from the House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906 (House of Commons No. 288, of 1906).

‡ *See*, for instance, in our evidence, *Qs.* 246–250, 6076, 6077, 6445, 6446, 8525–8529, 12037, 18730, 18731, 20418–20741, 25154, 29769, 30540, 30622–30731, 36182–36226, 37605–37861, 39648, 43626–43810, 46493, and Appendices Nos. XXXVII. (Pars. 11–13), XXXVIII. (Par. 17), LXIII. (Par. 11), and LXXXII., to Vol. IV. and Nos. XXIV. (Par. 3), and XXIX. (Par. 18), to Vol. V., together with the incidental references in the Report of our Medical Investigator.

§ At Birmingham, the practice is to supply meals where the net income, after the rent has been paid, does not exceed 2s. 4d. to 2s. 9d. per week per head, *including children*.

|| Report on the Home Circumstances of Necessitous Children in Twelve Selected Schools (London County Council), July, 1908. Out of the sample 1,218 families investigated, the family income was definitely ascertained in 663 cases. Of these, 331 had less than the "poverty limit," adopted for comparison, of 3s. per week per adult, after the rent had been paid; and 187 more had less than 4s. per week per adult. Thus, 78 per cent. may be taken to have less than 7d. per day per adult to live on. With this may be taken the evidence afforded by the home; 911 out of the 1,218 families or 74 per cent. were found to be living in the "overcrowded" condition of more than two persons to a room. In no fewer than 544 out of the 1,218 families or 44·7 per cent., one or other parent was reported to be "intemperate and wasteful." But though this may have caused the poverty, the poverty was demonstrably there. In these families the children were undeniably necessitous, in the sense of not having sufficient food; the families to the extent of 80 per cent. of them were living in an "overcrowded" condition; and, what is even more cogent, of all the cases in which the family income of this class was definitely ascertained, 68·5 per cent. fell below the line of 7d. per day per adult (after paying rent). So that, although intemperance may conceivably have brought the families into that state, it cannot be said, in these 68·5 per cent. of cases, that the income (of less than 7d. a day each) would have permitted the feeding of the children, even if there were now nothing spent in drink.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXXVII. (Pars. 11–13) to Vol. IV.

** *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXII. to Vol. IV.

†† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 37605 (Pars. 36–42), 37680–37692, etc.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 20445–20454, 20689–20710.

§§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXIV. (Par. 3) to Vol. V.

that some thousands more who were equally destitute were never reported by the teachers. And this calculation omits altogether the child destitution, doubtless much less in proportion, of the large number of towns in which no similar action has yet been taken by the Local Education Authorities.

The first attempt to cope with this evil of child destitution was made by voluntary philanthropic agencies. As the hunger among the school children became known to the benevolent public, there grew up, at intervals during the last forty years, a whole series of charitable agencies for giving, sometimes during spells of severe weather, sometimes throughout the whole winter quarter, and occasionally throughout the whole year, free meals, or meals at nominal charges below cost, to the hungry children of the poorer districts. We do not find that these agencies acted, in any one case, in co-operation with the Destitution Authorities, and they do not appear to have even sought to discriminate between the hungry children already nominally provided for by Outdoor Relief, and those who were not being so relieved. It is impossible to withhold our admiration from the many thousands of humane and benevolent persons who have thus come forward, often at great sacrifice of money and personal service, to relieve the destitution of the children. But this unco-ordinated and irregular distribution of gratuitous or cheap food by irresponsible agencies had many obvious disadvantages. The relief given was in nearly all cases quite inadequate for the really destitute children, seldom amounting for each child to more than two or three meals a week. It was usually spasmodic and temporary, money being collected freely, when a cold snap, or a dramatic cessation of employment, brought home to the hearts of the charitable the perennial destitution that existed.* The relief was usually afforded in the least advantageous manner. Sometimes doles of soup, bread and pudding were shovelled out to crowds of hungry children without any attempt being made to secure the ordinary decencies of civilised meals.† Sometimes dinner tickets were distributed, which had to be presented at eating-houses of a cheap type, where the children were fed without responsible supervision ; and where, moreover, the tickets could sometimes be exchanged for cigarettes or sweets. It was rare that any adequate investigation was made into the home circumstances of the children who looked anaemic and hungry. Finally, from beginning to end of these attempts to meet the need by charitable agencies there was, we may say, no thought of anything but unconditional relief : there was no suggestion of obtaining, in return for the food, any greater exertions by the parents for the benefit of their children, or of securing from the children any improvement in manners or greater regularity of life, or of enforcing by the prosecution of negligent and drunken parents, any greater fulfilment of their parental responsibilities.‡ After all that was done by charitable agencies, there remained, in certain schools, in certain districts and at certain seasons, an amount of child destitution which public opinion eventually found to be intolerable.§

The existence of this enormous mass of child destitution in the schools was very slowly, and we may add, very reluctantly, perceived by the Local Education Authorities ; and still more slowly and reluctantly were any steps officially taken by them for its relief. Established to provide schooling only, the School Boards were naturally averse from assuming responsibility for the home circumstances of their pupils. They were under no legal or

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* Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Q.* 1015 ; Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. I., p. 75.

† In London, it was found on inquiry by the London County Council in 1908 that, in some of the centres, absolutely no plates or mugs or knives or forks were provided, the children,as it was said, being "fed like hounds," and eating the food out of their hands. In other centres no sufficient provision was made for washing the plates, etc., and several children had to use the same article without any attempt being made to cleanse it. Only rarely did the children sit down, at a table provided with a table-cloth, to a meal served with decent amenity. Great stress has been laid by educational experts—in our opinion, rightly—upon the importance of so serving the meals, and so supervising the children's methods and manners at table, as to raise their standards of decency and civilised amenity, as well as of mastication. We regret that these considerations have, so far, where the work has been undertaken by Voluntary Agencies or the Destitution Authority, usually not received sufficient attention. (*See* Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Qs.* 76, 1082, 1831–1834, 2396, etc., 2464, 2779, 3505, 3544 ; and the valuable Report of the Medical Superintendent . . . on a course of Meals given to Necessitous Children (Bradford Education Committee, 1907).)

‡ To use the description given by Mr. C. S. Loch, it was "purely a movement against destitution without regard to education." (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904, *Qs.* 10192–10199.)

§ "I would taboo voluntary agencies feeding in a wholesale way altogether," deposed one experienced witness, "they are fluctuating, they are inadequate, and not co-ordinated." (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Q.* 2458.)

even moral obligation to see that their pupils were properly cared for out of school. What forced them to realise the existence of child destitution was the manifest absurdity of wasting costly education on hungry or starving children. When active physical exercises, which could not be shirked by the child, were added to mere sedentary listening to the teacher's lesson, which did not need to be learnt, this absurdity approximated to cruelty. To the keen educationalist, as to the practical teacher, it became apparent that the semi-starvation, from which in "slum" districts whole schools were suffering, was producing two types of abnormality, both disastrous alike to the future welfare of the community and to the present efficiency of the school. These results of child destitution are graphically described by the medical expert who examined the children in the schools of the Liverpool Education Authority:—

> "Starvation acting on a nervous temperament," reported Dr. Arkle as to the children whom he examined, "seems to produce a sort of acute precocious cleverness. Over and over again, I noted such cases of children, without an ounce of superfluous flesh upon them, with skins harsh and rough, a rapid pulse, and nerves ever on the strain, and yet with an expression of the most lively intelligence. But it is the eager intelligence of the hunting animal, with every faculty strained to the uttermost so as to miss no opportunity of obtaining good. I fear it is from this class that the ranks of pilferers and sneak thieves come, and their cleverness is not of any real intellectual value. On the other hand, with children of a more lymphatic temperament, starvation seems to produce creatures much more like automata. I do not know how many children I examined among the poorer sort, who were in a sort of dreamy condition, and would only respond to some very definite stimulus. They seemed to be in a condition of semi-torpor, unable to concentrate their attention on anything, and taking no notice of their surroundings, if left alone. To give an example of what I mean, if I told one of these children to open its mouth, it would take no notice until the request became a command, which sometimes had to be accompanied by a slight shake to draw the child's attention. Then the mouth would be slowly opened widely, but no effort would be made to close it again, until the child was told to do so. As an experiment, I left one child with its mouth wide open the whole time I examined it, and it never once shut it. Now that shows a condition something like what one gets with a pigeon that has had its higher brain centres removed, and is a very sad thing to see in a human being. I believe both these types of children are suffering from what I would call starvation of the nervous system, in one case causing irritation, and in the other torpor. And further these cases were always associated with the clearest signs of bodily starvation, stunted growth, emaciation, rough and cold skin, and the mouth full of viscid saliva, due to hunger. With such children I generally had to make them swallow two or three times before the mouth was clear enough to examine the throat. . . . I do not think I need say any more to show that the extent of the degeneration revealed by this investigation has reached a very alarming stage. . . . What is the use of educating children whose bodies and minds are absolutely unable to benefit by it. In my opinion, the children must first be taught how to live, and helped to get food to enable them to do it."*

The question arises why the Destitution Authorities had not already relieved the obvious destitution—not of education or of medical attendance, but actually of food—of this appalling number of children found to be positively suffering from hunger. The first answer is that, in quite a large number of cases—we suspect, in all, many thousands—the Destitution Authorities were actually providing simultaneously by Outdoor Relief for the very children whom the Local Education Authorities found themselves driven to feed, because the Outdoor Relief allowed to the family was positively insufficient for its support. In the Metropolis it was found in 1907–8 that 3·29 per cent. of the 49,000 children fed were at the time in receipt of Outdoor Relief, whilst no fewer than 13·46 per cent. had recently been in receipt of such relief, though it had been brought to an end before the date of the investigation.† Thus, it would appear that of the 10,000 children of school age on any one day maintained by the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians on Outdoor Relief, *something like* 1,600, *or one in every six, were actually being fed, in the winter of* 1907–8, *by the Local Education Authority;* whilst of the 30,000 separate children who got Outdoor Relief during some part of the year, no fewer than 7,000, or one in every four or five, also got fed in that winter at school.‡

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* The Condition of the Liverpool School Children, by A. S. Arkle, B.A., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (Liverpool, Tinling & Co., 1907, p. 15).

† Report on the Home Circumstances of Necessitous Children in Twelve Selected Schools (London County Council, July 1908).

‡ Similar overlapping is reported in other towns. In the elaborate Report on the Physical Condition of 1,400 School Children in Edinburgh, extracts from which are given in our evidence (not yet in volume form), many cases are given of families in receipt of Outdoor Relief receiving also for one or other of their children, school dinners, school clothing and boots, free meals provided by the Destitution Authority itself and maintenance in Industrial Schools. The Outdoor Relief, in fact, was inadequate. "In many cases," sums up our Medical Investigator, "the amount allowed by the Guardians for the maintenance of Outdoor pauper children cannot possibly suffice to keep them even moderately well." (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, p. 79. (*See* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2413, 2415, 2830, 5092, 8867, 9127, 12729, 12741, 17037, 20394, 25449, 25543, 31837, 32103–32229, 32384–32393, 35968, 36061, 37280–37292, 40362–40411, 43439, 44209–44216, 43004, 43005, 44976, 45067–45069, 45160, 46398, 46399, and various Appendices to Vol. IV. and Vol. V).

The second answer of the Destitution Authorities is, apparently, to say that no application for relief had been made to them by the parents of the children. On this we have to point out that the Poor Laws do not require application to be made before relief is granted. It is the statutory duty of the Destitution Authority to relieve all the known destitution within its district, whether application be made or not.* The Destitution Authority could hardly plead that it was unaware of the existence of hungry children unable to get food. The fact that children at school were actually suffering from want of food, was known to every Board of Guardians or Parish Council in the principal towns of the United Kingdom. Moreover, in the case of children, the Destitution Authorities have been, since 1868, under a special statutory obligation to proceed against parents who fail to supply their children with food—an obligation which was specially brought to the notice of the House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief in 1888 :—

> "There is," said the late Rev. W. B. Waugh, speaking for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, "an Act of Parliament, 31 & 32 Vict., c. 122, Sec. 37, which requires that every Board of Guardians shall (the word 'shall' is used) institute prosecutions and pay the costs where they have reason to believe that children are not sufficiently fed. . . . The Guardians do not act upon it to any great extent. . . . There are cases in which they are habitually doing it, chiefly where ladies are upon the Board, but in a very small number of cases, indeed, throughout the country. . . . It is a matter of fact that the Relieving Officers know of cases of children starving to death, and take no action. . . . I will take a case at Swindon. Last week, we sent to prison two persons who had seven children in their custody, all of whom were looked after by the Relieving Officer to this extent. In January last he visited and reproved the woman, and I think he called the house very filthy in March, but no action was taken. The children were all dying. . . . They were children who might have been looked after by the officers of the Poor Law ; children who ought to have been looked after under that section."†

Since this remarkable testimony, the law has been so far altered, owing to the neglect of the Boards of Guardians, as to allow other persons as well as these Boards to institute prosecutions in these cases ; and we gather that the Destitution Authorities have thereupon practically ceased to institute any proceedings whatever. It is, however, under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1904 (now re-enacted in the Children's Act, 1908), still open to them to do so in all cases that come to their knowledge. The Local Government Board for Ireland specially drew the attention of the Irish Boards of Guardians to this fact in sending them the Act of 1904.‡ We have it in evidence, from one of the English Local Government Board's Inspectors that : "The laws of the land are perfectly adequate for bringing every man, who neglects his children by starving them, to the Police Court. . . . If the law was stringently administered . . . you would stop the starving of children to a great extent." The Boards of Guardians have "a power of prosecuting" and also "a power of relieving." § The Destitution Authorities, we were informed by another witness, have "ample authority" to punish parents who neglect their children, but "they think it is not advisable to do so." ‖

It has been urged on behalf of the Boards of Guardians that, in the early stages of the movement for the feeding of hungry children, no effort was made by the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board to put them in a position to carry out their statutory obligations. Where the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order was in force, the Destitution Authority could lawfully relieve the children of able-bodied men only by receiving both father and child in the Workhouse. In other Unions, where the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order was in force, it had long been customary for the Board and its Inspectors to press Boards of Guardians to adopt the same policy of refusing Outdoor Relief to able-bodied men and their dependents. Not until 1905 did the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board reverse that classic policy. In that year an Order

* We were authoritatively informed by the Legal Adviser to the Local Government Board that the Relieving Officer "has not to wait for an application from the head of the family," or from anyone else. "A third party's notification would be equivalent to an application," even to the extent of making the officer personally responsible. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 970–972.)

† Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief, 1888 (*Qs.* 5957–5965.)

‡ "The Act does not impose upon Boards of Guardians the duty of instituting proceedings in these cases, but it contemplates that they will do so where the circumstances are such, as, in their opinion, render it desirable in the public interest that proceedings should be instituted by them ; and they are by Section 21 empowered to pay out of the funds under their control, the reasonable costs and expenses of any proceedings," etc. (Circular of Local Government Board for Ireland of October 27th, 1904.) The Local Government Board for England and Wales made an intimation to the Boards of Guardians to the same effect in its Circular of January 1st, 1907, pointing out that they could proceed either under the Vagrant Act of 1824, or under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, of 1904, against fathers who habitually neglected to provide their children with food. We have not found any Report showing that any such proceedings were taken by the Boards of Guardians, merely for not providing food.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 7609–7611.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 8528–8531.

was issued empowering Boards of Guardians, on the application of the Local Education Authority or its officers, to grant relief to the child of an able-bodied man, without requiring him to enter the Workhouse, or to perform the Outdoor Labour Test. But all such relief was, if the father was deemed guilty of neglect, to be given only "on loan" and might be so given in all cases; proceedings were (except in any special case to be reported to and sanctioned by the Local Government Board) always to be taken for the recovery of the amount from the parents; and whether or not the amount was so recovered, the parent became legally a pauper and was consequently disfranchised. For some reason that we fail to understand this Order was expressly stated not to apply to the children of widows, or to children residing with other relatives than their father, or to children who were blind or deaf and dumb, or to children whose fathers were for any reason absent from them.*

This belated attempt of the Local Government Board to spur the Destitution Authorities on to perform their statutory duty was a complete failure. In very few Unions was there any action at all taken under it. The express exclusion from its scope, without explanation, of the children of widows and deserted wives, and of absentee fathers seemed, to many of the Authorities concerned, to render it almost useless.† We do not find that the Local Government Board explained that the only reason for omitting these classes from the Order was that the Boards of Guardians had already, without any Order, unlimited power to grant Outdoor Relief at their discretion for the support of all destitute children, except such as resided with fathers who were able-bodied. Nor was it explained that it was open for the Local Education Authorities, or for anyone else conversant with the facts, quite irrespective of the Order, to send in lists of destitute children, every one of which would then have to be dealt with by the Destitution Authority. Amid all the misunderstanding and confusion, the Order quickly became a dead letter.‡ "The labour given to the officials," one of the Local Government Board Inspectors informs us, "and the expense to the Guardians, appear to be out of all proportion to the benefit conferred."§ At Manchester, Leeds and Bradford, where most seems to have been attempted under it, the action quickly broke down. The Local Education Authorities and the Boards of Guardians found it impossible to agree on any systematic scheme. When children were reported as underfed, the Boards of Guardians struck four-fifths of them off,‖ not because they disputed the children's need of additional food, into which they did not inquire, but because they chose to assume, on the information supplied to them by the Relieving Officers, that the parents could have provided food for their children if they had chosen to do so. But the Guardians took no steps whatever to enforce on these parents their legal responsibilities, and the children remained unfed. For the small minority of children whose parents the Guardians admitted to be destitute, they issued tickets which could be exchanged, at eating-houses of a cheap type and at other shops, for any food desired, this plan having all the unsatisfactory features of private charity. The fathers of many of the children who had received such tickets, indignantly refused to allow them to continue to receive them, when they understood that it involved, not only the striking off of their names from the electoral roll, but also the subsequent refunding of the value of the tickets under circumstances of public indignity. The numbers fell off to a nominal figure. Meanwhile, on the assumption that the Guardians were meeting the need, private donations declined: and a large number of children remained hungry.¶

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 246–254.

† "The whole Order," deposed the Clerk of the Education Committee of the Manchester Town Council, "was a most perplexing thing. Very early in the year there came down to Manchester a Poor Law Inspector who said that the construction of the Order was that the children of widows or deserted women should not come under the Order. That swept away a great many of these we had been feeding." (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Q.* 1208.) Similar evidence was given by School Managers and officers of the London County Council, who thought that the Order "rules out two classes of parents who really form the most difficult classes." (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children attending Public Elementary Schools, 1905, Vol. II., *Q.* 483, etc.).

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 5795, 6076, 6440, 6076, 7608, 8524, 8602, 9530, 12475, 13529, 18730, 18731, 20418–20756.

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XIII. (A) Par. 34, to Vol. I.

‖ The same result followed at Kettering, Northampton, and Norwich, among other places. (*Ibid.*, Appendices No. XIII. (A), Par. 34, and No. XXIII. (G), to Vol. I.).

¶ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXII. to Vol. IV., (as to Leeds); Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Qs.* 1173–1218 (as to Manchester), and *Qs.* 1651–1839 (as to Bradford); Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, etc., 1905, Vol. I., p. 83; Vol. II. *Qs.* 2270–2273, 5670, 5671.

The result of this long-continued abdication of duty by the Destitution Authority has been, in England and Wales, after calamitous delay, the assumption by the Local Education Authority of the obligation of seeing that hungry children are fed. There was no power to provide food out of the Education Rate, but we see the Local Education Authorities, in town after town, gradually driven to put themselves at the head of the movement, to do their utmost to spread out the charitable gifts so as to cover evenly the whole ground, to lend the aid of the school organisation, and to provide premises, equipment, staff and even fuel.* At last Parliament felt itself compelled to intervene. A Bill to enable Local Education Authorities to undertake the feeding of necessitous children was read a second time, and referred to a Select Committee. This Committee recommended "that the Local Education Authority ought to undertake the administration rather than the Board of Guardians," † up to the limit of a rate of ½d. in the £; and a measure to that effect became law in 1906.‡ In the winter of 1907–8, and still more in that of 1908–9, most of the Local Education Authorities of the great towns in England and Wales were, as we have mentioned, feeding children out of the Education Rate.

(D) The Failure of the Destitution Authority to Relieve Child Destitution.

We do not attribute the failure of the Destitution Authorities to prevent child destitution, to prosecute the negligent parents or to feed the hungry children—any more than we do their failure properly to supervise the host of children on Outdoor Relief—to any defects of the unit of area of Poor Law administration, or to any shortcomings in the persons who constitute Boards of Guardians. We have, indeed, been much impressed by the humanity, zeal and self-sacrificing industry displayed by the members of these Authorities—especially the women members—in all their dealings with the children. The failure is certainly as great in the large Unions, wielding practically the whole powers of populous Urban communities, as it is in the smaller ones. Thus, no alteration in the membership, no change in the constitution, no enlargement of the area of the Destitution Authority would remedy the defects that now stand revealed. The failure of the Boards of Guardians in the great centres of population in England, Wales and Ireland, and of the Parish Councils in those of Scotland, to relieve so much of the child destitution, is rooted in the very fact that they are Destitution Authorities, with a long established tradition of "relieving" such persons only as voluntarily come forward and prove themselves "destitute." § What is required is some social machinery, of sufficient scope, to bring automatically to light, irrespective of the parents' application, or even of that of the children, whatever child destitution exists. We see such machinery actually at work, so far as regards all the children of school age, in the organisation of the Local Education Authority. From its fifth or sixth to its fourteenth or fifteenth birthday, every poor child resident in the district is daily under the notice of the officers of this Authority. A staff of School Attendance Officers is occupied in searching out all children who ought to be on the school rolls. Once on the roll, if a child stays away, the School Attendance Officer visits its home as a matter of course. In school, the child is hour by hour under the observation of the teacher. The amount of its energy is being perpetually tested, mentally or physically. The systematic medical inspections now commanded will reveal the less obvious causes of malnutrition, for experience has shown "that it is very difficult to trace the source from which the unhealthy condition of the children arises, and that it might be due to congenital causes,

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* Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children attending Public Elementary Schools, 1905.

† It was represented to the Select Committee by the President of the Association of Poor Law Unions that, in the opinion of the Association, the provision of food to necessitous children "must be unquestionably allowed to be a question of the relief of the destitute," and the Association submitted "that their past experience in relief matters entitles them to the confidence of the country." (Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, *Q.* 2167.) But the witness doubted the existence of many cases needing relief (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 2177–2273). On the other hand, other Poor Law witnesses expressed a desire to be rid of the work. "I should prefer," said the Clerk of the Bradford Board of Guardians in 1906, "that the Education Authority should have the whole of the machinery" for providing food for necessitous children at school. "I think it would work better." At the same time he thought that the Poor Law Authority should undertake the necessary prosecution of neglectful parents, as it already possessed the legal powers to do so. (*Ibid.*, pp. 88, 89.)

‡ An amendment was inserted by the House of Lords excluding Scotland from the scope of the Act. It is significant that, after two years' experience, the power to feed necessitous children has now been given to the Scottish School Boards by the Education Act of 1908.

§ "From what I know of those neglectful parents," said a witness of great experience, "when the child is starting for school he will be warned that if he dares to tell his teacher that he wants a meal he will get a thrashing when he gets home, because his father will be locked up for not feeding the child." (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, etc., 1905, Vol. II., *Q.* 423.)

late hours, insanitary surroundings, uncleanliness, or work out of school hours." * It is clear that the Destitution Authority could not possibly duplicate this official machinery for keeping constantly and automatically under observation the entire child population. The evil to be remedied is not the destitution of a day or of a month, but the continuous carelessness and ignorance bred of chronic poverty. This fact was abundantly demonstrated in the four official inquiries the reports of which we have quoted, as well as in evidence that we have ourselves received. Though money and food were often necessary, it was not school dinners that would remedy the evils from which the children were suffering :—

> "The general features," we were informed, "prevailing in the homes of these neglected or underfed school children are strikingly alike. . . . There is an absolute lack of organisation in the family life. It seems to be entirely absent under conditions where careful and minute organisation of the family resources is more essential than anything else. Existence drags along, anyhow; the hours of work, leisure and sleep are equally uncertain and irregular. . . . The underfeeding of the children is but a part of a more important feature of the life in this district. The children's health is affected by many different evils, overcrowding, want of sleep, dirt and general irregularity of life."†

An Authority dealing with the child, or with the family, merely at the crisis of destitution, having no excuse for intervening before or after this crisis, can never cope with the conditions here revealed. What is required is the steady and continuous guidance of a friend, able to suggest in what directions effective help can be obtained where help is really needed, which will gradually remedy parental ignorance or neglect. In many cases friendly advice and warning will suffice.‡ Such an organisation for systematic friendly visiting can, we think, only be supplied by voluntary effort, working as part of the machinery of the Local Education Authority, and enabled in ways that we shall subsequently describe to bring to bear the material aid that the children, in some cases, are found actually to require. These Children's Care Committees, under one title or another, are now becoming part of the machinery of the Local Education Authority. They were, for instance, required by the Act of 1906, and their establishment has been expressly called for by the Board of Education.§ It is obvious that Committees of this sort, equipped with the personal knowledge of each child derived from the School Attendance Officers, the Teachers, the School Nurse, and the medical inspection, and sending their members as friendly visitors to the homes of the parents, are far better able to effect the improvements required than any machinery that the Destitution Authority can devise. Where the parents prove recalcitrant to moral suasion, the Local Education Authorities, besides their full power to prosecute the parents under the Children's Act, 1908, have at hand, in the Day Industrial Schools that we have described, which they have in some towns already established, a method of ensuring the proper sustenance of the children,

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* Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, p. v. It was largely for this reason that the House of Commons Committee were of opinion "that the Local Education Authority ought to undertake the administration" of the meals provided for necessitous children, "rather than the Boards of Guardians. It is true that the Boards of Guardians are in touch with the extreme poor in their districts, but the Local Education Authorities are in touch with the children. The latter have a machinery ready to deal with the problem reaching to the homes of the children. . . . The Local Education Authority through its managers and officers, assisted, as far as possible, by voluntary helpers, would form the desired connecting link with the home. The duty of investigation and inquiry appears to be one peculiarly suitable for them to assume." (*Ibid.*, p. viii.). "I would rather keep it in the hands of the Local Education Authority," deposed the Roman Catholic Vicar-General of the diocese of Southwark, after a lifetime of experience of extremely poor parishes, "than put it in the hands of the Boards of Guardians, for this reason, that once you bring it under the Boards of Guardians you inevitably bring the child, as it were, on the threshold of the workhouse. The next thing to not being fed at school is to be 'offered the House,' because Outdoor Relief is not given much in many of the Unions in London where there is an able-bodied man." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 1030.) The difficulty that the schools are not open and the meals are not provided, in the holidays, has been met, in practice, by the teachers arranging for the children known to be specially necessitous to be otherwise provided with meals during these periods. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 937, 938, 3395–3399.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 83251 (Pars. 38, 39, 69) (being the Report of an Inquiry by Miss Phelps in connection with Underfed School Children in the Dock District in Liverpool).

‡ "The moment they were inquired into," says one witness, "they began to feed them." (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. II., *Q.* 176.) "In many instances, warning has proved to be sufficient." (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, p. ix.).

§ Such committees were often called Relief Committees, or Children's Relief Committees, but Miss Frere found the term objectionable as importing Poor Law Associations. (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, 1905, Vol. II., *Qs.* 630–633.) Parliament, thinking only of meals and of the *cantines scholaires* of Paris, adopted the term School Canteen Committee. This was felt by the London County Council to be open to various objections, and the term Children's Care Committee has been adopted in London and in some other towns.

without relieving those parents who can maintain their offspring from the burden of providing for them. These Day Industrial Schools, originally established for the purpose of dealing with the neglect of parents to take the trouble to send their children regularly to school, have proved very successful in enforcing this particular parental responsibility.* The parent, far from escaping scot free, is ordered to make such weekly contribution to the cost of feeding his child as his means will allow; and experience shows that, far from dealing laxly with such parents, the Local Education Authorities have been quite strict in their enforcement of this parental obligation.† This use of the Day Industrial School has had a wonderful effect in stopping the particular form of parental neglect which shows itself in the child's truancy.‡ It has been suggested that the Local Education Authority has in the power of committing children to these schools an instrument which, whilst ensuring the proper feeding of the child, and not relieving the careless or neglectful parent of its cost, is likely to be equally efficacious in bringing to an end a large amount of wanton parental neglect to provide meals.§

(E) The Supersession of the Destitution Authority by the Local Education Authority.

The legislation of 1906–7, authorising the Local Education Authorities to give medical treatment and food to children found at school destitute of these requisites, sets the seal, in our opinion, on the necessity for completing, so far as children of school age are concerned, the supersession of the Destitution Authority by the Local Education Authority. It is, we think, clear that wherever the Local Education Authority performs what is now its statutory duty, and provides, or gets provided, not only schooling, but also medical inspection and treatment, and food for all who are in need of it, the Destitution Authority, in respect of the 20 per cent. of the population who are between the ages of five and fourteen, becomes superfluous. Where both Authorities are actively at work, there will be perpetual friction, overlapping and waste.‖ Moreover, the rapidly developing machinery of medical inspection at school, and the visits to the homes of School Attendance Officers,

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* Appendix No. LXXIII. to Vol. IX.

† Throughout Great Britain the parents of the children at the Day Industrial Schools, taken together, actually paid, on an average, more than 1d. per child per day. (Fiftieth Annual Report of Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1906, p. 7.) In Manchester, the Local Education Authority gets an average of 9d. per week. (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, etc., 1905, Vol. II., *Q.* 2939). In the sixteen day schools for the physically defective (crippled) children maintained by the London County Council, all the children, about 1,100 in number, are provided with meals every day. The Council provides the accommodation, the stoves and utensils, the fuel, the nurses who supervise, and about half the wages of the cooks. The parents are required to pay 1d. or 2d. a day, according to their means; about 3 per cent. only being altogether excused owing to extreme poverty. The balance of the expense is provided from charitable funds. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1–134.) In Chapter VIII. of this Part of our Report we shall deal fully with the question of recovering the cost from parents or other persons legally chargeable.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXIII. to Vol. IX.

§ This suggestion has been made to us by witnesses of the most varied opinions and diverse experience. Thus Mr. Toynbee thought "that a Day Industrial School would, on the whole, be the best way of dealing with exceptional cases." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 30622, Par. 44.) A similar suggestion was made by the Clerk to the Education Committee of the City of Manchester. (Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Medical Inspection, etc., 1905, Vol. II., *Q.* 2933.) We have the proposal brought before us by many other witnesses, *see* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 43441–43446, 43649–43654, 44215, 45157, 46502, 46503, Appendix No. LXXXII., (Par. 12) to Vol. IV.; Appendix No. LXXIII. to Vol. IX.

‖ Our own Children's Investigator informs us that, at one non-provided school in the Metropolis, "the level both of education and of discipline is distinctly lower than that of other schools in the same district. *Unfortunately, a particularly large proportion of Out-relief children attend this school, because free breakfasts are given in the winter, and an outfit of clothing every year.*" (Report . . . on the Condition of the Children, by Dr. E. Williams, 1908, p. 155.) At Bury St. Edmunds, we learn that it was found last winter that a large percentage of the families whose children were fed at school were in receipt of Outdoor Relief of an amount which the Education Authority thought inadequate. The attention of the Board of Guardians was called to the fact, but no steps were taken by them. The Education Committee of the Town Council accordingly continued to feed the children, whilst the Board of Guardians continued to give Outdoor Relief, and, we may add, the Distress Committee under the Unemployed Workmen Act provided relief works and wages to men who were, in many cases, the fathers of the children thus fed. This is what is happening this winter, in town after town. In Edinburgh, Liverpool, and various other large towns there is even another committee concerned. The Police-aided Clothing Association, administered in close connection with the Watch Committee and the municipal police force, supplies destitute children with clothing, children who may be simultaneously getting Outdoor Relief from the Board of Guardians, and free meals from the Education Committee, besides private charity, none of the donors being necessarily aware of the operations of the others. The Annual Report of the Edinburgh "Police-aided Scheme for Clothing Destitute Children," for 1905–1906 (which clothed 1,136 destitute children in the year), actually specifies, as the two typical examples of its work, two cases in each of which the family was known to be in receipt of Outdoor Relief (pp. 8, 9). At Liverpool, it has been brought to our notice that "a family received help from the Central Relief Society, the clergyman of the parish, the Police-aided Clothing Association, the 'Hot Pot Fund' and finally the parish authorities, in the space of four months." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 83251, Par. 65.)

School Nurses and members of Children's Care Committees seems to furnish, for the first time, an effective instrument for keeping under practically continuous supervision the 160,000 children of school age for whom Outdoor Relief is being granted, and the 35,000 more who, in different parts of the United Kingdom, are boarded-out or placed in residential homes. With such continuous supervision by the Local Education Authority, we believe that by far the best way for the community to provide for a destitute child is, so to speak, "to board it out with its own mother," upon an allowance really adequate for its full maintenance, provided that the mother is not mentally or morally unfit to be entrusted with its care. For undertaking the complete custodial care of children of school age who are without parents, or who have been compulsorily withdrawn from their unfit parents, the Local Education Authority offers manifest advantages over an Authority limited to the relief of destitution. Here the Local Education Authority has ready to hand, not only the device of Boarding-out already employed by that Authority under the supervision of Special Committees of philanthropic workers for some of the defective children, but also its residential schools, at present used only in the form of schools for special classes of children.* If, for other sections of children, the plan of Scattered Homes commends itself, the Local Education Authority can most conveniently place these Homes in proximity to the day schools which the children should attend, and can allocate the children among them in such a way as to provide each of them with accommodation in the type of school that its faculties make most appropriate. In so far as "Certified Schools and Homes" are made use of for particular kinds of children, the Local Education Authority, unlike the Destitution Authorities, will have at its command, qualified inspectors, accustomed to deal with the managers of voluntary institutions, and able to satisfy themselves of the value of the care and instruction given. Compared with the Local Education Authority in this respect, the Destitution Authority, even at its best, stands at a grave disadvantage. It either has to divorce the children from all the official machinery which it directs—the Guardians and the Relieving Officers striving, so to speak, to hide themselves from the children's view, in order to free them from all associations with the Poor Law—or else it smears their young lives over with the stigma of pauperism, and brands them as a special caste. What the Destitution Authority does in this dilemma is to impale itself alternately on each of the horns; never succeeding in wholly dissociating the children from the Workhouse or its precincts, and yet failing to maintain over them the watchful supervision that all systems require. Finally, even if it overcomes all these drawbacks, the Destitution Authority, as an Authority for children of school age, has, in the matter of education, an impossible task. The children with whom it has to deal are arbitrarily selected from the general child population by circumstances wholly irrelevant to their classification in the school, namely, by the destitution of the parents—the result being that old children and young, bright children and the mentally defective, criminal children and scholarship children, children who have been regularly under instruction and those who have been wandering untaught, are all dumped down in the same building, in the same classes, before the same teachers. In short, for the grouping of children in schools, as for the grouping of the sick in hospitals, the category of the destitute is a mischievous irrelevancy.†

(F) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report:—

1. That the Destitution Authorities of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland have proved themselves—in spite of the devoted personal service of many of their members—

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* It is not generally realised that the Local Education Authorities in England and Wales are already providing and maintaining residential or boarding-schools (thirty-two under the Children's Act of 1908, formerly under the Industrial Schools Acts; and eleven under the Education Acts, for blind or deaf children). (*See* Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1905, *Qs.* 19–21.) These have now increased to fifty, which is half as many as those of all the Destitution Authorities put together. For particulars of the practice of Education Authorities in "boarding-out," and otherwise providing for the maintenance of special classes of children, *see* Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. V., Appendix B., pp. 49–61. There are elaborate rules made by the Board of Education, regulating this boarding-out (Statutory Rules and Orders, 1900, No. 158); see *Ibid.*, pp. 206–210.

† "What all these children require," says a competent authority, "to whatever class they may belong, is moral, physical, and industrial education. The supreme authority in charge of delinquent and dependent children should be the Education Department of the State. So long as these children are looked at, as at present, through the eyes of the Criminal Department, or through the eyes of the Pauper Department, they will not receive the humane consideration to which their miseries entitle them; and Society will be punished for refusing them this consideration by seeing an ominous percentage of them relapsing into a life of habitual criminality and becoming a permanent danger to the community." (Juvenile Offenders, by Rev. W. D. Morrison, 1896, p. 304.)

inherently unfitted, by the very nature of their functions, to have the charge of the 237,000 children of school age for whom the State, in the United Kingdom, assumes the responsibility of whole or partial maintenance.

2. That, as a result of this inherent unfitness of a Destitution Authority for the rearing of children, it has been demonstrated to us by our own expert investigators, and confirmed by other evidence, that certainly a majority of all the Outdoor Relief children—probably 100,000 boys and girls—are to-day suffering, definitely and seriously, in health and character, from the circumstances of their lives—these circumstances being, in great part, the inadequate and unconditional character of the Outdoor Relief upon which they are supposed to be maintained, and the lack of care and supervision exercised by the Destitution Authorities, and of inspection by the three Local Government Boards, to prevent the too frequent neglect and ill-treatment of these wards of the State.

3. That, in spite of almost universal condemnation and notwithstanding a whole generation of effort on the part of the three Local Government Boards to get the children otherwise maintained, there are, in Great Britain three or four thousand, and in Ireland as many more, children of school age being brought up in the demoralising atmosphere of the General Mixed Workhouse; and we have found no evidence of any effective desire or intention on the part of the Destitution Authorities to take steps to bring to an end this discredited method of providing for children.

4. That the system of "boarding-out" the children with foster-parents, or placing them in certified institutions—a system which, under careful and continuous supervision, and confined to a minority of suitable cases, has much to recommend it—is, at present, seriously prejudiced by the fact that the Destitution Authorities and their officers are, by the very nature of their functions, unqualified to maintain an efficient inspection of the homes and institutions which they select for their children, let alone any continuous supervision of their welfare. In some cases it has even been deemed advisable to discourage or prohibit such visiting of the homes or institutions in order to avoid the connection of the children with the Destitution Authority which is supposed to look after them.

5. That the children in Poor Law Schools and Cottage Homes—the conditions of which have, for the most part, greatly improved—are, in many instances, maintained at an unnecessary cost; an excessive expenditure sometimes directly attributable to the inexperience of a Destitution Authority in school management, and one which still leaves the children suffering, even in well-administered institutions, from:—

(*a*) The difficulty of getting the best teachers in Poor Law Schools.

(*b*) The impracticability of affording these "institutionalised" boys and girls proper experience of life in a small home; and

(*c*) The educationally defective grouping together of children merely by the common attribute of their parent's destitution, instead of allocating them severally to the particular types of school (*e.g.*, mentally-defective schools, crippled schools, higher-grade schools, technical schools, etc.) that their individual characteristics require.

6. That owing to their lack of any appropriate machinery for the purpose, the Destitution Authorities fail to-day even to discover a large amount of the destitution that exists among children in the great towns; and this not merely in the matter of medical treatment urgently required, but even in the matter of actual inadequacy of food, so that the powers entrusted to the Boards of Guardians for the prosecution of cruel or neglectful parents are hardly ever put in force, and many thousands of children are, for lack of the necessaries of life, growing up stunted, debilitated and diseased.

7. That, as a consequence of this failure of the Destitution Authorities to prevent or to relieve child destitution, Parliament has been led, after many official investigations, to entrust to the Local Education Authorities the duty of providing meals for the children found at school unfed, at any rate on those days of the week, and those weeks of the year

when the elementary schools are open; with the result that these Authorities are in England and Wales, during the present winter, feeding more than 100,000 children, and probably nearly as many children of school age as are being relieved, otherwise than in institutions, by all the Destitution Authorities put together.

8. That these competing systems of relieving child destitution by rival Local Authorities in the same town—in many cases simultaneously assisting the same children—without any effective machinery for recovering the cost from parents able to pay, and for prosecuting neglectful parents, are undermining parental responsibility, whilst still leaving many thousands of children inadequately fed.

9. That it is urgently necessary to put an end to this wasteful and demoralising overlapping, by making one Local Authority in each district, and one only, responsible for the whole of whatever provision the State may choose to make for children of school age.

10. That the only practicable way of securing this unity of administration, and also the most desirable reform, is, in England and Wales, to entrust the whole of the public provision for children of school age (not being sick or mentally defective) to the Local Education Authorities, under the supervision of the Board of Education; these Local Education Authorities having already, in their Directors of Education and their extensive staffs of teachers, their residential and their day feeding schools, their arrangements for medical inspection and treatment, their School Attendance Officers and Children's Care Committees, the machinery requisite for searching out every child destitute of the necessaries of life, for enforcing parental responsibility, and for obviating, by timely pressure and assistance, the actual crisis of destitution.

11. That in Scotland, the whole of the public provision for children of school age might be entrusted, at any rate in the large towns, to the School Boards, and elsewhere, perhaps, either to the District Health Committee or to the newly-formed "County Committee of the District," under the supervision of the Scottish Education Department.

12. That in Ireland, where no Local Education Authorities exist, it should be considered whether the whole of the public provision for children of school age might not advantageously be entrusted to the County and County Borough Councils, acting through special "Boarding-out Committees," on which there should be women members, and sending the children to the existing day schools.

CHAPTER V.

The Curative Treatment of the Sick by Rival Authorities.

We find, throughout the United Kingdom at the present time, two separate and distinct public authorities dealing with the sick poor, the Destitution Authority, providing medical attendance, nursing and medicine, and often institutional treatment, for destitute sick persons whatever their diseases; and the Local Health Authority, providing, in the same area, medical attendance, nursing and medicine, together with institutional treatment where required, for persons whatever their affluence, suffering from certain specific diseases. Alongside of these two ubiquitous rate-supported Medical Services, we find a whole array of medical charities of one sort or another, dealing with essentially the same classes of persons and many of the same diseases.

(a) The Medical Service of the Poor Law.

Of the 915,000 simultaneous paupers in England and Wales, probably 120,000 are acutely sick, requiring, not merely maintenance, but also appropriate medical treatment. It is, therefore, somewhat remarkable that the Report of 1834 contained no recommendations as to the treatment of the sick.* Among the four separate institutions which the authors of that Report recommended as the minimum for each Union, a hospital found no place.† This was not because they were careless of the sufferings of the sick poor, but because the institutional treatment of sick persons was, at that date, hardly recognised as important, either from a curative or a preventive standpoint. What the authors of the 1834 Report contemplated providing for the sick poor—what indeed, was at that time the customary provision for the sick of all degrees—was merely the attendance of a medical man in their own homes and a plentiful supply of medicine. Accordingly when the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47, instead of establishing in each Union these four separate institutions, pressed for the building of one General Mixed Workhouse, this did not include any specialised provision for the sick. The most that was done was to set aside a room for such of the Workhouse inmates as became ill, for medical attendance upon whom the Board of Guardians contracted with a local doctor. Thus, whether within the Workhouse or in the sufferers' own homes, the conception of medical care was, in 1834, of the simplest.

During the past seventy years the influence of the Central Authority on the Boards of Guardians has, in this branch of their work, been of a two-fold character; it has attempted to restrict the area of Outdoor Medical Relief, whilst striving to improve the quality of Indoor Medical Relief. The crusade against Outdoor Relief, conducted, as we have seen, by the Inspectorate of 1869–86,‡ included as one of its departments a tightening-up of the conditions on which Medical Orders were habitually granted. Boards of Guardians were encouraged to subject the applicant for a Medical Order to the same inquisitorial inquiries and the same treatment by the Relieving Officer as if the application had been for money or food; to grant the relief "on loan," and to threaten to recover its cost; and generally to deter persons from applying for the services of the District Medical Officer except in dire necessity. On the other hand, there has been, especially from 1866 onwards, a steady pressure on the Boards of Guardians to improve the institutional provision for the sick poor, by erecting separate hospital buildings, by augmenting the medical staff, and by substituting trained nurses for the pauper attendants. This apparent inconsistency between the two parts of the medical policy of the Central Authority is explained by the assumption that Outdoor Medical Relief, whilst not in itself deterrent, was an open door to other forms of pauperism, to which it was apt to

* We estimate, though no statistics are available, that the pauper sick in England and Wales numbered on March 31st, 1906, probably 120,000; in Scotland, probably 16,000; and in Ireland, possibly 24,000, apart from the merely infirm aged, and the mentally defective. Including "chronic" cases, the number would be much greater. A Return obtained by the Commission from 128 Unions, comprising 31 per cent. of the population of England and Wales, showed that on a given day, 31·4 per cent. of all the paupers, indoor and outdoor (excluding lunatics in asylums) were actually receiving medical treatment. This indicates that throughout the United Kingdom there are probably 300,000 paupers under treatment. But half of these are merely "chronic" or "senile" cases.

† Report of 1834, p. 303.

‡ Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907

lead ; * whilst Indoor Medical Relief, however good in quality, would, by its very nature, always be deterrent, owing to the necessary loss of liberty, and would thus never be taken advantage of by any but those who were absolutely destitute.

The two-fold policy thus emanating from the Local Government Board has been reflected in the medical administration of the Boards of Guardians up and down the country, in an irregular manner and to a varying degree. Some Boards have distinguished themselves for diminishing, almost to the vanishing point, the number of Medical Orders given for the attendance of the sick poor in their own homes. Other Boards have marked themselves out by the efficiency and elaborateness of the costly "infirmaries" or "hospitals" that they have provided for the sick poor, and by the complete separation of these institutions from the General Mixed Workhouse. We have, however, to record that, in the great majority of Unions, especially those of rural or semi-rural character, the Boards of Guardians have shown themselves equally impervious to both sides of the advice and injunctions of the Local Government Board ; and have continued, with a minimum of improvement, much the same primitive provision for the sick poor, alike for those residing in their own homes and those within the General Mixed Workhouse, in which the authors of the Report of 1834 seem tacitly to have acquiesced.

(B) Domiciliary Medical Treatment under the Poor Law.

The domiciliary medical treatment of the sick poor is entrusted, in England and Wales, to 3,713 District Medical Officers, averaging five or six for each Union, severally appointed for life or during good behaviour by the Boards of Guardians concerned. The Local Government Board insists that the person appointed shall be legally qualified ; that he shall reside within the district assigned to him, and that he shall receive a permanent and personal appointment. Subject to these requirements, the selection of the District Medical Officer, the amount of his remuneration, and the detailed conditions of his appointment are left entirely to the discretion of the Guardians, who have usually, for this purpose, no expert advice at their command. In the first years of the Poor Law Commissioners the new Boards of Guardians were urged by them to put these appointments up to competition among the medical practitioners of the Union, and to appoint the man who, being duly qualified, offered to take the post (including the supply of the necessary medicines) at the lowest price.† This gave rise to much objection, and the Poor Law Commissioners

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* Investigation did not give much support to this assumption. Our Medical Investigator, for instance, reports that to him at the outset it seemed "a perfectly natural one, and I had no doubt of finding abundant evidence of its soundness in the first Union to be inspected. I decided to ask every inmate of its Workhouse who could give any information on the subject whether he or she had received medical Out-relief before getting any other kind of relief from the Guardians, and accordingly spent an afternoon interviewing the paupers, dependently of other Out-relief. The replies were so unexpected that I asked the master to continue catechising on the same lines and to give me a note of the particulars of all the answers obtained. He did so, and the result was similar." Dr. McVail then extended his inquiry, so as to include persons on Outdoor Relief. The outcome was that : "In only four out of 490 indoor paupers, and in only twelve of 1,198 outdoor paupers, or in practically 1 per cent. of each of the two classes, had general pauperism begun with Medical Out-relief only, so that in only this 1 per cent. is it possible that, in the rural Unions, Medical Out-relief had led the way to Indoor Relief, or to Outdoor Relief in money or in kind. The figures given for January 1st, 1905, correspond very closely to these. In a total of 6,018 paupers in the eleven rural Unions only sixty-six, or very little over 1 per cent., were in receipt of Medical Relief only. And it cannot be assumed that even this 1 per cent. was led into pauperism by receiving Medical Out-relief. In short, I found it impossible to get on a statistical basis any evidence of this alleged evil influence of Medical Out-relief" (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, pp. 141–2). In the Metropolis, where it is "the nearly unanimous opinion of Relieving Officers," that "the obtaining of Medical Orders, especially in the cases where nourishment is prescribed," is "a most prolific cause of pauperism," our Investigators into industrial conditions "found that of a total of 237 male operatives in the boot and shoe trades, a Medical Order formed the kind of relief first given in thirty-four cases, or about one-seventh of the total" (Report . . . on the Effect of Industrial Conditions on Pauperism, by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss R. E. Squire, p. 15). This, however, leaves it uncertain whether, even in those cases, the cause of pauperism was not the disease, rather than the issue of the Medical Order. We have been unable to get any evidence as to the relative effect on subsequent pauperism of cases of disease left unattended to, and cases of disease for which a Medical Order was granted.

† First Annual Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1835, p. 53 ; Report of the Poor Law Commissioners on the Further Amendment of the Poor Law, 1839, pp. 73–78, 156–287 ; Reports of House of Commons Committees of 1838, 1844, 1854, and 1864 ; *Life and Times of Thomas Wakley*, by S. Squire Sprigge, 1897.

and their successors in office gradually became converted to the advantage of transferring the competitive pressure from price to quality—offering an adequate salary for the duties required, of paying separately for drugs and other accessories of the treatment, and even of providing an official dispensary and a salaried dispenser. Unfortunately, but few of the 650 Boards of Guardians have yet adopted the new policy, in spite of all the pressure that the Local Government Board has exercised. In the great majority of Unions the District Medical Officers still have to find their own drugs and medicines, and any dressings and bandages that are required, and they are paid fixed stipends which vary from as little as £10 or £15 a year up to as much as £300 or £400, a very usual figure being £100; together with additional fees for midwifery cases and operations. Many of them declare that they do not receive more than 4d. or 6d. per visit.* Both the amount and the method of the remuneration of the District Medical Officers have repeatedly been made the subject of official criticism, which was brought forcibly to our notice. "It is undeniable," testified the Poor Law Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, "that the majority of medical officers, in or outdoor, are paid salaries miserably inadequate."† This is obviously due to the continuance, in a veiled form, of the practice unfortunately encouraged by the Poor Law Commissioners, of putting the office up to competitive tender. The Medical Inspector himself informed us that when, on one occasion, he "was a candidate for an outdoor medical officership, . . . a colleague of mine offered to do the work for nothing for one year if he was appointed, and afterwards at a much less salary than I asked for."‡ "When I tell guardians that their . . . medical officers are not adequately paid," remarked to us one of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, "they answer: 'Well, at all events, we have only to advertise it, and we shall get any amount of candidates who are perfectly ready to come forward and do the work on the terms we offer. In the face of that, can we, in the proper performance of our duty to the ratepayers, offer more than we can get what we want for?'"§ What was not fully considered by the Poor Law Commissioners, and is still not adequately realised by the Boards of Guardians, is that so long as these appointments are thrown open to private practitioners, they will be taken for other reasons than the salaries offered. "One knows," testified a competent witness, "that the medical men in a great many instances do not take office for the emolument which they will get from the office, but for various other considerations. Probably one of the chief considerations is to keep somebody else out. There are a certain number of men who have the medical work in a certain area between themselves and they naturally want to keep another practitioner from coming in. That is one motive. Another motive is that holding Poor Law offices does indirectly bring them practice. . . . Even taking all that into consideration, I do not think that there is any justification for not paying a man a fair value for his work. I think it is very undesirable that Medical Officers should be able to say: "Well, if they find fault with me, at all events I feel this—that I am giving them more than their money's worth."‖ "The evils arising, or likely to arise, from this underpayment," says a competent witness, "are various. The Medical Officer is compelled to economise his time too strictly; he cannot afford to supply expensive medicines or to carry out modern improvements in medical

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* Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, pp. 119–121; Report by Mrs. Sidney Webb, on the Medical Services the Poor Law and Public Health Departments, p. 13. It seems gradually to have become customary for the Guardians in their contract with the District Medical Officer, to undertake to supply certain "expensive" drugs, usually cod liver oil, and quinine. The selection of these drugs in this way seems, in view of altered prices and the changes in medical practice, somewhat out of date. Potassium iodide, for instance, is sometimes included, sometimes not. Diphtheria antitoxin is hardly ever supplied; though the Local Government Board has informed one Union that this may be done (Local Government Board to Winchcombe Board of Guardians, July, 1906). One District Medical Officer found that he spent 8s. upon it for two cases only, so that the antitoxin is, in fact, hardly ever used for paupers. The Local Government Board has lately declared, in answer to an inquiry, that, not only the above, but also antiseptic surgical dressings, cocaine, phenacetin, trional, antipyrine, salicylate of sodium, tincture of digitalis, and serum preparations ought all to be included in "expensive medicines."

† Evidence of Dr. Fuller, Inspector for Poor Law Medical Purposes in the Provinces of England and Wales, Appendix, No. XXI. (A), Par. 25, to Vol. I.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 10460.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 8920, 9320.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 9320. This evidence was confirmed by that given by the Secretary of the Poor Law Medical Officers' Association, *Ibid.*, *Q.* 33419.

treatment."* Nevertheless, only in two or three instances have the whole services of a Medical Officer been secured, at a "full-time" salary. Only in the Metropolis and a few other towns is an official dispensary or a salaried dispenser provided.† Practically only in these few cases is the District Medical Officer set free to prescribe what he may deem necessary for the patient, without having to pay for it out of his own pocket. Everywhere, with but two or three exceptions, the whole duty is entrusted, at a scanty and inclusive stipend, to one of the local practitioners.

The conditions under which the District Medical Officers carry out their duties are as unsatisfactory as their remuneration is demoralising. They are at the beck and call of the Relieving Officer, a non-medical authority, who has the right, at his unaided discretion, to refuse a sufferer access, to direct him to call at the doctor's house, or (by merely marking the medical order "urgent") to require the doctor himself immediately to visit the patient's residence.‡ If the District Medical Officer, obeying the dictates of humanity, attends any urgent case without the Relieving Officer's order, he not infrequently finds himself refused, "on some frivolous pretext or another," the midwifery fee or other emolument to which he would normally have been entitled.§ The majority of the cases that he has to attend are, moreover, of the most disheartening kind—largely old people, with chronic complaints, or persons of more than the average degree of ignorance, carelessness, intemperance and, above all, grinding poverty, with the drawbacks of bad housing, the poorest kind of clothing, insufficient and unsuitable food, inadequate attendance,‖ and an almost total absence of skilled nursing. The Boards of Guardians have power to appoint salaried nurses for the outdoor sick, but they have almost uniformly refused to do so. In a small minority of Unions they pay a subscription to the local nursing association, so that the paupers may obtain a share of the services of the district nurse. But over the greater part of the country there is no district nurse; and it is rare for the Guardians to make any sort of provision for nursing the outdoor sick poor.¶

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 33391, Par. 4. In one rural Union, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Guardians stated that the District Medical Officer got no allowance for even the most expensive medicines, and that he had been heard to complain that his salary hardly covered the cost of the medicines he supplied (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 71432, 71433). "The poor do suffer to some extent," declared a District Medical Officer, "we could do much more justice if we were paid better; if there is a choice between an expensive and better method of treatment and an inexpensive method of treatment not quite so good, I am afraid they get the inexpensive method." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 74925–8). "Drugs should be provided by the Guardians," said a Medical Officer of Health, "the doctor giving a prescription to be taken to the chemist. The poor would then get the drugs they need, and not what the Medical Officer thinks he can afford to give them on his diminutive salary" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. CLIX, (Par. 8) to Vol. VII.

† The Poor Law Dispensary, with premises, drugs, and a salaried dispenser provided by the Board of Guardians, where the District Medical Officer attends at stated times to see such of his patients as can come to him, has been, since 1867, established at the instance of the Central Authority in all but two of the Metropolitan Unions. Similar dispensaries have since been established by the Boards of Guardians of a score of provincial towns. This brings with it the advantage of freeing the District Medical Officer from the misplaced duty of providing, out of his meagre stipend, the drugs and medicines that he prescribes, and also, to some extent, of facilitating his work by enabling him to deal more expeditiously with the half of his patients who come to the dispensary, at the cost, however, of diminishing for that half the opportunities for diagnosis and appropriate hygienic advice that are afforded by seeing the patient at home. In all other respects the arrangements are the same as where no Poor Law Dispensary is provided. The shortcomings of the Poor Law Dispensaries from the standpoint of curative treatment are stated in our Medical Investigator's Report (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, pp. 126–139; *see also* Report . . . on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and Public Health Departments, pp. 14, 15.)

‡ It is said to be a practice in some Unions to mark all Medical Orders "urgent," that are given out of regular hours.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 33391, Par. 11.

‖ Here is a case which one of our Committees happened to visit. Their Report says: "This is the case of a man dying of cancer in the throat. We found the door locked, and but for a kindly neighbour who opened a window and found the key, we could not have got in, the man being quite alone, hardly able to speak, and horribly ill. The house very poor. A daughter earns 9s., the only regular income, and the rent is 4s. 2d. The old wife had gone to a neighbour where she would earn 4d. by minding the house. The Relieving Officer did seem to see the horror of this man lying there locked in, and suggested sending the ambulance. Relief, 5s. and a loaf." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 22 G., p. 57.)

¶ There used to be an idea that one outdoor pauper could nurse another; and some Boards of Guardians still embody in their By-laws that: "Out-paupers will be required to attend other out-paupers in sickness, when ordered by the Relieving Officer to do so." (Rules of Kingsclere Board of Guardians.) Some Boards occasionally allow a shilling or two to a neighbouring woman to look in upon a sick patient. This is, however, discouraged and restricted. "No allowance," run the rules of several Unions, "shall be made for nursing except in special cases." (Rules of Warwick Board of Guardians; similarly, in various terms, at Brixworth, Cheltenham, Banbury, etc.) At Chichester, where it so happens that the Workhouse Medical Officer is also the Outdoor Medical Officer for the whole Union, the Workhouse nurses are—as at Merthyr, Rochdale and Sculcoates—sent out as required, to attend to the patients on Outdoor Relief. "The result is," says the Medical Inspector, "that at Chichester we get a vastly better nursing staff than we have in other Workhouses of the same size," and the Outdoor poor are better nursed (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 10376–9).

Our Medical Investigator reports that "In many villages and their surrounding neighbourhood, I found that no district nurse whatever was available. District Medical Officers complained very much of this want of assistance, and the complaint was well founded. . . . Quite unquestionably, in some rural districts the want of sick-nursing of paupers is a serious defect in the present system of Poor Law medical relief." * This was, indeed, frankly stated by the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board. "The lack of nursing upon the outdoor sick poor," testified one of them, "is another source of hardship, and one which urgently needs to be dealt with." † The fact that wool, lint and bandages are hardly ever supplied by the Guardians aggravates the evil. The District Medical Officer can order nothing better than clean rags for dressings, lest" (as one of them said "the bad legs should ruin him."‡ As things are, it is unfortunately painfully true, as an experienced District Medical Officer informed us, that "many cases die simply from want of proper nursing. I cannot," he said, "speak strongly enough on this point. It is one of the Medical Officer's greatest drawbacks that he cannot get efficient nursing for his outdoor cases." § "It is dreadful," reports a Local Government Board Inspector, "to think of the amount of unnecessary inconvenience, to say the least, suffered by outpatients now, looked upon as a matter of course, and allowed to continue with no practical effort to prevent it. If expense were incurred it would be doubly justifiable. Firstly, because of the suffering it would alleviate. Secondly, for the more cynical reason that it would restore the patient to health, and get him off the rates much more quickly. Medical Officers are handicapped in their work when they have no intelligent nursing power behind them, and know that it is useless to try many things that might be done if there were the requisite attendance at hand." ‖ Finally, the District Medical Officers are deprived of the stimulus and encouragement of official recognition or supervision. They have no medical superior to whom they can report; they are not even in official communication with the Medical Officers of Health of their districts, or with the County Medical Officer. As some of them have complained to us, they are never asked, either by the Boards of Guardians or by the Local Government Board, for particulars of their success or failure in treating cases, or for details of any improvement in treatment that they may have introduced. There are no medical statistics of their work. According to the "year's count" of pauperism that the Commission had taken for England and Wales, no fewer than 216,022 persons received "Medical Relief only" in the course of one year, to say nothing of those who got other relief as well. Yet, by what seems to have been an official oversight that we do not understand, these 3,713 District Medical Officers are left to do their work without either supervision or inspection by the Local Government Board.¶ From 1834 down to the present day there has been no official inspection of this Poor Law Medical Service, which costs in salaries, dispensaries, and drugs alone, nearly £500,000 sterling annually.

Under these circumstances, we were not surprised to find existing a certain dissatisfaction with the Outdoor Medical Service of the Poor Law. The Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, who "has no duties in connection with the supervision or administration of Outdoor Medical Relief," ** informed us, in reply to our questions, that, "unofficially," he was "constantly hearing complaints" that patients on Outdoor Medical

* Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, p. 112.

† Evidence of Mr. Baldwyn Fleming, Appendix No. XIX. (A), Par. 22, to Vol. I.

‡ "Many of the old people whom I saw," reports our own Medical Investigator, "were afflicted with ulcers of the legs; the use of proper and sufficient dressings for such ulcers was the exception. Lint and gutta-percha tissue and other non-porous coverings are seldom provided. Linen rags are the rule. These are usually obtained from neighbours or from the charity of the better-off in the community. Linen rags saturated with a medicated lotion may be comfortable enough, so long as the rags are kept wet, but at night, when the patient goes to sleep, the lotion will quickly evaporate, and in the morning the rag and ulcer will be closely adherent, and not separable without a good deal of pain." (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. McVail, 1907, p. 102.)

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 34566, Par. 6 (c). "There is no doubt in my mind," testifies another witness, "but that the medical assistance to the poor (paupers) is seriously affected by the complete absence of any organised scheme for the proper nursing of the patients in their own homes." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 75774, Par. 6.) Nor need this attendance be wholly that of a trained nurse. "Much help could be given, and better results obtained," says a District Medical Officer, "by the employment of respectable women to thoroughly cleanse and keep clean the homes of the poor where there is sickness in the house, and a qualified nurse is not necessary for this purpose." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. CXLVIII. (Par. 6) to Vol. VII.) "The very poor people, I am sure," says another witness, "are very much neglected indeed; there are a great many deaths due to it (inadequate nursing) that would otherwise get better." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 34672.)

‖ Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1905–6, p. 466. (Mr. Fleming's Report.)

¶ This lack of official inspection was made the subject of complaint by several of the District Medical Officers themselves; *see* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 34566 (Par. 6 (b)), 34648, and Appendix No. XCI. (Par. 6) to Vol. VII. We were informed that, with the exception of two Reports on the London dispensaries, there were no systematic Reports in existence on the working of Outdoor Medical Relief. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 22923.)

** *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXI. (A), Par. 29, to Vol. I.

Relief were not well and sufficiently attended.* The District Medical Officers, said one witness "do the work according to the pay." He did not think the paupers were treated as well as the paying patients. "The doctor," he said, "takes these positions in order to further his private practice, and I am afraid the poor very often have to suffer for that reason; he takes it too cheap." † "The present plan of medically assisting the poor under the Poor Law," says a medical practitioner, himself a Guardian, "is not an efficient system. The average Poor Law Medical Officer (outdoor) does not give the satisfaction he ought to his patients." ‡ "The working classes," says another medical practitioner, "have the idea that the attention they get from the Poor Law Medical Officer is not satisfactory."§ "They feel," said another witness, "that the District Medical Officers have not the time to attend to them." ‖ "I am inclined to think," deposed a Shropshire Guardian, "that they do not get much of his services. He goes round to them in a casual way, but there are great complaints that the patients of the Poor Law . . . do not get very much attention from the doctors . . . I merely speak from my knowledge of the cottagers themselves, and where there is illness, I find if there are more important cases in the neighbourhood the poor are neglected." ¶ "The poor people are very dissatisfied, I find," said the Hon. Sydney Holland, "with the medical relief that they get from the Poor Law authorities; it is given in a very grudging spirit, and they do not believe in it." ** One of the District Medical Officers himself admitted to us "that the tradition of the service is that every pauper is to be looked on as being such through his or her own fault, and the tendency is to treat the case accordingly. . . . In the town . . . I believe that the tradition, as to a pauper, is that he is a shade only above a criminal. . . . Now to this tradition the Medical Officer tends, like all other officers, to become a victim, and the tendency is that the case of sickness is treated as a 'pauper' and not as a 'patient.' The Commission will, I trust, see the distinction." ††

These complaints appear to us to do less than justice to the District Medical Officers themselves. So far as we have been able to see anything of their work, we have been struck by their personal kindness to the poor, and by their desire to relieve suffering. When we consider the method and amount of their remuneration, and the conditions of their duties, we are impressed with the zeal and devotion displayed, with the humanity shown to the poor, and with the large amount of unpaid, unrecognised and unrecorded work performed by them as a class. But taking into account all the evidence, we have to make two main criticisms on the Outdoor Medical Service as a system involving a large expenditure of public money. In too many Unions, it is clear, outdoor medical relief begins and ends with a bottle of medicine and, in the twentieth century, we have ceased to believe in the bottle of medicine. It is not regarded as any part of the duty of the Poor Law Medical Officer to insist on, or even to inculcate, the personal habits necessary for recovery. "Under the Poor Law," reports our Medical Investigator, "there is practically no sanitary supervision of phthisis in the home of the patient. . . . Phthisis cases are maintained in crowded unventilated houses. . . . Diabetes cases live on the rates and eat what they please. Infirm men and women supported by the Poor Law are allowed to dwell in conditions of the utmost personal and domestic uncleanliness. . . . It is not worth while entering on any reform of the Poor Law unless this policy is changed. Beneficiaries must be compelled to obedience, alike in their own and in the public interest. And the officers who are placed in direct charge of the beneficiaries must themselves be subject to supervision and discipline."‡‡ Our second criticism is that, from first to last, there is, in the Poor Law Medical Service, no thought of anything but "relief." It is not regarded as any part of the duty of the District Medical Officer to take any steps to prevent disease, either in the way of recurrence in the same patient, or in its spread to other persons. His work is entirely unconnected, on the one hand, with the institutional treatment of the

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 10572.
† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 71430–4.
‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 42509, Par. 2.
§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 43150.
‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 44672.
¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 71725, 71774.
** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 32536.
†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 51859, Par. 7. "I certainly think," says a county medical practitioner, "the health of the community suffers owing to the insufficiency of the medical assistance." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVIII. (Par. 7) to Vol. VII.) "The poor," said another medical practitioner, who is himself a Poor Law Guardian, "are choked off by the Relieving Officer, and by the Guardians in many cases; and I am afraid the manner of some of the Medical Officers chokes them off as well." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 42519.)
‡‡ Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, pp. 91 and 149.

sick in the workhouse or Poor Law Infirmary, and on the other with the operations of the Medical Officer of Health. It is not regarded as any matter of reproach to a Board of Guardians or to its staff, that numerous mild cases of scarlet fever or chickenpox and even thirty or forty per cent, of the cases of measles or whooping cough, ringworm or mumps should be wholly destitute of medical attendance, to the serious danger of the public health.* It is not even the business of the District Medical Officer to reduce the amount of sickness in his district. All that he is charged to do, as it is all that he is paid to do, is to "relieve destitution" in a certain specialised way, namely, to supply medical relief to those applicants who have braved the deterrent attitude of the Relieving Officer and satisfied him that they would otherwise be without it. From first to last, in short, the Outdoor Medical Service of the Poor Law has no conception of the Public Health point of view.

(c) The Restriction of Domiciliary Medical Treatment.

In the early part of our inquiry it was brought to our notice by the advocates of strict administration, that many Boards of Guardians had failed to carry out the policy pressed on them by some of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board to restrict the grant of Medical Orders to persons actually destitute. We found, indeed, that in a large number of Unions the grant or refusal of a Medical Order was practically left to the discretion of the Relieving Officer—on occasions, indeed, even to the discretion of the workhouse porter.† One of our committees, for instance, after visiting a large urban Union reported that the "orders for medical relief were sanctioned *en bloc*."‡ Of another populous Union our committee reported that "the medical relief was in all cases ordered by the Relieving Officer, the Committee (of the Board of Guardians) merely confirming his action. The order in each case lasted for a month."§ Under these circumstances the tendency naturally is for the Relieving Officers to grant Medical Orders freely and indiscriminately; sometimes in order to protect themselves against the risk of having an applicant die for lack of help;‖ sometimes "with a view," as the President of the Association of Poor Law Unions informed us, of "getting rid of" applicants for relief on the easiest possible terms. A Relieving Officer will say, for instance, "we will give you a Medical Order if you like, but we will give you nothing else."¶ Frequently every person, well or ill, who receives Outdoor Relief, is put on "the permanent list," and becomes entitled himself to send for the District Medical Officer whenever he chooses.** In the laxest Unions, as we have gathered, Medical Orders are given to all who apply for them, without even being entered in the Application and Report Book.†† We have even had it given in evidence that, in one Union, the practice is for the Relieving Officers to sign a batch of such Orders at a time, with the names and dates blank, and to leave them with the shopkeepers of the villages, from whom any person gets one who chooses to ask for it.‡‡

This lavish and indiscriminate grant of Medical Orders, by medically unqualified persons, without any verification of the fact of illness, or of its urgency or gravity, has, we think, a disastrous effect, both on the quality of the service rendered and on the spirit in which it is accepted. Under such a system a District Medical Officer is quite in the dark as to the weight to be attached to the Order that he receives from the Relieving Officer; he can feel no assurance that his services are really needed, or that the case is one of urgency. We have even heard of instances in which he has suspected, apparently with some justification, that the Order has been applied for by a malingerer,[1] given by a Relieving Officer, or marked by him urgent, in order to vex or harass the doctor in

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* *See* the statistics given in the Report . . . on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and Public Health Departments, p. 47.

† *Ibid.*, p. 8.

‡ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 24 C., p. 63.

§ *Ibid.*, No. 2 E., p. 11. Another of our Committees found that: "Medical Orders are given with practically no inquiry, and the recipients do not appear before the Committee" (*Ibid.*, No. 112, p. 177). These facts were confirmed by the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, who informed us that, in some Unions, "an order for Outdoor Medical Relief is given without any inquiry, simply on the application of the person." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 10302.)

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 22767–71.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 25024.

** In the Metropolis alone there are 20,000 persons on "the permanent list."

†† Report . . . on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and Public Health Departments, p. 8; *see also* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 10302.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 70671–82.

revenge for some former lack of compliance on his part with an unwarranted request. Moreover, a lavish distribution of Medical Orders to all applying for them is a contravention of the present contract with the District Medical Officer, who is paid a meagre salary for attendance only on parishioners who are both sick and actually destitute. All this tends to make the District Medical Officers reluctant and suspicious—to quote again the words of one of them, to make them regard the holders of Medical Orders "as paupers rather than as patients." It is to the credit of the District Medical Officers that their representations to us have taken the form, in the main, of complaints that many poor persons who in fact need their attendance are, under the present system, deterred from getting it; and that, when such persons do succeed in obtaining a Medical Order, the delay has often injurious results. It has been pointed out that this would not be the case if, instead of the Relieving Officer, it was the District Nurse, the Certified Midwife, the Health Visitor, the Sanitary Inspector, or any qualified person under obligation to search out and report cases of illness, who notified to the District Medical Officer that a sick person was in need of medical attendance. Nor is the effect of this indiscriminate grant of peremptory orders to the District Medical Officer, to visit persons who may or may not be ill, any less harmful to the recipients. Whatever may be the advantage of a public organisation of medical assistance, as universal and as free—if not also as compulsory—as that of education, a careless and ignorant issue, by a Destitution Authority, of Poor Law Medical Orders to persons not really entitled to them, encourages fraud and malingering. The holder of a Medical Order may have merely pretended to be ill or pretended to be destitute; he is under no responsibility with regard to his own illness, or to the order which he has obtained; he presents it or not, as he chooses; he takes the medicine or throws it away at his option; he follows the doctor's advice, or remains dirty and dissolute, exactly as he pleases—without feeling under any obligation to the community to co-operate in his own cure, or under any kind of compulsion to abandon the evil courses which may have led to his ill-health.

On the other hand, it was represented to us that, in some Unions, there has been a persistent, and in a sense successful, attempt to restrict the use by the sick poor of the services of the District Medical Officers provided for them. In these Unions "Good administration of the Poor Law Medical Service" is apparently taken to mean not curing the sick or preventing ill-health, but cutting down the number of Medical Orders. This policy is even expressed in standing orders or bylaws. Thus, Relieving Officers are often forbidden to grant Medical Orders without first paying a personal visit to the home of the applicant and investigating his circumstances,* in order, not to find out how best to cure the sufferer, but if possible to discover some ground which makes him ineligible for aid. Other Boards expressly say "that orders by the Relieving Officer for Medical attendance must be more charily given, due inquiries being made when possible at the house before being granted, or at any rate at the earliest moment possible after being granted." † In some Unions the applicant for a Medical Order is required to attend personally before the Guardians at their meeting, and explain, to this non-medical authority, how he comes to need medical aid. "Midwifery Orders," says one Board, "shall not be given by the Relieving Officer, except in urgent cases, without the consent of the Board of Guardians, given on personal application to them." ‡ An even more usual way of staving off applicants is, whatever their circumstances, to insist on granting the Medical Order only as "relief on loan," this being sometimes printed, as a matter of course, on the form. "All orders for medical attendance," says a Suffolk Board of Guardians, "shall be granted in the first instance by way of loan, the applicant to repay 10s. for each midwifery case, and 5s. for each other case." § The applicants then remain liable to repay the cost; and the Relieving Officer is sometimes allowed a commission of 20 per cent. on what he can recover. Occasionally the grant of Medical Orders in midwifery cases is restricted to families having less than a prescribed income, it may be 15s. or 18s. or 21s. a week, whatever the number of children,‖ or it may be at the rate of 2s., 2s. 6d., or 3s. a week for each member of the family.¶ In the Ellesmere Union we were informed that Medical Orders were never

* Regulations of Bromsgrove Board of Guardians; also at Calne, and many other places.

† Instructions of Wincanton Board of Guardians.

‡ Rules of Keynsham Board of Guardians.

§ Rules of Mitford and Launditch Board of Guardians; similarly in various terms, at Hinckley, Ruthin, St. Asaph, Llanfyllin, Warwick, Yeovil, Monmouth, Cosford, Nantwich, and many other places.

‖ Rules of the Chertsey, Lymington, Godstone and Lewisham Boards of Guardians.

¶ "That where the earnings of a family amount to 3s. per week for each member thereof, orders for medical aid be not given, except in fever or other extreme cases." (Regulations of Evesham Board of Guardians.) "Able-bodied people, if earning less than 2s. 6d. per head in family, may have Medical Orders for man, wife, and children. . . . Midwife; basis not to exceed 2s. per head in family." (Resolution of East and West Flegg Board of Guardians, 1904.)

given to anyone, however ill, who was not otherwise in receipt of relief ; in fact, the Guardians were under the impression that it could not lawfully be done. * A more ingenious way of deterring applicants is to resolve " that when relief is administered to a labouring man who is himself ill (if the disease is not contagious) the Board requires that some of the children shall come to the Workhouse during the sickness,"† that is to say, into the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described. When the Medical Order has been given, it is made the duty of the Relieving Officer to visit the case frequently and regularly ;‡ not to see whether the patient is obeying the doctor's orders, or whether anything else is needed to restore him to health, but in order to discover whether he has not some undisclosed resources which would permit of the relief being withdrawn. The Guardians are, in fact, as one committee reports, " strongly of opinion that a large number of the cases relieved would manage without assistance from the Guardians if they were properly and systematically visited and dealt with by the Relieving Officer."§

We have found the practice of some Boards of Guardians even more severely restrictive of the use of the District Medical Officers than is implied by the foregoing Bylaws. Thus, the Bradfield Union in this way claims to have reduced the number of Medical Orders granted from 700 to forty-seven per annum.‖ In the Bermondsey Union, where the poor are said to " have more difficulty in getting relief now than they used," the permanent list of those on whom the District Medical Officers have to attend has fallen from over 1,000 in 1901, to 322 in 1906, not because there is less sickness in Bermondsey, or less destitution, but merely because more difficulty has been put in the way of the sick poor getting Medical Orders ¶ Nor is there any doubt as to the cause of the reduction. One District Medical Officer informed us that he was convinced that the reduction in the number of Medical Orders granted in a particular Union was due entirely to the deterrent effect of insisting on prior investigation and personal application to the Board of Guardians.** The St. Pancras Board of Guardians reduced the number of its Medical Orders from 5,324 in 1899 to 2,546 in 1903,†† by making stringent inquiries on every application, requiring the applicant to appear personally before the Board, tendering the Medical Relief on loan in many cases, and offering the alternative of admission to the Workhouse whenever deemed advisable. Thus the Medical Superintendent of the Mill Hill Infirmary of the West Derby Union (Dr. Nathan Raw) states " people will struggle on with a disease and spend all their money, and then apply to the Poor Law, in some cases almost when the people are dying . . . in many cases they are deterred from seeking it until it is too late."‡‡ " The neglect of the poor to apply for Medical Relief," says another witness, " is partly due to the idea that Poor Law relief is a degradation. It has been so officially styled by the Poor Law Board, and I believe it is so considered by many of those engaged in the administration of the Poor Law."§§ " You will find," we were told, that " in most cases where " the delay in getting prompt medical assistance " is the fault of the people, it is because sending for the doctor means making themselves paupers."‖‖ The representatives of the British Medical Association were emphatic in their testimony that the association of the public medical aid with the Poor Law was in itself deterrent ; it was, they said, " the experience of every practitioner . . . that people avoid calling in

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 71420–6.

† Report of Atcham Board of Guardians, 1871 ; also adopted by the Pewsey Board of Guardians. " The method," states the Report of the Atcham Board of Guardians, " also acts as a test of destitution, for in almost every case where the parties have refused to send the children "—refused, that is, to plunge their children into the General Mixed Workhouse, for the Atcham Union has no separate institution for its children—" they have gone without relief altogether," and, as the Report optimistically assumes, " have had other means of support, and should not have applied to the Relieving Officer."

‡ " That the Relieving Officers be required to make at least fortnightly visits to the homes of all persons receiving relief on account of temporary sickness, and to visit the old and infirm cases at least once a quarter." (Regulations of Evesham Board of Guardians) ; similarly at Cheltenham, Warwick, Haverfordwest, Oxford, Luton, Holywell, and many other places.

§ Report of Special Committee of Willesden Board of Guardians ; MS. Minutes, Willesden Board of Guardians, December 13th, 1905.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 9499, 19781, and Appendix No. CCXI. (A) to Vol. VII.

¶ Report . . . on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and Public Health Departments, p. 22.

** Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 34076–8, 34164.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 23074.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 37946 ; *see* Confirmatory Evidence by Dr. Niven, Medical Officer of Health, Manchester, *Qs.* 38380–38626.

§§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 25373, Par. 157.

‖‖ Evidence of Dr. J. S. Cameron, Medical Officer of Health, Leeds, *Ibid.*, *Q.* 41629.

the parish doctor because he *is* the parish doctor." * The reluctance to come forward and state their need is increased by the fact that it is not to a medical man or a nurse that the sick persons have to make their applications for public medical assistance, but to the Relieving Officer, who,† as we have seen, almost inevitably comes to think of himself as bound to do all that he can to keep people "off the rates." ‡ To the Relieving Officer, under the instructions of the Local Government Board and the Bylaws of the Boards of Guardians, this medical treatment of the sick by the District Medical Officer, even without other aid, is not to be denied to those who are both in need of it and actually destitute, but nevertheless to be restricted to as few cases as possible. The Hon. Sydney Holland, who has been a Poor Law Guardian in two different Unions, and whose experience of hospital administration is very great, informed us that when he was a Guardian he himself entirely acquiesced in this policy and "thought it was a very good thing. I thought that everybody who came before us was a swindler and must be most carefully inquired into, and asked whether he had not drunk too much, and all the rest of it. That is the ideal Guardian, a man who prevents imposition. . . . All Poor Relief," he continues, "is given reluctantly. Every Guardian is told to give it reluctantly; every Poor Law Officer gives it reluctantly, and, in fact . . . the only person you relieve in the Poor Law is the person who is starving. . . . It is exactly the same with regard to medical relief. You are not to treat medically unless they are paupers." The result is, as he informed us, "that the poor people were dissatisfied with the medical relief they got from the Poor Law; that it is given grudgingly . . . the man going to the Relieving Officer, being put in the dock, questioned up hill and down dale, and treated as a thief." §

The advocates of this policy of restricting the use of the District Medical Officers asserted that it resulted in no hardship to the poor, or injury to the community. Other witnesses declared that it was "a real danger to the public," ‖ and that it was responsible for much of the excessive mortality among infants and unnecessary ill-health and premature invalidity among the wage-earners. In face of this conflict of testimony, we thought it necessary, not only to appoint a special medical investigator, but also to consult those who were officially responsible for the public health—taking evidence, oral or written, from no fewer than 51 Medical Officers of Health. We regret to report that the authoritative testimony thus obtained does not support the optimistic assumptions of the advocates of restriction of public medical aid. Whilst some of the witnesses seemed to take for granted the present system as inevitable, and not to have noticed any of its drawbacks, the great majority of the medical practitioners who gave evidence were definitely of opinion that a "deterrent" administration of Poor Law Medical Relief had a gravely adverse effect on the public health. Many of them went further, and deposed that, in their opinion, the stigma of pauperism that was attached to the mere use of the services of the District Medical Officer, by the very fact of his connection with the Poor Law,¶ and the inconvenience and delay caused by having first to make application to the Relieving Officer,** were, in themselves, even without stringent administration, inimical to the health of the district. This has been demonstrated by many instances. We were informed that the present high mortality from the diseases of young children, and also many serious complications among those who survive, are undoubtedly due to the common

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 39389–91.

† "It stops the more decent ones, the really more deserving cases," deposed one District Medical Officer (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 51863).

‡ "Probably as long as medical relief is only granted on an order obtained from the same officer who with grudging hand gives an order for ordinary relief, the respectable poor will be as unwilling to apply for the former as for the latter" (*Ibid.*, Appendix XLIV. (Part III.) to Vol. IX.).

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 32776–86.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 25373, Par. 157.

¶ "There is very considerable unwillingness on the part of the working classes to apply for an order for medical treatment," testified a Medical Officer of Health, "on the ground that they lose caste, lose their vote and become paupers. It is not generally known that by having medical relief the franchise is not lost. It is probable that the Relieving Officers, in their endeavour to diminish Outdoor Relief, do not concern themselves to make known the fact that the Legislature has drawn this distinction between medical and other forms of relief" (*Ibid.*, Appendix XLIV. (Part I. (B)) to Vol. IX.).

** Thus, as one medical witness put it to us: "A pauper, therefore, being taken suddenly ill at twelve o'clock, cannot see the Relieving Officer before next morning, the necessary inquiries into his case will not be made until, perhaps, the afternoon of that day, and the doctor may not see the patient until the day after that" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 38631, Par. 12). "The present system of medical assistance to the poor," we were informed, "is unsatisfactory, as cases of serious delay from time to time occur in obtaining orders for medical attendance in urgent cases. . . . The method by which medical assistance can be obtained in the absence of the Relieving Officer, who may be gone, for instance, in charge of a pauper lunatic to the asylum, causes dangerous delay" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. IV. to Vol. VII.). The difficulties and delay caused by this procedure in rural districts were forcibly put to us by District Medical Officers (*see Ibid.*, *Qs.* 34566 Par. 6 (*a*), and 34631–4); and emphasised by the British Medical Association (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 39013, Par. 31).

lack of medical attendance in the families of the poor, for what are regarded as the simple affections of measles and whooping-cough, and mild and often unrecognised cases of chicken-pox and scarlet fever.* "There is a widespread disinclination," testified a Medical Officer of Health for a Metropolitan Borough, "to utilise the services of the Poor Law doctors. In consequence of this failure to seek skilled medical advice, many cases of infectious disease go unrecognised, and to this fact we must attribute the comparative ineffectiveness of our modern methods of dealing with scarlet fever and diphtheria."† Nor does the Board of Guardians, aiming at restricting medical relief, make things easier for those responsible for the health of the district. "Both friendly suggestions," publicly states a Medical Officer of Health, "and simple reports, appear to cause irritation and resentment on the part of Relieving Officers and all officials connected with the Poor Law administration."‡ A case was brought to our notice in which, when an officer of the Public Health Department was seeking to get sick children treated by the District Medical Officer, this action was made the subject of serious reproof by the Destitution Authority.§

> "As a typical illustration of the great waste of money entailed by the present methods of Poor Law administration," officially reports a Medical Officer of Health, "I may mention a case that occurred in this district. Two cases of scarlet fever occurred in a family of six children. The mother was a widow with no income. There was sufficient room in the house for the proper isolation of the cases, and they could have been nursed at home, if a little help could have been obtained. Every possible effort was made to get assistance from the Poor Law authorities, but without success, and the cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital. Nine days later, two more children had to be removed, and ten days later still another two. The total cost to the district for the treatment of these cases was £55, whereas a total allowance of £5, or even of food only, would certainly have prevented this unnecessary expense. This is a single instance. The sacrifice of life, health, and money resulting from the untreated cases of disease is beyond estimation."‖ "Among the poor," says the same authority, "there is a vast amount of infectious illness continually present. Many of such cases remain unreported, untreated, practically unknown. They serve, however, as a continual and ever-present focus for the spread of such diseases among the general public. There is thus constituted a most grave public danger. The only possible way to remove such danger is to devise improved and more easily available means for treating these cases. Treatment and prevention are inseparably associated in practically all disease. The one is essentially the complement of the other. By adequately providing for the early recognition and the proper treatment of all disease, an almost incredible improvement in the public health would rapidly result. The mere existence of disease, altogether apart from any consideration as to whether it is accompanied by destitution or not, should be sufficient to ensure proper medical treatment, if the public are to be relieved of the ever-present dread of the sudden and rapid spread of infection." ¶

Nor is the danger confined to the notifiable zymotic diseases. It was given in evidence on high authority that the very great mortality from phthisis—a disease to which no less than one-seventh of the total cost of the Poor Law is said to be directly or indirectly due**—is to be attributed in no small degree to the fact that sufferers are not encouraged to present themselves for treatment in the early stages of the disease,†† when it is often curable, but when they are still capable of going to work, and are not regarded as destitute and thus not technically eligible for a Medical Order. Under the present arrangements of the Poor Law medical service, such cases are left outside its ken, until in due course the ravages of the disease have reached a stage at which the sufferer, having in the meantime perhaps infected other members of the family, becomes simultaneously eligible for Poor

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* Even in the country "the health of the children suffers somewhat," admitted a rural District Medical Officer, owing to the restriction of relief. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXVI. (Par. 7) to Vol. VII.)

† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 2) to Vol. IX.

‡ Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Handsworth District, 1908, by R. A. Lyster, Medical Officer of Health, p. 9.

§ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 20) to Vol. IX.

‖ Report on the Sanitary Condition of the (Handsworth) District, 1908, by Robert A. Lyster, Medical Officer of Health, p. 11.

¶ *Ibid.*

** Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 38213.

†† "At the Out-relief Committees," reports a Local Government Board Inspector, "one hears of men and women who have struggled with the disease (phthisis) as long as possible before applying for relief, often sleeping in small rooms with children. . . . Out-relief is generally given till finally the sufferer enters the Workhouse infirmary to die, in the meantime, possibly, having infected other members of his family" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XI. (A), Par. 133, to Vol. I.). "Those people," said one District Medical Officer, "are very often too far gone for one to do any good to them" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 51899). They do not "come under the Poor Law Medical Officers," deposed the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, "until . . . the patient is probably . . . incurable as far as being returned to work fit as an able-bodied man" (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 10216–8). "We have had very rarely what are called curable cases, or cases in the first stages of phthisis pulmonalis, under treatment by Poor Law Medical Officers or in Poor Law medical institutions" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 10482). "The whole of my experience up to now is that it is very unusual indeed for what is called a curable case to come to the Poor Law" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 10687).

Law medical relief and incapable of deriving from it any real advantage. In fact, the Poor Law doctor seldom knows phthisis in any but its incurable stage, shortly before the sufferer enters the Workhouse to die. In some places, we were informed, one-third, and even one-half, of the deaths from phthisis take place in the Poor Law institutions.* Much the same may be said of cancer, which fills so many Workhouse beds, but which the Poor Law doctor hardly ever sees at a stage at which he can operate with any advantage. "Every year," we were authoritatively informed, "many persons die of cancer whose lives could have been saved had they sought medical advice in time. Especially is this true of the poor."† The Poor Law medical officers, says our Medical Investigator, see any amount of "inoperable cancers, and incurable Bright's disease, and overlooked rheumatic fever in children, causing heart disease later on." ‡ Less dramatic, but even more frequent, are the cases of chronic disability brought about by rheumatism and gout, heart disease in its various forms, varicose veins and ulcerated legs, and other affections which account for so many of the premature invalids among the workhouse inmates, and which could have been cured, and many years added to the working life of the sufferers, if they had received proper medical treatment at an early stage, before neglect of the incipient disease had led to actual cessation of wage-earning and consequent destitution.§ "I have carefully examined over 4,000 cases of consumption," deposed the Medical Superintendent of a Poor Law Infirmary, "and of these people approximately 60 per cent. would never have come within the range of the Poor Law had they not had that disease." ‖ In short, as one witness significantly put it, "Guardians who deter the poor from coming for medical relief are themselves causing pauperism, for, as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain has said, 'preventable disease is the great agent for filling our Workhouses.'" ¶

(D) The Hospital Branch of the Poor Law.

As we have seen, the authors of the 1834 Report, and the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47, never contemplated the establishment, under the Poor Law, of institutions for the hospital treatment of the sick poor.** What they visualised was a continuance of the practice of granting to the sick Outdoor Relief and the services of the District Medical Officer. In the course of a generation, however, the Workhouses were found to be very largely peopled by the infirm, the disabled, the chronically sick, and even the sufferers from acute diseases. By 1869 it was recognised that what was then officially termed "the hospital branch of Poor Law administration"†† had reached large dimensions. The policy of the Central Authority thenceforth definitely took the form, so far as the sick were concerned, of pressing for the provision of the most efficient institutional treatment that could be obtained. "There is one thing," said the President of the Poor Law Board in 1865, "that we must peremptorily insist on, namely, the treatment of the sick in the Workhouses being conducted on an entirely different system, because the evils complained of have mainly arisen from the Workhouse management—which must, to a great extent,

*"More than half the deaths from this disease in Finsbury occur in institutions, and, with few exceptions, Poor Law institutions" (evidence of Dr. Newman, Medical Officer of Health, Finsbury, *Ibid.*, *Q.* 94287, Par. 7).

† Evidence of Dr. G. F. McCleary, Medical Officer of Health, Hampstead, *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 9) to Vol. IX.

‡ Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. McVail, p. 108.

§ A grave problem which, in our judgment, cannot be any longer ignored, is that presented by the widespread suffering of the poor from venereal diseases. "These," testified a medical expert, "constitute one of the greatest evils of the age. I am not sure that they do not give rise directly and indirectly to more suffering and more injury to us as a nation than even tuberculosis." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 52840, Par. 15.) Here the lack of medical attendance has very grave results. The Boards of Guardians habitually refuse a Medical Order in such a case, if they become aware of it. Thus one Union puts in its bye-laws: "Persons affected with venereal disease to be granted indoor relief only." (Rules of Docking Board of Guardians.) We are told that: "Provident associations, friendly and trade societies rigorously exclude persons suffering from these (venereal) diseases from their medical benefits. Most general hospitals refuse to admit them." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 52840, Par. 16.) A very large number of cases thus remain untreated in the early stages of the diseases, with terrible effects in the contamination of innocent persons, and of a new generation. Presently, when the ravages of disease have gone so far as to make life outside an institution quite impossible, the sufferers enter the Workhouse—too late to be really cured—to be, at great cost, relieved, patched up, and discharged; returning often again and again until eventually they die in the Workhouse.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 38219.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 25373, Par. 63. We do not need again to call attention to the prohibition by the Scottish law of any medical relief to the sick dependents of an able-bodied man.

** Report on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 5. We have been informed that, until 1865, there was no medical inspector or adviser regularly attached to the Poor Law Commission or the Poor Law Board. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 22913.)

†† Twenty-Second Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1869–70, p. x.

be of a deterrent character—having been applied to the sick, *who are not proper objects for such a system.*"* If you have a sick man upon your hands," said one of the Local Government Board Inspectors in 1888, "the best thing you can do with him is to give him the best possible attention, to cure him and restore him to his work again."† Such an improvement in the institutional treatment of the sick seemed, to the Inspectorate of 1869–1886, a useful auxiliary, if not the logical complement, of their crusade against all Outdoor Relief.‡ Especially since the establishment of the Local Government Board has the pressure of the Central Authority on the Boards of Guardians to get them to provide better structural accommodation, new infirmaries, elaborate hospital equipment, trained nurses, and additional medical staff§ been persistent and unrelenting.

Unfortunately, the great majority of the Boards of Guardians have failed to carry out this policy. We have had it brought to our notice by the Medical Inspectors of the Local Government Board, by accredited representatives of the medical profession, by philanthropists acquainted with the Workhouses in the rural Unions and the smaller towns, as well as by Poor Law Guardians and their officers, that two-thirds of the sick now receiving institutional treatment at the hands of the Destitution Authority—amounting as we have reason to believe, in England and Wales alone, to something like 60,000 persons—are still in the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described. We were informed that they were, in many cases, receiving treatment inadequate to their needs and inappropriate to their diseases; and that this was resulting, not only in unnecessary personal suffering, but also in a prolongation of the period during which they were maintained at the public expense, and, in too many cases, in their premature permanent disability. On the other hand, so deterrent are the conditions in these General Mixed Workhouses that many poor persons suffering from incipient disease—sometimes of a contagious character—and requiring institutional treatment, refuse to enter their doors, until they are driven in by actual destitution in a moribund state. So grave an indictment led us, in view of the importance of the subject to Public Health, to obtain much medical evidence, to visit many sick wards, and to appoint our own Medical Investigator. We regret to have to report, after considering all the evidence, that the continued retention, in the General Mixed Workhouses—never even contemplated by the Report of 1834—of a large number of sick persons requiring curative treatment, amounts at the present time to a grave public scandal.

We may conveniently consider first the small rural Workhouse, of which there are about 300 with fewer than fifty sick beds in each. Such a Workhouse—containing habitually a score of men and women with chronic rheumatism and asthma, and suffering more or less from senile imbecility and paralysis; half-a-dozen children from one to thirteen subject, from time to time, to the usual diseases of childhood; the "village idiot," and various harmless lunatics and feeble-minded of both sexes and all ages; every few months a lying-in case; a few phthisical patients; occasionally individuals with all sorts of ailments; and now and then a tramp with smallpox upon him—is, over nearly half the superficial area of England and Wales—the only institution in the nature of a hospital available for the country side.‖ These 300 small rural Workhouses accordingly deal, in the aggregate—apart altogether from the "chronics," and the persons suffering merely from senility—with thousands of sick persons annually, who require curative treatment.

In most of these rural Workhouses, the buildings—which, as we have seen, were never intended for the reception of sick patients—are, to quote the words of a Local Govern-

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* Mr. Gathorne Hardy (*Hansard*, Vol. CLXXXV., p. 163.)

† *Q.* 381, in House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief, 1888.

‡ "It was admitted," says one witness, "by the sterner opponents of Out-relief, that the success of their restrictive regulations rendered necessary proper provision for the remedial treatment of the sick poor elsewhere than in their own homes, where the conditions were 'destitution' of the means necessary for recovery." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 43626, Par. 9.)

§ Report of the Departmental Committee on Nursing; "Nursing in Workhouses and the Report of the Departmental Committee," by Dr. Arthur Downes, in Report of Poor Law Conferences, 1903–4, pp. 91–106.

‖ Over half the superficial area of England and Wales—largely the same half—there is, it seems, also no isolation hospital accommodation provided by the Public Health Authority. Medical practitioners and benevolent neighbours often attempt to send acute (non-infectious) cases, and those requiring more than the simplest surgery, to the voluntary hospital in the county town, but there is, even for these cases, frequently no such hospital available within fifty miles. In the Atcham Union, for instance, celebrated for the relentless persistence with which Outdoor Relief has been refused, "pauper infectious cases of all sorts have to be treated on the Workhouse premises, in the midst of a community of 400 or 500, many of whom are children" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 70186, Par. 3). Scarlet fever epidemics and isolated small-pox cases have been so dealt with. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 70197–8.)

ment Board Inspector, "old and ill-adapted to meet modern requirements . . . . for the treatment of the sick."* Some of them, reports our Medical Investigator, were not even erected "for Workhouses, but for factories or other purposes; and in one or two cases the institution consists of a curious conglomeration of old houses of various sorts, set up anywhere within the boundary walls, and apparently altered or added to in irregular fashion as occasion arose . . . . In at least one case the buildings are much too crowded on the site . . . . The floors . . . were of wood, often old wood, with wide seams for dirt to lodge in." More than one-fourth of the wards that he had measured "failed to comply with requirements," as to the minimum cubic space per inmate. In more than one-third of those visited, the hot water supply—"an absolute essential for the proper management of a Workhouse or Workhouse infirmary"—was "more or less defective."† The bathing and sanitary accommodation for the sick is, as we have ourselves noted, often sadly old-fashioned. Perhaps the most important consequence of the structural defects of the old Workhouse building—with its small and often ill-ventilated rooms, its old wooden floors and absorbent walls, and its primitive sanitation—is that they often involve a disposition of the patients that is, to say the least of it, neither comfortable nor curative. "At present," reports an Inspector, "in the sick wards of a small country Workhouse, it sometimes happens that children and adults, persons suffering from phthisis, offensive cases, and imbeciles are not separated from each other, and it seems to me that classification in this respect is what is most needed."‡ One of our own committees found, on visiting the sick wards of a provincial Workhouse, "that one mentally deficient patient keeps crying out, day and night, at frequent intervals, disturbing the other patients. He seemed to be in great discomfort, if not pain; but is not removed on the ground of economy."§

But however desirable may be the structural advantages of a modern hospital building, with its elaborate classification by wards, we are bound to say that we regard the somewhat primitive buildings of the old rural Workhouses as the least of their drawbacks. We have come across, in Workhouse sick wards, no such scandalous instances of overcrowding, dirt, and insanitation as were formerly revealed in Workhouse inquiries; and, as we are glad to add, no such neglect and inhumanity. The worst defects of the rural Workhouse sick wards of the present day, apart from the general conditions of admission, centre round the medical attendance and nursing. None of these 300 rural Workhouses has, or indeed needs, a resident Medical Officer; but the conditions under which the medical attendance is afforded are, in our judgment, such as to make curative treatment almost impossible. The Guardians appoint one of the local practitioners to be the Medical Officer of the Workhouse, and expect him, at the most meagre stipend, to do all that is required for all the patients. These stipends—we have it on the authority of the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board—are, in the majority of cases, "miserably inadequate."‖ In one Workhouse that we happened to visit, containing as many as sixty-seven sick patients, we found that the Medical Officer, who has held the post for thirty years, received only £70 a year, out of which he stated that he sometimes spent as much as £25 in medicines.¶ We desire to bring no accusation against a hard-worked and ill-remunerated class of doctors. "It would be easy," we are told, "to name Medical Officers whose work is beyond praise . . . . Unfortunately, there is another side to the picture."** We are unable to escape from the conclusion that, in not a few Unions, the Workhouse Medical Officer finds himself able to attend only irregularly and infrequently, and to give only

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* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XI. (A) Par. 44, to Vol. I.; also *Q.* 5360.

† Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Poor Law Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, pp. 19, 22, 23.

‡ Thirtieth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1900–1, Appendix B., p. 120, Mr. Preston Thomas's Report; and again, Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1905–6, p. 473.

§ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 65 C., p. 134. Our adverse judgment on the General Mixed Workhouse in the rural Unions, as, for half England, the "hospital branch of the Poor Law," does but follow the verdict of the medical profession. The *British Medical Journal* in 1895, after an elaborate investigation of the sick wards of the rural Workhouses, summed up as follows in terms which, we fear, are still in the main, true: "The buildings match the service; we read of no bathrooms; no supply of hot and cold water, but such as is carried from a distance; sanitary arrangements defective or absent; no proper provision for the comfort or privacy of lying-in women; no surgical supplies; no screens for decency; overcrowding in wards where the helpless sick live, sleep, and eat all the year round; miserable dark rooms for the use of the coarsely termed 'dirty cases'; no classification; no means of isolation; dreary airing courts; indeed, an absence of all intelligent appreciation of the needs of the sick." (*British Medical Journal*, June 1st, 1895, p. 1231.)

‖ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (A), Par. 25, to Vol. I.

¶ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 93, p. 163.

** Thirtieth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1900–1, Appendix B., p. 106, Mr. Flemings' Report.

a perfunctory service. We learn that "instances may be quoted where (making all allowances for the possible inaccuracies in the porter's book) a few minutes in the house two or three times a week constitutes the ordinary attendance of the Workhouse Medical Officer."* Nor can they afford to spend much time when they do attend. "Entries recently taken from porters' books in several Unions," declares the Inspector, "show that some Medical Officers frequently only stay for a few minutes in the house, and very rarely long enough to make an examination of the bodily condition of the patients and of their surroundings. The Medical Officer should certainly, and with sufficient frequency to ensure the object, thoroughly examine each of the patients, and particularly the bed-ridden ones, as to bodily condition and cleanliness, also the beds, bedding, appliances, and all other details connected with the proper treatment and nursing of the cases."† Our impression of the inadequacy of the medical treatment afforded to the sick poor in some of the small rural Workhouses does not rest on such general evidence only. "It is most desirable," said to us one of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, "that the Medical Officers should be much better remunerated than they are. They should be so remunerated that they could fairly be called upon to do the work as it ought to be done. There is a difficulty now if you say to a Medical Officer, 'I find that you have been very little in the Workhouse,' and he says 'I do all that I consider necessary; that is my business, not yours' . . . . I have come across striking instances in which I have been able to show a complaint. I remember going into a Workhouse when the Medical Officer was not there. I said to the nurse 'Have you any bed sores?' She said: 'There is not a bed sore in the place.' I went into some of the wards, and I saw one man looking very miserable. I said to the nurse 'Is that man all right?' She said 'Yes.' I said 'Let me see his back." She turned him over. He had a bad bed sore. I looked at several other cases, and I found many bed sores. I sent for the doctor . . . . 'I am horrified,' he said . . . . If (he) had been properly paid to do his work thoroughly, he would probably have examined those patients. But he took the nurse's word for it because he was receiving an inadequate salary, and did as much work as he thought the money was worth."‡ We ourselves found on our visits some confirmation of this testimony. In one Workhouse where the sick ward seemed unsatisfactory, our committee saw the Workhouse Medical Officer, and on questioning him, he "quite frankly admitted that he was not able to give to the patients as much attention as they ought to have. This he laid at the door of the Guardians, who, he said, would neither remunerate him sufficiently, nor provide him with an assistant."§ With the meagre remuneration of the Workhouse Medical Officer goes the system—in the rural Workhouses, still, we are informed almost universal ‖—of requiring him to provide, at his own expense, all the medicines that he prescribes. This system leads to serious results. It encourages, we are told, the Workhouse Medical Officer to prescribe alcohol (which the Guardians pay for) instead of the other remedies of the pharmacopœia.¶ The Workhouse Medical Officer practically finds himself limited to the simplest remedies. "Human nature," says one of the Inspectors, "will not allow him to use anything which is very expensive. He cannot try the up-to-date drugs which may save a person's life. . . . It is a very important point, and I believe the present system may cost the life of an inmate of a Workhouse."** What is far worse is the fact that "there is nothing to prevent an unscrupulous Medical Officer," as a Workhouse doctor himself pointed out to us, "from using inferior drugs and stinting his patients with medicine."†† That such things do happen is unfortunately borne out by authoritative evidence. "About three weeks ago," testified the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, "I was inspecting a Workhouse, and I noticed a case in bed: I asked the Medical Officer what the case was, and he told me that it was a case suffering from syphilitic disease, and apparently, from what he said, it was curable. I asked him if the case was having drug treatment. He said, 'No, I cannot afford it; my salary is not sufficiently adequate for me to find the expensive drugs necessary.' I asked

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* *Ibid.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 9480.

§ Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 20, p. 45.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4943, 10779, 11781. This system is now deplored by the Local Government Board, and the Boards of Guardians are advised—often in vain—on the making of a new appointment to agree to provide the drugs. But the more common practice has not yet been forbidden by the detailed regulations in which the Local Government Board minutely prescribes the conditions of the appointment (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4943, 10194–10203, 10453–8, 11782–3, etc.).

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 10199–10201.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 4943.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 34566, Par. 3.

him then whether he had reported this matter to his Guardians, and he said 'No,' and I advised him to do so . . . . I think," added Dr. Fuller, "*that is a very good example of cases that frequently come under my notice.*" *

The inadequacy of the medical attendance in the small rural Workhouses is rendered more disastrous by defective nursing. In spite of all efforts of the Local Government Board, which have, in the past two decades, effected great improvements, there are still many rural Workhouses without even one trained nurse; † there are still scores in which there is absolutely no nurse, trained or untrained, available for night duty; ‡ there are even some, so far as we can ascertain, in which there is no sort of salaried nurse at all. Everywhere the Master and Matron have still to employ pauper assistants to help in attending to the sick. In spite of all that has been done, "the Reports of the Local Government Board inspectors. . . show very clearly that this deplorable system of pauper assistants is far from decreasing in as rapid a manner as may have been hoped after the issue of the Nursing Order of 1897."§ "Looking at the facts with regard to the individual rural Unions which I visited," reports our Medical Investigator, "I have concluded that the nursing staff is insufficient in the majority of them. . . . In one Workhouse the sick wards contain twenty-four beds, of which sixteen were occupied, nine of them by bed-ridden cases, and one of these with a bedsore. For all this work there was only a single nurse, both for night and day service, and her duty included attendance on confinements in the lying-in ward, though these fortunately were infrequent. . . . In only two or three of the rural Workhouses have I been able to form the opinion that the staff is sufficient." ‖

It does not need statistics of the mortality and of the recoveries in Workhouses, which unfortunately are lacking, to persuade us that, under such conditions as we have described, curative treatment of the thousands of sick patients in the 300 small rural Workhouses is, to say the least, difficult. The phthisis cases, of which there are many hundreds, seem to be given up as hopeless, there being usually no sort of special provision for them.¶ The acute cases needing prompt treatment, constant nursing or expensive remedies, appear sometimes to fare almost as badly. "When I [came to this Workhouse]," said a nurse, "I was told 'the pneumonia cases generally die with us.'"** A dim appreciation of the medical conditions in these small rural Workhouses, combined with the stigma of pauperism, explains why the sick poor insist on remaining in their own homes, however insanitary and overcrowded these may be. The General Mixed Workhouse is, in fact, as long as possible, shunned even by those who would benefit by it, to the grave detriment of the public health. Where such conditions exist—and we fear that they are characteristic of the majority of the rural Unions—the Guardians, as it seems to us, would not be warranted in adopting a policy, so far as the sick are concerned, of "offering the house," and refusing Outdoor Relief. Any suggestion for entrusting to the Destitution Authority powers of compulsory removal to such a General Mixed Workhouse as we have described—even of the worst cases of neglected sickness and dangerous insanitation—appears to us quite out of the question.

We do not wish to suggest that the structural conditions and medical and nursing attendance characteristic of the 300 small rural Workhouses, with their few thousands of

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 10610–1.

† The Nursing Order of 1897 requires that, where there are three salaried nurses, one of them must possess training, and hold the position of Superintendent Nurse. But there is nothing in the Order or elsewhere, making it obligatory on the Board of Guardians to employ three salaried nurses; or, indeed, any salaried nurses at all. The result is, that there is, as the Senior Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board informed us, "some little tendency . . . to evade the Order by calling the nurses anything but nurses, or in some cases, perhaps, by not appointing an extra nurse which would just bring them within the Order" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 23144). In some Workhouses the Order is evaded by appointing what are called "ward maids" to do the work of nurses (Memorandum from the Workhouse Nursing Association; Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LVII. (Par. 2) to Vol. IX.)

‡ In one Inspector's district, he reports: "In fourteen Workhouses it has not been found possible to provide a night nurse." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LVII. (A) to Vol. IX.)

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LVII. (Par. 2) to Vol. IX. One Inspector actually reports, in his district, an increase in the number of pauper attendants in the sick wards. On January 1st, 1905, there were 159, and on January 1st, 1908, there were 175.

‖ Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. McVail, 1907, pp. 28, 29.

¶ *See* the Return by the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (D), to Vol. I. "Generally speaking," says an Inspector, "there is no provision for the treatment of these (phthisis) cases in the Workhouse." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XI. (A), Par. 133 to Vol. I.)

** Memorandum from the Workhouse Nursing Association, *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LVII. (Par. 2), to Vol. IX.

sick, are equally characteristic of the 300 General Mixed Workhouses of the urban or more populous Unions, in which, as we regret to infer, there are ten times as many sick cases. In London, and a score of other large towns, there have been developed separate Poor Law Infirmaries, which we shall presently describe. But short of this development there is, among the General Mixed Workhouses of the 300 urban Unions, every possible variety in the character and efficiency of their provision for the sick. Some of these General Mixed Workhouses are as old, as ill-adapted for use in the "hospital branch of the Poor Law," as badly equipped, and furnished with as inadequate a medical and nursing staff* as the worst of the small rural Workhouses that we have seen. But under the constant pressure of the Local Government Board there has gone on, for forty years, a steady process of improvement. Here and there we find new sick wards added to the old Workhouse building; the Guardians have begun to provide the drugs and medicines; the pauper attendants have been gradually replaced by salaried "ward-maids," and these by nurses; the nurses have got trained and a superintendent nurse has been installed; occasionally on the occurrence of a vacancy we find that a young resident doctor has been appointed; the Superintendent Nurse and the Resident Medical Officer gradually win greater independence from the Master and Matron; until finally, when the Workhouse has long been overfull, the Guardians have perhaps yielded to the repeated suggestions of the Inspector, the criticisms of the Medical Inspector and the injunctions of the Local Government Board itself, and agreed to erect an entirely new and independent Poor Law Infirmary.† We have not found it possible to estimate how many Unions, and what proportion of their aggregate sick population of thirty or forty thousand, are, at this moment, at each of these various stages of development. But all these sick wards of General Mixed Workhouses, however far they may have developed along the lines of improvement, seem to us—from the standpoint of curative treatment of the sick—to suffer from the blight of being, and being felt to be, pauper establishments. This blight shows itself in the inability of the Boards of Guardians wholly to exclude—even from Workhouse infirmaries having a dozen paid nurses—the pauper "wardsman" and the pauper attendant;‡ it is seen in the incapacity of the Guardians to realise the necessity, in what is becoming virtually a hospital ward, of a medical and nursing staff out of all proportion to what had formerly been customary in the Workhouse day room or night

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* In one Inspector's district alone there was, in 1906, out of forty Unions, one Workhouse having 352 sick patients, and there were four having between 200 and 300 sick patients, without a resident Medical Officer; there were two Workhouses having over fifty sick patients without a Superintendent Nurse; there were a dozen in which there were more than fifty patients to each nurse on night duty, and a dozen also in which each nurse on day duty had more than half that number to attend to. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXII. (C) to Vol. I.)

† Unfortunately some large towns have not yet taken this step. "The most conspicuous exception," observes one Inspector, "is at Plymouth, where the Guardians, some years ago, decided to build a new infirmary, but subsequently rescinded their resolution, and have since expended a good deal on old buildings without a satisfactory result. The wards are old-fashioned, ill-constructed and ill-ventilated; they are so scattered as to make proper administration and supervision very difficult; they have been repeatedly reported as quite inadequate for the cases requiring admission; a good many of the nurses have to live in the town for want of room, and the whole workhouse has been overcrowded. The Medical Officer has frequently represented to the Guardians the serious evils of the present arrangements, but so far nothing effectual has been done." (Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1904–5, Appendix B., p. 219, Mr. Preston Thomas's Report). And at Bristol, where hundreds of sick of all kinds are crowded together in most unsuitable buildings, old and even unsanitary, there is a deadlock between the Guardians, who want a cheap scheme, and the Local Government Board, which refuses to sanction such a scheme but cannot, apparently, compel the adoption of any other, (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 5362–4.)

‡ To take only one Inspector's district out of twelve, such pauper attendants are still to be found in the sick wards of no fewer than sixteen Workhouse infirmaries, having over fifty sick patients, including some with several hundred sick patients, and definitely organised staffs of paid nurses. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXII. (C.) to Vol. I.) We regret to infer that between 2,000 and 3,000 paupers are still thus employed in England and Wales, to eke out the deficiencies in the nursing staff. "So long, however, as the employment of paupers in sick wards as 'attendants' is tolerated," says an experienced Inspector, "it is almost impossible to be sure that the somewhat undefined line which separates the duties of an 'attendant' from those of a nurse is never overstepped. The placing of the larger Workhouse infirmaries under separate management, which is viewed with increasing favour, will, however, do more than anything else to free the sick wards from all paupers other than the patients themselves." (Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1897–8, Appendix B., p. 125, Mr. Jenner Fust's Report.) These so-called "wardsmen" gamble with the patients at dominoes (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 36465–70), and are said even to divert eggs and other things from the sick, to sell them to others. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 36472.)

dormitory ;* it shows itself in the friction which so frequently arises between the Resident Medical Officer or the trained Superintendent Nurse, and the Workhouse Master and Matron, who remain in command of the whole institution ;† and it is manifested, above all, in the repugnance of the sick poor to enter even an institution for curative treatment when admission brings them plainly into contact with the Workhouse itself.‡

We have now to pass to the separate Poor Law Infirmaries which form, in the Metropolis and some other large towns, the most extreme development of, to use the official phrase, "the hospital branch of the Poor Law." These institutions, erected on separate sites apart from the workhouse, independent of the Master and Matron, administered by their own Medical Superintendents, having their own resident staffs of doctors and nurses, and wholly free from pauper attendants, are increasing annually in number, in size and in cost per bed, and now probably accommodate, though in only a few score of the most populous Unions, at least a third of the aggregate total of sick persons for whom the Boards of Guardians provide institutional treatment.§ Here undoubtedly, to quote the congratulatory words of a Northern Board of Guardians, the sick poor "receive care and attention such as the average ratepayer would find it difficult to provide for himself and his family."‖ Their "most significant feature," we are informed, "is that they have become largely surgical,"¶ some of them having daily operations under general anæsthesia.** In some places, the Poor Law Infirmaries receive a large proportion of acute cases of many different kinds; in some, there are frequent cases of measles, whooping cough, chicken-pox and other infectious diseases ; in one or two the number of tuberculous cases is very large ; in others there are many cases of accident ; the maternity ward is sometimes non-existent, sometimes a speciality ; and in one we have it noted that it has a specially large amount of "surgical operative work, . . . five-eighths of its cases belonging to the hospital as distinguished from the infirmary class."†† We do not feel competent to determine how far the claim often made on behalf of these Poor Law Infirmaries ‡‡—that they are now fully equal to the endowed or voluntary hospitals—can be substantiated. But we notice certain general characteristics of these most modern of the institutions of the Destitution Authority. The structure tends to be elaborate, ornate and expensive. The lighting and heating, the ventilation and sanitation, the operating room and the dispensary, are all of the most costly, if not always of the most useful character. On the other hand, it is clear that, in the proportion of doctors and nurses to patients, and in the variety and specialisation of the staff, even the best Poor Law Infirmary falls markedly below the standard of the London hospitals.§§ It has been suggested to us that this is at once caused and justified by the fact that the Poor Law Infirmaries, though receiving yearly an increasing variety of diseases and accidents, still

* "The majority of Guardians," observes the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, "naturally do not understand or appreciate the necessary standards of medical and nursing administration which should obtain." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXI. (A.), Par. 14 (i), to Vol. I.) Even in some of the large urban Workhouses, our Medical Investigator, after taking all the circumstances into account, came to the conclusion "that the medical staff is hardly ever sufficient. The amount of medical work is too great to permit of it thorough performance." He reports, in particular instances, "the nursing staff . . . insufficient"; in one case "seriously inadequate." (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, pp. 45, 49.)

† "The dual control now exercised by the Workhouse Master, Matron, Medical Officer, and Superintendent Nurse," testifies the Clerk of a large Lancashire Union, "gives rise to friction, and is not to the advantage of the sick poor. Difficulties arising from this dual control have been experienced frequently in this Union within the last few years." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 36693, Par. 1.)

‡ Where the infirmary is in the Workhouse building there is, we were repeatedly informed, "quite a great aversion" to enter it. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 51479.) The spirit in which it is regarded by the Destitution Authority, may be inferred from the fact that at Birmingham in 1885, the Board of Guardians actually made a rule, to which the Local Government Board extended its express approval (Local Government Board to Birmingham Board of Guardians, December 9th, 1885), that patients desiring admission to the infirmary should be made to enter it through the main Workhouse gate, upon orders of admission to the Workhouse itself, in order to impress upon them that they were making themselves paupers. (*Q.* 381, in Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888.)

§ As already indicated, there is a tendency for the sick wards of the large progressive Union to pass, by insensible gradations, into the Poor Law infirmary. In several cases, where the last stages of the evolution are not yet quite completed in form, the institution has become substantially separately administered.

‖ Sixth Annual Report of the Workhouse Committee of the Whitehaven Board of Guardians, 1904.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 36971.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 23303, Par. 2.

†† Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, p. 49.

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 23314, 39235, etc.

§§ Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, pp. 48–50.

habitually contain a large proportion of chronic cases, requiring neither specialised medical skill, nor continuous nursing. To some extent, no doubt, this contention is valid,* but we think the weight of medical evidence is in favour of the view that, so far at any rate as the surgical and acute cases are concerned, there is, even in the best of the Poor Law Infirmaries, still inadequacy of medical attendance and nursing. "My general conclusion is," says our Medical Investigator, "that even where Guardians provide excellent, or perhaps extravagant, modern buildings, and equip these most elaborately with the most modern medical and surgical appliances, and furniture and furnishings, yet when they come to the appointing of a staff to do the work of these fine institutions, liberality of policy fails them, and parsimony takes its place. They may have most advanced views as to the manner in which the poor should be housed and fed, but when they come to medical work they are likely to adopt unknowingly a policy of sweating both as to the amount of work required and as to the payment made for it."† We are inclined to attribute the backwardness in medical attendance and nursing, not only to the inadequate salaries, but even more to the lack of other *stimuli*. The medical staff of a Poor Law Infirmary has not the advantage of being under the supervision and inspection of the medical profession; the Boards of Guardians publish no medical reports of their work; they are tested by no statistics of recoveries or case mortality, and encouraged by no inquiries from the Guardians or the Local Government Board as to their remedial treatment or their surgical successes. And whilst their doors are, by Local Government Board order, shut to medical students,‡ and their work is divorced from the general current of clinical research, they suffer also from being equally divorced from the laboratory experiments and statistical investigations of the officers of the Public Health Authorities.

Perhaps the most striking contrast between even the best of the Poor Law Infirmaries and a good London hospital is the lack of specialism in the institution of the Destitution Authority. The Medical Superintendent has to admit every case sent to him by the Relieving Officers, and these non-medical functionaries naturally go more by urgency and destitution than by the kind of disease. In some Unions, indeed, the Guardians assume that all cases requiring medical attendance and nursing should be sent to the Infirmary, which has, accordingly, simultaneously to treat a congeries of hundreds of patients of the most diverse kinds—the acutely sick and mere "chronics"; the expectant mother and the senile feeble-minded; children with measles or whooping-cough, and the sufferers in advanced stages of venereal disease;§ the phthisical, the cancerous, and the rheumatic; the man knocked down by a motor car and the charwoman with bronchitis. "Children suffering from . . . infectious diseases have to be mixed up with adult patients."‖

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* It is, however, a mistake to suppose that the cases so common in a Workhouse infirmary do not require a staff of nurses, almost as large as do the acute or surgical cases. "A general principle in nursing in Workhouses," says the Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, is "that helpless, or wet and dirty cases, or cases bordering upon or actually suffering from senile dementia, require much more skilled care and attention from suitably trained nurses, and should take up, necessarily, much more of their time night and day than average cases of illness, such as pneumonia, rheumatic fever, etc., after the very acute stage is passed." (Memorandum from the Workhouse Nursing Association, Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LVII. (A) to Vol. IX.)

† Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, p. 46. "These Poor Law infirmaries," said one of our witnesses, "should have special surgeons and physicians appointed to them . . . a visiting medical staff. . . . They should not be left altogether in the hands of the resident superintendents." (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 36971, 36972.)

‡ The attendance of medical students at the "sick" asylums to be provided under the Metropolitan Poor Act, 1867, was expressly authorised by that Statute (Section 29); but this provision was expressly repealed in 1869 (32 and 33 Vict. c. 63, sec. 20); and the Local Government Board declined in 1884 to sanction the admission of medical students to the Kensington Poor Law Infirmary (*Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board*, Vol. III., 1888, p. 224), apparently on grounds of Poor Law policy, as the then Medical Officer of the Board was strongly in favour of their admission as being advantageous to the patients, and not displeasing to them (*Qs.* 5474–8, 5501–8, in House of Lords Committee on Poor Law, 1888). As to the desirability of such admission, *see* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 39237—41. It was suggested by Mr. C. S. Loch that the utilisation of the Poor Law infirmaries for medical instruction might have the effect of causing patients to be detained in the infirmary as "interesting" cases, longer than need otherwise take place. (*Q.* 4204 of House of Lords Committee on Poor Law, 1888.)

§ "All cases of venereal disease are now practically debarred from the general hospitals . . . it has to be taken up by the Poor Law as a last resort." (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 37927, Par. 10; 37928–29.)

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 23318, 23529. This drawback was pointed out long ago. "There is no ward set apart for sick children," noted the Investigator into Workhouses of the *British Medical Journal* in 1895, "in health, they are carefully kept from mixing with the adults, but when sick are put among the older people, and in a short time all the result of careful training may be undone." (*British Medical Journal*, January 5th, 1895, p. 26.)

There are not even any mutual arrangements among the thirty Poor Law Infirmaries of the Metropolis by which each of them, in addition to its general wards, could provide specialised accommodation for one particular class of disease. In every Poor Law Infirmary—and some of them exceed in size the largest voluntary hospitals in the Kingdom—all the cases have to lie in the common wards, and be diagnosed, physicked and operated on by the overworked Medical Superintendent and his two or three assistant medical officers. The absence, even in the Metropolis and the largest towns, of visiting physicians and surgeons is here a patent drawback of these extraordinarily mixed institutions. We do not, however, gather that there has been any official encouragement to specialisation, but rather the contrary. The development of the "hospital branch of the Poor Law" has, in fact, brought us to the dilemma that it may become apparently too efficient. Boards of Guardians have been officially advised to provide for their lying-in cases in the General Mixed Workhouse, rather than develop a maternity ward at the Infirmary, on the ground that the former course would deter applicants, whereas "there would be considerable danger of the Infirmary becoming a lying-in hospital, as there is great readiness and facility for obtaining admission to an Infirmary of cases that would not come into the Workhouse."* The far-sighted provision, by the Bradford Board of Guardians, of an admirable sanatorium for cases of incipient phthisis, and the actual encouragement, by a circular to all the medical practitioners of the town, of such patients to come in and be treated, before they are actually destitute, has caused some apprehension among those who cling to the idea of restricting the area even of the medical side of the Poor Law. All specialisation in medical treatment, it is suggested, whether phthisis sanatoria, Finsen Light or Röntgen Rays, or the new serums, should be excluded from the Poor Law institutions.† "Unless some organisation and co-ordination of the relief is arranged," urged the Senior Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, "we shall have expensive specialisation set up for persons who qualify for its receipt by becoming paupers."‡ "It would be a temptation to a man to come to the Poor Law," in order to obtain these privileges.§

For good or for evil the Poor Law Infirmaries are growing rapidly in popularity.‖ The excellence of the dietary and the accommodation—even, as has been suggested to us, the freedom from the perpetual observation and discipline of the students and nurses of a voluntary hospital—are attracting, to these Poor Law institutions, an ever-increasing stream of non-destitute persons.¶ It has become the custom, in certain residential quarters of the Metropolis, for the servants of wealthy households freely to use the Poor Law Infirmary. In the more industrial quarters, the skilled artisans and the smaller shop-keepers are coming to regard the Poor Law Infirmary—especially when, as in Camberwell, or Woolwich, or Wandsworth, it happens to be the only general hospital in the locality—much as they do the public park or library—as a municipal institution, paid for by their rates, and maintained for their convenience and welfare. To use the phrase of more than one of our witnesses, the Poor Law Infirmaries "are fast becoming rate-aided hospitals." "It seems to me," observed to us the Chairman of one of the most populous Unions, "an important point for the Commission to decide whether this state of things should be allowed to continue and increase, or whether it should be retarded." **

We did not have time to make any systematic investigation into the Poor Law Medical Service of Scotland, which was the subject of enquiry by a Departmental Committee in 1904. From the information that we obtained we formed the opinion that

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* Third Triennial Report of Bethnal Green Board of Guardians, 1903, p. 14.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 35116–21.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 23193.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 35117.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 32790–2, 33127, 33128.

¶ "The Workhouse infirmary has in this and similar districts come to be looked upon as the general hospital for the district." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 34233, Par. 9, 34351, 34352, 34468, 34469, 36142–5.) "Practically," notes one of our Committees, after visiting a great Poor Law infirmary in the north-west, "this . . . is a rate-supported hospital. . . . There is no reluctance to enter it on the part of the poor, and all acute cases (except confinements) are freely admitted. . . . Last year, over £2,000 was recovered from patients." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 2 C., p. 10.) To quote the words of the Clerk: "The old idea of its being a degradation or a disgrace to go into a Poor Law infirmary has quite ceased" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 36146). "The infirmary," says another of our committees, "is practically a general hospital, and caters for a class slightly better than the ordinary *habitues* of a Workhouse. A considerable sum is recovered each year from relatives, as much as 10s. a week being paid in some cases. One patient, a paralytic, was mentioned as being the brother-in-law of one of the richest men (in the town), who repaid the whole cost of treatment, etc., to the Guardians." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 25 B., p. 68.) *See*, on the same point, the Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Metropolitan Hospitals, 1892.

** Statement of the Chairman of the Wandsworth Board of Guardians (Canon H. Curtis).

Poor Law Medical Relief in Scotland did not differ essentially from that in England and Wales, and that it was open to the same criticisms. The General Mixed Poorhouses seemed to us to exhibit the same defects, as institutions for the treatment of the sick, as the General Mixed Workhouses of England and Wales. There is the same tendency to the development of a "hospital branch" of the Poor Law. "Owing to the splendid equipment of our modern Poorhouse hospitals," reports the Departmental Committee on the Methods of Administering Poor Relief in Eight Great Towns of Scotland (1905), "it is not thought a degradation to have relatives treated in them. They are, to a large extent, taking the place of public hospitals or infirmaries, and being separate establishments their connection with the Poorhouse is altogether lost sight of. In the case of the three hospitals recently erected by the Glasgow Parish Council, the name "Poorhouse" has been dropped." (p. xxv.) On the other hand, the largest Poorhouses, even in the most important towns, appear to be sometimes terribly understaffed. One of our committees gave us the following report after visiting two of the most important Poorhouses in Scotland. "In one of the Workhouses there were about 600, in the other about 800, inmates of all kinds, the numbers rising 25 to 30 per cent. in the winter. *Each of these vast Workhouses had only a single resident medical officer*—in both cases a young woman. Aided only by a consultant visiting thrice a week, her duties were to examine thoroughly every inmate on entrance, in order to discover what exactly was his or her disease or infirmity; to certify which of the adults—all presumably non-able-bodied—were fit for the "test" (work); to settle the diet and treatment of all persons actually sick; and to supervise the arrangements for the children and infants. In each of the Workhouses the "hospital cases" alone numbered between two and three hundred. In one of them at any rate there was a phthisical ward, a surgical ward, an ophthalmic ward, a lying-in ward, and, strangely enough a male venereal ward—all under the sole charge of the same young lady doctor who had the medical supervision of the rest of the establishment. The nursing staff was far below an English standard, extensive use being made of pauper inmates. In many of the large wards that I entered there was no trained nurse in attendance, even in the daytime. In one of these institutions (I forgot to ask in the other) there were only three night nurses for all the hundreds of patients. The operations—some abdominal sections, and others of apparent difficulty—were performed by the same one young lady doctor with the help of the consultant, who was a physician! No record of the results was kept. The same one young lady doctor had to extract the teeth of patients requiring this service.

"Altogether, I venture to suggest to the Commission that the condition of the hospital wards in these two large Workhouses demands special investigation."*

(E) The Defects of the Poor Law Medical Service traced to their root.

We have, therefore, to report that the Medical Branch of the Poor Law, now becoming an exceedingly costly service, is, in our opinion, far from being in a satisfactory condition. There is, to begin with, all over the Kingdom, a remarkable lack of uniformity between district and district in the treatment accorded to the sick poor. In respect of domiciliary medical attendance we find in some places the doctor's services lavished on all who ask for them, whilst in other places they are refused to any one who is not actually destitute of the means of subsistence. "It is indefensible," rightly declares the Poor Law Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board, "that a sick and destitute person who happens to be ill in one Union should be less well nursed than his *confrère* who falls ill in the next Union, where he is well cared for and restored to the community at a much earlier period on this account alone, while his *confrère* in the neighbouring union, owing to the inadequacy or inefficiency of the nursing staff, or both, becomes a permanent charge upon the rates."† Yet the institutional treatment provided for the sick poor varies from mere reception in the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described, with little or nothing beyond pauper nursing and the scanty visits and inefficient treatment of an underpaid Medical Officer, unable to afford either the time or even the remedies required by the disease, up to the almost luxurious maintenance and relatively excellent medical care and nursing of the newest Poor Law infirmaries, not unjustly called rate-supported hospitals. These

* Reports of Visits by Commissioners in Scotland, not yet in volume form. That the Poor Law Medical Service of Scotland was, in spite of great improvements, still extraordinarily inadequate, was repeatedly testified to us. "The health of the community suffers grievously owing to the insufficiency both in amount and quality of the medical assistance." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 65889, Par. 10.) "The system is not adequate," said the Medical Member of the Local Government Board (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 56605, Par. 111). "Many die without being seen by a medical man" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 53510, Par. 117). "Pauper nursing is still legal" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 60852).

† Statement of Dr. Fuller (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (A.), Par. 53 to Vol. I.).

extremes of deterrence and attractiveness in the institutions provided by the Destitution Authority in different districts for the sick poor, result in an even greater diversity in the classes of persons maintained in them under the common designation of paupers—varying from those miserables whom nothing but the imminent approach of starvation drives into the hated General Mixed Workhouse, up to the domestic servants of the wealthy, the highest grades of skilled artizans and even the lower middle class, who now claim as a right the attractive ministrations of the rate-maintained Poor Law hospitals characteristic of some of the great towns. But the absence of national uniformity, which the authors of the 1834 Report regarded with such disfavour, appears to us, in 1909, the least of the evils to which we have to call attention. What seems, from the standpoint of the community, most urgently needing reform is the deterrent character which, in all but a few districts, clogs and impedes the curative treatment offered to the sick under the Poor Law. It has been demonstrated to us beyond all dispute that the deterrent aspect which the medical branch of the Poor Law acquires through its association with the Destitution Authority, causes, merely by preventing prompt and early application by the sick poor, an untold amount of aggravation of disease, personal suffering and reduction in the wealth-producing power of the manual working-class. Scarcely less harmful in our eyes is the unconditional character of the "medical relief" given under the Poor Law. The District Medical Officer finds it no part of his duty—for it, indeed, he is neither paid nor encouraged — to inculcate better methods of living among his patients, to advise as to personal and domestic hygiene, or to insist on the necessity of greater regularity of conduct. No attempt is made to follow into their homes the hundreds of phthisical and other patients discharged every week from the sick wards of the Workhouses and Poor Law infirmaries, in order to ensure at any rate some sort of observance of the hygienic precautions without which they, or their near neighbours, must soon be again numbered among the sick. From one end to the other of the Poor Law medical service, costly as it now is, we find, in fact, a complete and absolute ignoring of the preventive aspect of State medicine. To the Relieving Officer it is officially a matter of indifference whether the applicant is most likely to recover, or to recover most rapidly or most completely, in the Workhouse or in his own home. It is no part of his duty to consider whether the applicant's wife and children will suffer most in health by his removal to the infirmary, or by his struggling on in his avocation, with his lungs getting steadily worse, in order to avoid the stigma of pauperism. If a poor family takes measles or whooping cough badly, and cannot afford competent medical attendance, it seems to the Destitution Authority a wanton incitement to pauperism to urge them to apply for the attendance of the District Medical Officer; though abstention may mean, through neglected *sequelæ*, the lifelong crippling of the health of one or more of the children. The prevalence of ophthalmia of the newly born, with its result of entirely preventable blindness, will not appear as any matter of reproach to those Destitution Authorities which have managed to restrict their Midwifery Orders. Nearly the whole of the children of a slum quarter may go on year after year suffering from adenoids, inflamed glands, enlarged tonsils, defects of eyesight, chronic ear discharges, etc., which will eventually prevent many of them from earning their livelihood, without inducing the Relieving Officer and the Destitution Authority to notice anything beyond the total sum coming in to the household of each applicant for a Medical Order or other relief. Even to the average Poor Law doctor, it does not seem so important to prevent the spread of disease, or its recurrence in the individual patients, as to relieve their present troubles. In short, from beginning to end of a Poor Law expenditure of over £4,000,000 annually upon the sick, there is no thought of promoting medical science or medical education, practically no idea of preventing the spread of disease, and little consideration even of how to prevent its recurrence in the individual. The question cannot fail to arise whether so large an expenditure on mere "relief," with so complete an ignoring of preventive medicine, can nowadays be justified.

Under these circumstances we cannot recommend any extension of Public Medical Service by the Destitution Authority. We do not think, for instance, that it is desirable for the Destitution Authority to undertake the urgently needed service of the treatment of tuberculosis in its early stages—still less that it should, as at Bradford, actually encourage persons to become paupers in order to be treated. We agree with the Senior Poor Law Medical Inspector of the Local Government Board in deploring the tendency for the Destitution Authority to "set up . . . expensive specialisation" in the treatment of the sick "for persons who qualify for its receipt by becoming paupers."* An equally pressing public need, urged upon us by every sort of witness, is some power of compulsory removal to

* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 23193.

an institution of persons found lying neglected, dangerously sick or contaminating their surroundings. Yet so long as the institutions for the sick poor are in the hands of a Destitution Authority, with its stigma of pauperism, its deterrent machinery and its failure in many districts to provide anything better for the unwilling patient than the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described, no responsible Minister of the Crown could propose, and no Parliament would permit, the concession to an Authority dominated by the idea of "relieving destitution" of any such power of compulsory removal. Thus, all the defects and all the shortcomings of the Poor Law Medical Service as it at present exists are inherent in its association with the Destitution Authority.

(f) The Treatment of the Sick by Voluntary Agencies.

It has been represented to us that the whole provision for the sick now made by the Destitution Authority, alike in its domiciliary treatment and in its "hospital branch"—being legally confined to the destitute—is but the fringe of a more general provision for the sick made by other agencies; that these other agencies impinge upon the medical work of the Poor Law, and are themselves impeded by it; and that, if the Poor Law medical work were brought to an end or seriously restricted, they might with advantage undertake the whole service. These voluntary agencies in some cases provide their service gratuitously; others claim to be wholly self-supporting; whilst others again exact a partial contribution for their benefits. Across this classification runs the cleavage between those voluntary agencies maintaining residential institutions, and those supplying only domiciliary treatment.

To begin with the domiciliary treatment of the sick poor, we find overlapping the work of the District Medical Officer, (*a*) the Free Dispensary or "Medical Mission;" (*b*) the out-patient department of the voluntary hospital; (*c*) the doctor's medical club, or the Friendly Society or other "contract practice"; and (*d*) the Medical Provident Association started by a combination of the local doctors, or the Provident Dispensary managed by a philanthropic committee. These four classes of agencies for domiciliary treatment of the sick poor differ widely from one another in their geographical extension, the doctor's medical club or contract practice being, for instance, widespread over town and country alike, and the out-patients' department being confined to the Metropolis and a few large towns. They differ also in the degree to which, in one place or another, they impinge upon or overlap the Poor Law.

The free dispensaries and "medical missions," on the one hand, and the out-patients' departments of the voluntary hospitals on the other, have in common the attribute of offering medical attendance and medicine gratuitously to those who come for it at prescribed times and places—sometimes without the slightest fee or formality, sometimes on presentation of a subscriber's letter, and sometimes on payment of a few pence for the medicine supplied. Started originally on a small scale, in order to afford relief to the suffering poor who had access to no other doctor, these centres of gratuitous doctoring now minister, in the Metropolis and in certain other towns, to literally hundreds of thousands of cases annually. Here, at any rate, we have unrestricted access to medical treatment—a widely advertised gratuitous provision which to some extent mitigates the hardship of a restriction of Poor Law Medical Relief, and which goes far to explain, in the Metropolis and the other towns in which it exists, the slow growth of any form of medical insurance. "In our great cities," states a great hospital authority, "and especially in the Metropolis, the vast out-patients' departments of the voluntary hospitals, with their ever-open doors, offering gratuitous treatment to all comers, are a standing obstacle to any efficient reform of the home treatment of the sick poor. No organisation of Provident Dispensaries or Public Medical Service, no system of mutual insurance for medical attendance, no scheme based on thrift, supplemented by State-aid, can hope successfully to compete with the open hand and high prestige of the great voluntary hospitals." * This objection to the out-patient departments—that of preventing more self-supporting forms of medical treatment—will, however, not be conclusive to those who desire that the sick poor should have every possible access to medical assistance in their hour of need. What appears more serious is the assertion that the treatment afforded to the bulk of the patients is, from the standpoint of preventive, or really curative treatment, wholly unsatisfactory. "These great institutions," continues the eminent physician of Guy's Hospital whom we have already

* "The Future of the Voluntary Hospital and its Relation to a reformed Poor Law Medical Service," by Dr. Lauriston Shaw, Physician at Guy's Hospital, *British Medical Journal*, June 20th, 1908, p. 1,472.

quoted, "while preventing the proper development of other agencies, are quite unable efficiently to fill their places. They cannot carry their services to within reasonable distance of every patient's door, nor can they follow the patient to his home when too ill to attend at the out-patient department, and not ill enough, or not suitably ill, for admission to the wards." * Indeed, from the necessarily hurried way in which the work has to be done, no less than from the crowding together of all sorts of sick persons—sometimes men, women, and children of all ages—with sores and ulcers, with coughs and expectorations, not infrequently with a case of zymotic disease among them, kept waiting for hours cooped up in dirty and insanitary waiting-rooms, we cannot help regarding these mammoth out-patients' departments as positive dangers to the public health. Nor is this merely our own opinion. "As a matter of well-known fact," testified a medical practitioner of experience, "the out-patient department is so crowded that the work has to be done in a slipshod fashion, and unless the case happens to be an 'interesting' one, the patient is put off with the stereotyped 'How are you to-day?' 'Put out your tongue.' 'Go on with your medicine.' No one who knows the system can blame the infirmary doctors, as they are notoriously overworked. Many people go there who could well afford to pay for outside advice, and whose complaints are of the most trivial character. The consequence is that cases which really require time and consideration frequently fail to get it from the overworked house-surgeon or physician." † However profitable may be the out-patients' department in attracting the subscriptions of the benevolent; however convenient it may be as a means by which the hospital can pick out "interesting" cases which are wanted inside; and however genuinely useful it may be as a preliminary diagnosis which promptly sifts out and admits the cases requiring institutional treatment, we are bound to conclude that, to a large proportion of the patients dealt with, it is, so far as any preventive or really curative effect is concerned, little better than a delusion. It is, indeed, difficult to take seriously in the twentieth century, as an organisation professing to treat disease, the typical arrangement under which an overworked and harassed house-surgeon gives a few minutes each to a continuous stream of the most varied patients; without knowledge of their diet, habits or diathesis; without any but the most perfunctory examination of the most obvious bodily symptoms; without even the slightest "interrogation of the functions"; and without any attempt at domiciliary inspection and visitation. "At present," summed up one experienced medical practitioner, the out-patient department of the voluntary hospital "is to a great extent a shop for giving people large quantities of medicine." ‡

We need not describe the Free Dispensaries and "Medical Missions" which abound in the slum districts of a few large towns. All the arguments against the gratuitous, indiscriminate and unconditional medical attendance afforded by the out-patients' departments of the hospitals appear to us to apply, in even greater strength, to the Free Dispensaries and Medical Missions; with the added drawbacks, that they are not, as a rule, under responsible and specialised medical supervision, and that they are not able to offer immediate institutional treatment to those of their patients whom they find to require it. The "Medical Missions," in particular, were stated to us to be "the worst of the whole lot . . . mixing up medicine and religion," and seeking to attract persons to religious services by the bait of "cheap doctoring." § In our opinion, all these centres for the gratuitous, indiscriminate, and unconditional dispensing of medical advice and medicine, far from meriting encouragement, or offering opportunities for extension, call imperatively—at any rate where they involve the gathering of crowds of sick persons in halls and passages—for systematic inspection and supervision by the local Medical Officer of Health, in order to ensure that they are not actually spreading more disease than they are curing.

We pass now to those agencies for domiciliary treatment which are based on contributions from the persons attended to, wholly or partially covering the cost of the service. The most widespread of these agencies is the more or less formally organised medical "club," or "contract practice"—it may be a regular friendly society giving also sick pay; it may, on the other hand, be merely a scratch enrolment of members got up by the doctor himself for his own convenience and profit—the members in either case paying a small sum weekly or quarterly whilst they are well, in order that, when they happen to be ill, they

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* *Ibid.*, p. 1,472.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 51859, Par. 4; *see also Q.* 50873; *Qs.* 33240–33245; and *Q.* 41888, Par. 10. Where "the home life" is not "properly attended to," sums up a medical witness, "the relief they get at the out-patient department" of the great hospital is "of very little value."

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 51896.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 33690, 33691.

may obtain medical attendance and medicine free of charge. This "club practice" which has, in one or other form, greatly increased during the past few decades, has plainly some advantages. The poor pay something towards their own doctoring, and the feeling that they are themselves paying for it increases their independence and self-reliance. They pay for it, too, by the device of insurance, by which the cost of the years of sickness, being spread over a large number of persons, falls in effect upon the years of good health, when the small periodical instalments can be borne with the least inconvenience.

Notwithstanding these advantages, there is, we notice, a feeling of uneasiness among the medical profession,* and, we think, also among the clients of this club or contract practice—as to the real benefits of the arrangement. The contracts so extensively made by the organised Friendly Societies for medical attendance on their members are constantly producing strain and friction in the relations between the societies and the local practitioners whom they employ, breaking at intervals into open warfare. The doctors allege that the remuneration allowed to them is so insufficient as hardly to cover expenses, whilst many persons of substantial means take advantage of the society membership.† The members of the friendly societies, on the other hand, complain that they get only perfunctory attendance, that the doctor favours the committeemen or other influential members, and that he seeks to recoup himself by charging fees for all the other members of the family. We need not consider these mutual recriminations, except in so far as they reveal conditions inherently inimical to the cure and prevention of disease. We have it in evidence that "the club doctor is not infrequently regarded as an inferior kind of practitioner. I have known," says a Medical Officer of Health, "several cases where members of clubs on the occurrence of serious illness in themselves or their families, have discarded the services of the club doctor and incurred the expense of employing a private practitioner. A few weeks ago I was asked by a workman whether I thought a 'club doctor' was competent to treat a case of scarlet fever. . . . From my own experience in club practice, I can testify to the extremely unsatisfactory conditions under which it is carried on. The examination of a patient should be conducted on the principle laid down by Trousseau: 'Interrogate all the functions,' but in a busy club practice it is impossible to interrogate even one function with sufficient care."‡ But besides the adverse influence on the public health which medical attendance upon such conditions must necessarily exercise, the contract practice of Friendly Societies fails altogether to provide for some of the classes for whom the provision of medical aid is, in the public interest, most essential. Speaking broadly, the Friendly Societies do not provide medical assistance for any woman, whether married or single,§ or for children. They do not, if they can help it, admit "bad lives," against which all Friendly Societies protect themselves by a medical examination prior to admission, or any persons suffering from constitutional defects, or incipient disease. Nor do they provide for persons, even if already admitted to membership, who suffer from venereal diseases, or the results of alcoholic excess. Taken together these excluded classes must amount to more than three-fourths of the population.

Much the same objection applies to the private medical clubs established by doctors for their own profit. It is true that, unlike most of the Friendly Societies, they do provide

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* It has been represented to us that the great growth of these medical clubs and of "contract practice" in some districts has seriously undermined the remuneration of the local medical practitioners; and that a large part of the growth has been actually at their expense. In view of the facts that the work of the Poor Law Medical Officers has certainly not decreased, and that of the Public Health Authorities and voluntary hospitals has steadily increased, it appears probable that the increase in club and contract practice represents, in part, at any rate, an absorption of those who formerly paid fees as individual patients.

† A vivid picture of this friction and conflict was given in *The Battle of the Clubs*, by the Special Commissioner of the *Lancet*. Much of the conflict is waged round the so-called "income-limit." "Clubs," said one of our witnesses, "were originally started to afford sick pay and medical attendance to the class immediately above paupers, that of artisans, labourers, etc., and the contributions were so arranged as to pay the doctor something, perhaps half of what he would have charged, taking an average; but they have now been taken possession of by a higher class which ought to pay better fees, and the contributions are utterly inadequate to pay for modern medical attendance, involving, as it does, estimation of opsonic index, bacteriological investigation of secretions, serum therapy, etc., and the performance of many operations which were unthought of when the rates were fixed" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 70631, Par. 7).

‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 29) to Vol. IX.

§ The Friendly Society contract for medical attendance habitually includes members only, not their dependents. Friendly Societies for women are objected to. The doctors, we are told, "boycott female Courts." In one town, the Medico-Ethical Society, to which all the best doctors in the town belong, have a rule that: "No female club be accepted by any member of the Society" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. CI. (Par. 26) to Vol. V.).

for children and also for wives, though midwifery is not included. But the remuneration is practically never sufficient* to enable the doctor to devote the time and attention necessary for really curative work. There is the same exclusion of "bad lives,"† with the additional drawback that, in the doctor's own medical club, there is no obligation to continue the membership of any member who develops chronic disease, or even to continue the club at all if he thinks that the average sickness becomes too great.‡ Needless to say there is no idea of prevention, or even of taking precautions against the communication of disease. "The long waiting in the crowded waiting rooms at the doctor's surgery," we are authoritatively informed, "tends to spread infectious disease, to injure the health of the patient and to cause a considerable loss of time, which in many cases inflicts inconvenience or even actual loss on the poor. Moreover the doctor should take account of the home conditions of the patient. In the home there are various influences which assist or retard recovery, and the doctor should make himself acquainted as far as possible with those conditions and endeavour to modify them in the interest of the patient. For instance, sanitary defects should be reported to the sanitary authority, and advice should be given as to the due sanitary ordering of home. The overworked club doctor, however, has time for none of these things. He reduces his domiciliary work as much as possible and encourages the patients to come up to his surgery for treatment, and it is extremely rare for him to report anything to the sanitary authority except cases of notifiable infectious disease."§ There is the same temptation to supply only the cheapest medicines that we have seen to prevail where the Poor Law Medical Officer has himself to provide drugs. There is even a tendency, it is said, to pander to the medical superstitions of the sick rather than correct their bad hygienic habits. "To the poor people who crowd his surgery," as one overworked club doctor explained, "he must be equally subservient. They must not be allowed to grumble about the club medical man; and to ensure their goodwill it is best to treat them more in accordance with their palates than with their symptoms. To satisfy these patients it is necessary to give them a lot of medicine. It must be a dark medicine with a strong taste, preferably of peppermint."‖ Hence we are not surprised to be informed by a responsible medical witness that, to the "medical profession, club practice is most distasteful. No practitioner remains a club doctor any longer than he can possibly help. The disadvantages of club practice constitute a burning question for the medical profession at the present time. In various parts of the country practitioners are banding together to resist what are spoken of as the 'sweating' methods of the clubs, and the weapon of the strike (with the concomitant ostracism of the 'blackleg') is being freely employed by these associations of medical practitioners in their struggle for better conditions of club practice."¶ To quote the words used by a medical witness, himself a Poor Law Guardian, "the clubs are a failure, both for the patients and for the medical men." **

It is, we think, impossible to avoid the conclusion that the spontaneous and competitive organisation of medical insurance—far from being in a position to supersede the Poor Law Medical Service—has, in all its varied forms, proved in practice to be inimical alike to the medical profession and to the public health. This result has gradually forced itself upon the conviction of philanthropists and the medical organisations. In certain provincial towns the local medical practitioners have combined to establish "Provident Medical Associations," on a plan which, after some hesitation, has received the endorsement of the British Medical Association.††

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* "The amount paid by these clubs to medical men," says one witness, "is generally 3s. per annum per member, and as the doctor provides all medicines this does not give a living wage to the doctor, hence the work is often unsatisfactory" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXIII. (Par. 15) to Vol. IV.) "Club fees are so low," deposed a local secretary of the British Medical Association, "that the medical men cannot do justice to the patients. The fees vary from 3s. to 4s. a member per annum" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. CIV. (Par. 2) to Vol. IV.) "I may state this with the greatest positiveness," states a Medical Officer of Health, "that medical men would much rather be without any such form of contract practice than have it. They simply take clubs . . . in order to keep somebody else out" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 38844). "I . . . am opposed to them on principle," testified a hospital surgeon, "because . . . it means a sweating of the medical profession on the one hand, and a perfunctory and inefficient performance of duties on the other" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXVI. (Par. 17) to Vol. IV.).

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 74818–74822. "They take very great care," deposed Sir William Chance, "only to take in cases they know will pay them" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 29297).

‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXV. (Par. 13) to Vol. VII.

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix XLV. (Par. 29) to Vol. IX.

‖ *The Battle of the Clubs*, by the Special Commissioner of *The Lancet*, p. 120.

¶ Statement of Dr. McCleary, Medical Officer of Health for Hampstead (Evidence before the Commission Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 29) to Vol. IX.).

** *Ibid.*, Appendix No. CLIX. (Par. 9) to Vol. IV.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 39153, etc.

These Provident Medical Associations differ from the medical clubs got up by individual doctors, and from the contract practice of the Friendly Societies, only in the fact that all the medical men of the locality who are willing to take part share in the practice and in the contributions, in exact proportion to the number of members who select each of them as their doctor. "We consider it undesirable," testified the representatives of the British Medical Association, "that there should be the existing monopoly in contract practices; we think they should be thrown open so that all the patients should have a choice of all the medical men in the district."* The Provident Dispensaries established by philanthropists in London and some other places, are, for the most part, based upon the same plan of allowing the contributing member a choice of doctors, and sharing the contributions among all the doctors on the list in proportion to the number of patients whom they severally attract. These deliberately organised arrangements for combining medical insurance with free choice of doctors have made little headway; owing, it is said, to the difficulty of inducing the doctors to combine, and, in the Metropolis and other large centres of population, also to the rivalry of Free Dispensaries and Medical Missions and the out-patients' departments of the hospitals that we have already described. But as it has been suggested to us by responsible witnesses that charitable persons might be urged to foster the Provident Dispensaries and Provident Medical Associations; that Poor Law Medical Relief might be so restricted as to compel all poor persons to join them, as the only way by which they could obtain medical assistance in their hour of need;† and even that some such system of Provident Medical Insurance, with free choice of doctors, might well receive a state subsidy, and might actually be made to take the place of the Outdoor Poor Law Medical Service, we have felt compelled to examine with some care both its results and its possibilities.

After careful consideration of the working and results of medical insurance in all its various forms, our conclusion is that we should hesitate before recommending to the charitable any deliberate extension of it, even at its best. "It must be borne in mind," observes a Medical Officer of Health, "that the 'self-supporting' character of a medical club is largely an illusion. There are many diseases that a club doctor does not attempt to treat. The vast majority of notifiable cases of infectious disease, lunacy, and an increasing number of cases of tuberculosis are treated in rate-supported institutions. Abdominal surgery, ophthalmic surgery, any surgical operation except the most trivial, and many other conditions are treated in hospitals that are supported by private charity. If these institutions were not available, clubs and provident dispensaries could not be conducted on their present conditions, and, therefore, it is true to say that, in a sense, these so-called 'self-supporting' medical agencies are partly supported by the rates and partly by private charity."‡ But even with regard to the kind of sickness with which they actually deal; the indigestions, the chronic catarrhs, the sores and eruptions, the palpitations, the dragging pains of the woman worker, the rheumatism and lumbago of the outdoor labourer—the quality of their ministrations leaves, as we have seen, much to be desired. In nearly all these cases, as has been over and over again pointed out to us in evidence, what is needed is not so much "a bottle of physic" or an ointment, as some alteration in the unhygienic methods of living to which so many of the poor, whether from ignorance, from sheer poverty or from lack of self-control, are unfortunately addicted. But this is just where all the forms of provident clubs or dispensary practice fail. To quote the words of an experienced physician "they give people a bottle of medicine, but they do not do much else. They take no supervision of their home surroundings, and no supervision of the general hygiene, and they never provide anything in the way of food and nourishment. It is very often much more food that is wanted, for instance, with the children. The cost of feeding an infant alone is 3s. a week, and the people cannot always afford it. They only get an attempt at food in the shape of cod-liver oil or something of that kind from the hospital."§ "The amount of medicine consumed," deposed a medical expert with regard to perhaps the largest and most flourishing of the Provident Dispensaries, "is out of all proportion to the amount of advice taken."‖ All this applies

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 59151.

† It is claimed that this has been done at Bradfield. By making Poor Law Medical Relief more irksome and even more costly to the recipient, than belonging to a medical club, it has been practically superseded by a great growth of such medical clubs (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 29895, 29896).

‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 31) to Vol. IX.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 36946.

‖ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. CXXXII. (Par. 38) to Vol. IV.

with even greater force where, to the device of medical insurance, there is added a free choice of doctors. The medical practitioner who is chary with his drugs, but prodigal and plain spoken in his advice about giving up bad habits and injurious excesses in eating and drinking, is seldom popular among the poor. To give either public encouragement or public aid to any system of medical attendance among the poor that was based on a free choice of doctors, and on their remuneration according to the number of patients that they severally attracted, could not fail, in our opinion to perpetuate and intensify the popular superstition as to the value of medicine and the popular reluctance to adopt hygienic methods of life; and—as we fear we must add—could not fail also to foster the injurious "medical demagogy" to which, in the stress of competition, these popular feelings already give occasion.*

Apart from the general shortcomings of any system of medical insurance so far as its contributing members are concerned it is, in our judgment, for other reasons quite impossible to employ it as a substitute for the Poor Law Medical Service. We note, to begin with, that neither the Medical Association nor the Provident Dispensaries have themselves had any hope of including in their membership those for whom the Poor Law Medical Service is provided, namely, the destitute. It has, however, been suggested to us that the Local Authority, instead of having a Poor Law Medical Officer, might enrol all the persons now or hereafter entitled to medical relief as members of the local Provident Association, simply by paying the requisite contributions in their names. But, if this were done, or done whenever any case might prove to require medical aid, we fail to see what motive there would be for any person to pay his own contribution to the Association. We have it in evidence that one of the strongest inducements at present to join a medical club or otherwise to pay for one's own doctoring, is the free choice of doctors which is thus secured. The poor, we are told, strongly resent having to go to one particular doctor whether or not they like him or have confidence in his treatment. But if the labourer who has neglected to contribute to the Provident Medical Association finds himself, when illness overtakes him, with just the same privilege of choosing his own doctor and of changing with equal facility from one doctor to another,† as if he had himself contributed, it is difficult to see why anybody should be at the pains of contributing at all. Thus the use of these Provident Medical Associations by the Destitution Authority, in order to provide for the paupers requiring medical treatment, would very shortly bring the self-supporting side of these associations to an end.

It has been suggested that the difficulty would be avoided if the Provident Medical Associations were fortified by a compulsory enactment, requiring every adult to become a member for himself and his dependents. The short answer to this suggestion is that it is in this country, under present conditions, totally impracticable. For the Government to extract any weekly contribution—let alone the substantial contribution that would be necessary—from the millions of unskilled and casually employed labourers of our great cities, from the hundreds of thousands of homeworkers in the sweated trades, from the women workers everywhere, from the tens of thousands of Vagrants and their dependents, would be an impossible task. To bring the Government into the field as a rival collector

* To the Chancellor of the Exchequer the proposal to supersede the present Poor Law Medical Service by a system of State-subsidised medical insurance, involving free choice of doctors, will appear impracticable for quite other reasons. Any such system of provident insurance, coupled with the boon of free choice of doctors, must necessarily be offered simultaneously to the poor all over the country. The 3,713 District Medical Officers in England and Wales, the 800 in Scotland, and the 845 Dispensary doctors in Ireland, hold definite salaried appointments, nearly always during good behaviour, from which they could not be displaced without the usual compensation. This, upon the customary basis, would involve a lump sum payment of about £5,000,000. On the other hand, the mere transference of these officers, at their existing emoluments, to a reorganised Public Health Medical Service, which could take place simultaneously all over the country, leaving desirable readjustments to be made only as vacancies occurred, would involve no compensation.

† It is an incident of the absurd popular belief in medicine, and the anarchy fostered by the full choice of doctors, that there is already any amount of overlapping. "It is quite possible," says a Medical Officer of Health, "that a Poor Law doctor, a club doctor and the doctor in charge of the hospital out-patient department may attend the same patient at the same time. I once heard of a case where the patient had secured in this way three bottles of medicine from three different doctors, and took from one in the morning, from the second in the middle of the day, and from the third in the evening. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 41888, Par. 8, 41921–41923.) "It is common," testifies a District Medical Officer, "for people to use two institutions (for outdoor medical treatment) at the same time . . . and to throw away one or both lots of medicine." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 43998, Par. 50.) Apparently 11 per cent. of all the out-patients at the voluntary hospitals of London are, or have recently been, in receipt of Poor Relief (Report . . . on the Overlapping of the Work of the Voluntary General Hospitals with that of Poor Law Medical Relief, by Norah B. Roberts).

of weekly pence in the skilled trades—whether or not deducted by the employer from the wage — would excite the strongest opposition not only from those doctors who have large medical clubs of their own, but also from the whole Trade Union movement, from all the friendly societies and from the tens of thousands of agents and collectors and the millions of policy-holders of the industrial insurance companies—an irresistible phalanx! Nor would such a method of levying the revenue required to pay for universal medical attendance be, in accordance with the classic canons of taxation, economically justified. It would, in short, be in the nature of a poll-tax; and England has not had a poll-tax since 1381. Finally, for the Government in this way to guarantee the revenue of these Provident Medical Associations would, we suggest, involve the Government in the necessity of guaranteeing the management. We should thus have got round again to a State Medical Service, but this time to one of gigantic dimensions.

We have left to the last the objection that seems to us the most serious against the proposal to supersede the Poor Law Medical Service by any system of medical insurance, whether voluntary or compulsory, which involves the free choice of doctors by the persons for whom the medical attendance is provided. In the treatment of poor persons, the problem is complicated by the frequent necessity for supplementing the medical attendance and medicine by "medical extras," that is to say, nourishing food and stimulants of one sort or another. It must necessarily be left to the doctor to recommend authoritatively in which cases this extra nourishment is required for curative treatment. If the patient can choose his doctor, he will inevitably choose the one who is most addicted to ordering "medical extras," and the medical practitioner whose remuneration is dependent on the number of patients whom he attracts will be under a constant temptation to recommend, for any person who looks anaemic, at the cost of the ratepayer, the additional food or stimulant for which all poor patients have a craving. To give to the destitute, at the cost of the rates, not access to the particular medical treatment that their ailments really require, but the power to choose, and to enrich with their fees, that one among all the doctors of the town who most commends himself to them, would be, we suggest, most disastrously to aggravate all the existing temptations to "medical demagogy."* To expect this freely-chosen doctor to give, not the "strong medicine" beloved by the poor, or the appetising "medical extras" for which they crave, but the stern advice about habits of life on which recovery really depends—to look to him to speak plainly about the excessive drinking or the unwise eating which cause two-thirds of the ill-health of the poor; or to stop the overcrowding and bad ventilation that encourage tuberculosis; to insist, in measles or whooping-cough, on the troublesome precautions against infection which may check the spread of these diseases; or to press for the removal of his patients to an institution whenever he believes that they would be better cured there—would clearly be chimerical.† What would tend to be provided under such a system would be, not preventive or curative treatment or hygienic advice, but, in the literal sense of the words, medical *relief*, and that wholly without conditions. On all these grounds, the proposal to supersede the Poor Law Medical Service by any system of universal medical insurance appears to us, not only politically impracticable, but also entirely retrograde in policy, and likely to be fraught with the greatest dangers to public health and to the moral character of the poor.

We have still to consider the institutional treatment of the sick provided by voluntary agencies. This is practically confined to the endowed and voluntary hospitals, and, of these, fortunately, the merits are so well known as to enable us to be brief. They are already made use of freely by the very poorest, and Boards of Guardians everywhere transfer suitable cases to them from the Workhouse infirmary, usually making, as is recommended by the Local Government Board, a contribution towards the cost of mainten-

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* We had it given in evidence that any plan of letting the pauper choose his own doctor "would be very bad because the pauper would not . . . be under proper discipline" (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 34179).

† The lack of connection in the public mind—even the divorce in the minds of medical practitioners themselves—between the medical treatment of an ailment, and "the cure of the . . . bad habit" which (*Ibid.*, Q. 38758, Par. 28) are actually producing that ailment, seems to us, from the standpoint of Public Health, one of the strangest anachronisms of the present day. We were actually informed by some medical practitioners, in one and the same statement, that the arrangements for the medical attendance of the poor left nothing to be desired, and that the infants were dying in heaps; that no further medical attention was required, and that the people were living most unhealthy lives. "The poor," says one doctor, "do not suffer from insufficiency of medical attention. . . . [There is] an utte want of knowledge . . . of the ordinary rules of health and treatment of minor ailments. The treatment of babies by young mothers, from ignorance, is appalling." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXII. (Pars. 8, 9) to Vol. VII.

ance either of these particular patients or of the institution as a whole.* But the endowed and voluntary hospitals are very far from sufficing for the needs of the sick poor.† They appear to provide in the aggregate little more than 25,000 beds, which is only about one-fourth of the number of sick beds already actually occupied in the Workhouses and Workhouse infirmaries. Moreover, instead of being distributed geographically as required, the voluntary hospitals, whether general or special, are mainly concentrated in London and the sixty or seventy larger or more ancient provincial towns, where physicians and surgeons and their students love to congregate. The selection of the diseases which these hospitals are willing to admit for treatment is, alike from the standpoint of preventive medicine and from that of the needs of the poor, equally arbitrary. It was because the voluntary hospitals refused to provide for zymotic diseases, or for any epidemic, that the municipal hospitals arose. It was because they would not deal with cases of chronic disablement that the Poor Law had to develop its "hospital branch." "No general hospital," stated a Local Government Board Inspector, "will admit a man who is suffering from delirium tremens: hence the Poor Law Infirmaries are charged with such cases."‡ "All cases of venereal disease," says a Poor Law Medical Officer, "are now practically debarred from the genuine hospitals, to the great detriment of the community." § To-day there is no sign of any development of medical charity competent to provide institutional treatment all over the country for the two gravest national diseases, tuberculosis and syphilis. In fact, what the voluntary hospitals like to deal with is the acute case and the unique or "interesting" case—just those which are least prevalent and which, in all probability, are, to preventive medicine, the least important. Moreover, even where voluntary hospitals exist, and even in those diseases which they select for treatment, their provision, excellent as it is so far as it goes, has the capital drawback of disconnection with domiciliary inspection and supervision before and after the acute stage of the illness. In fact, as it has been paradoxically put, the voluntary hospital is not concerned with the treatment of disease: what it treats and treats so magnificently is collapse from disease; until the patient is so ill that he cannot continue at his employment, he does not enter the hospital. As soon as he is well enough to be discharged, his case disappears from the ken of the hospital staff. And it has been given in evidence that this tendency to get rid of a case as soon as the acute stage is passed, or as soon as it is apparent that the disease is a chronic or incurable one, is leading more and more to the prompt transfer of such patients from the hospital to the Workhouse or Poor Law Infirmary. ‖ Thus, whilst it may be foreseen that the Local Authority dealing with the sick poor will, under proper conditions as to payment, be able to make increasing use of the voluntary hospitals for the treatment of the acute stages of certain diseases, and especially for operative surgery, these hospitals, far from rendering unnecessary "the Hospital Branch" of the Poor Law Medical Service, will, on the contrary, tend more and more to reject or to transfer all other cases to rate-supported institutions of one kind or another.¶

(G) The Treatment of the Sick by the Public Health Authorities.

The voluntary agencies treating the sick poor are not the only rivals whose work overlaps or surrounds that of the Poor Law Medical Service. It has been formally brought to our notice by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board for England and Wales,** by the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland,†† and by the Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland,‡‡ as well as by the Medical Officer of the Board of Education for England and Wales,§§ that ubiquitous and expensive as is the Poor Law Medical Service, it is not the only one maintained out of

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 268, 737, 930, 5046, 6019, 7938, 8994, 11044, 18653, 18753, 20888, 21335, 21378, 21383, 21494, 23384, 32608–32610, 32805–32807, 42237, 45586, 47501, 37921, 50468, 50856, 51107, 52533, 52577–52587, and Appendices No. LXV. (Par. 4), LXXXVI. (Par. 10), XCIII. (Par. 14), CXXII. (Par. 13), CXXXII. (Par. 33), CL. (Par. 23 (a)) to Vol. IV.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 2887.

‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVI. (A), Par. 41, to Vol. I.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 37927, Par. 10.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 32618; 32675–32677; 32757–32763; 33380; 49171, Par. 20; 49192; 51119.

¶ Report . . . on the Overlapping of the Work of the Voluntary General Hospitals with that of Poor Law Medical Relief, by Norah B. Roberts, p. 14.

** *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 92531–93029; *see also* Dr. Newsholme's "Memorandum by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board on the Unification of the Official Medical Services."

†† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 56601–57036, 61904–62080.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 99927, 99882; *see also* Dr. Stafford's "Some Notes on Public Health, and its Relation to the Poor Law in Ireland."

§§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 94283–94628.

the rates. Every part of the United Kingdom is now provided with an equally ubiquitous, quite as highly qualified, and nearly as costly a service of public medical officers, maintained by the Local Sanitary Authorities. To mention only England and Wales, under the various Public Health Acts, the Municipal and Urban District Councils on the one hand and the Rural District Councils on the other, are charged, under the supervision of the County Councils, with explicit responsibility for the health of their several districts —that is to say, for the maintenance in health of all the inhabitants thereof. To this end the councils have been granted elaborate statutory powers, both of regulation and provision, some of them optional and some obligatory. We have had described to us by the responsible heads of the medical departments above mentioned, as well as by numerous medical officers of the Local Authorities concerned, the very extensive functions which those Authorities are now fulfilling in the treatment and cure of the sick poor amounting, in fact, to the provision of medical advice, attendance or medicine, in one way or another, for possibly nearly as many patients—certainly as many acutely sick patients—as are under the care of the Poor Law Medical Service. And it has been given in evidence by the responsible heads of the Departments concerned, as well as by the Medical Officers of Health themselves, that neither in legal theory nor in practical administration are the destitute sick excluded from their ministrations. We have, in fact, in every part of the Kingdom, two public medical authorities legally responsible for, and in many cases simultaneously treating the same class of poor persons, sometimes even for the same diseases. So extensive and costly an overlapping has compelled us to explore in some detail and to describe at length the various developments of the Public Health as well as of the Poor Law service.*

(i) *Municipal Hospitals.*

Starting from the provision of temporary isolation hospitals for cholera patients and then for those attacked by smallpox, the Public Health Authorities now maintain over 700 permanent municipal hospitals, having, in the aggregate, nearly 25,000 beds,† or nearly as many as all the endowed and voluntary hospitals put together. These vary in size and elaboration, from the cottage or shed with two or three beds set aside for an occasional small-pox patient, up to such an institution as the Liverpool City Hospital, divided into seven distinct sections in as many different parts of the city, and having altogether 938 beds, served by six resident and seven visiting doctors, and treating nearly 5,000 patients a year, for an average period of seven or eight weeks.‡

The Manchester Town Council maintains the Monsall Fever Hospital, with 415 beds, which makes no charge whatever to the patients; another at Baguley, with 100 beds; and a third at Clayton Hill for small-pox cases.§ The Birmingham Town Council has a couple of hospitals, having together 610 beds.‖ The Leeds Town Council provides a series of hospitals and isolation dwellings, principally for scarlet fever, diphtheria and small-pox, accommodating over 600 persons, where patients are admitted "without any charge whether they belong to the families of ratepayers or of paupers."¶ These towns are typical of many others. Mention must here be made of the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, because, though administered by a body largely made up of representatives of Boards of Guardians, and actually maintained out of the poor rates,** they have become, both by statute and by Local Government Board decisions, practically public health institutions. The dozen great hospitals thus maintained for small-pox, scarlet fever, enteric fever and diphtheria, now admit all cases recommended by any medical practitioner, irrespective of the patient's affluence. The maintenance and treatment, once made matter of charge, is now by virtue of the Public Health (London)

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* *See* the Report by Mrs. Sidney Webb on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and Public Health Departments of English Local Government in their relation to each other, to the public and to the prevention and cure of disease; and "Some Notes on Public Health, and its Relation to the Poor Law in Ireland," by Dr. T. J. Stafford, Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland.

† We regret that no official return of these Municipal hospitals has been published; and that no more complete list is available than that given in Burdett's *Hospitals and Charities Annual*, for 1908; or that to be gleaned from the return of deaths in public institutions in the Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales.

‡ Report on the Health of the City of Liverpool during 1905, by the Medical Officer of Health.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 38380, Par. 37.

‖ *Ibid.*, Appendices No. CXXXVII. (Par. 1 (a)) and CXXXVIII. (Par. 2) to Vol. IV.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 41489, Pars. 2–5.

** *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4–9; 23253–6; 24155–499; Appendix No. XVI. to Vol. II

Act, 1891, universally free. The inmates, originally exclusively paupers, are now explicitly declared to be not pauperised, the treatment, and even the maintenance, being (by the Diseases Prevention Act of 1883) expressly stated not to be parochial relief and to involve no stigma of disqualification whatsoever. The 3,000 to 6,000 patients in these hospitals, costing nearly £1,000,000 a year, may, therefore, be reckoned, though under a Poor Law authority, as virtually patients of a Public Health Department, and they are accordingly excluded by the Local Government Board from the statistics and computed cost of pauperism. The municipal hospitals of the provincial towns, provided in the first instance usually for small-pox, have had their spheres extended to scarlet fever, enteric fever, and usually diphtheria; in addition to any stray cases of plague, cholera or typhus that may turn up. But they do not stop there. The Public Health Acts do not prescribe the kind of disease to be treated in the hospital which they authorise,* and whatever may have been the primary object for which it was established there is nothing to prevent the Local Authority from admitting any sick patients whatsoever.† Hence, although it is generally assumed that these so-called "Isolation Hospitals" are for infectious cases only, the list of diseases dealt with is steadily growing. In most towns of any size the municipal hospitals are willing to deal with puerperal fever (as at Crewe)‡ and with serious erysipelas. Cases of chicken-pox are occasionally found in them; children suffering from scabies and pediculosis are occasionally admitted for temporary treatment;§ and the door is now being opened to the two most deadly diseases of children beyond infancy. The Liverpool Town Council has decided to receive in its municipal hospitals "infants suffering from whooping cough and measles . . . together with the mother or other natural guardian of the child if necessary,"‖ so far as there is room; and since it is recognised that "the isolation of the infectious sick in hospital is important and necessary," special steps have been taken to make room. "Provision of hospital accommodation for a limited number of cases," reports the Medical Officer of Health, "has now been made for measles."¶ Moreover, "isolation for a limited number of [whooping cough] cases has been found."** At Liverpool, indeed, the municipal hospitals admitted and treated during the year 1905 nearly 200 cases, and in 1906 between 500 and 600 cases, of other diseases, including gastro-enteritis, pneumonia, tubercular meningitis, bronchitis, tubercular peritonitis, cystitis and nephritis, erythema, influenza, varicella, septicæmia, abdominal tumour, empyema and tubercle, psoas abscess, tetanus, syphilis, tonsilitis, laryngitis, pharyngitis, angina ludovici, and appendicitis, besides four cases of poisoning. It appears to us difficult to believe that these can all be explained as being cases of mistaken diagnosis.††

The assumption that the power of the Public Health Authority in the provision of hospitals is limited to contagious or infectious disease is, indeed, a mistake, though a common one. There are no such words of limitation in the sections of the Public Health Acts dealing with the matter.‡‡ For a long time, however, probably influenced by the common impression that their powers applied only to infectious diseases, no Public Health Authority sought to establish anything but an isolation hospital. In 1900 the Barry Urban District Council (which sends its infectious cases to a joint isolation hospital at Cardiff, and provides home nurses for such of them as are not moved), established, with the express sanction of the Local Government Board, a free municipal hospital exclusively for non-infectious cases, intended principally for accidents and urgent surgical cases. This municipal hospital has a medical staff of eight visiting surgeons and physicians, an organised nursing staff, and maintains seven beds.§§ The Widnes Urban District Council,

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 37989, 39302, and Appendix No. XXXVIII. (Par. 10) to Vol. IV. It is only the Isolation Hospitals Act of 1893 permitting combinations of Public Health Authorities to establish hospitals for infectious diseases, that is limited to notifiable diseases. There is equally no limitation in Scotland under the Public Health (Scotland) Acts, 1867 and 1890.

† It is somewhat remarkable that there is neither systematic governmental inspection nor central audit of these municipal hospitals. Beyond sanctioning the loans for hospitals under the Public Health Acts, the Local Government Board, we understand, has no other official knowledge of this branch of civic activity than it can glean from the Local Taxation Returns, and from reading the Annual Reports of the 1,800 Medical Officers of Health, with which it is supplied, but which it does not tabulate, summarise, or review statistically. There appears to be no official statement how many sanitary authorities, or what proportion of the whole, either maintain their own hospitals, or make arrangements to use other hospitals, or make no provision at all.

‡ Report on the Health of Crewe, 1905, by the Medical Officer of Health, p. 39.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 92534, Par. A (i).

‖ Report on the Health of the City of Liverpool during 1905, by the Medical Officer of Health, pp. 19, 37.

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

** *Ibid.*, p. 37.

†† *Ibid.*, pp. 202–209.

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 22940–22942.

§§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 22942, 49222 (Par. 1), 4923, etc., and Appendix No. XXV. (Par. 24) to Vol. V.

which runs a fever hospital and a temporary small-pox hospital, was definitely informed by the Local Government Board that it was free to start also an accident hospital, and accordingly did so.*

But the greatest recent development has been in the provision for tuberculosis. The Brighton Municipal Hospital in 1906 actually dealt with more cases of phthisis than of any other disease, they forming a third of its whole number of patients, and amounting to nearly 2 per 1,000 of the entire population of the town. The object of their admission is not so much immediate cure as treatment with a view to instruction in good hygienic habits. They are therefore admitted preferably at an early stage, before being invalided, and they are retained only a few weeks, passing then to their homes, where they are periodically visited. About half of all the known consumptives in Brighton have already been thus through the municipal hospital, with the result, it is believed, of great prolongation of life.† Special hospital provision for tuberculosis primarily with educational objects is accordingly now being made, one way or another, by many public health authorities. At Manchester, the Town Council not only pays for beds at the Delamere and Bowden Sanatoria, but has for several years opened special phthisis wards at its Clayton Vale Hospital.‡ At Leicester, the Town Council has set aside a special hospital block for curable cases, no charge being made for maintenance and treatment during the first month. They may stay for a second, a third and even a fourth month, on payment of 10s. a week.§ It is, however, not only by admission to hospital that the public health authorities now treat individual cases. In certain instances, and for particular purposes, individual cases of disease are dealt with out of hospital. Alike in numbers and in degree this municipal outdoor medical service is rapidly growing. In Scotland it has even been definitely laid down by the Local Government Board that it is for the Local Health Authority to treat all cases of phthisis; and that sufferers from this disease should not come under the Poor Law at all.‖

(ii.) *Notification and Disinfection.*

We may notice first the notification of disease, the inspection as to isolation, the treatment of "contacts," and the arrangements for disinfection. This organisation, at first dependent on voluntary, and only subsequently on obligatory notification, has been extended from disease to disease, until it now covers not only plague, cholera and typhus; erysipelas, puerperal fever, small-pox, scarlet fever, enteric and diphtheria; but also, in one town or another, for this or that period, influenza, measles, and chicken-pox. Puerperal fever, too, has become in a sort of way also separately notifiable by midwives. Arrangements for the voluntary notification of phthisis have been made in numerous towns (including Liverpool, Blackburn, Brighton, Northampton, Southwark, Finsbury), a payment of 2s. 6d. being made for each case. At Sheffield and Bolton this notification of phthisis has been made obligatory by a Local Act. Scotland has gone still further. Under the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1889, phthisis is compulsorily notifiable in Edinburgh and a large part of the country, including the whole of Lanarkshire outside Glasgow; and with or without compulsory notification, the local Health Authorities are now required to deal with phthisis as with other infections diseases. And now, throughout England and Wales, the Local Government Board has ordered the Poor Law Authorities everywhere to notify to the Local Health Authorities every case of phthisis that is observed in the pauper population. Arrangements are also made by direction of the Board of Education for the Medical Officer of Health to receive weekly notifications, from the head teachers of all the public elementary schools, of all cases in which the children stay away on account of such diseases as measles, whooping cough, chicken-pox, mumps, ringworm, scabies, etc.¶ A Board of Guardians has strongly urged that ophthalmia should be made compulsorily notifiable.** Medical Officers are now suggesting that not only pneumonia, influenza, and diarrhœa, but also

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* Evidence before the Commission *Qs.* 10728, 10729, 22942.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 92543, Par. A (iii.); 92541–92605; and Annual Report on the Health . . . of Brighton for . . , 1906, by Arthur Newsholme, p. 26.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 38380 (Pars. 38, 39), 38437, 38438, 38445–38448; *see also* Report on the Health of the City of Manchester, 1905, by James Niven, pp. 168, 169.

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. CXLIV. (Par. 3) to Vol. IV.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 53286–9, 54029–54035, 62676 (Par. 24).

¶ *See*, for instance, *Ibid.*, *Q.* 37605, Pars. 26–28.

** Kensington Board of Guardians to Kensington Borough Council, 1900; Monthly Report of Medical Officer of Health for Kensington, October, 1900, p. 109.

cancer should be added to the list of notifiable diseases.* "As the result . . . of recent additions to our knowledge of cancer," reports one Medical Officer of Health (and this is only an echo of similar proposals made at Finsbury and elsewhere during the past decade), "I am of opinion that it is a disease which calls for public health measures; not indeed of a stringent nature, but dealing more with the necessity of destroying the dressings of cancerous ulcers, and for issuing warnings that persons dressing these cases should be careful to protect cuts or wounds of the hands, and to boil sheets and pillow-cases used by patients.†

(iii.) *Supply of Medicines and Anti-Toxin.*

The importance, in certain diseases, of the prompt administration of specific remedies has led the Public Health Authorities to supply these gratuitously to all who will accept them: just as vaccination has, since 1840, been performed by the Poor Law Authorities free of charge, on all who will submit to it. The Manchester Town Council, and various other bodies, distribute bottles of diarrhœa mixture to anyone in need of them, using all the police stations as distributing agencies. But the remedy usually distributed gratuitously is the anti-toxin serum for diphtheritic cases. The extreme importance of promptitude in the administration of this remedy, and the great saving of expense implied by the prevention of the spread of diphtheria, have led very many Public Health Authorities, sometimes after a vain attempt to enlist the co-operation of the Board of Guardians, to supply it gratis, on demand, to any medical practitioner; sometimes,as at Blackburn, through the police stations among other agencies.‡ In some cases the Municipal Authorities have gone further, and have paid Poor Law doctors and private medical practitioners to use it. Thus, the urban district council of Fenton, in Staffordshire, decided in October, 1905, on the advice of the Medical Officer of Health, and as being less costly to the ratepayers than institutional treatment, to undertake the domiciliary treatment, so far as the injection of anti-toxin was concerned, of all diphtheritic patients, and of all who had come in contact with them. For this purpose every medical practitioner in the district, including the District Medical Officers of the Board of Guardians, was, in effect, made, temporarily, an additional officer of the Urban District Council as Public Health Authority, and paid a fee for each case so treated—amounting, for the next few months, to three or four per week.§

(iv.) *Municipal Out-patients' Departments.*

Another direction in which the Public Health Authorities have extended their treatment of individual cases is by opening an out-patients' department. At Willesden, finding that from 25 to 50 per cent. of the cases were without any sort of medical treatment, the Public Health Authority, on the recommendation of the Medical Officer of Health, has established an out-patients' department at its isolation hospital for persons suffering from ringworm, impetigo, scabies, or ophthalmia.‖ At Newcastle-on-Tyne, where the Town Council subscribes 100 guineas a year to the Dispensary, something like eight hundred "letters" are, in return, placed at the disposal of the Municipality. These "letters" each entitle the bearer to two months' gratuitous treatment, including domiciliary visits where required, and, in practice, recommendations for admission to various voluntary hospitals, etc. if institutional treatment is necessary. At present, these "letters" are distributed by Town Councillors. The Town Council also maintains salaried Health Visitors, who go round the town under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, and who thus discover many cases of disease, but have, at present, no organised method of securing medical attendance. "The Medical Officer of Health himself has . . . recently suggested to the Corporation that they should increase their subscription to the Dispensary . . . with the object of getting more letters, *and that these letters should be distributed by the Health Visitors.*"¶

* Report on the Health of the County of Dorset for 1905, by the various Medical Officers of Health (Sherborne Report), p. 28.

† Report on the Health of Southend-on-Sea for 1905, by the Medical Officer of Health, p. 59.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 37605, Par. 14.

§ Report on the Health of Fenton, 1905, by the Medical Officer of Health, p. 49.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XLIII. (Par. 17) to Vol. IX.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 51466 (Pars. 12, 14, 16), 51511, 51601–51607.

(v.) *Pediculosis and Scabies.*

For the particular bodily affections of pediculosis and scabies—which, as being morbid conditions of the body susceptible of treatment and cure, must be classed as diseases—Parliament has expressly authorised gratuitous provision, which is not to be deemed parochial relief or charitable allowance.* "Baths and disinfecting chambers for the cleansing and purifying of the bodies and clothing of persons infested with vermin or parasites" are now provided by various municipal authorities. "No charge is made for the use of these facilities, and applicants will be treated with every consideration." † This small "attempt in the treatment of certain skin diseases," as it has been apologetically described, represents, it is admitted "a departure from the principle of not treating disease, but it has its justification in the contagious nature of such disease"—a justification which would carry us far. But even for pediculosis alone one Public Health Authority (that of Marylebone) has successfully treated 32,500 patients in seven years.

(vi.) *Health Visiting.*

The system of "health visiting" now adopted in some scores of towns, which we have already described in Chapter III., is, of course, not confined to newly-born infants and children in "baby farms." The Health Visitors go at once to every house at which either an infantile death or a death from phthisis or any infectious disease is notified, with a view of inquiring into the sanitary condition of the premises, ensuring the execution of any necessary disinfection, and (with regard to deaths of infants under two years old)‡ also obtaining elaborate particulars as to the method of feeding, source of milk supply, etc. The health visitor goes also to any house in which sanitary defects are complained of. She follows up "contacts." She visits all the cases reported from the public elementary schools of children staying away or excluded on account of measles, whooping cough, ringworm, etc. She investigates cases of erysipelas for the Medical Officer of Health. She visits the patients discharged from the municipal hospital, and exercises a certain amount of supervision over them.§ She may even, so far as time permits, visit from house to house in blocks or districts in which special sanitary care is for any reason required. Wherever she goes, she makes such inspection of the inmates as she can; she is able to report to the Medical Officer of Health where and what diseases exist, and which cases are without medical attendance; she gives hygienic advice; she makes known the facilities with regard to phthisis; and she advises the calling in of a medical practitioner where necessary. Her advice is found specially useful in those children's ailments which are so often treated lightly without medical aid.‖ The Medical Officer of Health for Warwickshire, points out in one of his reports (1903) that "the work of the Health Visitor does not trench on the work of the Sanitary Inspector; that she is not an inspector in any sense of the word, and that her functions are those of friend of the household to which she gains access. He also states that although at first there may have been some opposition to her entering a house, it rapidly died away, and in numerous instances she has been asked to return and aid the family by her help and counsel. He also believes that in this new departure of carrying sanitation into the home, we have not only an important, but almost the only, means of further improving the health of the people, and that in the future, although sanitary authorities, by providing water supply, drainage, and decent houses, have done much in the past, the most important advance will come from an appreciation by the people themselves of the value of good health."¶

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* The Cleansing of Persons Act, 1897.

† Public notice by Medical Officer of Health for Hackney, April, 1905. Similar facilities are afforded by the Metropolitan Borough Councils of Marylebone, Woolwich, etc., whilst that of Finsbury pays the Board of Guardians to perform the service. (Report on the Health of Finsbury, 1907, by Medical Officer of Health, p. 193.)

‡ "The dead baby is next of kin to the diseased baby, who, in time, becomes the anæmic, ill-fed, and educationally backward child, from whom is derived later in life the unskilled casual, who is at the bottom of so many of our problems." In the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of the Education Committee of the London County Council for 1906, Dr. Kerr gives statistical grounds for concluding that physical defects are more marked in children born in years of high infantile mortality than in years of low infantile mortality.

§ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XLVI. (Par. 11) to Vol. IX.

‖ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LVI. Pars. 5–8) to Vol. IV.

¶ Report on the Prevention of Infantile Mortality, by Alfred E. Harris, (M.O.H. Islington), 1907, p. 31

(vii.) *Municipal Home Nursing.*

In addition to the work of the health visitors and school nurses, some Public Health Authorities have begun a system of domiciliary treatment of the adult sick by municipal home nurses. At Brighton, for instance, under a Local Act, the Town Council employs a trained nurse, who is employed in attending at home on cases, such as puerperal fever or erysipelas, in which removal to hospital is not considered desirable.* Nurses are also provided "in special cases of infectious diseases," by the Barry Urban District Council.† Even more interesting is the action of the Health Committee of the Worcestershire County Council, which maintains a staff of nurses for the domiciliary treatment of the sick poor in certain of the sanitary districts within the county, in which the Local Authorities do not, either in their capacity of Guardians of the Poor or in that of Rural District Councillors, make adequate provision for home-nursing.‡

(viii) *Diagnosis.*

One of the most important branches of the Public Health Medical Service is that of diagnosis. The bacteriological laboratory of the Medical Officer of Health, or that at the municipal hospital, frequently undertakes the investigation of "swabs" for diphtheria or of sputum for tuberculosis, for all the medical practitioners of the district. But the service does not stop here. The Medical Officer of Health frequently acts himself as diagnostician in individual cases, being called in (without payment) by the medical practitioner to suspected cases of small-pox, etc. In times of epidemic, the active Medical Officer of Health goes even further and himself spontaneously visits the common lodging houses and other suspected centres, in order to search out cases of small-pox which are not being medically attended at all, and to hurry them off to the municipal hospital. The services of the Medical Officer of Health as diagnostician are rapidly extending. Not only in diphtheria and tuberculosis cases, but also in typhoid fever, in cerebro-spinal-meningitis, in affections of the throat, and in the whole realm of opsonic diagnosis, he is more and more coming to serve as the general consultant of the district. It is he who considers "suspects" and "contacts" and "carriers," who, not being themselves ill, are not remunerative patients. Yet it may be upon their prompt treatment that the health of the district depends.

(ix) *Home Aliment.*

Possibly more important, in its future development, is the practice of Local Health Authorities of granting free lodging and an alimentary allowance, to "contacts" or persons (whether dependents or not) who have been in contact with a patient suffering from infectious disease. In order to prevent new cases of disease these "contacts" are often segregated and kept under medical observation. It then becomes necessary to provide for the maintenance of the persons thus prevented from working. The Leeds Town Council has "frequently paid part wages of those who, though not themselves apparently ill, have at request remained away from work on account of having been exposed to contagious disease. . . . The practice has been to pay half the wages, and to maintain the contacts in . . . cottages . . . under medical observation."§ They may, however, in other cases remain at home but abstain from working, receiving allowances for their maintenance. This practice is followed as a matter of course in cases of suspected plague or cholera, and frequently for small-pox. With regard to other infectious diseases, the state of things is chaotic, and great hardship arises. One such case has been brought specially before the Commission. A widow working as a laundry woman had a child ill with fever, who was removed by the Local Health Authority to its hospital. The Local Health Authority, apparently, in the public interest, stretching its legal powers, peremptorily ordered the widowed mother not to go to work, it being a penal offence to spread infection. The widow being thus rendered destitute applied to the Relieving Officer, who refused to give Outdoor Relief, and referred her to the Local Health Authority; from which however, she received no maintenance allowance. The Board of Guardians thereupon reported the matter to us, demanding legislation to make it obligatory on the Local Health Authority to grant aliment to heads of families so prevented from working, owing to their having come in contact with infectious disease.‖

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 92534, Par. A (iv.); 92762–92765.
† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 49222, Par. 1.
‡ Annual Report of the Medical Officer (Worcestershire County Council).
§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 41489 (Par. 8), 41515–41523, 41531–41534.
‖ Resolution of Kingston Board of Guardians, July 2nd, 1906.

The question of allowing aliment to "contacts" forced, in the public interest, temporarily to suspend work, is, however, comparatively simple. The practice of the Local Health Authorities brings them, as the Medical Officer of Health for Manchester has explained to us, up against the far more serious problem presented by the necessity of granting aliment to the dependents of patients admitted to the municipal hospitals or sanatoria. The Poor Law Authorities in many places grant Outdoor Relief freely for the families of men in hospital. This, however, involves the stigma of pauperism and accordingly (as is actually intended and desired by the Boards of Guardians) many respectable wage-earners struggle to continue at work in gradually failing health, and put off entering the hospital as long as they possibly can. In cases of tuberculosis, especially, this delay, besides spreading the disease, militates against a cure; and makes, in fact, in the vast majority of cases, all recovery hopeless. The Local Government Board Inspector attending "Out-relief Committees . . . hears of men and women who have struggled with the disease as long as possible before applying for relief, often sleeping in small rooms with children. It too often happens that application is made too late for the disease to be arrested." Even when they enter an institution, they are so eager to get back to work to maintain their families, "that as soon as the disease is arrested, they take their discharge before a cure is effected," and return soon "much worse than when they first came under treatment. . . . Finally, the sufferer enters the Workhouse infirmary to die, in the meantime possibly having affected other members of his family."* In this dilemma the Bradford Board of Guardians, like the Brighton Town Council, seeks actually to induce and persuade the man with phthisis to come into its sanatorium at an early stage of the disease, when he can still earn wages. "All persons resident in the Union," states the Clerk to the Guardians, "found to be in that stage of the disease, whose income does not allow them to reside at a private sanatorium, are accepted on the recommendation of their private medical attendant."† This particular "Workhouse" is clearly run almost on the lines of a municipal hospital, with the added advantage that the Board of Guardians is able to induce people to take advantage of it by proffering liberal Outdoor Relief to their families. Some Local Health Authorities now want to use the same inducement. Dr. Niven has explained to the Commission the importance of the Health Committee of the Manchester Town Council being free to provide aliment, without the stigma of pauperism, for the dependents of patients suffering from incipient phthisis, whether removed to hospital or treated by the municipal doctor in their own homes. "It is to my mind very plain," says Dr. Niven, "that this would be an economic expenditure. One of the great means of combating phthisis would be to raise the nutrition of the families in presence of the disease. The family falling into a state of poverty, the rest of the family are exposed to infection just in that condition which lays them open to attack, and if we are to deal really effectually with the prevention of consumption I feel sure that it is necessary to improve the nutrition of the families in presence of the disease." Dr. Niven explained that he would put it on the same plane as money given in the plague or cholera cases.‡ Hitherto Local Health Authorities have limited any such grant of aliment to cases connected with plague, cholera, and small-pox, and have always coupled it with complete isolation of the patient. There does not, however, appear to be any legal limitation to their power to grant such aliment, at any rate as regards all notifiable diseases. This incipient development of a second public body granting what is virtually Outdoor Relief to the sick poor appears to us to demand the most serious consideration. We shall recur to this point in our subsequent chapter on "The Scheme of Reform."

(x.) *The Characteristics of the Public Health Authority's Treatment of Disease.*

All treatment of the individual patient by the Local Health Authority has for its object, not the relief of immediate suffering, but the prevention of disease. It is plain that this involves the treatment and cure of existing diseases in the individual patient, because, as one Medical Officer of Health remarks, "the cure of a sick person tends to prevent disease in that person."§ But, unlike Poor Law medical practice, even of the

* Evidence before the Commission, App. XI. (A), Pars. 133, 139 to Vol. I.
"In a large number of cases the disease was in an advanced state when notified, the sufferers continuing to work for the support of their families, and having refused to see a doctor until absolutely compelled. The longer we work the more are we impressed with the need of a sanatorium to which the sufferers could be removed in the early stage of the disease, which, however, cannot be brought about without provision being made for the support of the families during the period devoted to isolation." (Report of lady inspectors, in Report on the Health of Kensington for 1905, by Medical Officer of Health, p. 51.)

† Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXIII., (Par. 9 (*f*)) to Vol. IV.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 38442-38456.

§ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLV. (Par. 28), to Vol. IX.

best type, it involves much more. In the obviously communicable diseases, such as plague, cholera and typhus, small-pox, scarlet fever and enteric, it involves the securing of complete isolation of the patient, and even the isolation and medical observation of healthy "contacts." In other infective cases, such as phthisis, trachoma and chronic ear, throat and skin affections, it involves the education of the patient in a method of living calculated to minimise the recurrence or spread of the disease.* But the special sphere of the Public Health Authority in the treatment of disease is not that of infectious or contagious, but of *preventable* disease. It was, indeed, not to stop the spread of disease from individual to individual, but to prevent its arising from dirt and filth, that the Poor Law Commissioners first made their public health investigations, and importuned the Government to give the local authorities public health powers. It was preventable disease which Chadwick found to be so great a cause of unnecessary pauperism. It was for the reduction to a minimum of this preventable disease that the Public Health Act of 1848 was passed; and it is to preventable disease, whether communicable or not, that the powers and duties of Public Health Authorities to-day extend. The accident of the widely-published advance of bacteriological science since 1848 has tended unduly to concentrate attention on the zymotic diseases, which, taken altogether, cause only 11 per cent. of the deaths, and account, probably, for only a twentieth or a thirtieth of the persons ill at any one time. But as the Medical Officer of Health for Coventry remarks: "It is a great mistake to suppose that it is only infectious diseases that are preventable."† "Our activity as health officers," writes another Medical Officer of Health, "cannot be limited to the infectious diseases. There are indeed greater opportunities of preventing illness among the non-infectious ailments, *e.g.*, ailments of the digestive system, almost, than in the case of infectious illnesses." To the long list of common infective diseases already given, we must add as plainly preventable: "infectious eye diseases, such as conjunctivitis in most of its forms (trachoma, etc.); infectious ear diseases (abscesses, etc.); infectious nose and throat diseases; abscesses of all kinds not due to tuberculosis; parasitic skin diseases, and some others. To these again we may add as due to immediate environment, and preventable, the occupational (non-infectious) diseases; chronic arsenical poisoning, chronic lead poisoning, chronic phosphorus poisoning, mercury poisoning, coal-miner's lung, steel-grinder's lung; the diseases due to dusty occupations, skin diseases, lung diseases, bowel diseases; and many others due to special manufactures, as rubber works, chemical works, dry cleaning, rag works, etc., etc. . . . . Similar reasoning can be legitimately applied to chronic bronchitis, which can usually be prevented if the acute stage is properly treated; to catarrhal pneumonia, which is often the precursor of phthisis; to the heart diseases that are due to acute rheumatism; to chronic kidney disease, which often follows neglect of acute kidney disease; to some forms of cancer, which are curable if operation is early enough."‡ Thus, the special characteristic of the treatment of disease by the Local Health Authority is, not to wait until the patient is so ill that he is driven to apply, but positively to search out every case, even in its most incipient stage. "An active Medical Officer of Health," sums up one of them, "attempts anything and everything which promises to reduce death rates or to prevent disease." The one recurring note of all the statements and oral evidence of the Medical Officers of Health is the vital importance of "early diagnosis." "I am satisfied," writes Dr. Newman, "that much illness is prolonged quite unnecessarily, and that there is a lamentable and disastrous amount of failure to deal with the *beginnings of disease*. Neglect of such things leads to mortality more than many other factors."§ The disastrous effects of failure to seek early treatment, in consumption, diphtheria and other diseases, are continually coming to the notice of medical men. It is a necessary condition of the Public Health Medical Service that there must be no delay in searching out and discovering all the cases; there must be no delay in securing the necessary isolation; there must be no delay in applying the necessary treatment; there must be no delay in the adoption of the appropriate hygienic

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* It is worth noting how extensive is now the class of legally recognised infectious diseases. "The Local Authority for Public Health," says Dr. Leslie Mackenzie, "may legally deal with the following well-known and common infectious diseases:—Anthrax, cerebro-spinal fever, chicken-pox, cholera, diphtheria, dysentery, endocarditis (infective), enteric fever, enteritis (infective), erysipelas, gangrene (acute infective), German measles, influenza, measles, mumps, osteomyelitis and periostitis (acute infective), phagedæna, plague pneumonia, pyæmia, pyrexia of uncertain origin, relapsing fever, rheumatic fever, scarlet fever, septicæmia, small-pox, tetanus, tuberculosis, typhus, whooping-cough—thirty orders of disease. These are taken from the official "Nomenclature of Diseases, 1906." For special reasons I have omitted the venereal group." (Statement of Dr. Leslie Mackenzie. *Ibid.*, *Q.* 56605. Par. 128.)

† Report on the Health of Coventry for 1905, by Medical Officer of Health, p. 109.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 56605, Pars. 129, 130, and 133.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 94287, Par. 28.

habits. It is the consciousness of the importance of this "early diagnosis," the immense superiority in attractiveness of the incipient over the advanced "case," the overwhelming sense of the dire calamities that may come from a single "missed case" that mark the characteristic machinery of the Public Health Medical Service—its notification; its birth, death and case visitation; its bacteriological examination; its school intimations; its house to house visitation; its domiciliary disinfection; its medical observation of "contacts," and its prolonged domiciliary supervision of "recoveries" and patients discharged from institutions in order to detect the "return case." But besides the preventable diseases brought about by environment, and by neglect of acute diseases, there are those now recognised to be caused by bad hygienic habits of the individual himself. "The chief factor in disease production," says Dr. Newman, "is personal rather than external."* To quote the epigram of a distinguished doctor: "We have pretty well removed the filth from outside the human body; what we have now to do in order to lower the death rate, is to remove the filth from inside." "Diseases spread not alone by infection and contagion," says another Medical Officer of Health. "The habits and practices of people are responsible in even greater measures for the continuance of diseases. These cannot be combated by the popular panacea of a bottle of medicine."† It may be said, in fact, that "the public health method of treatment is superior to that of the Poor Law because it is largely educative and for the future." Nor is this merely a matter of cleanly living and the avoidance of excess. The prevention of disease, which, as the Medical Officer of Health always remembers, "is far more effective and infinitely less costly than the treatment of disease that is accrued," may depend on the adoption of a particular mode of life. Incipient phthisis, in particular, may be thus curable. "Such conditions as diabetes, granular kidney and aneurism," says another authority, "are not necessarily diseases. If the condition is recognised early, and the patient adopts the proper *regimen*, the symptoms which really constitute the disease may be postponed for a considerable period."‡ We come even to the study of individual proclivity or diathesis, as a branch of preventive medicine. "Thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands of young men and women with hereditary or acquired tendencies to various diseases are, *owing to want of knowledge*, brought up, enter upon occupations, and lead modes of life which inevitably result in disease and early death."§

Passing from the characteristics of the Public Health Medical Service to its effects on its patients, there comes to light an interesting contrast with the Poor Law Medical Service. It has been strongly urged upon the Commission that Poor Law Medical Relief is not merely "deterrent" but that, when accepted, it breaks down the independence of the recipient and frequently leads him to become a chronic pauper. It is alleged that the labourer who begins by asking the Relieving Officer for a midwifery order or for medical attendance on his ailing infant is easily led on to apply for a medical order for himself and presently for Outdoor Relief. No such allegation is made with regard to submission to medical treatment of the Local Health Authority. On the contrary there is absolute uniformity of testimony, from all sorts of witnesses in all parts of the country, that the medical attendance and medicine of the Public Health Department has no pauperising

* *Ibid.*, Par. 26.

† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLIII. (Par. 30) to Vol. IX.

‡ *Ibid.*, Appendix XLV. (Par. 28) to Vol. IX.

§ *The Prevention of Diseases other than Infectious Diseases* by Roger McNeill, Medical Officer of Health for the County of Argyll (1896). Dr. Newsholme, in his Paper at the 1907 Meeting of the British Medical Association, gave the following tabular classification of deaths in England and Wales:—

Caused by.	Per cent.
Acute notifiable infectious diseases	2·39
Acute non-notifiable infectious diseases	18·58
Chronic infectious diseases, including pneumonia and rheumatic fever	11·21
Accident	2·99
Preventable non-infective diseases	3·31
Partially preventable non-infective diseases	17·63
All other diseases	43·89
	100·00

Thus, nearly two-thirds of all the deaths are due to diseases which can be classed either as "infectious" or as otherwise "preventable."

tendency. The fever-stricken patient who is removed to the isolation hospital, or the mother who receives hygienic advice about her infant, is not thereby induced to find her way to the Poor Law. Indeed, it has been repeatedly given in evidence by witnesses with practical experience that the essential characteristic of the Public Health Medical Service—that it is rendered in the interest of the community and not in order merely to relieve the suffering of the individual—actually creates in the recipient an increased feeling of personal obligation, and even a new sense of social responsibility.* This sense of obligation is, we are informed, seen in a new responsibility as to not creating nuisances or infecting relations and neighbours; in a deliberate intention to remain healthy, and therefore to control physical impulses; and in an altogether heightened parental responsibility in the matter of the conscientious fulfilment of the daily—even the hourly—details of family *regimen* necessary for the rearing of the infant or the recovery of the invalid. The very aim of sanitarians is to train the people to better habits of life. The object of health visiting is to make the people understand that prevention is better than cure.† It has, indeed, been urged upon us that actual experience of public health administration indicates that universal medical inspection, hygienic advice and the appropriate institutional treatment of those found out of health might have as bracing an effect on personal character, by imposing a new standard of physical self-control, as it would have on corporeal health. Nor is this a mere figment of the imagination. "The form in which medical aid would be given," states Dr. Newsholme, the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, in the light of his actual experience with the hundreds of phthisical patients whom he has treated, "would be such as constantly to enforce on the minds of the patients their duty to the community and to themselves in matters of health. Though they would pay nothing, they would not be merely passive recipients of advice and attention. The influence of the doctor would demand from them habits of life and even sacrifices of personal taste in the interest of the health of the community, their families and themselves, which would leave them conscious of a sensible discharge of duty in return for the attention which they received. The discipline of responsibility into which the system would educate them should, in my judgment, suffice to avoid the loss of self-respect liable to arise from the merely passive receipt of gifts; and it would introduce into the national life an attitude towards matters of personal health that would have an indirect influence upon conduct while directly restricting disease." ‡ But the Public Health Medical Service, as it exists to-day, has grave defects. Though nominally co-extensive with the kingdom and applicable to all preventable disease, it exists, over a large part of the country, merely in skeleton outline. So far as we have been able to ascertain, positively a majority of the 650 rural Sanitary Authorities of England and Wales and not a few of the smaller urban Sanitary Authorities, have no hospitals even for the most infectious diseases, no domiciliary visitation for the searching out of disease, and nothing more in the way of a Medical Officer of Health than the scrap of the time of a private practitioner, to whom the small fee of a few guineas comes with instructions "not to be meddlesome." Some sanitary districts are far too small for efficiency, there being even "urban districts" with less than 1,000 population. It is true that there is provison for voluntary combinations of districts, and such exist; but they are difficult to arrange—and not permanently satisfactory. Even in many considerable urban districts the Local Authorities have not yet realised the importance either of extending their isolation hospitals to anything but three or four of the "chief zymotics," or of any sort of supervision of infantile ailments. A large town like Norwich was, in 1906, making "no provision for the treatment of other infectious ailments, such as measles, German measles, whooping cough, chicken-pox and mumps; nor for the tuberculous diseases, nor for such contagious diseases as scabies and the other pediculi, nor for venereal diseases."§ The varied activities that we have described have, in fact, often emanated from the zeal and energy of the Medical Officer of Health himself. It is a

* *See*, for instance, the striking evidence of Dr. Leslie Mackenzie, Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 56927–34.

† "I look," stated to us the distinguished sanitarian who was recently Medical Officer of Health for Finsbury, and is now the Medical Officer to the Board of Education, "to a betterment of the personal factor as likely at the present time (now that environment has reached a high standard of excellence) to be most effectual in the betterment of physical life. I would, if I could, bring to bear upon the homes of the people of Finsbury more suitable health visitation, by which we should gain :—(*a*) Information as to the occurrence of illness; (*b*) information as to insanitary conditions; (*c*) advice on domestic hygiene, dietaries, cleanliness, etc.; (*d*) direction and advice on the whole question of care of infancy and children; (*e*) counsel in the carrying out of medical treatment; (*f*) special health work in the direction of phthisis prevention, physically defective children, invalid children, and so on. Such health visitation would act as a deterrent to malingering and unsupportable complaints of which we now receive a large number. They might also assist in providing some check on school non-attendance, employers' certificates in relation to infectious diseases, etc." (Evidence before the Commission of Dr. Newman, Medical Officer of Health for Finsbury, *Q.* 94287, Pars. 27, 28.)

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 92534, Par. 36. *See* also *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 42664–71.

§ *Ibid*, Appendix No. XLVI., (Par 7) to Vol. IX.

further drawback that the apathy of the Local Authorities is not systematically exposed by any regular inspection by the Local Government Board, and that the zeal and enterprise of the best among them meets, so far as published documents go, with little official recognition or encouragement. Even in the largest provincial centres of population, where the Public Health Medical Service is most fully developed, the systematic medical observation of the children is limited to the entirely arbitrary period of the first twelve months; there is no regular inspection or house-to-house visitation for children between one and five, during which ages measles and whooping cough are most deadly; the medical supervision of pupils at school is practically restricted to those whom the teachers report as absent through illness; there is no systematic treatment of their affections of the eyes, ears, nose, teeth, throat, and skin—not to mention incipient curvature; there is no study of diathesis in order to advise as to occupation; and there is no regular system of observation of the "children of larger growth"—not even of the pregnant mothers of the race. After infancy, in fact, the activity of the most public-spirited Medical Officer of Health is limited practically to particular diseases, to such, in fact, as the Local Authority may choose to consider sufficiently infectious. The most energetic are no further advanced than, following the lead of Dr. Niven at Manchester, and Dr. Newsholme at Brighton, to have begun to include tuberculosis, and to provide for a tiny proportion of the cases—usually the advanced cases—of phthisis in their districts; though "between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five more than one-third of all deaths are due to this cause." None of them, so far as we have been able to ascertain, deal with venereal diseases, though these account, it is said, for an enormous proportion of the inmates of lunatic asylums and a vast amount of the pauperism of disease. In short, the Public Health Medical Service, though excellent in its aims and results, and demonstrably successful in a few zealous districts, for such diseases as it has there touched, is, from a national standpoint, suicidally deficient in its volume and geographical extension.

(H) The Need for a United Medical Service.

It is, we think impossible, after considering all the evidence, to avoid the conclusion that what is before all else needed, with regard to the curative treatment of the sick poor, is the establishment of one united Public Medical Service, in which the medical services of the Poor Law and the Public Health Authorities would be merged. It has been abundantly proved to us that: "At the present time the question of treatment of sickness is in a state of chaos and confusion entailing a great deal of overlapping and unnecessary expense." * "There is," we are told, "considerable waste of energy and money. Two sets of officials visit the same houses, one for one object, the other for another. Neither completely attains his object—the cure of the social bad habit—and neither has much hope of doing so under existing circumstances. Much of this waste of money and energy would be saved by amalgamation of Poor Law and Sanitary Authorities." † In consequence of this overlapping and confusion, the community is at present spending an untold amount of public money—apparently as much as seven or eight millions sterling annually—on the curative treatment of the sick by the rival Authorities. In return for this large expenditure we have two conflicting Public Medical Services, both rate-paid, overlapping in their spheres, practically without communication with each other, working on diametrically opposite lines, and sometimes positively hindering each other's operations. Between them, as we have it in evidence, they fail to provide for a large proportion of the illness—even of the preventable illness—of the community. The number of cases of sickness—even of dangerous infective sickness—that go entirely without medical attendance of any sort, private or public, is demonstrably enormous. The proportion of uncertified deaths, indicating a total lack of any sort of medical attendance even in the most advanced stages of disease, amounts, as the Registrar-General warns us, in certain towns in England to 4 or 5 per cent., in certain counties of Scotland to 20 and even 30 per cent., in some islands to as many as 60 or 70 per cent.‡ But to the community it is of less importance that people should die without medical attendance than that they should live without it. What is above all deplorable is the enormous amount of incipient disease that exists—undiscovered, untreated and unchecked—in the infants, school children, and young persons who constitute one-half of the entire population, and upon whose health the productive power of the next generation depends. Even in the Metropolis, where hospitals and free dispensaries abound, and where the Poor Law Medical Relief is specially well organised, it is evident that a large proportion of the 18,000 infants who die annually in the first year of life are medically attended, if at

* *Ibid.*, Q. 37927, Par. 56 (c).
† *Ibid.*, Q. 38758, Par. 28.
‡ *Ibid.*, Q. 56605, Par. 111.

all, only in the last days or hours of their brief existence—often merely in order to avoid trouble with the coroner or the insurance company. Among the 1,000,000 or more older children in the Metropolis, some 40,000 of whom are probably ill at any one time, thousands of the cases of measles and whooping cough are not medically attended at all. The married woman, left without medical or even midwifery attendance at her first childbirth, is not infrequently injured for life, both as mother and as industrial worker. The young artisan with the seeds of tuberculosis in him, goes on, for lack of medical inspection and advice, in habits of life which presently bring him, too late to be cured—after, perhaps, he has infected a whole family—to the sick ward of the Workhouse. Scarcely less important to the nation are the ravages of venereal disease, which now goes almost entirely untreated, either by the Public Health Medical Service or by the Poor Law Medical Service (except when advanced cases enter the Workhouse as destitute), whilst the sick clubs and provident dispensaries definitely or by implication exclude treatment of such cases. Yet it is proved that, owing to lack of medical treatment or to insufficient medical treatment, such diseases as syphilis and gonorrhœa are eventually responsible for a very large proportion of the pauperism of disease and insanity. For all these cases, so vital to the interests of the community, the Poor Law Medical Service—costly though it be—is, with its stigma of pauperism, its deterrent tests, its consequent failure to get hold of incipient disease, its total ignoring of the preventive aspect of medicine, its lack of co-ordination between domiciliary inspection and institutional treatment, practically useless. Medical "relief" may even be regarded, for all its attempted palliation of individual suffering, from the standpoint of national health (at any rate in a large proportion of cases), as worse than useless. In so far as it encourages in the patient faith in the taking of medicine instead of reliance on hygienic *regimen*—wherever the District Medical Officer dispenses physic rather than advice—it positively counteracts the efforts of the Public Health Medical Service in the promotion of personal hygiene. And when the District Medical Officer, conscious that his physic will not avail, orders "medical extras," he provides the fatal introduction of the patient to reliance on the food or money doled out by the Relieving Officer. On the other hand, the existence of a separate Poor Law Medical Service, with its hundreds of thousands of patients under medical treatment in the course of each year, gives the Local Health Authority an excuse for not—except for this or that particular disease, or for infants under twelve months old—acting upon what are actually its statutory powers to provide hospital accommodation for all, and temporary medical attendance and medicine for the poorer classes.*

It is, we think, equally clear that the united Public Medical Service, in which those of the Poor Law and Public Health Authorities will have to be merged, must be established on the lines of scientific prevention of disease and the appropriate treatment at the earliest possible stage of such disease as is not prevented—its medical practice, in short, must be based upon Public Health rather than upon Poor Law principles. We might have hesitated to express so definite an opinion on such a subject as the proper basis of organisation of the Public Medical Service of the State—vitally connected as it must be with the prevention and treatment of destitution and pauperism—were it not for the fact that the Commission has been led to investigate this part of its subject matter with special thoroughness, and that the weight of testimony, both administrative and medical, appears to us to be overwhelming. A certain number of the doctors whom we have consulted, including private practitioners and Poor Law doctors, and even some Medical Officers of Health, have, indeed, like many of the Poor Law officials, expressed themselves as inimical to a

* The Local Sanitary Authority is even warranted, though the tramp on discharge may infect a whole town, in refusing to treat the most infectious or communicable diseases when these occur in destitute paupers. At Bristol, between 1886 and 1894, the Board of Guardians itself provided isolation hospital accommodation for all the destitute infectious sick, whilst the Town Council provided similar (only far superior) accommodation for the non-destitute infectious sick. The results of this administrative duplication were so injurious (small-pox twice becoming epidemic in the city), the friction and delays were so great, and the total expense was so unnecessarily increased, that after eight years' trial the Board of Guardians ceded the whole service to the Town Council, which has since dealt alike—but only for these particular three or four diseases—with the destitute and the non-destitute. As regards all other kinds of disease the conflict continues, and the results, although not so dramatically obvious, may be no less disastrous. It is quite another kind of anomaly that two of the most important instruments of the Public Health Medical Service, the registration of births and deaths and vaccination, have no connection whatever with the public health organisation, but are attached, more or less closely, to the Poor Law. The nomination of local registrars of births and deaths, who receive authentic information of what is essential for the Medical Officer of Health to know, by the Board of Guardians, and their almost complete lack of connection with the local health service, is explicable only on historical grounds. The same is true of the vaccination doctors and officers who now administer at enormous expense a specific medical treatment, free to all alike, destitute or non-destitute, in order to prevent the ravages of a disease that has now been made far less disabling to the individual and far less destructive to the community than either tuberculosis or syphilis.

unified Public Medical Service, either because they were, through long habit, not conscious of the defects in the existing arrangements, or because they could not see how a united service would work. Some of these—forgetting, we think, the large amount of actual treatment of disease now carried on by the Public Health Authorities—urged upon us that it was positively advantageous for preventive work to be carried out by one department and curative work by another.* We have, however, been much impressed by the very wide concurrence in the recognition of the superior advantages of a unified State Service expressed by those who had given thought to the subject.† The Medical Investigator whom we appointed specially to inform us on this subject found himself, as he relates, irresistibly driven to the same conclusion.‡ What is perhaps even more convincing is the fact that the imperative need for unifying the present competing Public Medical Services is felt by the heads of all the four public departments concerned. "I think it was unfortunate," says the Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland, "that Public Health did not precede Poor Law, and that the medical relief of the poor, both indoor and outdoor, was not organised as a Public Health Service. A Health Service having for its first and great aim the prevention of disease, embracing the present Public Health, Medical Charities and Poor Law Hospital Services, and in fact charged with the prevention and treatment of disease among the poor would, I consider, particularly if managed as a State Service, be a forward step of immense benefit to the public health and poor of the country. Everything points to the fact that the future of all medicine, but particularly of Poor Law medicine, lies in the adoption of preventive measures; the time has passed when the principal function of the Poor Law Medical Officer is merely to dispense drugs."§ The need for union of the rival medical services has been equally pressed on us by Dr. Newman, formerly Medical Officer of Health for Finsbury and for the County of Bedford, and now Medical Officer of the Board of Education. "My experience," says Dr. Newman, "convinces me that from a medical point of view further co-ordination is imperatively necessary . . . between Public Medical Services, and if practicable a unification under one Authority. . . . Personally I am disposed to think that the medical part of the Poor Law Service might suitably be organised, partly or wholly, in conjunction with the Health Authorities. . . . By some such unification the Medical Service would be more economical as well as more efficient and effectual."‖ We have already quoted the striking testimony to the same effect of Dr. Leslie Mackenzie, the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland as to the urgent need for a complete provision by the community for all cases of sickness.¶ Most emphatic and impressive of all has been the evidence in confirmation of Dr. Newsholme, given first as Medical Officer of Health for Brighton, and then on wider and fuller information, officially repeated to us by him as Medical Officer of the Local Government Board for England and Wales. "Under the present conditions of treatment of sickness for the poor," says Dr. Newsholme, "diagnosis is usually belated, treatment is curtailed, and its efficiency is correspondingly diminished. . . . I entertain little hope of success (in respect of measles and whooping cough) until more efficient medical attendance is promptly available in the homes of the very poor. . . . The divided responsibility as to cases of puerperal fever and erysipelas needing institutional treatment at the present time leads to inefficient arrangement for such cases, and to much suffering and some loss of

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 47745, Pars. 10 and 11.

† Amongst these we may mention, in particular, Dr. Nathan Raw (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 37927, Par. 47), and Dr. Bygott (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 44088); Dr. Burnett (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 44124, 44588); Dr. Longbottom (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXIII. (Pars. 18, 18) to Vol. IV.), of the Poor Law Medical Service; Dr. Meredith Young (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 38758, Pars. 15–19); Dr. Barlow (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 38631, Par. 20, 38723); Dr. McCleary (*Ibid.*, Appendix XLV. (Par. 28) to Vol. IX.); Dr. Richards (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLVII. (Pars. 25–29) to Vol. IX.); Dr. Cooper-Pattin (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLVI. (Par., 31) to Vol. IX.); Dr. Davies (*Ibid.*, Appendix XLIV. to Vol. IX.); Dr. Chalmers (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 95100, Pars. 30–51); Dr. Gould (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXXVIII. (Pars. 14–19) to Vol. IV. Dr. Morrison (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 52434, Par. 8), of the Public Health Service; and Dr. McAlister Hewlings (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 47501, Par. 45 (9)); Dr. Lea (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 36982, 37062); Dr. Reid (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 50912), and others who are private practitioners.

‡ "Should the control of all the health conditions of the poor be put under a single health authority? . . . Should this health authority supervise the work of the District Medical Officers, or, on the other hand, should there be two medical services supported by the State? . . . Having no previous knowledge of the English Poor Law, I believe I approached the question with an open mind. . . . As my inquiry progressed however, the conclusion has forced itself on me that transference of functions should take place if that be practicable" (Report . . . on the Methods and Results of the Present System of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Poor Law Medical Relief, by Dr. J. C. McVail, 1907, p. 153).

§ Some Notes on Public Health and its Relation to the Poor Law in Ireland, by Dr. T. J. Stafford, p. 5, cited in Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 99927.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 94287, Par. 31; *see also Qs.* 94367–70, 94379, 94380, etc.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 56601–57036.

life. . . . Such instances represent only a small part of the mischief caused by the division of responsibility and powers." And he sums up significantly "that the present division of medical duties is gravely mischievous to public health and the unification suggested is very desirable."* Such authoritative official testimony, we feel, cannot be disregarded.

(I) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report :—

1. That the continued existence of two separate rate-supported Medical Services in all parts of the Kingdom, costing, in the aggregate, six or seven millions sterling annually —overlapping, unco-ordinated with each other and sometimes actually conflicting with each other's work—cannot be justified.

2. That the very principle of the Poor Law Medical Service—its restriction to persons who prove themselves to be destitute—involves delay and reluctance in the application of the sick person for treatment ; hesitation and delay in beginning the treatment ; and, in strictly administered districts, actual refusal of all treatment to persons who are in need of it, but who can manage to pay for some cheap substitute. These defects, which we regard as inherent in any medical service administered by a Destitution Authority, stand in the way of the discovery and early treatment of incipient disease, and accordingly deprive the medical treatment of most of its value.

3. That it has been demonstrated to us beyond all dispute that the deterrent aspect which the medical branch of the Poor Law acquires through its association with the Destitution Authority causes, merely by preventing prompt and early application by the sick poor for medical treatment, an untold amount of aggravation of disease, personal suffering and reduction in the wealth-producing power of the manual working class.

4. That the operations of the Poor Law Medical Service, being controlled by Destitution Authorities and administered by Destitution Officers, inevitably take on the character of unconditional "medical relief"—that is, relief of the real or fancied painful symptoms —as distinguished from remedial changes of regimen and removal of injurious conditions, upon which any really curative treatment, or any effective prevention of the spread or recurrence of disease, is nowadays recognised to depend.

5. That whilst domiciliary treatment of the sick poor is appropriate in many cases, it ought to be withheld :—

(i.) Where proper treatment in the home is impracticable.

(ii.) Where the patient persistently malingers or refuses to conform to the prescribed regimen ; or

(iii.) Where the patient is a source of danger to others.

It has become imperative in the public interest that there should be, for extreme cases, powers of compulsory removal to a proper place of treatment. Such powers cannot, and in our opinion should not, be granted to a Destitution Authority.

6. That where Destitution Authorities cease to abide by the limitation of their work to persons really destitute, or pass beyond the dole of "Medical Relief," their attempt to extend the range or improve the quality of the Poor Law Medical Service brings new perils. We cannot regard with favour any action which, in order to promote treatment, openly or tacitly invites people voluntarily to range themselves among the destitute ; or which tempts them, by the prospect of getting costly and specialised forms of treatment, to simulate destitution. Nor do we think that an Authority charged with the relief of destitution, whatever its method of appointment or whatever the area over which it acts, or any Authority acting through officers concerned with such relief, whatever their official designation, can ever administer a Medical Service with efficiency and economy.

7. That, with regard to the suggestion that the medical treatment of the sick poor should be left either to provident medical insurance or to voluntary charity, it has been demonstrated to us that these offer no possible alternative to the provision for the sick made by the Public Authority. With regard to domiciliary treatment, the evidence as to medical clubs, "contract practice," Provident Dispensaries and the out-patients' depart-

* Memorandum by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board on the Unification of the Official Medical Services for the Poor ; *see also* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 92531–93029. This consensus of weighty testimony is supported by the definite recommendations of the Vice-Regal Commission on the Irish Poor Law, in favour of the complete separation of all Medical Relief from the Poor Law, and the organisation, under the County and County Borough Councils, of a unified system of hospitals, dispensaries and domiciliary treatment. (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906.)

ments of hospitals is such as to make it impossible to recommend, in their favour, any restriction of the services at present afforded by the District Medical Officers and Poor Law Dispensaries. Nor do we feel warranted in giving any support to the proposal made to us that the whole of this Outdoor Medical Service of the Poor Law should be superseded by a publicly subsidised system of letting the poor choose their own doctors. Any such system would, in our judgment, lead to an extravagant expenditure of public funds on popular remedies and "medical extras," without obtaining, in return for this enlarged "Medical Relief," greater regularity of life or more hygienic habits in the patient. With regard to institutional treatment, we gladly recognise the inestimable services rendered to the sick poor by the hospitals, sanatoria and convalescent homes supported by endowments or voluntary contributions. We approve of the use now made of these institutions by Public Authorities, and we think that many more suitable cases than at present might, on proper arrangements as to payment, be transferred from rate-maintained to voluntary institutions. But it is clear that such institutions provide only for a small fraction of the need, and that they leave untouched whole districts for some cases, and whole classes of cases everywhere, which there is no prospect of their being able or willing to undertake.

8. That the Medical Service of the Public Health Authorities, which now extensively treats disease, and actually maintains out of the rates a steadily increasing number of the sick poor, is based on principles more suited to a State medical service than that of the Poor Law. These principles, which lead, in practice as well as in theory, to searching out disease, securing the earliest possible diagnosis, taking hold of the incipient case, removing injurious conditions, applying specialised treatment, enforcing healthy surroundings and personal hygiene, and aiming always at preventing either recurrence or spread of disease—in contrast to the mere "relief" of the individual—furnish in fact the only proper basis for the expenditure of public money on a Medical Service.

9. That such compulsory powers of removal in extreme cases, as have been asked for, are analogous to those already exercised, with full public approval, by the Public Health Authorities; and that the proposed extension of such powers can properly be granted only to an authority proceeding on Public Health lines.

10. That we therefore agree with the responsible heads of all the four Medical Departments concerned—the Chief Medical Officer of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, the Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland, and the Medical Officer of the Board of Education—in ascribing the defects of the existing arrangements fundamentally to the lack of a unified Medical Service based on Public Health principles.

11. That in such a unified Medical Service, organised in districts of suitable extent, the existing Medical Officers of Health, Hospital Superintendents, School Doctors,* District Medical Officers, Workhouse and Dispensary Doctors and Medical Superintendents of Poor Law Infirmaries—the clinicians as well as the sanitarians—would all find appropriate spheres; that one among them being placed in administrative control who has developed most administrative capacity.

12. That we do not agree with the suggestion that the establishment of a unified Medical Service on Public Health lines necessarily involves the gratuitous provision of medical treatment to all applicants. It is clear that, in the public interest, neither the promptitude nor the efficiency of the medical treatment must be in any way limited by considerations of whether the patient can or should repay its cost. But we see no reason why Parliament should not embody, in a clear and consistent code, definite rules of Chargeability, either relating to the treatment of all diseases, or of all but those specifically named; and of Recovery of the charge thus made from all patients who are able to pay. In our chapter on "The Scheme of Reform," we propose new machinery for automatically making and recovering all such charges that Parliament may from time to time impose.

* The question has been raised of the relation in which, with a unified Medical Service, the nascent medical activities of the Local Education Authorities should be placed. The question is one to be determined, in our opinion, by the dominant characteristic of the service. Within the limits of school age, the predominant service should be that of education; and the responsibility for the normal child should rest with the Local Education Authority. The case is different with the mentally defective child, for which the new Local Authority for the mentally defective will have the responsibility; and with the child withdrawn from school for definite illness, for which the Local Health Authority will be responsible. But when the child, without being so ill as to be withdrawn from school, requires the services of a doctor—as, for instance, in school medical inspection, in medical examination for Scholarships, and in the treatment of minor ailments, we suggest that the Local Education Authority should, where the two Authorities are Committees of the same Council, not set up a medical staff of its own, but call in the Local Health Authority as its agent; just as it does already with regard to inspecting and certifying the drainage of the school building. On the other hand, where the children in the hospitals and sanatoria of the Local Health Authority are in need of education (a point now often neglected), we suggest that the Local Health Authority should not have its own teachers, but should call in the Local Education Authority as its agent. The case may be different where (as at present in England and Wales, outside the County Boroughs) the two Authorities are not Committees of the same Council, and do not serve the same areas. But even here arrangements could usually be made on similar lines.

CHAPTER VI.

The Mentally Defective.

The Mentally Defective were scarcely alluded to in the Report of 1834. To-day in the United Kingdom they number, in all their grades, more than one-sixth of the entire pauper host—an army approaching 200,000 in number, constantly receiving maintenance from the rates, in respect, nominally of their destitution, but really, as we shall see, by reason of their infirmity. In view of the elaborate investigations of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland (1902–6) and of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded (1904–8), although we received some useful testimony, we have abstained from doing more than cursorily surveying this part of the field of the Poor Law, and we accept the valuable evidence obtained by those Commissions as if given to ourselves.

(a) The Rival Authorities for the Mentally Defective.

In England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, in spite of minor variations, we find the public provision for the different grades of the Mentally Defective everywhere divided between two or more Local Authorities acting for the same districts; and supervised by two, by three, and even by four different Departments of the National Government; with the result that whilst there is, in some respects, duplication and overlapping, the total provision made is far from satisfactory, and we have it in evidence that there has been considerable waste of money.*

In England and Wales it is, speaking generally, the County or County Borough Council† acting through its Asylums Committee, which is the Local Lunacy Authority, charged by statute to make the necessary institutional provision for persons certified to be of unsound mind, irrespective of their affluence. If they, or anyone on their behalf, repay to the Council the average weekly cost of their maintenance (not including the cost of the asylum site and buildings), they rank as "private patients,"‡ and are not deemed to be in receipt of relief. But in nine cases out of ten no payment is made direct to the Council; and the sum is then claimed from the Board of Guardians of the Union in which the patient has a settlement. That Board endeavours to recover some contribution from the relatives liable to maintain the patient; who remains a pauper whether or not the full cost is repaid to the Destitution Authority. The relations legally liable for his maintenance also become constructively paupers by the mere presence of a dependent in the County Asylums as a pauper.§ It is a curious feature of the arrangement that the Asylums Committee of the County or County Borough Council has practically no interest in managing its asylums economically, as the actual weekly cost has to be paid by the Boards of Guardians concerned. On the other hand, these Boards of Guardians, who pay the bill, have no connection whatever with the management. Indeed, as we shall subsequently describe, the National Government chooses to make its grants-in-aid in such a way as to afford the Boards of Guardians a direct financial inducement to get as many persons as possible certified to be of unsound mind, to transfer as many of them as possible to the more expensive institutions, and to refrain from obtaining repayment from relatives of more than a

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* The Local Government Board for England and Wales officially deposed that "the lack of co-ordination between the Local Authorities who have to deal with lunacy administration appears to the Board to involve *a large amount of unnecessary expenditure.*" (Report of Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. IV., *Q.* 33766, Par. 14.)

† Certain other Municipalities, not being County Boroughs, are also Lunacy Authorities in themselves; for example, the City of London and twenty small towns (*Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 336).

‡ The definition of pauper lunatics is merely "all lunatics who are not entitled to be classed as private patients" (Lunacy Act, 1891, Sec. 3). (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 321, 325.) If no settlement can be discovered, the lunatic has to be paid for from the county rate, but is, nevertheless, a pauper.

§ Hence, in the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, when it was desired to exclude such persons from the disabilities attendant on the receipt of parochial relief, it was found necessary expressly to enact that the maintenance of a dependent in an asylum should not, for the purposes of that Act, be deemed parochial relief.

portion of the cost.* Meanwhile the supervision and control of the Local Lunacy Authorities is divided among no fewer than three Government Departments—the Home Office, the Lunacy Commissioners, and the Local Government Board †—each of them, nominally, wielding peremptory powers, but none of them charged with clearly defined responsibility for either the efficiency of the service as a whole, or for economy, and none of them exercising any control over the large Grants-in-Aid that the Government contributes towards the expenditure of the Local Authorities. The result is that the capital cost of a lunatic asylum has mounted up to £300, £400, and even to £500 per patient, because there is no one Government Department strong enough, and expert enough, to combine technical and financial control; and the total cost of the public provision for persons certified to be of unsound mind has risen, in England and Wales alone, to more than £3,000,000 annually.

The bulk of this amount is paid by the Boards of Guardians out of the Poor Rates. But they, too, make extensive provision of their own, alongside that made by the County or Borough Council, for the various grades of the Mentally Defective. Whilst more than four-fifths of the persons actually certified to be of unsound mind are now in asylums, the Boards of Guardians have over 5,000 on Outdoor Relief, and they still maintain more than 11,000 of these certified lunatics, imbeciles and idiots in the General Mixed Workhouses. Moreover, as has been proved by the elaborate investigations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, there is, in these Workhouses, a further contingent who ought to be certified as being distinctly "feeble-minded" or epileptic, and requiring special treatment, numbering, if we may accept the careful estimate made by the Royal Commission of 12 per cent. of the inmates of the urban Workhouses, and 18 per cent. of those in the rural Workhouses, at least 40,000, besides 12,000 more among the paupers on Outdoor Relief.‡ Thus the Boards of Guardians of England and Wales, notwithstanding their very free use of the County Asylums, have to-day, under their own administration, nearly 70,000 mentally defective persons. The Asylums Committees of the County and Borough Councils, though professedly the Local Lunacy Authorities, have themselves no more than 120,000.

There is yet another Local Authority entering the field, to spend public money in providing for the Mentally Defective. Under statutes of 1899 and 1902 the Local Education Authority is authorised and required to provide for the mentally defective children, of whom it appears there are no fewer than 47,000, in some cases up to sixteen years of age. In London and in some other large towns special schools for these children are being provided; they are sometimes "boarded-out" in families to enable them to attend such schools; and they are now even maintained in residential schools at the cost of the Education Rate. To quote the phrase of one of our colleagues, in this way "a considerable relief system of so-called maintenance is growing up," § without any co-ordination with the Poor Law, or with the Lunacy Authorities. In the Metropolis, in particular, "the residential homes of the Metropolitan Asylums Board duplicate, for so-called defective pauper children, the homes which have been established by the Education Committee for school children who are equally defective though not technically pauper." || It happens now in London that a father may find one child thus taken off his hands by the Local Education Authority, whilst another may be sent to an industrial school, and the others, perhaps, supplied with school dinners, whilst he or his wife may be getting infirmary treatment or even Outdoor Relief, without one Authority necessarily even knowing what the others are doing. The various authorities will even compete among themselves. "There has been with us," stated one witness,

* In the Metropolis there is yet another Local Authority concerned, alongside the County Council and the Boards of Guardians, namely, the Metropolitan Asylums Board. This independent Authority, the whole expenditure of which is met from the poor rate, besides providing hospitals for the infectious sick (maintenance in which is not deemed parochial relief, and is never repaid), has asylums for imbeciles and idiots, and special schools for children, which are pauper institutions. There is most extensive overlapping between these asylums and those of the London County Council, patients being sent, to a great extent indiscriminately, to the one or the other, the Unions exhibiting the most remarkable differences in the proportion of cases so distributed. We note that it was given in evidence that "in sending to [the County] Asylums, the Medical Superintendent [of the Poor Law Infirmary] gets a fee, but in sending to the Metropolitan Asylums Board Asylums he does not get a fee." (Report of Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. IV., *Q.* 33915.) All such fees should be merged in fixed salaries.

† We might add the Board of Education, in respect of the mentally defective children now being dealt with (and sometimes maintained) by the Local Education Authorities.

‡ Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., pp. 21, 193.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., *Q.* 289 (Mr. Loch).

|| *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 66.

"several times a conflict between the Education Committee and the Guardians as to who was responsible" for the custodial care of Mentally Defective children.*

In Scotland there is a similar duplication of Authorities, though to a lesser extent. The Local Lunacy Authorities are the District Boards of Lunacy, which are, in effect, district committees of County Councils or joint committees of groups of County Councils.† These District Boards of Lunacy provide asylums, to which the Destitution Authorities (the Parish Councils) remit their certified patients, much as in England and Wales. The Parish Councils, however, retain under their own charge, not only a small number of certified persons whom they maintain on Outdoor Relief, but also 2,780 whom they "board out" for payment to persons who make use of the lunatic's labour, and also 1,300 who reside in "certified wards" of the Poorhouses. In the ordinary wards of the Poorhouses it is estimated that there are, in addition, at least one or two thousand persons who ought to be certified as distinctly feeble-minded or epileptic. Thus apart from the fact that six important Parish Councils are themselves the Lunacy Authorities as well as the Destitution Authorities, these latter are actually in charge of half as many Mentally Defective persons as the District Boards of Lunacy.

In Ireland, herein differing from Great Britain, the County Lunatic Asylums are in no way connected with the Poor Law, and maintenance in them, even if gratuitous, involves no pauperism. But, alongside of the Asylums Committees of the County and Borough Councils, the Boards of Guardians also maintain, out of the Poor Rate, as paupers, more than 3,000 certified lunatics and idiots in the General Mixed Workhouses,§ besides a number more on Outdoor Relief. Moreover, there are estimated to be, in these Workhouses, at least 6,000 more who ought to be certified as distinctly feeble-minded, and needing appropriate treatment.‡ Thus the Boards of Guardians in Ireland have under their own charge half as many Mentally Defective persons as the Local Lunacy Authorities themselves.

We have still to mention the asylums for inebriates, which are maintained in one or two cases by Local Authorities, and elsewhere by voluntary committees administering funds which are almost entirely derived from the rates and taxes; and the special institutions for epileptics, which two or three Boards of Guardians have combined to establish.‖

(b) The Mentally Defective under the Poor Law.

Apart from the unnecessary expense to the public, and the wanton undermining of family responsibility, that this overlapping and confusion of Authorities necessarily causes, we find grave deficiencies in the service itself. We have been painfully impressed, in our visits to the General Mixed Workhouses in England, Wales and Ireland, with the almost universal herding of the idiots, imbeciles, epileptics and feeble-minded of all grades indiscriminately with the other inmates of these institutions.¶ This is an extensive, and, we regret to say, contrary to the usual impression, an increasing evil. In 1859 there were, in all the Workhouses of England and Wales, only 7,963 persons certified to be of unsound mind. In 1906 there were in these same Workhouses no fewer than 11,151**, an increase during the forty-seven years of 40 per cent. And though the numbers of

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* *Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Q.* 11320.

† In six large towns, they are the several Parish Councils, namely, at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Leith and Govan.

‡ Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 424; Report of Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I.

§ "On March 11th, 1905, lunatics and idiots to the number of 3,165 were inmates of Workhouses, and the greater number of them, it may be assumed, are chronic or harmless, though some are excitable and troublesome. Others, again, are in need of special skilled care, owing to filthy or degraded habits." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 38.)

‖ This has been done by the Manchester and Chorlton Unions, and by those of Birmingham, Aston and King's Norton. Authority for similar action has been obtained by the Liverpool and West Derby Unions, and by those of Croydon, Kingston and Richmond, but these schemes have not yet been carried out.

¶ "In the majority of rural Workhouses which I visited," reports our Medical Investigator, "the practice is to provide no separate accommodation for imbeciles, either as to dormitories, or as to dayrooms. They live and sleep and eat with other inmates." (Report . . . on the Present Methods of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. J. McVail, 1907, p. 25.)

** Report of Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. IV., *Q.* 33765 (Par. 3). This is irrespective of 6,591 in the institutions of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The number on Out-door Relief had remained practically stationary at about 5,700; notwithstanding that the number sent to County or Borough Asylums had risen from 16,369 to 85,990. (*Ibid.*).

these actually certified persons has, of recent years, remained nearly stationary, by no means all the imbeciles are certified as such; and, with the change that has come over the Workhouse population, the proportion of those who ought to be certified as distinctly feeble-minded is now estimated to amount, in addition to the certified lunatics and idiots, in Urban Unions to more than 12 per cent., and in Rural Unions to more than 18 per cent., of the total.* The total number of mentally defective persons now residing *in the ordinary wards* of the General Mixed Workhouses of the United Kingdom must amount to more than 60,000.†

These 60,000 persons, of all ages and conditions, exhibiting all grades of mental defectiveness, are receiving practically nothing in the way of ameliorative treatment. We do not suggest that all the 60,000 are suffering, either in body or mind, from this lack of special care or treatment. In many a small rural Workhouse, under a kindly Master and Matron, among companions in misfortune who happen not to tease or wrangle, we have found the merely feeble-minded middle-aged men and women harmlessly and happily employed. But we have ourselves witnessed terrible sights. We have seen feeble-minded boys growing up in the Workhouse year after year untaught and untrained, alternately neglected and tormented by the other inmates, because it had not occurred to the Board of Guardians to send them to (and to pay for them at) a suitable institution.‡ We have ourselves seen—what one of the Local Government Board Inspectors describes as of common occurrence §—"idiots who are physically offensive or mischievous, or so noisy as to create a disturbance by day and by night with their howls," living in the ordinary wards, to the perpetual annoyance and disgust of the other inmates. We have seen imbeciles annoying the sane, and the sane tormenting the imbeciles. We have seen half-witted women nursing the sick, feeble-minded women in charge of the babies, and imbecile old men put to look after the boys out of school hours. We have seen expectant mothers, who have come in for their confinements, by day and by night working, eating and sleeping in close companionship with idiots and imbeciles of revolting habits and hideous appearance. "I have known," testifies Dr. Milsom Rhodes, "a noisy dement in the next bed to a case of acute pneumonia, to whom sleep was an absolute necessity, a *sine qua non* she had small chance of obtaining." ‖ "All over England, urban and rural," says our own Medical Investigator, "epileptics are found lodged in Workhouses and Poor Law infirmaries. Sometimes there are only a very few . . . sometimes as many as fifty. Often they occupy day rooms and dormitories along with ordinary or imbecile inmates. . . . In smaller Workhouses in the rural districts the arrangements are usually most inadequate. . . . The epileptics may not have suitable and sufficient outdoor employment, they cannot have the best kind of supervision, nor be preserved against irritation by their companions, and the spectacle of their seizures is detrimental to ordinary inmates."¶ The Irish Workhouses, declares the General Inspector of the

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* *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., pp. 21–193.

† Some of them are among the most incorrigible and hopeless of the "Ins-and-outs." "Of 6,538 men, 3,318 women, and 192 children, 993 were admitted three times [to the Workhouses in Glasgow] during the year 1905, 512 four times, 290 five times, 164 six times, and so forth; and it was alleged that the bulk of these 'ins-and-outs' were mentally defective persons who could not be certified as 'lunatics,' and should be detained compulsorily in Poorhouses or Labour Colonies." (*Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 396 (Scotland, Glasgow). Of a certain group of feeble-minded paupers it was reported that "nine of these have been inmates of the Workhouse on several previous occasions; they belong to that class who manage in fair weather to obtain a living by begging, hawking, or odd jobs, but are driven into the House by stress of weather. Under proper care they would be able to earn the greater portion of their keep." (*Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 5.)

‡ An Inspector of the Local Government Board deposes that "the provision for the training of feeble-minded children is absolutely inadequate. I was at P—— the other day. They have got about a dozen children in the imbecile block of the Workhouse, simply because they can find no place to which they can send them to be trained" (*Ibid.*, Vol. I., *Q.* 2199; Vol. VIII., p. 37)—except, that is to say, for a substantial payment. "Special provision is called for for the . . . defective children attending the Workhouse schools, as also for the . . . defective children who were in the Workhouses . . . none of these appeared to me beyond the reach of special training." (*Ibid.*, p. 20.)

§ Thirty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, 1903–4, Appendix B., p. 184 (Mr. Preston-Thomas's Report).

‖ Report of Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. I., p. 549 (Dr. J. M. Rhodes).

¶ Report . . . on the Present Methods of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. McVail, 1907, pp. 53–54. An epileptic boy of sixteen, placed in the ordinary ward of a Workhouse infirmary (where there was only one night nurse to six rooms and forty-nine patients), was found dead in the morning, having suffocated himself. (*Times*, August 5th, 1908.)

Local Government Board, as "is only too obvious to anyone who has had an opportunity of inspecting them," are "under existing management . . . most unsuitable places for the accommodation of persons of unsound mind, and . . . *the condition of the latter at present housed in these establishments is in many instances disgraceful.*" * We cannot but agree with our own Medical Investigator that this "herding of imbeciles with the ordinary inmates of a Workhouse is injurious to both. . . . The sane-minded should not be compelled to have continually amongst them the victims of imbecility and the gibbering speech and untidy habits of some of the afflicted." †

The evil consequences of this herding in the Workhouses of the mentally defective with the sane have been repeatedly pointed out for the last two decades. For at least twelve years they have been referred to, almost every year, in the Annual Reports of the Local Government Board for England and Wales,‡ yet it has been found impossible to move the Boards of Guardians to reform. To them, indeed, by their very nature as Destitution Authorities, the idea of ameliorative treatment does not seem to occur. What they are doing is merely "relieving destitution." For these unfortunate imbeciles and epileptics, as for all other paupers, "the system of indoor relief" is, as Mr. Adrian, the Legal Adviser to the Local Government Board, has pointed out, legally only "*a housing system.*" § It was in vain that the scandal of the retention of imbeciles and idiots in the old people's wards of the Workhouses was pointed out in one of the Reports of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor.|| It was in vain that the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1899 recommended the removal of all mentally defective persons from the Workhouses.¶ Ten years have elapsed since that recommendation, and the number of mentally defective persons in the Workhouses is actually greater than at that date. So obstinate a neglect to carry out an obvious reform provokes enquiry into its cause. We think we are not wrong in attributing the retention of these 60,000 mentally defective persons in the Workhouses to the fact that their labour is found useful—in the small rural Workhouses, indeed, actually indispensable to their administration on present lines. We have ourselves been informed, in Workhouse after Workhouse, that they had to rely on the imbeciles for practically all the manual work of the establishment. We gather that it was principally on this ground that the Local Government Board for England and Wales did not issue an Order requiring compliance with the recommendation of the House of Commons Committee of 1899, and the removal of all imbeciles from the Workhouses.** The President seems to have been advised that, without the mentally defective women in particular, the General Mixed Workhouse in the rural Unions could not be carried on. "If," said an objector, "you remove the feeble-minded women from the Workhouse who will do the scrubbing?" ††

(c) The Mentally Defective under the Local Lunacy Authorities.

We turn now to the 100,000 mentally defective pauper patients in the County and Borough Asylums in England and Wales and the District Asylums in Scotland. Built and equipped at great expense, by the watchful care of the Lunacy Commissioners in England and Wales and the General Board of Lunacy in Scotland, well staffed with doctors and nurses, and maintained at a cost for annual maintenance alone of something like £3,000,000 annually, these 180 institutions have become highly efficient mental hospitals for brain disease. Whilst many cases are permanent and hopeless, some 10,000 patients

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* Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 419 (Ireland).

† Report . . . on the Present Methods of Administering Indoor and Outdoor Medical Relief, by Dr. McVail, 1907, p. 54. We have it in evidence that the removal of "the imbecile or semi-imbecile from the Workhouses . . . would add immensely to the comfort of the sane old folk." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LI. (Par. 10) to Vol. VII.)

‡ We feel that one of the Inspectors, Mr. Preston-Thomas, deserves credit for his persistence in exposing what he rightly describes as "one of the greatest blots on Poor Law administration." (Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1898–9, Appendix B.).

§ Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 33.

|| Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895 (Mr. Henry Broadhurst's Minority Report).

¶ Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Cottage Homes Bill, 1899.

** Report of Royal Commission on Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. I., *Q.* 106 (Mr. Adrian).

†† *Ibid.*, Vol. I., *Q.* 887.

are discharged annually as cured. The average stay of all the patients, indeed, works out at less than five years; and of the curable cases, the majority remain under treatment only a few months.

Here the great blot appears to us to be the stigma of pauperism which is, in England and Wales, needlessly and uselessly inflicted on these persons and on their relations:—

> "The households in which the presence of a mentally afflicted member of the family is a danger, a degradation and an intolerable burden, are not necessarily those of paupers . . . many of" the so-called pauper patients "have never been in a Workhouse, and some of them cost the local rates nothing at all. Many of them are children of small farmers, tradesmen in a small way of business, clerks, artisans and others, who, unable to pay the full charge, are yet able to contribute 5s. or 6s. per week, or even more, for the maintenance and training of their children. In order to make up the full charge of from 10s. 6d. to 14s. per week, the parents pay their contributions to the Board of Guardians, who receive the 4s. grant, add to it the parents' contributions, and thus, in some instances, make up the required amount. This pauperises the parent, though it does not do so in the case of children sent to blind or deaf and dumb institutions, or educated at Public Elementary Schools, where the schooling is paid for out of the rates, or even in the case of criminal or neglected children sent to reformatory or industrial schools."*

The case is all the harder when a wife, a child, or a parent is compulsorily removed to an asylum, on the ground of possible danger, or even merely of annoyance to the neighbours. The relations liable are then called upon to contribute 10s. or 12s. a week, on pain of being stigmatised as paupers and deprived of the franchise. Indeed, unless they take care to make the full payment direct to the County or Borough Council, they will, notwithstanding their repayment to the Board of Guardians of the whole of the cost, still leave the patient a pauper, and included in the statistics of pauperism:—

> "The evidence shows that the division between pauper and non-pauper is quite unreal in the case of the mentally defective. The son of respectable parents, who is permanently supported, wholly or in part, by relatives and friends, requires, as mentally defective, the same treatment as another person whose relatives and friends cannot help him at all; and the greater or less possibility of obtaining payment for the treatment—the more or less poverty or destitution—is not the dividing line in these cases, but the existence of or non-existence of mental disease."†

In Scotland, the Court of Session has held that the maintenance of a dependent of unsound mind out of the Poor Rate does not pauperise those responsible for him.‡

In Ireland the patient in the County Lunatic Asylum has, from first to last, no connection with the Poor Law, and even if he is treated gratuitously, neither he nor his relatives are thereby made paupers.

(D) The Recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded.

We are relieved from formulating any judgment of our own upon the Mentally Defective under the Poor Law, by the authoritative findings and unanimous recommendations, not only of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland (1902–1906), but now also of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded (1904–1908). The latter extend to the whole range of the Mentally Defective, from the merely feeble-minded child, the inebriate unable to restrain himself from alcohol and the sane epileptic, up to the dangerous lunatic and the undeveloped idiot. With regard to the whole of this army of poor persons, probably approaching 200,000 in number, being more than one-sixth of the entire pauper host, the Royal Commission is emphatic in its judgment that "a Poor Law Authority cannot suitably undertake the care of the Mentally Defective."§ Both Commissions are decisive in their recommendation that the Mentally Defective should be wholly removed from the Workhouses.‖ It is accordingly recommended that the Mentally Defective of all grades and all ages should be taken out of the Poor Law, and that the Destitution Authority should henceforth have nothing to do with their maintenance or treatment. It is declared to be:—

> "The mental condition of these persons, and neither their poverty nor their crime," that "is the real ground of their claim for help from the State. It follows that their aid and supervision should be undertaken by some powerful local Authority, who can ensure that they will receive it from other quarters or, failing this, will provide it themselves. Hitherto, a large number of adults, young persons, and children, who cannot be certified under the Lunacy and Idiots Acts have been supported by Public Authorities as paupers, on the ground of destitution, or, as prisoners, on account of their crime, but they have not been dealt with primarily on the ground of their mental defect."¶

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* Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., pp. 54, 56.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 58.

‡ Palmer v. Russell and Others, 1871, 10 M. 185; P.L.M., 1871–2, 182.

§ Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 84.

‖ With regard to Ireland, "at least seventy witnesses recommended that all lunatics should be transferred from Workhouses to asylums, and no evidence was given in favour of a continuance of the present system." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 37.).

¶ Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 7.

> "In the development of any organisation for the care of the Mentally Defective, the precedent of the Lunacy Acts should, we think, be followed, rather than the precedent of the Poor Law. Under the Lunacy Acts, intervention is due to the existence of mental incapacity; under the Poor Law to the existence of poverty and destitution."*

> "If there is to be co-ordination between the Authorities and agencies concerned, it is essential that the care of the Mentally Defective should be made a duty not of the Poor Law Authorities, but of specially qualified Authorities organised with that object."†

> "There should be one Authority in the County or County Borough, which should have supervision of all institutions for the Mentally Defective, and be able, through its Medical Officers and by its annual survey of all cases, to ensure that the institutions should, as far as possible, be used each for its several purposes, and that those persons who require custodial treatment should be passed on to institutions fitted for them."‡

The Local Education Authority should give up the provision that it is beginning to make for mentally defective children.§

> "The fact that there was throughout and for all purposes one single and responsible Authority would make irrelevant all proposals for the transfer of the child at a certain age from one Authority to another, as, for instance, as some have suggested, at sixteen, or any age up to twenty-one, from the care of the Education Authority to the Board of Guardians, and from them to the Lunacy Authority. Whatever the mentally defective person might be, and in whatever way the Local Authority might provide for his maintenance, he would remain under the care and control of one Local Authority only."‖

It is accordingly recommended that the entire responsibility for the Mentally Defective of all grades and at all ages should be entrusted in England, Wales and Ireland to a committee of the County or County Borough Council, to be called the Committee for the Mentally Defective, in which the existing Asylums Committee would be merged, and in Scotland to the County Councils and principal Town Councils, from which the District Boards of Lunacy are at present selected.

(E) The Withdrawal of the Mentally Defective from the Poor Law.

We do not see how, in face of the facts now definitely revealed, and of the unanimous recommendations of so authoritative a Commission, any other conclusion is possible. We entirely concur in these recommendations, and we are glad to find ourselves, on this point, in agreement with the majority of our colleagues. We, however, think that the withdrawal from the Destitution Authorities of so large a number of paupers as 200,000, and particularly the complete removal of the whole class of the feeble-minded from the Workhouses, entails, in practice, the break up of the Poor Law system. The Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded has come, in fact, with regard to all grades of the Mentally Defective, to the same conclusions to which we, with regard to the children and the sick, have concurrently been driven, namely, the supersession of the Destitution Authority in favour of an Authority dealing with these patients in respect of the cause and character of their distress. It would indeed, be strange to remove from the charge of the Destitution Authority, from the demoralising General Mixed Workhouse, and from the stigma of pauperism, the inebriates, the feeble-minded and the epileptics, and to leave in the same unsatisfactory conditions the promising children and the curable sick. We may confidently predict that, unless we break up the Destitution Authority, and allocate to the more specialised Local Authorities the classes with which they severally deal, we shall find, years hence, the General Mixed Workhouse continuing still in existence, and the imbeciles and feeble-minded still herding within its walls.

(F) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report:—

1. That the existing provision for the Mentally Defective persons maintained in the United Kingdom at the public expense, probably approaching 200,000 in number, is far from satisfactory.

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* *Ibid.*, p. 54.
† *Ibid.*, p. 66.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 176.
§ "We cannot but conclude that there should be such a unification of Authorities as should operate, so as to dispense with this duplication or even triplication of certificates and orders, from the officers of the Boards of Guardians and the Asylums Board, the Education Authority, and the Justice of the Peace under the Lunacy Act. The children in the different institutions and under the different Authorities appear to be more homogeneous than the system of certificates that separates and classifies them." (*Ibid.*, p. 78.)
‖ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

2. That the existence everywhere of rival Local Authorities maintaining the Mentally Defective, and the division of the supervision and control over their work among three (or even four) different Government Departments, no one of which has full responsibility, or combines in itself technical knowledge and financial control, involves—to use the emphatic words, formally given in evidence, of the Local Government Board for England and Wales—"*a large amount of unnecessary expenditure.*"

3. That the continued detention in the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland, and, to a lesser degree, those of Scotland, of no fewer than 60,000 Mentally Defective persons, including not a few children, without education or ameliorative treatment, and herded indiscriminately with the sane, amounts to a public scandal.

4. That the practice of Ireland, where the inmates of the County Lunatic Asylums are wholly unconnected with the Poor Law, and are not stigmatised as paupers, should be adopted for Great Britain.

5. That we concur with the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland in thinking that all persons of unsound mind, whatever their mental state, and whatever their age, should be everywhere wholly removed from the Workhouses.

6. That, in the words of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, it is "the mental condition of these persons, and neither their poverty nor their crime" that "is the real ground of their claim for help from the State."

7. That we accordingly concur with that Commission in the view that all grades of the Mentally Defective (including the feeble-minded, the epileptics, the inebriates, the imbeciles, the lunatics and the idiots) should, at all ages, be wholly withdrawn from the charge of the Destitution Authorities, and from pauperism, as well as from the Local Education Authorities, and that the entire responsibility for their discovery, certification and appropriate treatment (whether institutional or domiciliary) should be entrusted in England, Wales and Ireland. to the County and County Borough Councils, acting by statutory Committees for the Mentally Defective, in which the present Asylums Committees would be merged, and in Scotland to the County Councils and principal Town Councils, from which the District Boards of Lunacy are (with the exception of six towns) selected.

8. That the whole duty of supervision and control of the action of the Local Authorities in respect of the Mentally Defective, including the administration of the Grants-in-Aid, should be concentrated, in England (including Wales), Scotland and Ireland respectively, in a single self-contained and fully equipped Division or Department, concerned with the Mentally Defective alone, however that Division or Department may be grouped with others under a Minister responsible to Parliament.

CHAPTER VII.

The Aged and Infirm.

The Aged and Infirm, who constitute about one-third of the entire pauper host, make up the most baffling of the categories into which the non-ablebodied poor are, under the Poor Law Amendment Act and the Orders of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, officially classified. It is to be noted that, ever since the Elizabethan Poor Law, the Old and Impotent—who have since been officially designated the Aged and Infirm—are always referred to as forming one and the same class, of which no official definition has ever been given.* The persons included in this class from time to time, by the instructions of the Central Authority and the practice of the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland and the Parish Councils in Scotland, comprise, in fact, all sorts and conditions of men, children only excepted. We find among them persons so sick as to require continuous medical treatment and nursing; others so mentally defective as to be continuously under restraint; others on the verge of imbecility; others, again, so fully ablebodied and intelligent as to be given quite a fair day's work. No man or woman is too young to be comprised within this class, if only they are permanently incapacitated; none are too vigorous or skilled if they are over a certain age, often arbitrarily fixed at sixty. Men and women, married or widowed, of every grade or variety of character or conduct, past or present, are alike included; persons who have been thrifty and industrious or wastrel and drunken; persons who are respectable and refined or dirty and dissolute; the orderly or disorderly; the active-minded and intelligent, the mentally defective and the senile.

In view of the numerous official inquiries of the past fifteen years into the question of the provision for the aged poor,† we have narrowly limited our own investigation into this part of our subject, taking evidence and inspecting institutions principally with the object of ascertaining how far the voluminous information that has been accumulated needed modification or correction in the light of the existing condition of things. We have not needed, in this branch of our subject, to go beyond the operations of the

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* It will be remembered that there was originally no separate provision even for the acutely or temporarily sick, who fell also into this class. On the other hand, old age alone may not have secured admission to it, so long as physical and mental vigour lasted. In the eyes of the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–1847, the aged and infirm were (omitting the case of children) the exact complement of the able-bodied (in the sense of those able to be employed for hire). This, at any rate, as regards men, appears still to be the legal classification under the Scottish Poor Law, and under the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order in England and Wales. "The Local Government Board," deposed one of its Inspectors, "always decline to fix an age, because one man may be quite able-bodied at seventy, and another man may not be able-bodied at sixty-five." (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Aged Deserving Poor, 1899, *Q.* 2265.) In support of this contention it may be pointed out that the Workhouse classification required by the General Consolidated Order refers not to the aged at all, but to men and women "infirm through age, or any other cause." Thus, it has been contended by strict administrators that, in granting Outdoor Relief to really able-bodied men of seventy, Boards of Guardians are "going behind" that Order—to use a phrase from Mr. Pell's examination of Mr. Knollys, Local Government Board Inspector, in Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Cd. 7684, Vol. II., *Qs.* 835–849. *See also*, in the same Report, the entertaining cross-examination of a pertinacious "strict administrator" by the Royal Commissioner who represented the Local Government Board. "If I might answer by a question," said this witness, "I should like to know what is meant by 'aged' . . . . Very often a case comes up that is over sixty, and I think that there is nothing at all the matter with that man or with that woman, and I maintain as Chairman that that is an able-bodied person, although he or she may be over sixty." The Royal Commissioner was reduced to retorting: "Leave those cases alone; you may say that that class of case comes under the Prohibitory Order, but I say that the cases of persons not able-bodied do not come under the Prohibitory Order." (*Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Qs.* 4486–4488.) What, in fact, has happened since 1834, in England and Scotland alike, has been, without alteration of the Statute or the Orders, a silent, gradual shifting of the classification, the temporarily sick and the acutely sick of whatever age being more or less taken out of the class of the aged and infirm, and all persons over sixty, however able-bodied, being more or less admitted to it. Sixty, usually adopted as the age at which the inmates of a Workhouse are classed as aged and infirm, (*Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Q.* 31) is doubtless taken from the Statute enabling man and wife of that age to live together. (Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Aged Deserving Poor, 1899, *Qs.* 2266, 2267). But in the Friendly Society Acts, 1875 and 1887, old age is defined as any age after fifty.

† Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vols. I. to III. (Cd. 7684); Report of the Committee on Old-Age Pensions, 1898 (Cd. 8911); Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill, 1899 (House of Commons No. 271 of 1899); Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Aged Deserving Poor, 1899 (House of Commons No. 296 of 1899); Report of Departmental Committee on the Financial Aspects of the Proposals . . . about the Deserving Aged Poor, 1900 (Cd. 67 of 1900); Tables . . . in Connection with the Question of Old-Age Pensions, 1907 (Cd. 3618 of 1907).

Poor Law itself. It is one of the many anomalies of the situation that, whereas there are, as we have seen, two rival Local Authorities for dealing with the sick poor, three different Local Authorities for treating those who are mentally defective, and four separate Local Authorities competing for the care of infants and children, there has been, down to the autumn of 1908, only one Local Authority providing for all the diversified medley of individuals classed as Aged and Infirm. Whether they are sick or well, able-bodied or incapacitated, over seventy or under forty, intelligent or feeble-minded, of admirable past and present conduct or the very dregs of the populace, they have been, in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, all heaped up under the jurisdiction of the Destitution Authority.

(A) The Three Policies of the Destitution Authority.

Since 1834 there have been, in England and Wales, three successive lines of policy laid down by the Central Authority for the treatment of the Aged and Infirm*—either by Orders, or through the Inspectorate, or in the President's Circulars. These three policies may be conveniently termed :—

(*a*) The Policy of an indiscriminate use of the General Mixed Workhouse, tempered in practice by general Outdoor Relief to all kinds of Aged and Infirm;

(*b*) The Policy of applying the Workhouse Test to the Aged and Infirm, assumed to be mitigated by the extraction of support from relations or the charitable ; and

(*c*) The Policy, so far as the Aged alone are concerned, of deliberate discrimination by Boards of Guardians according to past or present character, with generous treatment of the deserving.

These three lines of policy are, in our judgment, inconsistent and incompatible with each other ; they have all left their marks on the authoritative documents that are still in force ; they have all been more or less adopted by one or another of the 1,679 separate Destitution Authorities of the United Kingdom ; and the result is the confusion, uncertainties and inequalities that to-day especially mark this department of Poor Law administration.

The first of the three Policies with regard to the Aged and Infirm was established by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47, and continued by the Poor Law Board of 1847–71. This was not due to the 1834 Report. The meagre references to the Aged and Infirm in the Report of 1834 can hardly be said to amount to any recommendations as to policy. The authors of that Report accepted without question the almost universal practice of relieving the Aged and Infirm by small weekly allowances in their own homes, and they suggested no alteration in this practice.† The one change that they definitely advocated with regard to the Aged was that, where these had to be maintained in institutions, they were to be rescued from the General Mixed Workhouse, and accommodated in entirely separate buildings, under entirely separate management, expressly in order that "the old might enjoy their indulgences."‡ Unfortunately, as we have seen, the Poor Law Commissioners quickly found that, with the Destitution Authority that the Act of 1834 had established, it was impracticable to carry out the strong and reiterated recommendations of the Report of 1834 for the abolition of the General Mixed Workhouse. The separate institutions for the Aged, where "the old might enjoy their indulgences," were therefore not established. But a further step followed. As the existence of the Destitution Authority had involved the continuance of the General Mixed Workhouse, so the use of that institution for all classes of paupers prevented even the humane and considerate treatment of the Aged, on which the authors of the 1834 Report had laid stress. The Poor Law Commissioners found that they had to set themselves strictly against any discrimination inside the Workhouse between one class of paupers and another. There was, as they recognised in 1839, "a strong disposition on the part of a portion of the public"—who had perhaps read the 1834 Report—"so to modify the arrangements [of the Aged and Infirm Wards of the Workhouse] . . . as to place them on the

* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907.

† Pp. 42, 43 of Report of 1834.

‡ P. 307 of Report of 1834 ; *see also* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 65.

footing of almshouses. The consequences which would flow from this change have only to be pointed out to show its inexpediency and its danger. If the condition of the inmates of a Workhouse were to be so regulated as to invite the Aged and Infirm of the labouring class to take refuge in it, *it would immediately be useless as a test between indigence and indolence and fraud.*"*

On the other hand, so far at any rate as their official documents or public utterances are concerned, neither the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47, nor the Poor Law Board of 1847–71, saw any reason to discountenance the very general practice of the Boards of Guardians of providing, by means of Outdoor Relief, for all the Aged and Infirm who could anyhow manage to exist upon what was allowed to them. There had been no such suggestion in the 1834 Report. "It is not our intention," the Commissioners had declared in 1839, "*to issue any such rule* [requiring the Aged and Infirm to receive relief only in the workhouse]" unless we shall see, in any particular Union or Unions, frauds or abuses imperatively calling for our interference."† No such Order was ever issued. It is to be noted that the Central Authority always argued against any discrimination between one aged person and another according to past character, and even according to past thrift. No person was to be relieved unless he was destitute; no more was to be given than sufficed to sustain life; and no less could possibly be given even to the worst person. It was expressly held that any allowance from a Friendly Society, or other income, was to be counted at its full amount.‡ This policy of indiscriminate, insufficient, and unconditional Outdoor Relief to all the Aged and Infirm who could manage to exist outside, coupled with indiscriminate accommodation in the General Mixed Workhouse for the rest of them, was that adopted in practically all the Unions of England and Wales between 1834 and 1871.§ What it has always tended to be, in practice, is a sort of bargain between a good-natured but penurious Destitution Authority, and each Aged or Infirm person in turn, as to how little that person would consent to make shift on, rather than come into the abhorred General Mixed Workhouse.‖

The second of the three policies—that of applying the test of "the offer of the House" to the Aged and Infirm, as to other classes—appears to have prevailed among most of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board between 1871 and 1890, and the school of "strict administrators" with whom they were in communication. We may take as the best exponent of this policy Mr., afterwards Sir Henry, Longley, K.C.B., an able, zealous and experienced official of great influence in Poor Law administration, whose reports on the subject obtained a wide circulation. Mr. Longley assumed, in every paragraph of his well-known Report of 1873–4,¶ that the "Workhouse principle" was universally applicable to "the Disabled"—that being the term he used for the Aged and Infirm—as well as to the Able-bodied. His policy seems to have embodied, in what we think a confused way, several different hypotheses. It was advocated as an inducement to individual saving. A rigid adherence to the policy of "offering the House" would, Mr. Longley argued, lead the poor to provide, or induce their relations to provide, for

* Special Report of Poor Law Commissioners on the Further Amendment of the Law, 1839, p. 47. That it was their fear of destroying the utility of the Workhouse as a test for the able-bodied, that made the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835–1847 refuse to discriminate in favour of the Aged and Infirm within that institution, and not any desire to be harsh to this class in order to encourage provision for self-support, is shown by the fact that they took no steps to prohibit or to restrict, as regards the aged, the far more attractive Outdoor Relief.

† Special Report on Further Amendment of the Law, 1839, p. 61.

‡ Minute of Poor Law Commissioners, 1840; Poor Law Board to Mr. R. H. Paget, M.P., January 5th, 1870, in Twenty-second Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1870, p. 108; Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Q.* 299; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority, p. 126.

§ Thus, at Bradfield, which was, from the outset a "model" Union, we find a committee of the Board of Guardians reporting that they "do not recommend the Board to incur the expense of new buildings for increasing the accommodation for this class of paupers [the aged and infirm]; they rather advise that out-relief should be granted to them in all cases where necessity is certain; and that the workhouse should be kept as a test against imposition, more than as a permanent means of support for disabled persons." The Report was adopted. (MS. Minutes, Bradfield Board of Guardians, July 6th, 1858.)

‖ "Guardians," said an experienced Local Government Board Inspector, "are very apt to give what the individual pauper is willing to be content with." (Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. I., p. xxii., Vol. II., *Qs.* 246, 1442–1444.)

¶ Report on the Administration of Outdoor Relief in the Metropolis, in Third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1873–1874.

old age as well as for sickness and widowhood. If the aged had, however, not been able to save, and had no relations legally liable to maintain them, the "offer of the House" would, it was alleged, bring forward other relations, not legally liable, who rather than have the disgrace of a relation in the Workhouse would support them.* This was even held, in some queer way, to be specially true of the aged who had led really good lives.† Finally, in the cases, which were assumed to be very rare, of the deserving aged person having been neither able to save nor to attract the affection of relations able to support him, voluntary charity was supposed to come to the rescue. It was an integral part of the policy that Mr. Longley strongly deprecated any deviation in particular cases from what he euphemistically called "the offer of indoor relief." "That which an applicant does not know certainly that he will not get," he forcibly argued, "he readily persuades himself if he wishes for it that he will get; and the poor, to whom any inducement is held out to regard an application for relief as a sort of gambling speculation, in which, though many fail, some will succeed, will, like other gamblers, reckon upon their own success."‡ For every "hard case" he relied on the springing up in every Union of intelligently directed private charity. "It is, in fact, the very existence of charity"—assumed thus to be always at hand whenever required—"which strengthens the hands of the Poor Law administration in adherence to rule."§ There was thus to be a sharp division between those aged and infirm who were provided for in their old age by their own savings, by the kindness of their relations and friends, or by voluntary charity, on the one hand—assumed to be coincident with "the deserving"—and on the other hand those aged and infirm who had no alternative but Poor Law relief. For these latter—assumed to be coincident with "the undeserving"—there was to be nothing but the General Mixed Workhouse. And in order to emphasise this assumed coincidence of the aged who had to accept Poor Law relief and those who were undeserving, every effort was made to retain and even to deepen the "stigma of pauperism." This was officially expressed in the phrase "the degradation of parish support."‖ "I think," said in 1893 the then Chief General Inspector and Assistant Secretary of the Board, "that a man should feel that there is some degradation in living upon funds that have been raised . . . *by compulsion* from his neighbours."¶ Mr. Longley's Reports so far received the endorsement of the Local Government Board that they were not only published with commendation, but were officially circulated to Boards of Guardians. Other Inspectors were always pressing the same views. The half a dozen Unions that adopted this policy of "Thorough" were repeatedly held up for admiration by the Inspectorate and in the Official Reports. It even came to be commonly assumed that this was, in some special sense, the "orthodox" Poor Law policy. We do not, however, find that the Local Government Board ever expressly embodied it in any published Order, Circular, or other authoritative document.**

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* "One of the chief defects," he said, "in the present administration of the law in respect of the disabled class, and especially of that large section of it which consists of the aged and infirm . . . is its failure to relieve the rates from the burden of the maintenance of paupers, whose relations, whether legally liable or not, are able to contribute to their support. It is, I believe, within the experience of many Boards of Guardians, that while there are persons who, even when in prosperous circumstances, readily permit their aged relations to receive out-relief, an offer of Indoor Relief is frequently found to put pressure upon them to rescue themselves, if not their relations, from the discredit incident to the residence of the latter in a workhouse." (*Ibid.*, p. 188.) Another Inspector expressly reported that he urged Guardians with regard to the aged "to apply the workhouse test *in order to put pressure on relations who are not legally liable.*" (Mr. Culley's Report in Third Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1873–1874, p. 76.) So, again, in 1875, Mr. Longley argued that the "deterrent discipline" of the Workhouse was "the keystone of an efficient system of indoor relief," not merely for the able-bodied, but also for the aged ("directly on the able-bodied, and more remotely upon the disabled class of paupers," the term he always used for the aged). (Mr. Longley's Report on Indoor Relief in the Metropolis, in Fourth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1874–1875, p. 47.) It may, however, be noted that Mr. Longley never pretended that this was the policy of the Report of 1834, or of the Act of 1834. To him it was "*a further and special development* . . . of the principles of the Poor Law Amendment Act." (*Ibid.*, p. 41.)

† Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Q.* 2305. One of the strangest of the assumptions of this period—and one which, as in fairness it should be said, was, perhaps, the main justification for the policy—was that hardly any person could fail to be able to provide for his old age (and that of his wife), unless he had been in some way undeserving. "I think myself," said a noted Poor Law Guardian, "that what should be called deserving (aged) poor are so very very few in number that they might easily be dealt with by organised charity outside." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 2061.)

‡ Mr. Longley's Report in Third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1873–4, p. 144.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

‖ Poor Law Board to Mr. R. H. Paget, M.P., January 5th, 1870 (*see* references above).

¶ Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Q.* 1129.

** Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 115.

This policy of "offering the House" to all aged persons was qualified by exceptions. Thus the Paddington Board of Guardians adopted the following rules: "Outdoor Relief may be granted only to such aged and infirm persons as :—

"(1) Are deserving at the time of application.

"(2) Have shown signs of thrift.

"(3) Have no relations legally or morally bound to, and able to, support them.

"(4) Are unable to obtain sufficient assistance from charitable sources; and

"(5) Are desirous of living out of the Workhouse and can be properly taken care of."*

It will, however, be noted that it was still definitely laid down that persons who complied with Nos. 1, 2 and 4 of the regulations, but not with No. 3 or No. 5—persons, that is, who were admittedly deserving, thrifty and wholly destitute, but whose relations (not being legally liable) refused to support them; or who had no one to look after their little needs—were to be relieved only in the Workhouse—in the General Mixed Workhouse, made deterrent and intended only for the undeserving.

We pass now to the third policy—that of discriminating, with regard to persons over some prescribed age, between the deserving and the undeserving poor, alike in the amount of Outdoor Relief, and in the amenities of institutional treatment. This policy, diametrically opposed as it was to that inculcated by the Inspectorate of 1871–1890, has been described to us, by the present Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, as characteristic of "the political decade of Poor Law administration." † By this ambiguous phrase—unusual in the mouth of a Civil Servant—we understand to be meant that the policy was adopted by the Local Government Board in obedience to the wishes of Parliament and in compliance with a widespread public opinion. We note that the policy has been equally characteristic of Presidents of different political parties.‡ It is interesting to see that the new departure began over the indulgence of an allowance of tobacco.§ The Liverpool Select Vestry—the Destitution Authority of that great city—determined to give the well-conducted old men in the Workhouse the privilege of a weekly screw of tobacco, whether or not they were employed on disagreeable duties. The Auditor objected. The Vestry insisted. The Central Authority was obdurate. The local body appealed to its Parliamentary representatives. It was suggested as a compromise that the medical officer might be got to include it in the dietary table, when the Central Authority would not refuse to sanction it.‖ The Vestry declined to compromise, and insisted on allowing tobacco as a non-dietetic indulgence. Finally, the Inspector was instructed to say that objection was withdrawn. No publicity was given to the concession, but it gradually leaked out. During the year 1892 we see the Central Authority sanctioning by letter, without any official publication on the subject, such applications as were made by individual Boards of Guardians to be permitted to allow an ounce of tobacco weekly to the men over sixty in the Workhouse.¶ At last, in November, 1892, a General Order was issued permitting it in all

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* Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Q.* 2373. For rules of the St. Pancras Board of Guardians to similar effect, *see Ibid.*, *Q.* 2049. These rules were pressed on the Local Government Board for embodiment in a General Order (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 2124, 2413); but in vain.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 3338; *see also Q.* 3344.

‡ Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 118.

§ It is not clear from the published documents at what date, or in what unions, the Central Authority had first allowed tobacco. In 1880, it decided that it could not legally be given to the Workhouse inmate (not being sick), if it had not been specially ordered by the medical officer under Arts. 107 and 108 of the General Consolidated Order of 1847. (Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board, Vol. II., 1883, p. 372.) Yet, by 1885, at any rate, the allowance of tobacco or snuff to non-able-bodied paupers or to such as were "employed upon work of a hazardous or specially disagreeable character," with permission to smoke in such rooms as the Guardians might determine, had been exceptionally granted in particular cases; *see*, for instance, Special Order to Carlisle of June 22nd, 1885, not published in the Annual Report.

‖ "It is the invariable custom," said Mr. Ritchie approvingly, "to provide for the aged paupers a better diet than that for the other classes." (Mr. Ritchie in House of Commons, May 6th, 1892; *Hansard*, Vol. IV., p. 277.)

¶ Local Government Board to Bourne Union, August, 1892 (*Local Government Chronicle*, August 13th, 1892, p. 678); Local Government Board to Caistor Union, September, 1892. (*Ibid.*, October 8th, 1892, p. 859.)

Unions, irrespective of sex, and without limit of amount.* Little more than a year later, as some compensation to the old women (though they had not been excluded, in terms, from the indulgence of tobacco or snuff) they were allowed "dry tea" with sugar and milk, irrespective of that provided for in the dietary table.† Presently this indulgence is extended to "dry coffee or cocoa" if preferred, and the men also are allowed to receive it.‡

Meanwhile an agitation had grown up in favour of the grant of pensions, quite apart from the Poor Law, to the aged deserving poor. This movement led to a series of official inquiries into the condition and treatment of the aged poor, beginning with the Royal Commission of 1893–95. This Commission, which alike from its membership and the extent of its inquiries must be accounted as of great authority in Poor Law administration, found that neither the exercise of thrift, nor the support of relations, nor the intervention of voluntary charity, could be absolutely relied on to prevent deserving persons from requiring public assistance in old age; § and they recommended that Boards of Guardians should be advised to discriminate in their relief between the deserving and the undeserving. They insisted that Outdoor Relief ought to be given in all suitable cases; and that when the deserving aged had to accept institutional relief, they should be separated from, and treated quite differently from, the undeserving; and that these conditions should be definitely published to the poor, so that they might know with certainty what they might rely on in their old age. ||

In conformity with this extremely authoritative recommendation, the Local Government Board issued two lengthy Circulars in 1895 and 1896,¶ under the presidency of Sir Henry Fowler and Mr. Chaplin respectively, systematically laying down principles of Workhouse administration, so far as the aged were concerned, in sharp contrast with those advocated by Mr. Longley, and ,indeed, with those which had been inculcated from 1835 to 1892. It was expressly stated that, as the character of the Workhouse population had so completely changed since 1834, the administration no longer needed to be so deterrent. The old idea of fixed uniform times of going to bed and rising and of taking meals was given up, it being expressly left to the Master and Matron to allow any of the aged (as well as the infirm and the young children) to retire to rest, to rise and to have their meals at whatever hours it was thought fit. The visiting committees of Workhouses were now specially enjoined to see that the aged were properly attended to, and recommended to confer with them as to any grievances without any officials being present.** It was suggested that the great sleeping wards should be partitioned into separate cubicles. The Guardians were reminded that aged and infirm couples might be provided with separate rooms. The well-behaved aged and infirm were to be allowed, within reasonable limits,†† to go out for walks, to visit their friends, and to attend their own places of worship on Sundays. The rules were to be relaxed to allow them to receive visits in the Workhouse

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 169, 17547; General Order of November 3rd, 1892; Circular of November 9th, 1892; Twenty-Second Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1892–3, pp. 35–36, 85; Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Q.* 96, and Vol. III., Appendix No. II., p. 967.

† General Order of March 8th, 1894; Twenty-fourth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1893–4, p. 99.

‡ Special Order to Gateshead, February 15th, 1896; *see also* the "Specimen Order" given in Macmorran's *Poor Law Orders*, Second Edition, 1905, p. 1061.

§ "Though private charity may frequently prevent persons from becoming paupers, it should not be relied upon as a substitute for the legal obligations in cases of destitution." (Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. I., p. 27.)

|| These recommendations received the signatures (subject to some qualifications) of ten Commissioners, including Lords Lingen, Brassey and Playfair, and Messrs. Henley, Pell and C. S. Loch. A minority, including Messrs. J. Chamberlain, Ritchie and Charles Booth, recommended further differentiation between the deserving and the undeserving. There was no Minority Report in the other direction.

¶ Circular on Workhouse Administration of January 29th, 1895; Memorandum on Visiting Committees of July 1st, 1895; Circular on Classification in Workhouses of July 31st, 1896; Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1895–6, pp. 85, 107–112, 121–123; Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1896–7, pp. 9–10.

** Memorandum on the Duties of Visiting Committees, June, 1895, in Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1895–6, p. 122.

†† Sunday morning, and one day a month, was held to be not sufficient outing. "In the case of aged inmates of respectable character," said Mr. Chaplin, "leave of absence might well be allowed on week-days more frequently than is now the case" [at Old Gravel Lane Workhouse]. (*Hansard*, May 23rd, 1898, Vol. LVIII., p. 326.)

from their friends. There was to be no distinctive dress. Those of them who were of good conduct and who had "previously led moral and respectable lives" were to be separated from the rest, who were "likely to cause them discomfort," and were to have the enjoyment of a separate day-room. The whole note of the administration of the old people's wards of the Workhouses was, in fact, to be changed, so far as the Central Authority could change it. In the words of the 1834 Report, the old were to enjoy their indulgences. Four years later another Circular was issued in stronger terms, reiterating the suggestions of privileges that the guardians ought to allow to the deserving inmates over sixty-five—freedom to get up and go to bed and have their meals when they liked, to have their own locked cupboards for their little treasures, in all cases to have their tobacco and dry tea, to be free to go out when they chose, and to be allowed to receive the visits of their friends. They were to be given separate cubicles to sleep in, and special day-rooms, "which might, if thought desirable, be available for members of both sexes . . . and in which their meals, other than dinner, might be served at hours fixed by the Guardians. . . . It is hoped that where there is room the Guardians will not hesitate to take steps to bring about improvements of the kind indicated in the arrangements for the aged deserving poor." * Four or five months later the Guardians were stirred up by letter, and asked what they had done towards creating the specially privileged class of deserving aged inmates that had been so strongly pressed on them.†

Nor was there any hesitation on the part of the Local Government Board in equally accepting and endorsing the new policy with regard to the grant of Outdoor Relief to the Aged. In July, 1896, the Board, under the presidency of Mr. Chaplin, issued a Circular to Boards of Guardians outside the Metropolis, drawing attention to the importance of the Relieving Officers and Medical Officers discharging their duties with the greatest particularity. In a concluding paragraph the Board significantly reminds the guardians of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, of which an extract is appended. "We are convinced," runs the recommendation thus exceptionally brought to the Guardians' notice, "that there is a strong feeling that in the administration of relief there should be greater discrimination between the respectable aged who become destitute, and those whose destitution is distinctly the consequence of their own misconduct; and we recommend that Boards of Guardians, in dealing with applications for relief, should enquire with special care into the antecedents of destitute persons whose physical faculties have failed by reason of age and infirmity; and that *Outdoor Relief should in such cases be given* those who are shown to have been of good character, thrifty according to their opportunities, and generally independent in early life, and who are not living under conditions of health or surrounding circumstances which make it evident that the relief given should be indoor relief."‡ But this was not all. The poor, far from being left uncertain as to the grant of Outdoor Relief, were to be specially told that they would receive it if only they led deserving lives. "It accordingly appears to us eminently desirable," continues the Report of the Royal Commissioners, as communicated to the Boards of Guardians, "that Boards of Guardians should adopt rules in accordance with the general principles which we have indicated, by which they may be broadly guided in dealing with individual applications for relief, and that *such rules should be generally made known for the information of the poor of the Union, in order that* those really in need may not be discouraged from applying." § This policy was emphasised four years later, still under Mr. Chaplin's

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* Circular of August 4th, 1900, in Thirtieth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1900–1901, pp. 19–20.

† *See*, for instance, Local Government Board to Bradford Union, January 10th, 1901, in MS. archives, Bradford Board of Guardians. There were then, in the Bradford Workhouse, twenty aged paupers of the first class, and seventeen of the second class. Both these day wards had cushioned armchairs, lockers with keys for each inmate, carpets on the floor, curtains to the windows, and were made comfortable with cushions, coloured table-cloths, pictures and ornaments. The inmates had special dormitories. (Bradford Union to Local Government Board, January 26th, 1901.) The General Consolidated Order of 1847 was still nominally in force.

‡ Circular of July 11th, 1896, in Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1896–7, pp. 7–9. No mention is made of this Circular in the Annual Report itself.

§ *Ibid.* In September, 1896, under Mr. Chaplin's presidency, the Central Authority "saw no objection" to a proposal of the Poplar Guardians to "board out" an aged married couple in a country cottage at 12s. a week, and added that its sanction was not required, if the case fell within "exception 2 to Art. 4" of the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order. It was simply "non-resident relief." But the Central Authority declared that it was impossible for such relief to be made chargeable on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, as "boarding-out" of adults was merely Outdoor Relief. (Local Government Board to Poplar Union, September 25th, 1896; MS. archives, Poplar Board of Guardians.)

Presidency, by another Circular urging that "aged deserving persons should not be urged to enter the Workhouse at all," unless from actual infirmity and lack of a suitable home; but that adequate Outdoor Relief should be granted to them.* Nor did the Central Authority rest content with a mere Circular. Letters were sent a few months later to all the Boards of Guardians, asking what action had been taken with regard to the suggestion that Outdoor Relief should be granted to the deserving aged, and, in particular, whether the practice was to grant an adequate amount in each case. This is, down to this day, the latest official utterance of policy with regard to the deserving aged.†

(B) The Aged and Infirm under the Destitution Authority of To-day.

We have to report, after considering all the evidence afforded by the numerous official enquiries of the past decade into the condition of the Aged and Infirm, and after supplementing this evidence by fresh witnesses and inspections of our own, that we find all the three policies that we have just described, as well as an indefinite number of modifications or combinations of these policies, simultaneously in full operation at the present day among the Destitution Authorities of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland. We infer from our investigations that the First Policy—that of indiscriminate, insufficient and unconditional weekly doles, coupled with the General Mixed Workhouse for all who cannot subsist on them—is to-day the policy adopted by practically all the Destitution Authorities of Ireland and Wales, and by a considerable majority of the Destitution Authorities of England. This policy is at once cruel to many of the deserving and wholly undeterrent to the undeserving. We could give in support of this judgment a mass of evidence; but it must suffice here to quote the very authoritative statement, with regard to the two-thirds of the aged who are existing on Outdoor Relief, of the present Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, Mr. J. S. Davy.

> "The relief," deposed this witness in 1893, "which is now usually given to outdoor paupers is inadequate, and the pauper is not properly looked after as he ought to be, either by the relieving officer or by the medical officer. *This is part of the system.* . . . Half-a-crown a week is about the outside relief that is given to old people. . . . It is not enough for them to live upon." "When," he continued, the Guardians "have by a *quasi*-judicial decision accepted a man as a pauper, and given him Outdoor Relief, they are responsible for his treatment. *They ought to see that he is properly clothed, properly housed, and properly fed.* They have no business to send him 2s. a week and wash their hands of him."‡

The same information has been given by other official witnesses.

> "I think," said an experienced Inspector in 1898, "the way in which relief is administered now in too many cases is intensely cruel to the [aged] poor; I think that to try to make old people live on 2s. 6d. and a loaf for a week is intensely cruel."§

We have already described in how large a proportion of all the two or three hundred thousand cases of Outdoor Relief, this is the standard adopted. "It is rare," summed up the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, "to find a Union in which it is not the exception to give sums which would suffice alone to provide even the barest necessities of life. . . . It cannot be doubted that, owing to the absence of the other means generally pre-supposed, great hardship must result."‖ Unfortunately, it is only too clear that what was described by Mr. Davy in 1893 and by Mr. Baldwyn Fleming in 1898, as "the system," is, in nine-tenths of the Unions of England and Wales, still "the system" in 1909. "I do not think to-day," deposed one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, "that the aged and deserving poor, in the immense majority of cases, receive sixpence more than they did before the Circular (of 1900) was issued."¶ We have ourselves seen cases of aged and obviously respectable persons, lingering out an existence in the most squalid surroundings, on a dole of Outdoor Relief insufficient to provide even

* Circular of August 4th, 1900, in Appendix to Thirtieth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1900–1901, pp. 18, 19. As to this Circular, *see* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2310, 2815, 3131, 3344, 4932, 5336, 5403, 5538–5347, 6953, 6954, 7272–7285, 8609, 9128, 11086, 11087, 12877–12884, 13813, 25781 (Par. 4), 25900, 27061 (Par. 29), 29326, 35461, 35679, 40477 (Par. 7), 40535, 41072, 47191 (Par. 34); and Appendices No. X. (A), Par. 33, XI. (A), Pars. 105–107, XV. (A), Par. 176, XVII. (A), Par. 7, and XIX. (A), Par. 13, to Vol. I; No. LXLI., Par. 6, of Vol. III.; and No. LXIX., Par. 4, and CXIII., Par. 3, to Vol. V.

† Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 117.

‡ Reort of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. I., p. 221, Vol. II., *Q.* 1715.

§ Report of House of Commons Select Committee on Cottage Homes Bill, 1899, *Qs.* 495, 961; ditto. on Aged Deserving Poor, 1899, p. 4.

‖ Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. I., pp. 20, 21.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 9138.

the barest food, clothing and shelter; not merely unprovided with any of the comforts, indulgences or amenities of life, but actually without fire or necessary covering. We realise that this irresponsible penuriousness of the Destitution Authority may, in the neighbourliness of rural life and in the customary generosity of the Irish and the Welsh to the aged, be supplemented by casual gifts which may frequently obviate the worst hardships. But the majority of the destitute aged in England and Wales are now to be found in large towns of mean streets and migratory populations, where such supplements are, as experience only too sadly proves, not sufficiently to be counted on. There is even worse to be told. It is a common practice of, we fear, the great majority of Boards of Guardians, to refuse Outdoor Relief altogether to the most destitute of all the cases that come before them—however genuinely deserving such cases may in all respects be—*merely on the ground that the applicants have no resources whatever.** "The rule of the Board," we were told, with regard to one Union, "is, and always has been, that they never give (Outdoor Relief) to those who have nothing."† This strange policy, which, however well intentioned, we cannot but condemn as cruel, of providing nothing better than the General Mixed Workhouse, even for the most deserving of the aged, on the ground of the extremity of their destitution, is, we fear, to be attributed to the characteristic penuriousness of a Destitution Authority. Rather than give a lonely old woman as much as seven shillings a week, they refuse to give anything. But the policy may be due, in part, to a wholly unfounded belief, derived from the early Orders of the Poor Law Commissioners,‡ that it is illegal, or in some way objectionable, to meet the rent out of the Poor Rate. "Unless," said one witness, "the rent is covered we decline to give Out-relief," § even to the most deserving cases. "We cannot pay a pauper's rent," expressly stated another witness.‖ The worst of the tragedy is that it is especially the shrinking, silent semi-starvation of the lonely old women, or disabled old men, of respectability and moral refinement, who have outlived relations and friends, which is least likely to be helped. When such persons, finding starvation actually upon them, consent to enter the workhouse—the General Mixed Workhouse that we have described—they come in, to use the expressive words of Miss Clifford, "with a feeling that it is just like death."¶

On the other hand, this policy of indiscriminate and unconditional weekly doles, however inadequate in amount, combined with optional sojourns in the promiscuous General Mixed Workhouse, with its ample food, sleep and warmth, and its unlimited idleness and low gossip, is exactly what suits the inclinations of the dirty, dissolute, and vicious old man or woman, who can, by bringing petty pilfering and assiduous begging to the aid of the Guardians' dole, manage to make out a not disagreeable life. The Guardians who pursue this policy in crowded urban districts find themselves faced by two problems which, for a Destitution Authority, are hopelessly insoluble. No inconsiderable number of aged persons in the great towns are now, as the Local Government Board's Inspectors have described to us, regularly spending their Outdoor Relief at the public-house, whilst habitually living in a condition "verminous and dirty beyond description," in rooms "stinking and loathsome;" a positive danger to the Public Health.** The Destitution Authority would like to relieve them only in the Workhouse; but they refuse to come in, and it cannot bring itself absolutely to refuse its dole of inadequate Outdoor Relief. It would like to have authority to compel them to come in, but it has

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 18048, 18281–18286, 31379; *see also* Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Qs.* 2049, 2126, 2127; Vol. III., *Qs.* 10845, 10846, 18281–18289, 31379.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 18284.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 2973, 3073–3076. Owing to the abuses prior to 1834 in the payment of paupers' cottage rents the payment of rent was forbidden in the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order. But this means only payment direct to the landlord (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 2973), and the payment of arrears of rent (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 3073–3076). There is nothing forbidden and nothing objectionable in granting to the pauper the means of providing himself with necessary lodging. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 3073.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 16733; *see also* Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Qs.* 1568–1573 1614–1616, 4066.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 67757; *see also Q.* 25373 (Pars. 129–131).

¶ Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Q.* 6316; *see also* Vol. III., *Qs.* 15209, 15341, 15360, 15762, 15778, 15822, 15823. It is, most of all, the promiscuity and lack of privacy of the General Mixed Workhouse that is objected to. "These old people," said one witness, "do not like to go, and will not go, into an institution where they are bound to mix with people that they would not otherwise mix with in life." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 73003.)

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 6636, etc.; *see also* Summary of Reports on the Condition of the Outdoor Poor by certain of the General Inspectors of the Local Government Board, *Ibid.* (not yet in volume form).

nowhere in which to receive them, except the hated General Mixed Workhouse—with its promiscuity, its brand of pauperism, and its chilling deterrence into which no Parliament will ever force anybody. An equally intractable problem to a Destitution Authority is that presented by those aged persons who belong to the army of "Ins-and-Outs." At the first snap of cold weather, there crowd into the urban Workhouses, autumn after autumn, a herd of the worthless old persons of either sex, who manage in the warm weather to pick up some sort of a living; but who prefer, for the winter, the substantial comforts and agreeable promiscuity of the General Mixed Workhouse. Many of these persons know exactly how to dodge the limited powers of detention which alone can be confided to a Destitution Authority; and we see them about once a week "taking their discharge" in the morning and invariably presenting themselves in the evening at the porter's lodge, often in a more or less intoxicated state, for re-admission in time for supper. For this problem the Destitution Authority has no other remedy than compulsorily detaining the "In and Out" person for as long as a week, the maximum term allowed by law.* This amounts, in practice, to no more than limiting the "day out" to one per week. And the very nature of a Destitution Authority and its General Mixed Workhouse stands in the way of Parliament granting any further powers of detention, which is the remedy asked for.†

We cannot but conclude, therefore, that the provision for the aged and infirm actually made by the great mass of Boards of Guardians in England, Wales, and Ireland is wholly unsatisfactory, and, in a quite peculiar sense, "too bad for the good and too good for the bad."

The Second Policy—that of applying the "Workhouse Test" to the Aged and Infirm, with the object of restricting Poor Law relief to the undeserving, and giving it only in the form of maintenance in a deterrent Workhouse—is unknown in Ireland and Wales, and has only been feebly attempted in a few parishes in Scotland. But in England the manifest success—judged only by the standard of reducing the number of persons accepting relief—of this policy of applying the "Workhouse Test" to the Aged and Infirm, or, to use Mr. Longley's term, the Disabled, led, between 1871 and 1890, to its partial adoption by an increasing number of Unions. The policy was, indeed, as easy to administer as it was certain in its results. If, as Mr. Longley suggested, the General Mixed Workhouse was to be kept deterrent and disciplinary; if it was to be deemed the resort of the undeserving; and if everyone who entered its portals was to be made to feel the "degradation of parish support," it was clear that those only who were reduced to the last extremity of want would "pass the test." Hence, although in the Unions in which this policy was adopted with any thoroughness nearly the whole expenditure on Outdoor Relief was saved, the number of persons in the General Mixed Workhouse did not increase. In defiance of the authoritative directions of the Local Government Board half a dozen Boards of Guardians continue to this day to enforce this policy in all its severity.

We recognise that the advocates of this policy, actuated by the greatest humanity, profess to arrange so that only "the undeserving" aged have actually to enter the Workhouse, all others being adequately provided for outside the Poor Law, either by friends or relations or by voluntary charity. How little these optimistic assurances are to be depended on is shown by the elaborate investigations that we set on foot into the results of the refusal of Outdoor Relief in some of the so-called "strict" Unions.‡ But whether or not it is possible in any Union to provide by voluntary charity for all the deserving aged persons who are legally entitled to apply for relief to the Board of Guardians, we cannot understand how it can be contended that any public body has the right, by a policy of withholding Poor Law relief from destitute persons, to force them to accept voluntary charity. If there is to be discrimination in the treatment of the deserving and the undeserving aged, the deserving person may certainly claim to receive his allotted treatment at the hands of the public authority, instead of being relegated to the caprices, the irresponsible judgments, and the arbitrary conditions of the individual private donor. Unfortunately, it is only too plain that, at any rate in the populous cities, not a few aged persons, who ought to be relieved, linger out their existence in semi-starvation, quite inadequately provided for, and

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 155, 3084, 3085.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 5016, 5778, 5872, 7572, 8908, 9542, 11245, 14076.

‡ Report . . . on an Inquiry in Six Unions into Cases of Refusal of Outdoor Relief, by Miss G. Harlock; Evidence before the Commission (not yet in volume form).

eventually succumb prematurely to disease and privation, rather than apply for admission to the Workhouse. We must content ourselves with quoting here the testimony of one who has had a lifetime of experience and devoted personal service among the poor of Manchester, Mr. Alderman Macdougall, who has been for many years a leading member of the Board of Guardians there :—

> "The large majority," testifies this exceptionally competent witness, "of those who endure biting poverty without seeking relief from the Guardians are women. Men do not so frequently attain to old age under disadvantageous circumstances as women do. Old men go more readily into the Workhouse than old women. Women struggle longer and with greater determination with the difficulties of poverty, and the incapacities of old age. Families in poor circumstances find it is less possible to provide food and shelter for an old man who is a relative than for an old woman. He is more in the way, he expects not only a larger portion of the food, but to share in the better portions. He does not fit into the household of a working family as an old woman does, and is not so useful in domestic matters. His welcome is colder, and he desires to get out of the way, and goes to the workhouse. A decent old woman will cling to a home where she may be regarded as the drudge rather than as the grandmother or the aunt, and she will exist on the plainer portions of the meals, and will wedge in both day and night without encroaching much on the means of the family." But there are even harder cases. "There are, in every Union, aged women of good character, who belong to no families into whose domestic life they can fit and on whom they can depend—women who have been domestic servants, assistants in shops, mill hands, nurses, seamstresses, women who have denied themselves in younger days to support parents and bring up younger sisters and brothers, widows of good repute who have out-lived husbands and children, daughters of fathers who have failed in business, and women left with some provision which has been exhausted. If absolutely unable to earn small sums, they must, of course, apply for relief, but many of them do manage by sewing, knitting, washing, hawking of small articles, or minding children for mothers going to work, to eke out a very scanty living. They dread the associations of pauper life. Having been self-supporting up to old age, they have the most intense desire to keep from even Outdoor Relief, and an utter repugnance to entering the Workhouse. Yet they have the daily fear that the Workhouse must be the final refuge, and this fear is harder to bear than the pinch of hunger, the cold of insufficient clothing, or the poverty of their surroundings."*

We must refer here to a special form of this policy of applying the "Workhouse Test" to the aged, which appears to prevail—to the serious hardship of some of the aged poor—in about a score of Unions. In some Unions in which Outdoor Relief is not systematically refused to the well-conducted deserving aged, there is a practice of refusing it in particular cases, not because of any defect in the applicant, but as a means of inducing relations or friends to come forward and undertake the maintenance of the destitute aged person. There is the same liability to contribute, and the same powers of enforcing contribution for any person chargeable to the Poor Rate, whether the relief is indoor or outdoor. But as there is usually a much greater repugnance in relations or friends to allowing a person in whom they are interested to enter the General Mixed Workhouse than to allowing him to receive Outdoor Relief, the Guardians, *without regard to the hardship to the destitute person himself*, play upon this repugnance, and refuse Outdoor Relief, with the object of extracting contributions from relations or friends who might otherwise refuse to make them. Sometimes Outdoor Relief is refused and an "offer of the House" is made, or the Outdoor Relief is reduced to a purely nominal amount, when there are sons legally liable to contribute, *merely as an alternative to enforcing contribution*—the Destitution Authority choosing to let the old people suffer the consequences of their sons' neglect, rather than take the proper legal steps for compelling these to contribute.† More often, however, the refusal of Outdoor Relief takes place with a similar object, when there are no relations legally bound to contribute, but when there are other relations under no such liability, or even mere friends or benevolent persons, whom the Guardians hope, by threatening the destitute person with the horrors of the General Mixed Workhouse, to persuade to contribute. This policy is occasionally even carried so far—we should not have credited it had it not been avowed by the Chairman of the Board of Guardians concerned—as to refuse all relief whatsoever, either indoor or outdoor, in order to make such non-liable relations or friends undertake, on pain of seeing the person in whom they may be interested suffer, a duty which, whether rightly or wrongly, the law has cast, not on them but on the Destitution Authority.‡ We regret to say that, in some Unions, this refusal, for ulterior objects, of Outdoor Relief to persons otherwise deserving it, is not merely a matter of practice, but is actually embodied in

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* *Ibid.*, Q. 36513, Pars. 17–19.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 19732, 19757, 27164. One witness expressly deposed that : "Many applications have been refused where children are known to be of sufficient ability to wholly maintain their parents." (*Ibid.*, Q. 67743, Par. 16.) *See also* Report of Royal Commission on Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. II., *Qs.* 4188, 4640, 4645, 4650, 4783, 4784, 4931, 7920, 7921 ; Vol. III., *Qs.* 15848–15857, 15908–15924, 15954, 15983, 15984, 16088–16096, 16191–16217, 17793.

‡ *Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Qs.* 2288–2295.

rules, which have not—so far as we can ascertain—been objected to by the District Auditors or by the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. It is not infrequent to find in the rules a prohibition of Outdoor Relief to persons who, being otherwise in all respects qualified, have relations, not legally liable to support them, but who are, as the Guardians consider, "morally bound" to do so, or "in a position" to do so, or "fully capable" of doing so.*

The Third Policy—that promulgated by the Local Government Board in 1895–6 and the one now in force—of securing to every aged, deserving, destitute person Outdoor Relief fully adequate for subsistence, or, if he or she is unwilling or unable to use such an allowance, good maintenance in comfortable quarters apart from the General Mixed Workhouse, has, despite the fact that it is the authoritative policy of the Local Government Board,† been adopted by only about a score of Boards of Guardians in England. The policy has usually been adopted subject to certain arbitrary qualifications, such as the absence of relations "morally bound" to contribute, the fact of continuous residence for twenty years within the boundaries of a particular Union, or the attainment of eighty years of age. We have already given our criticism of the first of these qualifications—the attempt on the part of a public authority, by an arbitrary exercise of its discretion, to force a third party to do something that the law does not require, by deliberately subjecting the person as to whom the discretion has to be exercised to a course of treatment which is not that deemed the most suitable to his condition. When, however, the alternative to Outdoor Relief is not, as at Brixworth or Bradfield, the General Mixed Workhouse, but maintenance on a higher scale in comfortable separate quarters, where the old people can come and go at their will, the policy of "offering the House" with the object of putting pressure on other people loses much of its cruelty and objectionableness. But then it loses also most of its efficacy. It becomes, in fact, a policy of "bluff," which may succeed in proportion to the ignorance or simplicity of the third party—those alone being imposed upon who remain unaware of the genuine superiority of the indoor provision made for the deserving old people. With regard to the stipulation that only such aged persons as have completed ten or twenty years' continuous residence within the particular Union, we have only to observe that it amounts, in effect, to an attempt, on the part of a particular Board of Guardians—as we think, an illegitimate attempt—to alter the Law of Settlement as enacted by Parliament. Even stranger for a public Authority charged with the relief of destitution is the rule of several Unions making the amount of the Outdoor Relief vary according to the age of the pauper; actually giving, irrespective of the cost of subsistence in any particular case, sometimes sixpence additional for each lustrum attained in excess of sixty-five years.‡

Omitting such strangely irrelevant local qualifications of the policy laid down since 1895–6 by the Local Government Board, we have to express our appreciation of the admirable provision for the aged deserving poor now made, according to this policy, by such Unions as Bradford, Sheffield, Ecclesall Bierlow, Woolwich, Hunslet, Dewsbury, Sculcoates, and Birmingham.§ The Boards of Guardians of these and a few other Unions have definitely adopted the policy of allowing, to their selected class of deserving destitute aged, Outdoor Relief of 5s. a week for each person.‖ The assumption, at any rate, is

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* Such rules appear to exist in the following (among other) Unions: Paddington, Marlborough, Halifax, Chichester.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 3778–3781.

‡ Report of House of Commons Select Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill, 1899, p. 7. The rules of various Boards of Guardians prescribe a definite scale according to age, which may be as follows: Under 65, 2s. 6d. a week; between 65 and 70, 3s. a week; between 70 and 75, 3s. 6d. a week; between 75 and 80, 4s. a week; between 80 and 85, 4s. 6d. a week; and over 85, 5s. a week. (Rules of Mansfield Board of Guardians; for other age scales, *see* Rules of Croydon, Derby, Hertford, Honiton and Shardlow Boards of Guardians.) In another Union, the scale is 4 lbs. of bread per week and a pair of boots once a year, plus 1s. to 2s. a week, to persons between 60 and 70; plus 2s. 6d. to persons between 70 and 75; plus 3s. to persons between 75 and 80; and plus 3s. 6d. to those over 80. (Rules of the Medway Board of Guardians.) We do not understand why the grant of Outdoor Relief, according to these rules, irrespective of the amount actually needed in each case, has not been objected to by the District Auditors.

§ In the Annual Proceedings of the Poor Law Conferences for 1901–1902, will be found Reports from thirty-two Unions as to the action taken under the Circular of August 4th, 1900 (pp. 775, 803), giving particulars of the steps taken also at Abingdon, Bolton, Bristol, and Warwick.

‖ We notice that the Birmingham Board of Guardians, in July, 1908, resolved that "all aged poor over the age of seventy, who are at present in receipt of Outdoor Relief from the parish, and who have exercised any sort of thrift, or have been respectable residents in the Parish of Birmingham during a number of years should be granted 5s. each per week from January 1st, next." (*The Times*, July 16th, 1908.) A similar resolution has been adopted in some other Unions, including that of Camberwell.

that no such person will ever be forced to accept indoor relief. If the aged person is unable to get properly taken care of, or for any other reason prefers to come inside, he or she is maintained in comfortably furnished apartments, separate from the General Mixed Workhouse, sometimes (as at Dewsbury and Birmingham) in a distinct block,* sometimes (as at Woolwich) in a separate house quite away from the Workhouse premises,† sometimes (as at Bradford) in a quadrangle of separate tenements,‡ or (as at Sheffield) in a row of cottages, each with two inmates. § They have often each a room to themselves, or at least (as at Birmingham) a cubicle, furnished with carpet, chair, and dressing table with drawers underneath. Sometimes (as at Nottingham) "afternoon tea" is served at 4 p.m. ‖ Dinners are usually cooked in a common kitchen¶ and served in common in a separate dining-room, but the old people may often prepare their other meals for themselves, over their own fires.** They have tea, sugar, tobacco and snuff served out to them weekly, to be used when they like.†† They have comfortable, non-distinctive clothing provided for them,‡‡ or they may retain their own ; and they may receive visits in their own apartments§§ and come and go during the daytime at their will.‖‖ They are sometimes allowed to retain pet animals,¶¶ and to cultivate their own little gardens.*** They may receive and retain for themselves any gifts from friends, other than alcoholic drink.††† "They get up when they like and go to bed as they please."‡‡‡ They need do no work unless they choose, but if they desire to do so, they are to be provided with "congenial" employment, "suited to their age and capacity."§§§ With the one exception that no pocket-money is provided for them, and subject to this one drawback that, disguise it as we may, the

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* Evidence before Commission, *Q.* 25159.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 3778, *see also Qs.* 14196–14199.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 14144.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 41006.

‖ Year Book of Nottingham Board of Guardians, 1906–1907.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 41010.

** Year Book of Sheffield Board of Guardians for 1906–1907.

††"Women to have 1½ ozs. of tea and 6 ozs. of sugar, and men ½ oz. of tobacco weekly, when over sixty years of age." (Rules of Hunslet Board of Guardians.)

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 41017. Year Book of Sheffield Board of Guardians.

§§ Regulations of Hunslet Board of Guardians.

‖‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 26944, 41018.

¶¶ Year Book of Sheffield Board of Guardians.

*** Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 27752.

††† Report of Paddington Board of Guardians for 1901–1902.

‡‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 25159.

§§§ Regulations of Hunslet Board of Guardians. We may quote two descriptions by our own committees. At Bradford, "the Homes for the Aged and Deserving Poor were erected to comply with the urgent recommendations of Mr. Chaplin's Circular. They may be described as adequately supported almshouses, under disciplinary conditions such as obtain and are enforced among the passengers of a mail-steamer. Each room accommodates either husband and wife, or two aged persons, male or female, who, before leaving the workhouse decided that they could and would like to live together. The rooms are comfortably furnished, well-lighted and warmed, and the occupants have on the walls, etc., the little possessions, pictures, etc., which originally found a place in their old homes. They have their meals in their own rooms ; the materials for breakfast and tea are served out weekly ; and the inmates have these meals when they think fit ; within reason, they get up when they like and go to bed when they like ; dinner is cooked in a common kitchen by the wife of the Superintendent, and properly served in each room. There is a kind of common room, where religious services, concerts, etc., are provided. The swing gate of the Institution is always open. The inmates go out when they please, but we understood that they seldom go beyond the garden ; they prefer that their friends should come and see them, and we are told, not a few look in for a 'cup of tea.' The old folk dust and tidy their own rooms, but the rougher work is done by some sane epileptic young men, who have been transferred from the House, in order that they may be made as comfortable as possible, having regard to the malady which has blasted their lives." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 21, p. 48.) In one Union, "the accommodation for the *first or highest class* provides for twenty-eight men and twenty-four women. Both the men and women have two dormitories and two sitting-rooms, the latter having linoleum or a canvas covering on the floor, and being furnished with arm chairs, rocking chairs, tables and couches. Meals are served in the sitting-room that appears to be in daily use (the other being reserved for Sundays or for receiving friends). As regards food, the inmates get a loaf and a pot of jam for the 'cupboard' whenever they require them. They are also allowed a cheap and wholesome currant cake to their tea. The inmates may, with the consent of the master, go out any day after 'the performance of their small duties.' Friends likewise are admitted on any evening." (*Ibid.*, No. 20, p. 45.)

inmates of these comfortable quarters for the aged are, owing to their being under the Destitution Authority, legally stigmatised as paupers,* the small and highly selected class of deserving aged have, in these few Unions, where the new policy of the Local Government Board has been fully adopted, as good conditions as could possibly be desired.

It is to the credit of the Destitution Authorities of Scotland that, with the cognizance of the Local Government Board for Scotland, they have for the most part long adopted an equally generous policy with regard to the deserving aged. In one respect they have even gone further than the most up-to-date of the English Boards of Guardians. They have combined the provision of agreeable quarters with Outdoor Relief. In the comfortable cottages, or in the old villa residences that are termed, in some Scotch Parishes, "Parochial Homes," we ourselves found the deserving aged inmates, not only enjoying the furnished lodgings, free firing and attendance that is provided, but receiving in addition, to dispense as they think fit, their "aliment" of three or four shillings a week. They may, if they choose, hand their money, or any part of it, to the salaried housekeeper, to provide their meals with; or they may, if they prefer, make any or all of their purchases for themselves, and cook their own meals over their own fires in their own way. This appears to us the best thing that has yet been done in the way of public provision for the aged. We can only regret that this policy of discrimination and generous treatment of the deserving aged has been extended, in England, owing to the inability of the Local Government Board to overcome in most places the almost inevitable reluctance of a Destitution Authority to provide anything beyond the barest subsistence, to only an insignificant minority of the deserving aged.

To the infirm and permanently incapacitated who are not "aged"—whatever be the age-limit locally adopted—the new policy has not yet been applied at all, with the one partial exception of the sane epileptics, for whom, in the Manchester, Chorlton, Bradford, and one or two other Unions, special provision is made.† There is obviously just as much need for classification according to present character among the infirm and incapacitated who are young, as among those who are old. There are just as many deserving persons among them. "It is very hard," as one witness pointed out to us, "upon the younger persons, who are thoroughly infirm, to be kept as they are with rather a degraded class. The younger infirm people do not get the liberties that the old people do, and they have really nothing to brighten their lives."‡ For the physically defective, the crippled, the half-paralysed, the blind and the semi-blind, the gravely rheumatic, and other men and women, not acutely sick, but chronically unable to earn in the competitive labour market an independent subsistence—of whom there are, we fear, many thousands destitute—we find nothing better prevailing than a fluctuating alternation between the First Policy and the Second; with the result that these thousands of physically incapacitated persons either get unconditional doles of inadequate Outdoor Relief, or are herded with the rest in the General Mixed Workhouse. Here no special provision is made for them. The sane epileptics, in particular, "spend their time . . . fighting and quarrelling, and passing a miserable existence till they die."§ "No arrangements," said another witness, "are made for their occupation; the disease grows upon them; they deteriorate morally and mentally till a worse fate befalls them, and they end their days in the lunatic wards." ‖ Moreover, among these incapacitated men and women—whether crippled or merely broken down by infirmity, epileptic, half-blind or partly paralysed—even more than among the aged, there has accordingly been developed a terrible variety of parasitic outdoor paupers, or of Workhouse "Ins and Outs," who alternate their periods of begging and pilfering and living in filth and degradation, with recuperative spells in

* It is, however, to be noted that, even when the Destitution Authority has done its best to separate the selected class of deserving aged from the rest of the Poor Law, it seldom succeeds in quite consistently doing so. Sometimes, as at Dewsbury, it cannot bring itself to put the quarters for the aged outside the porter's lodge, so that the deserving aged have to pass in and out with all the other paupers. Even at Bradford, where the deserving aged have a quadrangle of charming tenements to themselves, the Board of Guardians, having to find accommodation, first, for the sane epileptics of diverse ages and varied characters, and then for the able-bodied men on the "Outdoor Labour Test," dumped these all down on the land adjoining the old people's cottages; and then, as a climax, placed the whole—deserving aged, sane epileptics and able-bodied men in the Labour Yard—under one and the same Superintendent.

† There is an admirable special "colony" for the sane epileptics, established at an expenditure of over £75,000 by a Joint Committee of the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians at Langho, near Blackburn. (Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., pp. 307, 308.)

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 15419.

§ Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. I., *Q.* 7136; Vol. VIII., p. 308.

‖ *Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Q.* 16491, Vol. VIII., p. 308.

the idleness, gossip, food and warmth of the Workhouse.* For the many thousands of young infirm, even more than for the aged, the provision made by the Destitution Authorities is, indeed, everywhere wholly unsatisfactory—cruel to the deserving, demoralisingly attractive to the undeserving, and degrading to all.

(c) The Establishment of a National Pension Scheme.

The definite adoption by the Local Government Board since 1895–1896 of what we have called the Third Policy—of discrimination among different classes of the Aged, with generous treatment of the deserving—has now developed into the establishment, during the year 1908, of a National Pension Scheme. Under the Old-age Pensions Act of 1908,† which is not yet actually in full operation, every person of British nationality and twenty years' residence within the United Kingdom, becomes entitled as of right, on attaining the age of seventy, to a pension payable from the Exchequer, if he does not come into any of certain definitely excepted categories. These excepted categories comprise :—

(*a*) Those who have incomes exceeding £31 10s. per annum.

(*b*) Those who have "habitually failed to work . . . according to ability, opportunity and need, for the maintenance" of themselves and "those legally dependent" on them.‡

(*c*) Those actually under detention as lunatics.

(*d*) Those undergoing a sentence of imprisonment, or under a judicial order of disqualification for not exceeding ten years, subsequent to imprisonment or detention under the Inebriates Act ; and

(*e*) Temporarily, until December 31st, 1910, those who are, or who have been at any time since January 1st, 1908, in receipt of Poor Law Relief other than medical relief.§

The amount of the pension, beginning from January 1st, 1909, or from any subsequent award, will, if the aged person has not more than £21 per annum of income, be 5s. a week ; and if the aged person has between £21 and £31 10s. of income, be from 1s. to 4s. per week according to a fixed scale. Finally, it remains to be said that the whole class of aged persons thus becoming National Pensioners are to be wholly taken out of the Poor Law, and removed from any connection with the Destitution Authorities, the whole of the business relating to the award and payment of the pensions being assigned, subject to appeal to the Local Government Board, to special Pension Committees of the County and County Borough Councils, and the Councils of Boroughs and urban districts exceeding 20,000 in population,‖ with the aid of the Post Office and of a staff of special Pension Officers appointed by and responsible to the Treasury.

There will accordingly be, from now onwards, a new class of the Aged, that of National Pensioners, whose applications for public assistance, though they may be destitute, will not be dealt with by the Destitution Authorities. It is estimated that this new class will, before the expiration of the first year, amount to between 500,000 and 600,000. It is, however, quite impossible, pending further experience of the working of the Act, to estimate with any precision what proportion of the persons who now become paupers and are classed as Aged and Infirm will, in future years, become National Pensioners and thus escape the Destitution Authorities. The National Pension Scheme is, indeed, admittedly incomplete, as it has yet to be decided by Parliament what, after the end of 1910, is to be the position of those temporarily disqualified for a pension on the ground merely of having received Poor Law relief of other than the excepted kinds between the arbitrary dates of January 1st, 1908, and December 31st, 1910.

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* Among the worst cases of Outdoor Relief to persons of squalid and dissolute lives, the Inspectors found "epileptics, imbeciles and cripples of the lowest class." (See *ante*, p. 28.)

† 8 Edw. VII., c. 40.

‡ It is "provided that a person shall not be disqualified under this paragraph"—nor shall his wife be disqualified—"if he has continuously for ten years up to the age of sixty, by means of payments to friendly, provident, or other societies, or Trade Unions, or other approved steps, made such provision against old age, sickness, infirmity, or want or loss of employment as may be recognised as proper provision for the purpose" by the regulations under the Act.

§ With Medical Relief for this purpose is included not only any relief expressly declared not to be a disqualification for the Parliamentary franchise, but also "any medical or surgical assistance (including food and comforts) supplied by or on the recommendation of a Medical Officer," and also "the maintenance of any dependent . . . in any lunatic asylum, infirmary or hospital, or the payment of the expenses of burial of a dependent."

‖ In Ireland the population limit is 10,000; and in Scotland it does not apply, all Royal, Parliamentary, or Police Burghs having their own Pension Committees. The Scilly Isles are treated as a county.

(D) The Need for Diversified Provision for the Aged and Infirm.

After the most careful consideration we have to report that the diverse medley of persons who are officially included within the class of the Aged and Infirm do not appear to us, in any scientific analysis, to constitute a single category. Apart from those old persons who are acutely sick or mentally defective—who fall, notwithstanding their age, into the categories of the Sick and the Mentally Defective respectively, to be dealt with by the Authorities charged with those services—we must distinguish among the Aged and Infirm no fewer than five separate classes for which distinct provision has, in our judgment, necessarily to be made.

(i) *The National Pensioners.*

We may conveniently begin with the National Pensioners, the class of aged persons to whom the community as a whole decides to grant, as of right, an unconditional national superannuation allowance. By the passage into law of the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908, we are relieved from the necessity of discussing, in principle, the propriety of such a policy, in which we fully concur. Some of our witnesses—nearly all of them unconnected either with the wage-earning class or with the actual working of the Friendly Societies—have taken the view, based, as we understand, on *à priori* theory, that such non-contributory pensions would be likely to discourage thrift and saving.* We have, however, been more impressed by the fact that, of the representatives of Friendly Societies and Trade Unions who gave evidence before us, the official leaders and a majority of the witnesses were in favour of some such system of national superannuation allowances, without specific personal contributions, to be granted, on the attainment of a prescribed age, to all who need them. These witnesses, from their experience of Friendly Societies and of working class life, anticipated that such a national pension scheme—far from being injurious to the existing Friendly Societies and Trade Unions—would, by removing the present difficulty felt by the poorer labourers in ever being able to save enough to become independent of Poor Law relief, and with it their consequent scepticism as to saving for old age being of any avail, actually encourage thrift and saving, and increase the membership of all provident associations.†

Accepting, therefore, the principle that the needy aged should be provided for by national superannuation allowances, we have to report that the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908 fails, in various respects, to dispose of even this part of the problem of the Destitution Authorities. This Act, in the first place, obviously requires to be amended before the end of 1910 so as to remove the disqualification of those persons who, being otherwise eligible for a pension, happen to have received Poor Law relief, other than Medical Relief, since the arbitrarily chosen date of 1st January, 1908. As it has been decided—a decision in which we fully agree—that pauperism prior to 1st January, 1908, however prolonged and whatever the cause, should not disqualify, there can be no justice in withholding pensions from deserving aged persons, merely because—without having any notice of the intention of the Government—they accepted, after that date, the provision which the law had made for them. The Local Government Board itself, as we have seen, has, since 1896, deliberately instructed the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales to make generally known the advantages to be offered under the Poor Law to the deserving aged, "*so that those really in need may not be discouraged from applying.*" ‡ Under this official encouragement the number of deserving aged paupers (a majority of them being women) has, year by year, steadily increased. For the Government now to turn round, and penalise by ineligibility for a pension the very men and women whom it has been trying to encourage to apply for Poor Law relief—and, so far as concerns those who became paupers between January and July, 1908, actually without notice that this would make them ineligible for a pension—is plainly unjust. We fully agree with the Departmental Committee of 1900 in thinking it "by no means easy to defend the exclusion of those aged paupers who could give reasonable

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 27061 (Par. 32), 27287, 29772–29779, 30915, 35283, 35308, 41383, 44811, 47464, 50009 (Par. 19), 50973 (Par. 8), 50998, 52951 (Par. 31) and various of the Appendices to Vol. V., Nos. XXXI. (Par. 5), XXXIV. (Par. 5), LXXXVI. (Par. 7), CVII. (Par. 8).

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 43125, 50728 (Par. 11), 51760 (Par. 31), 51782, 51811, 67890, 67891, 68688 (Par. 18), 68745, 68746, 69047 (Par. 47), 72626–72633, 77352–77359, 77295, 77296, 77457, 77468 (Par. 16), 77501, 77502, 77663; Appendices No. XLII. (Par. 14), LXXIII. (Par. 13), XC. (Par. 9), to Vol. V.

‡ Circular of July, 1896, in Twenty-sixth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1896–1897, pp. 7–9.

proof that, had they not had the misfortune to pass the Rubicon in pre-pensionable days, they would have been able to satisfy the requirements of the Pension Authority." *

To retain any such disqualification as the acceptance of Poor Law relief, even after notice given that such relief will disqualify for a pension, appears to us both undesirable and in practice impossible. In view of the fact that the most thrifty and deserving persons may be rendered destitute by some accidental cause, to deprive them of their right to eventual superannuation merely because they had, in the time of their need, accepted, for their dependents or themselves, the provision which the law had made for them, would be felt to be unfair. It must be remembered that the receipt of parochial relief is final and conclusive in its disqualifying effect. *Even if the whole cost is subsequently repaid to the Guardians, the disqualification remains.* Even if the sons or other relatives pay their contributions to the Guardians before the aged person receives his dole of Outdoor Relief or his maintenance in the Workhouse, so that there is not even a monetary expense to the Guardians, the case is not altered. These facts add weight to the practical objection that evasions could not be prevented. It would, in many cases (and in a rapidly increasing number of cases), be impracticable, in future years, to find out whether or not an applicant for a national pension had received Poor Law relief at any time since 1907. Poor Law relief is being given this year separately by each of 646 Unions in England and Wales, by each of 874 parishes in Scotland, and by each of 159 Unions in Ireland. Many of these 1,679 separate Poor Law Authorities are keeping very imperfect records even of their present proceedings; and they have still more imperfect records for 1908. The almost universal practice is to treat each application as a new case, and to record particulars in separate entries, case by case. There is, of course, no common aggregate list of paupers. There is not even in any place a list of the persons who have received Poor Law relief during the past in the one Union. There is seldom even a complete list of the paupers of any one year in any one Union; and where such a list is compiled, it is nearly always made up separately for each of the score of constituent parishes of the Union; and then often altogether omits some minor classes of paupers. In very few cases would even these incomplete and separate lists be in alphabetical order. It might be difficult in any populous Union to prove, years hence, that a particular applicant, admittedly resident in that same Union, and not some other person of the same name, had received Poor Law relief ten or fifteen years before. It would be impossible, amid all the confusion of registers of different years and different classes of relief, for any officer of that Union, to be sure (and therefore to certify) that the applicant had never received any one of the various kinds of Poor Law relief, at any time since 1907—even if the inquiry were confined to the one Union. What clerk to a Board of Guardians could feel certain that the applicant or some member of his family for whom he was liable, had not, years before, spent a night in the Workhouse, or had a loaf of bread from the relieving officer on "sudden or urgent necessity"? The pauper does not always give his real name—he sometimes gives somebody else's name; and there are Unions in which the registration of such names as are given is by no means perfect.

But the relief may not have been given in the Union in which the applicant resides. A large proportion of the population, especially that of great towns, and that of new or rapidly growing urban centres, such as Barrow-in-Furness and Middlesbrough, Cardiff and Barry, is, or has been, migratory. It must be remembered that the Poor Law relief given by each Union is not confined to the settled inhabitants of that Union; though even a settlement is now acquired by three years' residence, and, in the case of a woman, by mere marriage. A person may have had in his life half-a-dozen settlements in succession. Relief is given in the Casual Ward or in the Workhouse proper, or even (by way of "sudden or urgent necessity") at his home, to any destitute person, whatever his real or pretended residence, and however brief his stay in the Union. A large proportion of the applicants for old-age pensions will, at various times, have resided in other Unions; and they can

* Report of Departmental Committee on the Financial Aspects of the Proposals . . . about the Aged Deserving Poor, 1900 (Cd. 67), p. 9. As the law at present stands the only persons now actually paupers who might obtain National Pensions are those over seventy who are not otherwise disqualified, and who, not having since January 1st, 1908, received any other kind of Poor Law relief, are now in receipt of Medical Relief only, including "food or comforts"—and therefore (according to the decision in Kirkhouse *v.* Blakeway, 71 L.J.K.B. 130) presumably maintenance for the purpose of treatment or cure in a Poor Law institution—"supplied by or on the recommendation of a Medical Officer." But as most of these would be inmates of Poor Law infirmaries, they would not, until they had sufficiently recovered to leave those institutions, cease to be legally paupers, or under the care of the Destitution Authorities, who could presumably impound their pensions in repayment of the expense of their maintenance.

hardly be compelled to recount all their wanderings and all their excursions on "hopping," or "haymaking," or merely on holidays. Those who had received Poor Law relief, and who subsequently wished to apply for a pension, would naturally remove, and apply in some other Union. If they found it necessary to apply for their pensions in their real names (so as to prove age by birth registers) they would soon learn to make their application for Poor Law relief under assumed names, so as to have their real names untainted when they attained the pensionable age. How can it be certified, years hence, that the applicant (or any member of his family for whom he is liable) has not, under any name whatsoever, received Poor Law relief, in any one of its numerous forms from any one of the 1,679 Poor Law Authorities of the United Kingdom, during any one of the preceding years since 1907? Who could search all the records, for instance, of the Casual Wards all over England, Ireland, and Wales; and what value would he give to the particular names under which their nightly inmates, knowing the penalties to which habitual tramping exposed them, chose to register themselves? Who could certify that an Irish applicant for a pension had not received temporary relief on some haymaking or harvesting tour in England or Scotland? How would it be possible to be assured that the applicant in Bermondsey or Bethnal Green had not been, since 1907, temporarily accommodated in the Workhouse of some Kentish Union on one or other of his annual "hoppings"?

It is true that various small and local pension endowments do prescribe as a condition of eligibility that the applicants shall not have been in receipt of parochial relief during a certain period. But it is to be noted:—

(*a*) That the term is a short one, usually five years;

(*b*) That the applicant is always required also to have been a resident during at least that period in the particular parish, so that it is comparatively easy to ensure that he has not had parochial relief at his residence;

(*c*) That the pensions are given as a matter of favour to such applicants as the trustees may choose, so that any doubtful case can be rejected without cause assigned; and

(*d*) That the condition has for its main object to ensure that pension and Poor Law relief shall not be received by the same person simultaneously, so that a mere general compliance completely attains its purpose, irrespective of possible chance receipt of temporary relief years ago in some other Union.

All these considerations would be absent in the case of a national superannuation allowance.

It is, perhaps, a minor point that, so far as women are concerned, the incident of marriage may present great difficulties to any making of pauperism a disqualification for an old-age Pension. There is first the change of name. Wives receive relief in their married names, and their maiden names are not recorded. But there is nothing to prevent them eventually resuming their maiden names and at seventy applying for a pension, duly armed with a birth certificate, and sinking all mention of the marriage (or one or other of their marriages), during which they had received parochial relief. They might well feel that it was their husbands who were really the paupers, not themselves. Indeed, it must be conceded that a wife accompanying her husband has no option in the matter. *She cannot prevent her husband making her a pauper if he chooses to do so.* It is very doubtful, in strict law, whether a wife or a child can ever be said to have accepted parochial relief. It does not seem possible to deprive her eventually of her national superannuation allowance on this ground. In fact, we gather that the better opinion is that no woman is legally disqualified in respect of relief received as a wife.

Far more important, both numerically and otherwise, are the difficulties presented by widowhood, *to which not less than* 30 *per cent. of all the pauperism is due.* The young widow of the labourer, suddenly bereft of the bread-winner, with a family of young children on her hands, often incapacitated for earning a livelihood by having an infant in arms, is the most pathetic and the most difficult of the Poor Law problems. At all times and in all places her moral claim to at least temporary Poor Law relief has been admitted. In the most strictly administered Unions, at the most severely restrictive periods of Poor Law history, under the advice of the most rigorous Poor Law critics, the claim of the widow has not been rejected. But whether or not the widow will be eligible for a pension at seventy, or whatever may be the pensionable age, will, under the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, depend on whether she had been lucky enough to have her husband die, and to pass through her inevitable time of difficulty, *before* 1908! In this fortunate conjecture she may have taken her six months' Outdoor Relief, which the Local Government Board regulations freely allow, and may hope to get into a position of earning her livelihood—probably by marrying again—and thus be eligible for a pension. If, however, cruel fate permitted her

husband to live on until after January 1st, 1908, and then carried him off, her " widow's six months " of Outdoor Relief, which is often necessary to prevent the children from starving, and which the harshest economist has not denied her, will carry with it, however hard and however successfully she might subsequently work to maintain herself in independence, the eventual loss of her old-age pension—unless, indeed, she is sharp enough to suppress all mention of her unlucky episode of marriage and its consequent widowhood and pauperism, and to present herself at seventy, smiling, in her second husband's name (which would, indeed, be the natural case); or even *in her maiden name*, under which she would never have received parochial relief anywhere.

In view of the fact that the sudden or premature removal of the family bread-winner, as things are now ordered, almost necessarily plunges into pauperism, at least for a time, a large proportion of the families of the wage-earning class, and that, under existing marital arrangements, it is usually quite impossible for the wife either to *compel* her husband to provide for her possible widowhood, or to " make a purse " for herself, even if it were desirable for her to do so, it is submitted that any disqualification of widows by reason of their having, subsequent to January 1st, 1908, at some time of their widowhood, accepted parochial relief, would be inequitable. Indeed, if they find themselves without the means of properly bringing up their children, they are legally bound to apply for parochial relief on their children's behalf; and they can be criminally prosecuted for not doing so. It is, moreover, clearly in the interests of the community that they should apply for parochial relief in such cases, in order that the children may not suffer. It is plainly against public policy to penalise such an act by eventually disqualifying the mother for her national superannuation allowance. It would be felt to be a monstrous injustice to make relief to a widow a ground of disqualification, when relief to a wife is not.

Even if the difficulty of discovering who had received Poor Law relief could be overcome (as it might be by postponing the operation of the condition for fifty years, and in the meantime introducing a scientific system of registration by thumb marks, and a well-arranged national register), there would still remain the difficulties presented by the differences in the law and practice between one place and another. We regret to learn that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue have given instructions to the Pension Officers all over the Kingdom—contrary to the decision of the Court of Appeal in Kirkhouse *v.* Blakeway—that maintenance in the workhouse or workhouse infirmary is never to be regarded as Medical Relief and is always to be held to disqualify for a pension, even if the applicant has been admitted on the recommendation of the Medical Officer, for the sole purpose of being medically treated. If this interpretation of the law, under which many hundreds of helpless poor persons are actually being denied their pensions, is ultimately upheld, we shall be face to face with a new crop of anomalies. Whether the person stricken with sickness, and institutionally treated at the public expense, thereby becomes disqualified for a pension will depend solely on *whether he lives in one part of the United Kingdom or another, or even in one town or another.* Thus outside the Metropolis, a person who becomes anywhere in the United Kingdom an inmate of any Poor Law Institution—it may be as a patient entering a Poor Law Infirmary with an infectious disease—thereby necessarily becomes a pauper, and, as the Commissioners of Inland Revenue are now declaring, disqualified for an Old Age Pension. But within the Metropolis (and those adjacent Unions who happen to have made agreements with the Metropolitan Asylums Board), admission to certain institutions of that particular Poor Law Authority, though these were established exclusively for paupers and are still maintained out of the Poor Rate, is, by law, not to be deemed parochial relief, and, therefore, does not disqualify for a pension. It is a further anomaly that this privilege does not attach to all the institutions of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, but only to some of them; and not even to all those that deal with infectious diseases.* Moreover, in Scotland, where, as we have mentioned, the Poor Law does not allow any kind of relief of the able-bodied, at any rate, for adult men, all admissions to the Poorhouse take place on the recommendation of the Parish Doctor, who certifies that the applicant is suffering from some ailment—it may be sciatica, it may be rheumatism, it may even be no more than sore feet—for which he needs medical or

* There will be other geographical inconsistencies under the Act. Where the Board of Guardians pays for a nurse to attend a sick person in his own home, that person thereby becomes a pauper in receipt, *not of Medical Relief, but of ordinary Outdoor Relief.* Where the Board of Guardians has a nurse permanently in its employment, and has merely directed her to attend, this will have been classed as Medical Relief only. Where the Board of Guardians contributes (as is now common) a fixed sum to a local nursing association, in consideration of the cases notified by the Relieving Officer being duly nursed, the patients do not thereby become paupers at all.

surgical treatment, including food and comforts. Even the provision for Vagrants has to be called, not a Casual Ward, but a "Casual Sick House." Thus, all the inmates of the Poorhouses of Scotland who have come in on medical certificate for treatment—though we have definitely ascertained that many of them are just as "able-bodied" as the inmates of the Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland *—may claim to be in receipt of Medical Relief only; and not to be disqualified, under the terms of the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, for a national superannuation allowance. To continue a disqualification which may affect practically no Scottish pauper—or, at any rate, no male adult—not even the most disreputable "Ins-and-Outs" or week-enders or the most hardened old Vagrants—whilst it operates against the most deserving of those who may be driven to take temporary refuge as able-bodied in an English or Irish Workhouse, will be politically impossible.

But the diversity in practice is far more perplexing than these geographical differences in the law. Thus, throughout the Kingdom there is, as we have described in Chapter V., a second rate-supported medical organisation, conducted by the Local Authorities under the Public Health Acts, the use of which entails no stigma of pauperism. The relative spheres of the Poor Law, assistance from which is held to disqualify for a pension, and the Public Health Department, assistance from which does not disqualify, vary indefinitely from place to place. If a patient, unable to get cared for at home, is taken to one of the seven hundred Municipal Hospitals—established primarily for certain infectious diseases, but now often extending their work to others—he does not, even if his treatment is gratuitous, lose his future pension. If he happens to be taken to a Poor Law Institution, for the very same disease, he is to be deprived of his pension, even if he contributes or repays the whole cost. If a man is found in the streets, senseless or helpless, he may (if the case looks like one of acute accident) be taken by the police to one of the voluntary hospitals, in the sixty or seventy towns which alone enjoy such institutions, treatment at which does not make him a pauper. But the patient may, equally probably, be taken, even in those same towns, to the nearest Poor Law Infirmary, treatment at which necessarily and irrevocably disqualifies him for a pension, even if he subsequently sends ten guineas to repay the cost of his treatment. *In many parts of the United Kingdom there is no alternative.* In the absence of any municipal or voluntary hospital, all patients meeting with accidents in the open, or found helpless or senseless on the road, or requiring treatment which cannot be given them at home, are taken to the Workhouse, where they become, for the time, paupers; and, according to the present interpretation of the law, will be eventually disqualified for an Old Age Pension.

The difference in practice between one locality and another applies even to the case of institutions established for the treatment of the same disease. At Brighton, for instance, a workman having incipient phthisis is received into the Municipal Phthisis Sanatorium, taught how to live, and discharged, all without the stigma of pauperism. *At Bradford exactly the same kind of institution, treating the same disease in the same way, and receiving largely the same class of patients, is maintained by the Board of Guardians out of the Poor Rate.* At Bradford, as at Brighton, the workman with incipient phthisis is sought out and *urged*, in the public interest, to come in and be treated at the public expense. At Bradford he becomes technically a pauper by so doing and loses thereby his right to a pension; at Brighton he does not.

No less striking is the variety of practice with regard to the co-operation of the Board of Guardians with the Town or District Council in regard to the Municipal Isolation Hospital. It is common, as we have mentioned, for the Board of Guardians to make a payment to the Town or District Council, so as to be able to send patients to these hospitals in order to avoid having to treat them in the Workhouse. *The status of the patient in such cases depends merely on the form in which the payment is made.* In those towns in which no payment is made, or where a fixed annual contribution is paid, the patient is not a pauper while in the Municipal Hospital, even if he is sent from the Workhouse, and he does not lose his right to a pension. In those towns in which the payment is made at so much per head per week, the patient admitted to the Municipal Hospital at the request of the Board of Guardians becomes or remains a pauper (being, by the Local Government Board's instructions, registered as in receipt of Outdoor Relief) even if he has not previously been in receipt of relief. He is not a pauper in any of these Municipal Hospitals if he is admitted on the order of the Medical Officer of Health; he is a pauper (but only in some towns) if he is admitted on the order of the District Medical Officer. Whether or not he is disqualified for an Old-Age Pension, depends, therefore, in practice, on which doctor gets hold of the case first.

* Report . . . on the Physical Condition of the Able-bodied Male Inmates in certain Scotch Poorhouses. by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 14.

In the same town the form of the payment by the Board of Guardians has sometimes been varied within recent times. Thus, the scarlet-fever patient will, or will not, have been registered as in receipt of parochial relief according to the year in which the disease occurred. Or a town may change the character of its provision for such cases. In Bristol, the Board of Guardians for some years provided its own hospital for infectious cases. Subsequently this was abandoned, and the Town Council Hospitals were used at a fixed annual payment. In such towns, accordingly whether or not the patients so treated were registered as paupers, will be found, to depend on the date of their disease. Much the same may happen in every town which provides for the first time—as a score or two do each year—a Municipal Hospital. A similar change is taking place, in one town after another, with regard to the provision for sufferers from phthisis.

Sometimes the difference of practice depends on the kind of disease. In some towns the Municipal Hospitals will only take in cases of small-pox, enteric, and scarlet fever. Patients with other diseases must go to the Workhouse or Poor Law Infirmary, and become paupers. In other towns the Municipal Hospitals will take in diphtheria, phthisis, and even measles and whooping cough, and thus enlarge the area of non-pauper treatment. In Scotland, we understand that, by the order of the Local Government Board, all phthisis patients are henceforth to be dealt with by the Local Health Authorities. In England and Wales they are mostly treated by the Destitution Authorities. At Barry and Widnes there are Municipal Hospitals for accidents and surgical cases. If a drunken labourer breaks his leg or falls over a scythe, he will, in most parts of England, usually be taken to the Workhouse, and will become a pauper and lose his right to a pension; if he does so in Barry or Widnes, he will be equally treated at the expense of the rates, but will not become a pauper nor be disqualified for a pension.

We have accordingly to report that it is not only inequitable, but also quite impracticable to withhold the national superannuation allowance from those who, whilst satisfying all the other conditions, have, at some time or another, received the kind of public assistance that the law has provided for their case.

Even this widening of the scope of the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908 will leave undealt with a large number of aged persons who now are provided for by the Destitution Authorities. So long as the pensionable age remains at seventy, the widest scheme of national superannuation allowances will fail to meet the general need. It is between sixty and seventy years of age * that the majority of those who have hitherto maintained themselves in independence, succumb to the dread necessity of submitting to the pauper's fate. We recognise that any national scheme of superannuation must necessarily adopt a relatively high age limit. But the effect of all our evidence appears to us to support the now generally admitted contention that any age limit above that of sixty-five—we might even say over sixty—will do little more than touch the fringe of the problem of Old-Age pauperism.

(ii.) *Provision for Persons ineligible for National Pensions.*

The suggestion has been made to us that the pensions for persons excluded from the national scheme, and especially the provision for breakdown before the age at which the national superannuation allowances begin, should be made dependent on some system of contributory insurance in early life. We have every hope that optional and voluntary methods of insurance, so as to provide for the period prior to the commencement of the national superannuation allowance, or in supplement of it when granted, will, under the stimulating effect of the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, be greatly developed.† But after carefully considering all the proposals that have been published we fail to see that any such system of insurance, voluntary or compulsory, can take the place of the provision now made under the Poor Law for the majority of aged and infirm persons excluded, for one reason or another, from the National Pension Scheme.

The insuperable difficulties inherent in any contributory scheme of Old-Age Pensions have been well expressed in the Reports of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor in 1895, and of the Committee on Old-Age Pensions in 1898, in a manner and with an authority that we take to be conclusive. Those difficulties, which may be said to have prevented the adoption of any such scheme as the basis for the national superannuation

* *See* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 29827, 43118–43124. Whilst the proportion of paupers to the number living at those ages is, between 35 and 45 only about 15 per 1,000, between 45 and 55 about 20 per 1,000, and between 55 and 60 about 30 per 1,000, it rises steeply between 60 and 65 to 70 per 1,000, and between 65 and 70 to 140 per 1,000.

† *See Ibid.*, *Qs.* 43125, 50728 (Par. 11), 51760 (Par. 31), 51782, 51811, 67890, 67891, 68688 (Par. 18), 68745, 68746, 69047 (Par. 47), 72621–72633, 77352–77359, 77295, 77296, 77457, 77468 (Par. 16), 77501, 77502, 77663.

allowances, appear to us to be even greater when it is a question of providing a supplementary pension. To state summarily the objections and difficulties that compel us to dismiss any contributory scheme for this purpose, we must first distinguish between proposals for voluntary and those for compulsory contributions. If it is suggested that contributions for the supplementary pension should be optional and wholly voluntary, the State contributing nothing, we have only to say that such a scheme amounts to no more than is provided, or could easily be provided, by the deferred annuity department of the Post Office, or by the existing Friendly Societies, Trade Unions and Insurance Companies. But unfortunately we cannot anticipate that these will be taken advantage of by the poorest labourers * or by many women, and it is from the ranks of these that come the most numerous and most deserving cases of Old-Age destitution. If it is suggested that the cost of such voluntary insurance should be lowered by means of a subsidy from the Exchequer, then, whilst the scheme would still inevitably fail to bring in either the women or the poorest men, the objections to it become considerable. Such a subsidy would involve the taxation of the very poorest for the benefit exclusively of those who were better off, largely the taxation of women for the benefit mainly of men; its benefits would be enjoyed only by a limited section of the relatively well-paid artizan class, rich enough to be able to take advantage of it, and not too rich to expect to be able to do without it; those benefits could not, except by extraordinarily costly temporary arrangements, themselves open to grave objection, begin to accrue for a whole generation; if the scheme were worked through the Post Office alone, it would be in serious competition with the existing Friendly Societies; if these also were subsidised, it would bring them into unfair competition with the Trade Unions giving friendly benefits, which would demand to be granted equal advantages; the State could hardly subsidise any of them without appearing to guarantee their eventual solvency, and this it could not do without exercising a right of supervision and control to which neither Trade Unions nor Friendly Societies would submit. And after all the expense to the community had been incurred, and the difficulties had been overcome, the problem of dealing with the destitute deserving aged who, for some reason or another, had not insured and who could not get the national superannuation allowance, would still be upon us. If, in order to avoid some of these objections, it be suggested that the scheme should be made compulsory and universally applicable, it becomes at once, at any rate in this country, wholly impracticable. A universal and compulsory scheme would not be able to confine itself, as the far from universal scheme of the German Government mainly does (so far as the actual securing of adequate pensions is concerned), to persons in relatively stable wage-earning employment. For the Government of the United Kingdom to seek to extract—for a benefit to be enjoyed many years hence if the contributor lives so long—a weekly contribution, not only from the relatively well-paid and durably employed skilled artisans, but also from the hundreds of thousands of casual labourers and sweated home-workers, from the crofters and peasants of Scotland, Ireland and Wales, from all the uncounted host of hawkers and pedlars and costermongers and petty dealers of one kind or another, and from the millions of independent working women, appears to us to be wholly impracticable. Moreover, even if this could be done, it would still leave untouched the huge problem—which the German Government Scheme has not yet been able to touch—of how to include the 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 of non-wage-earning wives of the wage-earning class, who unfortunately furnish the greater part of the Old-Age destitution. No scheme which leaves out of account this large section of the population—and practically every scheme for contributory pensions that we have seen does leave them out of account—can possibly obviate the need for non-contributory pensions, or have any chance of acceptance. But apart from these fundamental objections, the mere difficulties of a universal compulsory contributory scheme appear to us insuperable. To keep the separate accounts for half a century of all these millions, to register them in their changes from industry to industry and from place to place, and to receive and manage all the contributions, would in itself be a colossal task; and to enforce against the defaulters the obligation of payment would be an impossible one. But, in this country at any rate, the Government would never be permitted to undertake it. It is clear that, as Mr. Broadhurst, speaking specially on behalf of the Trade Unions, pointed out in his Minority Report in 1895:—

> "Any scheme involving contributions otherwise than through the rates or taxes would meet with much opposition from the wage-earners of every grade. The Friendly Societies and the Trade Unions to which the working-class owe so much, naturally view with some apprehension the creation of a gigantic rival insurance society, backed by the whole power of the Government. The collection of contributions from millions of ill-paid households is already found to be a task of great difficulty intensified by every depression of trade or other calamity. For the State to enter into competition for the available subscriptions of the wage-earners must necessarily increase the difficulty of all Friendly Societies, Trade Unions and Industrial Insurance Companies, whose members and customers within the United Kingdom probably number, in the aggregate, from 11,000,000 to 12,000,000 of persons."†

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 27288.

† Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Vol. I., pp. xcix.–c. (*See* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 47087, 47088.)

Any attempt to *enforce* on the people of this country—whether for supplementary pensions, provision for sickness or invalidity, or anything else—a system of direct, personal, weekly contributions must, in our judgment, in face of so powerful a phalanx as the combined Friendly Societies, Trade Unions and Industrial Insurance Companies, fighting in defence of their own business, prove politically disastrous.

(iii.) *Local Pensioners.*

We come, therefore, to the conclusion that the minimum provision for the destitute aged who are temporarily or permanently omitted from the National Pension Scheme, must take the form of Local Pensions, not dependent on personal contributions, and granted only to the destitute aged who live decent lives upon such pensions.* There will be, for instance, the case of the man who has resided in England since childhood, but is not a British subject, or has only recently become naturalised; the case of the woman who has lost her British nationality by marrying such a man;† the case of the British subject who has returned to his home after residence in the Colonies or abroad, or the widow who has come home after her husband's death;‡ there will be the case of the man or woman who finds himself disqualified merely on account of some trivial breach of the conditions. Moreover, whatever the age-limit, there will be many cases of thoroughly deserving persons who are physically and mentally older than their recorded age in years—men and women who are as thoroughly broken down and permanently incapacitated at sixty-one or sixty-two as others are at seventy. For all such persons who have fallen into destitution, the only proper provision, as some witnesses have suggested to us, is, so long as the applicants are in good health, or can be properly looked after at home, a Local Pension,§ such a pension, in fact, as many of the Destitution Authorities have already been driven, in effect, to award, under the guise of 5s. or even 7s. a week Outdoor Relief.‖ Such Local Pensions, to our mind, would, for this class, have actually an advantage over what might be secured by a contributory scheme, in that they would not need to be awarded and continued unconditionally as of right. We regard it as distinctly advantageous that they should be granted and continued only on condition of decent living and orderly behaviour. We see no advantage in connecting the grant of these Local Pensions with the Destitution Authority. In fact, with a separate Pension Committee awarding the national superannuation allowances, there would be grave difficulties and dangers in any other body but that Pension Committee dealing with the matter. The difference between a Local Pension and a National Pension, according to our view, should be merely that the Local Pension—

(i.) would be payable from local funds

(ii.) would be given and continued, not as of right but only to such persons, settled in the locality, as the Pension Committee find could and would live decently by its aid, and

(iii.) might begin at as early an age as sixty,¶ if deemed advisable.

(iv.) *The Helpless Aged.*

It has to be recognised that there are among the deserving aged many persons who from infirmity of body and lack of friends are unable to live independently on their small means, or on the Outdoor Relief that they may receive. At present there is, over the greater part of the Kingdom, no more satisfactory provision for these helpless aged persons, however deserving they may be, than the General Mixed Workhouse, with its promiscuity, its hated associations and its stigma of pauperism. To give one instance out of many, we

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 6922, 7161–7163, 17252–17255, 36272, 36273, 36317, 36541–36545, 68550, 72681 (Par. 30).

† It is interesting to note that, under the Old-Age Pension Law of Victoria, and now under that of the Commonwealth of Australia (No. 17 of 1908) (though not under those of the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and New South Wales), the right to a pension of such a woman is specially preserved, notwithstanding her change of nationality by marriage. (Report of Australian Royal Commission on Old-Age Pensions, 1906, p. 9; law of the Commonwealth, No. 17 of 1908, Sec. 21.)

‡ These cases will, with the progressive adoption of Old-Age Pensions in the different Colonies, involve the hardship that the applicant may become technically ineligible for the Colonial pension because he no longer lives in the Colony, and for the English pension because he has not resided twenty years in the United Kingdom. It is to be noted, moreover, that the Isle of Man and the Channel Isles are, for this purpose, in the same position as the Colonies.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 6922, 7161–7163, 17252–17255, 36272, 36273, 36317, 36541–36545, 68550, 72681 (Par. 30).

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 19752.

¶ The Pension Laws of New South Wales and Victoria—and now also that of the Commonwealth of Australia—which adopt the age of sixty-five as that at which pensions are normally awarded, permit them to be given between sixty and sixty-five, on account of physical unfitness. (Report of Australian Royal Commission on Old-Age Pensions, 1906, p. 8; Law of the Commonwealth, No. 17 of 1908, Sec. 15.)

have ourselves seen, in a small rural Workhouse, an aged postman, who had by long and honourable service earned a pension of 12s. a week. But he was helpless from paralysis, and having no family or friends, had no other refuge available in which to linger out his life, than the ordinary ward of the General Mixed Workhouse, enjoying conditions no more eligible than those allotted to the most debased old vagabond of the Union. The Board of Guardians impounded his pension, which fully covered all the cost of his maintenance. Nevertheless he was, and remained, a pauper. Such cases will, it is clear, become much more numerous when the national superannuation allowances have become payable.

Besides the persons in this condition who come voluntarily to the Workhouse, for lack of better refuge, there are, as many witnesses have told us, many helpless aged persons who struggle on, sometimes among their friends, more often in their lonely lodgings, with their tiny pensions or Friendly Society pay, their casual pittance of alms, or, at present, their dole of Outdoor Relief, whose conditions become steadily more insanitary and their wretchedness more extreme.* These, too, will become much more numerous when the national superannuation allowances become payable. But already such cases are frequent enough to cause much trouble to the Destitution Authorities, which have sometimes to watch them day by day so as to prevent actual starvation or death from neglect. There is no subject brought before us on which there has been such unanimity of testimony as the need, in the public interests, for some power of compulsory removal of infirm old men or women, who refuse to accept an order for admission to the Workhouse, and who linger on, alone and uncared for, in the most shocking conditions of filth and insanitation.† But so long as the only accommodation available is the General Mixed Workhouse, deliberately made deterrent, and publicly stated to be intended for the undeserving, no Parliament could possibly grant compulsory powers of removal to, and detention in, such an institution. Moreover, it is not compulsory removal and detention that, in the vast majority of these cases, is really needed. What these cases require is an Authority which, by its daily operations, will automatically become aware of them before the neglect or the inanition reaches extremity ; an Authority which can provide from its staff of nurses the necessary daily attendance which is all that many of the cases need ; ‡ an Authority which would have available under medical superintendence suitable asylums for the really helpless deserving aged persons who cannot be said to be, in the ordinary sense, wholly destitute ; an Authority, therefore, which must be quite unconnected with the Destitution Authority. This duty, it appears to us, should fall to the Public Health Authority. Just as that Authority already exercises what is, in effect, a kind of general guardianship over infants, in order to be able to step in where there is neglect, so it must exercise a similar guardianship over the citizen falling into second childhood. By the staff of Health Visitors and Sanitary Inspectors, daily going their rounds, the Public Health Authority will become aware of cases in which the helpless deserving aged, notwithstanding their little pensions or the attentions of the charitable, are suffering from neglect or lack of care. There ought, moreover, to be some practicable method by which a helpless old person may escape from or protect himself against the tyranny and repeated petty cruelties to which the aged are occasionally subjected, even by their own children. § There should be for all such cases, available in every district, asylums or "retreats under a more accurate and less degrading title" than that of Workhouse, "and under less stringent and kindlier

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 5781, 6635, 6636, 6936, 10412, 1112 (Par. 7), 11129, 15417, 19555, 20189–20198, 25091–25095, 25109, 25110, 25264 (Par. 8), 25296–25305, 25306, 25310, 34687–34689, 40936, 42597–42601, 53068 (Par. 228).

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 3014, 4988, 5028, 5162–5166, 6636, 6936, 7441, 8904, 9373, 10412, 11129, 11150, 11921, 13946, 15417, 15888, 15911, 19466 (Par. 30), 19555, 19556, 20117 (Pars. 4, 15), 20189–20192, 22535 (Par. 2), 22569, 25264 (Par. 8), 25296, 25300–25310, 28796 (Par. 10), 28943, 29073, 34101, 34687, 34811, 38613, 39776 (Par. 71), 39980 (Par. 6), 40007, 40310 (Par. 50), 40932–40936, 41105 (Par. 16), 41489, 42781 (Par. 14), 43825 (Par. 13), 43889 (Par. 44), 43977, 50438–50482, 67743 (Par. 18), 67771, 67909 (Par. 20), 68091 (Par. 8), 68125, 68514, 68687 (Par. 8), 70408–70413, 71172 (Par. 15), 71214–71220, 75944–75947, and various Appendices to Vols. I., IV., and V.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 42597–42601.

§ Although there are special legal provisions for the prevention of cruelty to animals, to children, and to wives, there is, as yet, no corresponding statute with regard to the aged, however helpless. To treat a helpless aged person with persistent and long-continued cruelty is—apart from assault and short of actually causing death—apparently not a criminal offence. An aged person without property is sometimes terribly helpless in the face of persistent neglect or cruelty in the family in which he or she is being maintained. The law would compel sons to contribute, if they are able to do so ; but such contribution is not in support of the parent, but in reimbursement of the Destitution Authority ; and to set the law in force the aged father or mother must become actually chargeable to the poor rate ; which means, in not a few Unions, entering the General Mixed Workhouse. This is no imaginary grievance of the aged. Sons, said a competent witness, "know that the parent must come to the Board of Guardians before they can be made to pay anything towards their parent's maintenance, and therefore they really have the whip hand, and if they are so inclined they treat their parent badly." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 36840.)

discipline" *—often taking the form of voluntary almshouses provided by private charity—where the helpless deserving aged can be looked after by nurses and doctors just as much as required, and where their little pensions will go far to cover the cost of their maintenance. The "Parochial Homes" for the deserving aged which we find in some of the parishes of Scotland, and the endowed almshouses which exist in various parts of England come nearest to the kind of institution that needs to be available under the superintendence of the Medical Officer of Health of every district.† If such a system were established of kindly guardianship of the aged of providing the necessary attendance on lonely old people, and of maintaining for their reception when really unable to live alone such "almshouses" or "Homes for the Aged" as we have described, there would be little need for compulsory powers of removal; and such as might, in exceptional cases, still be required for the prevention of insanitary conditions or of conditions actually endangering life would form but a small and unobjectionable extension of those already exercised without demur by the Public Health Authority.‡

Besides those aged poor who live decently on their tiny means, and the helpless deserving poor for whom Homes for the Aged have to be provided, there exists, we regret to say, no inconsiderable class of old men and women, whose persistent addiction to drink makes it necessary to refuse them any but institutional provision. For this class, indeed, the Aged Poor of Bad Conduct, out of all the pauper host, it might well be urged that the Destitution Authority at present makes a not unsatisfactory provision. For old men and women of this kind, the General Mixed Workhouse, with its stigma of pauperism, its dull routine, its exaction of such work as its inmates can perform, and its deterrent regulations, seems a fitting place in which to end a mis-spent life. But, far from being a deterrent, experience shows that what the Destitution Authority provides, whether in the Workhouse or outside, is exactly what suits the inclinations of this class, from which some of the most habitual "Ins-and-Outs" are, in fact, recruited. They pass in and out of the Poor Law at their will—they come on the rates when they choose, and are free, whenever they choose, to live as they like. In this way, we combine the maximum of demoralisation and contamination of those with whom, either in or out of the Workhouse, they are perpetually coming in contact. To regard these old persons as "able-bodied," and to commit them to the charge of the Authority maintaining disciplinary Colonies for the Able-bodied, would be inevitably to relax the discipline of these establishments for the really able-bodied man in the prime of life. Repeated experience of the Able-bodied Test Workhouses (which we shall describe in Part II. of our Report) has proved that the introduction of men of sixty-five or seventy, even if medically certified as able-bodied, into an establishment designed for men of thirty or forty, gradually but surely destroys the *regimen*. It is vital to the efficacy of the semi-penal establishment for the really able-bodied man that the man of advanced age should be otherwise dealt with. What seems essential in the institutional provision for this class is that it should be undertaken by an Authority having through its ordinary staff the means of becoming aware of the disreputable existence of such old persons, and providing suitable institutions for their reception, with powers, in cases in which they were leading grossly insanitary lives, of obtaining magisterial orders for compulsory removal and detention—not for the sake of punishing these old people, who cannot be reformed, and can hardly be made

* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 24670 (Par. 7). The need for some such Institutions has been pressed upon us by many witnesses (*see Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14142–14146, 15474–15477, 16223 (Par. 50), 27359 (Par. 11)–27843, 36278, 36521–36525 42566, 44976 (Par. 6), 45266, 45786 (Par. 19), 45804, 45910, 67743 (Par. 16), 67750–67758, 72990–73024, 73628 (Par. 9), 73705–73712, and Appendices No. CXIII. (Par. 14) to Vol. IV., No. LXXX. (Pars. 14–17), and LXXXVII. (Par. 5) to Vol. V.) This is the recommendation of the Irish Commission. "The infirm or aged inmates are at present in 159 Workhouses; we recommend that they shall, in future, be in (say) thirty-two 'Almshouses,' or such other name as may be preferred." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 35.)

† The establishment of such separate institutions for the infirm aged was authorised by 14 Eliz., c. 5. Sec. 18; Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 76; and was, as we have seen, contemplated by the authors of the Report of 1834. In 1840, there was even a Government proposal, never carried into effect, to establish, apart from the Workhouse, "district infirmaries" for persons permanently incapacitated for earning a livelihood; and this proposal was supported by the Poor Law Commissioners. (*Official Circular*, No. 15, June 16th 1840, p. 52; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907 not yet in volume form.)

‡ The analogy is used by the Irish Commission. "From time to time instances occur in which it is found impossible to induce sick or feeble old people, without any persons to take care of them, to go into the Union sick or infirm wards for treatment or care. We think it would be desirable that in such cases compulsory removal should be authorised *in the same way as is provided for infected persons in Section* 141 *of the Public Health* (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1878." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 32.)

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 27359 (Par. 11), 36696–36698, 40644, 49303, and various Appendices to Vols. IV. and V.

of any value to the community, but in order to place them where they will be as far as possible prevented from indulging their evil propensities, where they will be put to do such work as they may be capable of, and where they will, at any rate, be unable to contaminate the rest of the community. This need not be a prison. The aged person cannot usually be reformed, but experience shows that, within an institution, he is not, as a matter of fact, either recalcitrant or badly conducted. We cannot help thinking that the duty of looking after this class, to whom Outdoor Relief would be rigidly refused, seems, accordingly, to fall most appropriately to the Public Health Authority, with its constant "searching out" of cases, and the compulsory powers of removal and detention which it already enjoys in cases of infectious disease.

To sum up, whatever institutional provision has to be made from public funds for the aged, had better be administered by the Local Health Authority. This does not mean the agglomeration of all the helpless aged, deserving or undeserving, well-conducted or ill-conducted, into one and the same huge establishment. On the contrary, there will have to be a grading of Homes for the Aged, and classification of the inmates—not, we suggest, according to past conduct or desert, on which no human being can really be a judge—but partly according to physical needs, and still more according to present characteristics and conduct. What we look to see is the provision, for all the destitute aged who have not received pensions, or who cannot live decently on their pensions, and have failed to find admission into any of the various almshouses or asylums for the Aged, of a number of small establishments for each sex; each accommodating only a few dozen or a few score of persons; of various grades of comfort and permitting of various degrees of liberty. Into these the old people would be sorted, as far as may be in accordance with their present characteristics and conduct, with power to transfer inmates from grade to grade according to the occurrence of vacancies and to actual behaviour within the institution.

(v) *The Infirm and Permanently Incapacitated under Pension Age.*

We pass now to what is perhaps the most difficult of all the problems presented by the non-able-bodied poor, the provision to be made for those who, being under the age at which either the national superannuation allowance or the local pension can begin, are nevertheless so infirm or so injured in mind or body as to be incapable of earning their maintenance in competitive industry.* These persons may be of either sex; of any age between childhood and pension time; deserving or undeserving; well-conducted or vicious; helpless or fully able to manage for themselves; with friends or without. Their one common characteristic —and this suffices for their classification—is that, whereas they are at a time of life at which they are expected to maintain themselves, such independent maintenance, in the world of competitive industry, is really and permanently beyond their power. One large section of this class—a section which includes a considerable proportion of the present Workhouse population—has already been dealt with. Should the proposals of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded be adopted, those whose incapacity is due to "feeble-mindedness" will be removed altogether from the category of the destitute, and dealt with, along with lunatics and idiots, by the committees of the County and County Borough Councils charged with the care of all the Mentally Defective. But for all the others some appropriate provision has to be found. There is the common case of the man or woman seriously crippled from birth, or maimed by some accident or disease. There is the case of the man or woman disabled by rheumatism or arthritis. There are those partially disabled by hemiplegia in its early stages, or by epilepsy unaccompanied by lunacy. There are the blind † and the deaf and dumb.‡

For all these infirm and permanently incapacitated under pension age there is at present no other provision than the General Mixed Workhouse or the unconditional dole of Outdoor Relief. Apart from other disadvantages of their presence in these unspecialised institutions, where no proper provision can be made for them, it has been brought to our notice that, owing to the absence of specialised consideration of each case by a medical man, there is, in the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales, and Ireland, and in the precisely similar Poorhouses of Scotland, no small amount of malingering among those classed as infirm or incapacitated. It is, in the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales, and Ireland, or in the gigantic Poorhouses now characteristic of the great towns of Scotland, with their insufficient medical staff, the business of no particular person to see that they get well; it is nobody's business to consider whether, by some

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 257, 14106, 28163–28301, 44976 (Par. 13), etc.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 28164–28301, 44976 (Par. 13), and Appendices Nos. LXIII. (Par. 14), CXLXV. (Par. 13) to Vol. IV.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 25781 (Par. 18), 44976 (Par. 13).

special treatment or operation, or by the aid of special surgical appliances, they could not be made fit for work; it is nobody's business to take care that they do not deliberately keep their sores open or their shrunken limbs weak. We do not feel sure that all the men whom we have seen in idleness because they have hernia or varicose veins are incurable. We shall recur to this point when, in Part II. of this Report, we come to deal with the Able-bodied. We shall see that, if there is to be any genuine enforcement on the able-bodied of a proper task of work, experience shows it to be imperative that the able-bodied should be by themselves alone. But the present intermixture in the Workhouse of able-bodied men with men in various stages of defectiveness, whilst it destroys all chance of proper treatment of the able-bodied, is disastrous to the man who is really infirm or incapacitated.* In the General Mixed Workhouse of to-day, no real attempt can be made to sort out the different individuals according to their particular defects; to give to each of them the regimen that he needs; to promote, if not their cure, at any rate whatever amelioration of their several states may be possible; to provide them all with such industrial and other training as they are proved capable of; and at any rate to set them all to work at appropriate tasks, so that not only may the ratepayers' pockets be spared, but the inmates themselves may have the advantage and happiness of doing something towards their maintenance. On the other hand, to turn these blind or crippled, epileptic or paralysed men and women out into the streets on an unconditional dole of Outdoor Relief is, in many cases, to condemn them to much suffering, to a life of demoralising mendicity, if not of vice, and to conditions of squalor and disease which are not in the public interest.

We may mention here a matter which has been brought to our notice in connection with the Workmen's Compensation Act. A certain proportion of the present destitution of the infirm and incapacitated has been caused by industrial accidents, for which, in the past, little or no compensation has been paid. This, it was hoped, would be obviated, as regards accidents occurring after 1897, by the obligation then placed upon the employer of paying lifelong compensation for permanent incapacity equal to half the wages previously earned.† Unfortunately, as it seems to us, it is provided that this weekly payment, like the compensation payable to the widow and children when the accident is fatal, may be commuted for a lump sum, without any guarantee being taken that the money will not be squandered and dissipated or, through some misfortune, lost. There are, accordingly, already many cases in which persons, permanently incapacitated by industrial accidents since 1897, or the widows or children of persons killed by such accidents, have, notwithstanding the payment of full compensation, subsequently become destitute, and are now a burden upon the Poor Rates. In these cases an onerous obligation has been imposed by law upon the employer, and through him, on the consumers, without the community being protected from having, in effect, to pay over again for the results of the accident. This defect in the law, which will become year after year of ever-increasing gravity until it is remedied, appears to us to arise from the habit of regarding the compensation for an accident as a debt due from the employer to the injured man, or to his widow and orphaned children. It ought rather to be regarded, even in those cases in which it may be provided by individual insurance, as a provision which the State requires to be made for the future maintenance of those from whom the accident has withdrawn the breadwinning capacity. Here, as elsewhere, we object to relief being given to a sufferer, by means of a compulsory levy—even if the levy be on an individual employer—without the community taking steps to ensure that the provision thus made is applied in a manner to attain the social object aimed at. We think that the law should be promptly amended so as to provide that, whether by agreement or in the course of legal proceedings, no commutation of the weekly compensation payments should be permitted, and no lump sums paid in respect of fatal accidents, otherwise than through the County Court, or the special tribunal of Public Assistance that we shall hereafter describe, and that such sums should in all cases be invested in trust for the maintenance of those from whom the accident has withdrawn the means of support. If this were done, not only would some temptation be removed from the workman to whom an accident may at present be a source of profit, and much of the compensation money be saved from dissipation; but also there would at least be some security to the community that it would be protected from having the very considerable army of maimed, widowed and orphaned paupers still annually recruited in consequence of the industrial accidents assumed to be compensated for.

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 13876.

† Workmen's Compensation Acts, 1897 and 1906. We shall deal in Part II. of this Report with the suggestion that these Acts, by discouraging the employment of any men not of normal capacity, have increased the amount of unemployment.

But whether or not the victims of industrial accidents can ever all be suitably provided for by compensation there must always be many cases in which the infirmity or incapacity has no connection with industrial accident. What has to be done is to provide for these incapables conditions of existence more suitable to their needs than the competitive world. There are cases in which, under careful medical supervision, it may be desirable, so to speak, to "board out" the cripple or the blind man among friends or relations.* For the most part, however, some sort of institutional provision seems preferable. This can often be best secured by making use of existing special institutions under voluntary management. All these need, however, to be regularly inspected.† We do not feel able to say how far it would be possible or desirable to group together in a single institution the infirm and physically defective of different kinds. There seems much to be said for combined Farm Colonies where the lame could help the blind, and the epileptic be attended to by the crippled. But there would probably have to be a certain amount of classification by physical condition as well as by sex and by conduct. But whether in one institution or in several, in town or in country, in so far as voluntary benevolence has not provided suitable accommodation, there must be for all these persons, as it seems to us, appropriate residential institutions maintained from public funds. In view of the medical superintendence that is involved, of the constant need for medical and surgical attendance and nursing, of the importance of securing, wherever possible, a curative or ameliorative treatment, and of the necessity of taking appropriate measures to detect and to extrude malingerers, we consider that the maintenance of the infirm and incapacitated, whether on home aliment or in special institutions, voluntary or municipal, ought to form part of the duty of the Public Health Authority.

(E) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report :—

1. That the inclusion, under the Poor Law, in one and the same category, of the congeries of different classes known as "the aged and infirm," is fundamentally inconsistent with any effective administration.

2. That the majority of Destitution Authorities of England, Wales and Ireland make no other provision for this aggregate of diverse individuals, of all ages and of different mental and physical characteristics, than the General Mixed Workhouse on the one hand and indiscriminate, inadequate and unconditional Out-Relief on the other—forms of Relief cruel to the deserving, and demoralisingly attractive to those who are depraved.

3. That some of the Parish Councils of Scotland and a few Boards of Guardians in England have honourably distinguished themselves by providing, for aged persons of deserving conduct, either comfortable quarters or pensions in their own homes; though in the English Unions this provision has been unduly restricted by irrelevant conditions as to prolonged residence in one district, or as to the existence of relations not legally liable to contribute.

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* The Old-Age Pensions Law of the Commonwealth of Australia (No. 17 of 1908) contains additional provisions (which are not to come into operation until some later date, to be fixed by Proclamation), conferring "Invalid Pensions" upon persons over sixteen years of age, who are permanently incapacitated for work by reason of accident, or of "being an invalid." The amount of the pensions is to be fixed in each case, having regard to the means of the invalid, and to the contributions made by his relations (Secs. 19–23). If these provisions are ever put in operation, they will furnish interesting experience. We are, however, unable to recommend the adoption of a system of Invalidity Pensions. Apart from the very great expense involved, we doubt the wisdom of deliberately granting, to persons in no respect aged or superannuated, fixed incomes which they can enjoy as of right, without obligation either to work or to live as may be medically most expedient for them. Those who would be certified as "permanently incapacitated" for earning a livelihood in the world of competitive industry, are often not incapable of doing some useful work; they can, in the course of years, usually be improved in health and capacity (and can sometimes be even cured) by adopting an appropriate regimen; they are always liable to mental and physical deterioration under a lax and self-indulgent regimen; and they may easily become the worst of parasites, capable of much mischief. For all these reasons we think that (whilst in many cases domiciliary treatment with adequate home aliment may be allowed, under medical advice and supervision, subject to the fulfilment of appropriate conditions) the provision for most of the prematurely incapacitated must—partly for the sake of the proper organisation of such productive work as can be obtained from them—take the form, not of pensions, which the recipients would be free to consume in idleness, but of maintenance in a highly differentiated series of Farm Colonies, or similar institutions, under medical superintendence.

† Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. CXXIII. (Par. 13) to Vol. IV.

4. That no corresponding classification has been made among persons permanently, though prematurely, incapacitated, so that even the most deserving of these are very harshly dealt with.

5. That it is a necessary preliminary of any effective reform to break up the present unscientific category of " the Aged and Infirm," and to deal separately with distinct classes according to the age and the mental and physical characteristics of the individuals concerned.

6. That we concur with the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded that all persons, whatever their age, who are certified to belong to one or other grades of the Mentally Defective—including not only the lunatics and idiots, but also the feeble-minded and those suffering from senile dementia—should be entirely removed from contact with any form of Poor Law and should be placed wholly in charge of the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective.

7. That the establishment by Parliament in 1908 of a National Pension Scheme affords the proper provision for the aged who satisfy the necessary conditions in respect to income, residence in the United Kingdom, and conduct; but that it will be requisite at the earliest possible date to lower the pensionable age to sixty-five, if not to sixty; and that it is neither practicable nor desirable to make the previous receipt of any form of public assistance a ground for disqualification.

8. That, as there must always be a certain proportion of persons technically disqualified for a National Pension, for whom public provision must be made, and for whom institutional provision is neither necessary nor desirable, the Pension Committees of the Local Authorities should be empowered to grant out of the Rates, according to conditions settled by their Councils and approved by the Central Authority, pensions to persons of decent life, not being less than sixty years of age, who are not eligible for a National Pension.

9. That, whilst we anticipate considerable growth of voluntary agencies for securing, by insurance, supplementary pensions and provision for premature invalidity, we cannot recommend that the State should enter into competition for the workers' weekly pence with the Friendly Societies and Trade Unions, by any scheme of compulsory insurance; which would, we think, provoke the strenuous opposition of these societies, if they were left outside the scheme; and which must inevitably entail a national guarantee of their solvency, and Governmental control, if they were to be made part of the compulsory scheme.

10. That the responsibility for making suitable provision, domiciliary or institutional, for the prematurely incapacitated, and the helpless aged, together with the necessary institutional provision for the aged to whom pensions are refused, should be entrusted to the Local Health Authority.

11. That the Local Health Authority should be granted compulsory powers of removal and detention similar to those which it now possesses in respect to certain infectious diseases, with regard to all aged and infirm persons who are found to be endangering their own lives, or becoming, through mental or physical incapacity to take care of themselves, a nuisance to the public.

12. That, whilst all the obligations to support aged and infirm relations that are imposed by law should be strictly enforced by the appointed officers, where there is proof of ability to pay, no attempt should be made by any public authority to extract contributions from persons not legally liable, by subjecting aged or infirm persons, or threatening to subject them, to any treatment other than that deemed most suitable to their state.

CHAPTER VIII.

Charge and Recovery by Local Authorities.

All the public bodies making provision for the non-able-bodied poor—the Destitution Authority, the Public Health Authority, the Education Authority and the Police Authority—now possess definite legal powers of charging the cost upon the individual benefited or the persons liable to maintain him. These powers differ from service to service and from Authority to Authority, alike in the amount or proportion of the expense that is chargeable, in the discretion allowed to the Authority to charge or not to charge as it sees fit, in the conditions attached to the charge or exemption from payment, in the degree of poverty entitling to exemption, in the degree of relationship entailing payment for dependents, and in the process of recovery and its effectiveness. This chaotic agglomeration of legal powers, conferred on different Authorities at different dates, for different purposes, but all alike entailing on the individual citizen definite financial responsibilities, proceed upon no common principle. Moreover, the practice of the innumerable Authorities concerned is even more wanting in principle than the law; varying, indeed, from systematic omission to charge or recover anything, up to attempts to exact from the individual an entirely prohibitive payment for the service nominally offered. And this jungle of personal liabilities and what are in fiscal science technically called "special assessments" is practically unexplored. In no branch of our subject have we found it so difficult to ascertain the exact facts: in no part of the problem of the provision for the non-able-bodied poor have we found an extensive alteration in both law and administration so urgently needed and so little worked out in detail by the advocates of reform.

(A) Charge and Recovery by the Destitution Authority.

The Boards of Guardians in England and Wales have at present two separate and distinct powers of charge and recovery of the expenditure that they incur in the relief of particular persons, namely, against the particular person relieved, and against other persons liable for his maintenance.

(i) *Contributions by Relations.*

Under the Elizabethan Poor Law there seems to have been no question of recovering the cost of relief from the person relieved.* The very condition of the relief was destitution, and the system of free relief at the expense of the Poor Rate was but the successor of a system of free alms which had existed from time immemorial. But the free relief from the Poor Rate enjoyed by the destitute person did not release from their obligation those who were required to maintain him. This obligation of the relations was specifically enacted by the Elizabethan statesmen. Under the Poor Relief Act of 1601 (43 Eliz. c. 4, sec. 7) "the father and grandfather, and the mother and grandmother, and the children of every poor, old, blind, lame and impotent person, or other poor person not being able to work, being of a sufficient ability, shall at their own charges, relieve and maintain every such poor person in that manner and according to that rate as by the justices . . . shall be assessed." Thus, this legal liability to maintain others applies only to certain specified cases of blood-relationship—to grandparents, for instance, though not to grandchildren; and to grandparents even though the parents are alive, and themselves able to maintain their children.† It applies, moreover, only to the non-able-bodied—a qualification which, as we have found, is not always remembered by Poor Law officials.‡ It is curious that in the Elizabethan Statute there is no mention of the liability of husbands to maintain their wives, any more than that of wives to maintain their husbands. The omission has been rectified by subsequent legislation, under which a husband can be compelled to contribute

* It was scarcely a deduction from this principle that, as was subsequently made clear, any property found in the pauper's possession, or discovered to be due to him, might, irrespective of any Statute, have been appropriated by the Relieving Authority. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 110 and the cases there cited; *see also* Poor Law Amendment Act, 1849, Sec. 16.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 106; R. *v.* Cornish, 2 Barnewall and Adolphus, 498. Married daughters were not liable, even if they had separate property. In the latter case only, they are now made liable (by 8 Edw. VII., c. 27).

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 19993–20002, 20112

to the cost of relief given to his wife, and a wife having a separate estate can, in England and Wales, be compelled to contribute to the cost of relief given to her husband.* But for this last change, and for the fact that in Ireland grandparents are not liable for their grandchildren, the area of liability seems to be the same throughout the United Kingdom.

The process of recovering contributions from relations is partly in the hands of an administrative body, the Destitution Authority; and partly in those of a judicial body, the local magistracy. It is entirely within the discretion of the Destitution Authority whether or not it will ask for any contributions from any of the relations legally liable, and, if so, how much, and from which relations. If the relations do not comply with the demand of the Destitution Authority, it is open to that body, if it chooses, to apply to a Court of Summary Jurisdiction—in England and Wales, the Justices in Petty Sessions—for an order charging the relation who is liable with the payment of a definite amount per week for so long as the person remains chargeable. The Court has to satisfy itself that the relation whom it is sought to charge is legally liable and of ability to pay, and has to determine at what rate, not exceeding the whole cost of the relief, the relation shall be ordered to contribute. When the order has been made, it is again within the discretion of the Destitution Authority, in the case of non-payment, whether or not to take steps to enforce the order. It can summon for arrears and get an order of the Court for their payment, and eventually a distress warrant. If there are no goods on which to distrain, another summons is necessary, calling on the defendant to show cause why he should not be committed to prison for Contempt of Court. Upon the defendant appearing, the Destitution Authority has to prove that he has the means of paying what is due before an order for committal to prison will be granted.† In short, though enforceable in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction instead of merely in the County Court, the contributions due from relations are, in law, merely civil debts; and are not (as are payments on orders made under the Bastardy Acts and the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts, the latter now re-enacted in the Children's Act, 1908) payments enforceable as if they were fines or penalties by committal to prison, without evidence of means.

The special assessments levied on the relations of paupers, or on the paupers themselves, under this law and by this procedure, in the guise of repayments of the relief afforded, yield, in the aggregate, a large and steadily increasing revenue, having more than doubled in the last twenty years.‡ In 1888–9, for England and Wales alone, it was £211,061, or about 2½ per cent. of the expenditure, and in 1906–7 no less than £442,355, or 3 per cent. of the expenditure. Unfortunately, none of the statistics of the Local Government Board enable us to discover in what proportion this amount is made up of certain very different constituent items. More than one-half, we know, comes in the form of charges made upon the relations of persons certified to be of unsound mind, and maintained in the asylums of the Lunacy Authority. The balance is nearly wholly made up of two distinct items, namely, the contributions obtained from the relations of persons admitted to the Poor Law infirmaries, and the contributions obtained from sons towards the Outdoor Relief afforded to their aged parents.

The contributions recovered towards the cost of maintenance of persons of unsound mind constitute the greater part of these recoupments of the Destitution Authority. In this class of case, by a peculiar anomaly of the law, pauperism is, as we have already described, virtually enforced upon the patient, and upon his relations legally liable to support him. Thus, the pauper patients in the lunatic asylum really include a large number of persons from families who are in no sense destitute; many of them, in fact, belonging to the skilled artisan or the lower middle class. The Board of Guardians, having to pay the Lunacy Authority something like 12s. per week for every person in the asylum who belongs to the Union, and who does not enter voluntarily as a paying patient, naturally seeks to recover this sum in as many cases as possible. The Government grant provides 4s. per head per week. The balance of about 8s. per week, if not obtainable

* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 105; Married Women's Property Act, 1882, Sec. 20. Mention may also be made of two minor instances of charge and recovery. Relief to the wife or child or step-child of a merchant seaman during his absence is recoverable up to half (or, in certain cases, two-thirds) of his wages, by notice to the shipowner. (Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, Secs. 182, 183.) And the cost of relieving destitute Lascars or other natives of India may be recovered from the Secretary of State for India in Council. (*Ibid.*, Sec. 185).

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 36693 (Par. 14).

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 7619. The statistics given in the Annual Reports of the Local Government Board are as follows: 1888–9, £211,061; 1893–4, £241,904; 1899–9, £295,034; 1902–3, £370,087; 1906–7, £442,355.

from the property of the patient himself,* is claimed from the husbands, parents, grandparents or children of the patients. As so large a proportion of the cases are from families by no means destitute, the amount thus recovered is considerable, in many cases covering the whole cost of the patient. It is to be noted that, even if the whole cost be repaid to the Board of Guardians, the patient remains a pauper and he is included as such in the statistics of pauperism. We have had it brought to our notice by the London County Council that, as the collectors of the Boards of Guardians are paid by commission, it is not only to their pecuniary interest to have as many persons as possible certified as of unsound mind, but also to have them entered and retained as pauper lunatics, even if their relatives are paying the entire cost of their maintenance; rather than have them entered as private patients, when the payments would be made direct to the Lunacy Authority. Moreover, the mere maintenance of a dependent in an asylum as a pauper lunatic, even if a contribution is made towards the cost, is, in strict law, deemed to be parochial relief to the person on whom he is dependent. When, in the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908 it was desired to prevent the mere admission of a dependent to a lunatic asylum disqualifying for a pension as being parochial relief, this needed express enactment. Yet, as has been forcibly observed, by the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded :—

> "In the case of so-called pauper patients in idiot asylums, many of them have never been in a Workhouse, and some of them cost the local rates nothing at all. Many of them are children of small farmers, tradesmen in a small way of business, clerks, artisans, and others, who, unable to pay the full charge, are yet able to contribute 5s. or 6s. per week, or even more, for the maintenance and training of their children. In order to make up the full charge of from 10s. 6d. to 14s. per week, the parents pay their contributions to the Board of Guardians who receive the 4s. grant [from the Exchequer], add to it the parents' contributions, and thus, in some instances, make up the required amount. This pauperises the parent, though it does not do so in the case of children sent to blind or deaf and dumb institutions, or educated at the Public Elementary Schools, where the schooling is paid for out of the rates, or even in the case of criminal or neglected children sent to Reformatory or Industrial Schools.†

The amount charged upon "relations" for the treatment in Poor Law Infirmaries of patients in whom they are interested is large, and rapidly increasing. We were, for instance, informed that the three Boards of Guardians of Liverpool recover over £4,000 a year from their patients, whilst the general hospitals of that great city do not receive from their patients more than £400 a year.‡ We notice, in the evidence by the Medical Superintendent of one of these Poor Law Infirmaries, that the fiction that these repayments come from the relations of the "destitute" persons whom the Guardians are maintaining, is quietly abandoned. It is taken as a matter of course that the maintenance and medical treatment which is being afforded by the Destitution Authority to its patients, is, as a matter of fact, being paid for, to a considerable extent, by these "destitute" persons themselves. The fact, which is not peculiar to Liverpool, that the Poor Law Infirmaries are receiving no small number of "paying patients," is an interesting corollary of the gradual transformation that we have already described of some of the institutions of the Destitution Authority into public establishments, made use of indiscriminately by the wage-earning and lower middle classes. "We have thus," as it has been pointed out to us, "the administrative paradox that an institution intended by statute for the 'friendless impotent poor,' has evolved into a 'pay' hospital for poor persons that may be paid for by their friends."§ But this unperceived change results in curious anomalies. A person who is paying for his treatment in the Liverpool hospital as the Mill Road Infirmary, however much he pays, becomes a pauper; is known included in the statistics of pauperism published by the Local Government Board; cannot, in law, vote at the election of the West Derby Board of Guardians; and will be excluded or not from the register of Parliamentary electors according to the varying interpretations which the officers may put on the phrase "medical relief." The same

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* "In the case of lunatics it is often from the individuals themselves; they may have an estate, such as money in the Post Office Savings Bank, . . or be possessed of house property." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 15788.) Where a lunatic is entitled to a weekly allowance from a friendly society, but has a wife and children who would, but for this allowance, be destitute, the Central Authority practically directed the Guardians, in 1876, not to seek to recover the cost of his relief, but to leave the wife and children in the enjoyment of the allowance. (*Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board*, Vol. I., 1880, p. 15.) This was made law in Scotland by Sec. 4 of the Poor Law Loans and Relief (Scotland) Act, 1886.

† Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, Vol. VIII., p. 56; *see also* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 19228.

‡ *Ibid.*, 37927 (par. 25).

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 56605 (par. 88).

person, treated absolutely free of charge in the Liverpool Royal Infirmary, or in the hospitals of the Liverpool Town Council, is not a pauper. This anomaly becomes the more remarkable when a Board of Guardians (as at Dewsbury), with the cordial sanction of the Local Government Board, deliberately elects to limit its own provision for sick paupers to such as suffices for the easier cases, whilst sending all that are difficult to the voluntary hospitals of neighbouring towns, to which it makes contributions from the poor rates.* Under these arrangements, which are becoming common in all but the largest towns, the sick persons become paupers or not, and their relations become liable to contribute to their maintenance or not, according to quite irrelevant accidents. Those retained in the institutions of the Destitution Authority are chargeable to their relations and are legally paupers, however much their relations may pay. Those who are sent for the more specialised treatment of the voluntary hospitals, which are partly maintained out of the poor rate, are not paupers, and their relations cannot be required to contribute to their maintenance—unless, indeed, as is sometimes the case, the subvention of the Board of Guardians to the hospital takes the form not of an annual subscription but of the payment of so much per patient per week. In the latter case the sum so paid is, by direction of the Local Government Board, entered in the books as Outdoor Relief ; the person in respect of whom it is paid is included in the statistics of pauperism as in receipt of Outdoor Relief ; and his relations become liable to repay the amount.† The net result of these anomalies is that those patients for whose maintenance and treatment full payment is being made, by themselves or their relations, are all certainly paupers ; those who are being treated entirely gratuitously stand a good chance of retaining the status of independent citizenship.

We come now to the charges made upon sons by way of contributions towards the Outdoor Relief that their aged parents are receiving. The Board of Guardians finds an aged person destitute, grants Outdoor Relief, and proceeds, under the Elizabethan Statute, to make a claim upon the sons. It has, however, been brought to our notice that the procedure has, in some Unions, been so extended as to have become merely the means of "putting people on the relief list with the object of settling a family dispute." ‡ "In a large number of cases," deposed one witness, "the children are colliers earning very good wages, but owing to family disagreements between themselves they quarrel as to how much each son should contribute. One son has a wife and several children, he thinks he ought to contribute a less sum than the son who is unmarried and is earning good wages, and so on. They cannot agree amongst themselves. Over and over again they come to the relieving officer, and the old woman or the father is granted 3s. 6d. or 4s., and then the sons are summoned." § In these cases, "relief is granted where it is not needed, with the sole object of getting it repaid from the sons and daughters," This is said to be "a common occurrence" both in London and in the North of England,‖ the whole of the Outdoor Relief given to the aged person being "in a large number of cases" thus recovered.¶ But even if the whole amount is repaid, the aged persons are legally paupers ;** they are included in the official statistics as paupers ; and the family becomes entangled in, and acquires a demoralising familiarity with, the machinery of the Destitution Authority. To remedy this anomaly, many Guardians and Poor Law officers have recommended that the law should enable aged persons themselves to take proceedings against their children who are legally liable to support them, and that a Court of Summary Jurisdiction should be empowered to make an order for the payment of a weekly sum by the

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 25233–25238, 57483–9, 56685–7, 60159–81.

† If the arrangement between the Board of Guardians and the voluntary hospital is changed in form (as from payment per patient to an annual subvention), the pauperism of the patients, and their chargeability to relations, ceases from the date of the change. This inequality of treatment of the sick is much resented. It has been urged upon us that "since payment is not asked for in the infirmaries or in fever hospitals, why should it be required in Poor Law hospitals ? Is it reasonable that, whereas the victim of typhus fever, a tumour, or appendicitis is taken possession of by free-from-payment institutions, the poor wretch with phthisis, chronic rheumatism, heart disease, or ulcers is made a pauper, with the added injury that he or his relatives have to contribute to his maintenance ? " (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 60151, Par. 18.)

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 16177.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 48393–48398.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 7316, 7317, 19557, 19558, 36842.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 48397.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 19687.

son direct to the parent, without the case coming in any way under the purview of the Destitution Authority.* We cannot endorse this recommendation. To give to every aged parent who was without means the right at any time to apply to the Justices for a legal order peremptorily requiring his or her sons to make weekly payments for his or her support would not, we think, promote either filial affection or family harmony; and might, it has been suggested, open up a field for disreputable extortion, at the instigation of unscrupulous persons.† Even more important is the objection that such a power in the hands of the aged could not be made dependent on their personal conduct. There are, unfortunately, among the aged, not a few persons of disreputable life, who spend every available penny in drink. We should wholly disapprove of Outdoor Relief being granted to such persons unconditionally, and without supervision. We equally object to empowering disreputable old men and women, who are unwilling, and perhaps unable, to lead decent lives, to exact contributions from their sons, over the spending of which the sons would have no control. Such aged persons, if allowed to live outside an institution at all, ought, at any rate, to feel that their maintenance is dependent on reputable conduct. This can be to some extent secured at present, by the supervision and control exercised over those to whom Outdoor Relief is granted. What needs to be got rid of is not the supervision and control, which we regard as essential for all whose maintenance is provided for them otherwise than by their own exertions, but the association with pauperism and the Destitution Authority. This can be secured, as we shall see later, in quite another way.‡

The needless "stigma of pauperism," inflicted alike on the "paying patients" of the Poor Law Infirmary, and on the aged persons on Outdoor Relief who are really being supported by their children, and the unreal exaggeration of the pauper statistics that this causes, are not, in our opinion, the most serious defects of the present system of levying special assessments on the relations of persons in receipt of public assistance. What is more important in its evil consequence—if only because it affects every case—is the arbitrariness, and even the partiality, with which these "special assessments" are made. It is axiomatic that whenever, by the authority of the Government, a pecuniary contribution is levied upon individuals, this contribution should be levied equally, impartially and universally upon every person coming within the category of those legally liable to the imposition. In the whole range of the Poor Law, in this matter of contributions from relations, equality, impartiality, and universality are conspicuous by their absence. We find in practice a total lack of uniformity as to whether the relations of a sick pauper shall or shall not be asked to contribute to his maintenance, and upon what scale. One Union will, in this respect, differ entirely from its next-door neighbour. In the Fulham Union for instance, maintenance from every discoverable relation legally liable is rigorously exacted in every case. In the Chelsea Union, institutional treatment and maintenance seem to be granted free of charge to all sick persons unable to gain admission to the voluntary hospitals of the neighbourhood, without their relations being even asked to contribute. The same sort of contrast appears to be exhibited in the practice of the Lambeth§ and Camberwell Boards of Guardians. In some provincial Unions—notably some in South Wales‖—especially where there are no endowed or voluntary hospitals, Boards of Guardians evidently lay themselves out on a considerable scale for "paying patients"; they have separate Committees on "Ability of Relatives,"¶ staffs of collectors,** and large receipts. In most of the rural Unions, on the other hand, where medical treatment has not risen above the Workhouse ward, Guardians seldom think of expecting any repayment of the cost of indoor relief or of making any charge for Workhouse treatment.††

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 19686, 19687.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 22903.

‡ The alternative suggestion made to us (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 20103), that some public authority should be empowered to take proceedings, when it is found that an aged person is not being properly supported by those who are liable to maintain him, quite irrespective of whether he has actually become a burden on the rates, appears to us much more worthy of support. But it would clearly be undesirable that this should be done by the present Destitution Authority.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 15089–15091, 15784–15792.

‖ *Ibid.*, Appendices Nos. I. (F), XXV., LIV., to Vol. V.

¶ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LIV. (Par. 3) to Vol. V.

** *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXV. (Par. 35) to Vol. V.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 3001.

This inequality between Union and Union in the practice with regard to these special assessments is even more glaring when the expenditure in respect of which the charge is made takes the form of Outdoor Relief. We find, in fact, the utmost diversity, not merely between Union and Union, but between case and case. A few Boards of Guardians pursue a systematic policy. In so-called "strict" Unions, such as Atcham, Bradfield and St. George's-in-the-East, every discoverable relation who is legally liable, and who is earning as much as the regular wages of a mere labourer, is * definitely charged something, and as far as practicable compelled to contribute. In the Unions of East Anglia, on the other hand, we found it taken for granted that the ordinary agricultural labourer, even when unmarried and in full work, could not be expected to contribute anything towards the maintenance of his aged parents—some of the farmers frankly admitting that this practice had been adopted from their fear that attempts to charge even a shilling a week would help to drive the labourers into the towns. "I have been present at a Board meeting," deposed a Local Government Board Inspector, "when a Guardian employing two single labourers at full wages has protested against their being required to pay a shilling a week towards the support of their father, as the effect might be to drive them out of the Union where labour was badly wanted. They were excused." † Occasionally there are regular scales, showing what contributions are to be expected from sons in different circumstances. ‡ "Some Guardians," reports our own Investigator, "take into consideration the entire earnings going into the house, others consider what sons and daughters give. Others, again, consider the individual earnings (of the relations liable) only." § But in most Unions, every case is "considered on its merits." ‖ What this means in practice is that it depends on the mood of the Guardians, or even on which Guardians happen to be present, whether, in any particular case, much or little or nothing at all is demanded from relations known to be legally liable. ¶ "There is," said a witness, "no standard. I have known a man earning 23s. per week be asked to pay 9s. weekly towards the keep of his wife in the Infirmary, and the following week a single man getting 24s. per week asked to pay 2s. 6d. towards the maintenance of his parent. The single man was young, the married man greyheaded and homeless, living in lodgings at 4s. 6d. per week. This is termed judging each case on its merits." ** In a large Midland town, where, on the Board of Guardians, "the public-house interest is far too numerously represented, (*i.e.*, by seven or eight members)," †† an experienced witness informed us that he did not "know of a single case in which there is any repayment to the Guardians from children. If the Guardians give Out-relief there is no real effort to make the grown-up sons and daughters, who might be able to pay, pay something back." ‡‡ "In one

* This course is apparently without legal justification. A doubt has long been felt whether the ordinary wages of a mere labourer amounted, in the phrase of the Act of 1601, to "sufficient ability" on which to base liability to contribute. (Stone's *Justices' Manual*, editions of 1881 and 1902.) A case was taken to the High Court of Justice in 1902, when the Lord Chief Justice expressed some agreement with the view that such ordinary wages did not, in themselves, necessarily amount to "sufficient ability." The appeal was, however, dismissed on other grounds, and the point cannot be said to have been decided. (R. *v.* Moore and others, *ex parte* Saunby.) *See* the paper on "Contributions by Relatives towards Persons in Receipt of Parochial Relief," by W. B. Harris (*Poor Law Conferences*, 1903–1904, pp. 489–507).

† Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. VIII. (A) to Vol. L., note to Par. 25; also *Q.* 6176; *see also* p. 63, Report on the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages . . . in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. T. Jones.

‡ Thus the Aylesbury Board of Guardians directs "that a son, living with his mother, earning from 10s. to 12s. per week, be considered to allow her 1s. weekly; from 12s. to 15s., 1s. 6d. weekly; and from 15s. to £1, 2s. weekly; and that a woman keeping a son's house, and able to wash for him, be allowed no Relief." (Annual Report of Aylesbury Board of Guardians, March, 1905.) A similar scale, but beginning at as low a wage as 8s. per week, is supposed to prevail at Banbury. (Year Book of Banbury Board of Guardians, 1905–1906.) In the North Bierley Union the same rule is applied to daughters: "That in the cases of widows living with one unmarried daughter, all earnings of the daughter above 10s. per week be reckoned towards the support of the mother." (Year Book of North Bierley Board of Guardians, 1906–1907.)

§ Report on the Effect of Out-relief on Wages . . . in England, by Miss C. Williams and Mr. T. Jones (p. 7.)

‖ Rules of Glanford Brigg Board of Guardians.

¶ "One or two cases came up," noted one of our committees, "in which sons appealed against an order to contribute towards the cost of their parents which had been made at the previous week's meeting, and in one case at least *the previous decision was overturned*." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 15, p. 29.)

** Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 45786 (par. 10).

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 47015 (par. 4).

‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 47024.

Union," reports an Inspector, "an instance came under my notice where a widow had three sons, *one of whom was a Guardian*, but none of these were asked to contribute. The total out-relief was over £3,000. The amount collected from relations was £33 3s. 6d., but deducting collections on account of lunatics and deaf and dumb, the total recovered in one year was £6 11s. 3d. It is not surprising that the relief in this Union is amongst the highest in my district."* But the abandonment of the practice of making a charge may be due to real differences of opinion as to policy, quite apart from anything like corrupt motives. "The friendly societies," declared their representative on a North country Board of Guardians, "are totally opposed to the practice of the Guardians of compelling a working-man (who has a wife and three or four little children and whose income is not more than 26s. per week) to pay towards the maintenance of his father or mother who may have become recipients of Poor Law relief. This practice they consider perpetuates pauperism."† Nor is this evil consequence to the next generation without confirmation. "In many cases," deposed a Poor Law Guardian, "the maintenance of the old parent works to the detriment of the children's children."‡ On the other hand, some Guardians, not content with the power to charge conferred by the Elizabethan statute, actually try to go beyond the law, and to compel grown-up sons to contribute towards the support of their brothers and sisters, on the disingenuous legal fiction—which, however, fails to support the proposal—that relief afforded to children is deemed to be relief to their parent.§

Even this diversity of practice of the Boards of Guardians does not exhaust the measure of the inequality and partiality with which these special assessments are levied. When the Guardians have arrived at a decision as to what they will charge, they may or may not attempt to get their decision embodied in a magistrate's order, without which it is of no legal authority.¶ Some Boards take this step, but the majority do not. "The applications for a magistrate's order," we were informed, "are comparatively few."‖ The peson sought to be charged may appear before the magistrate, and show cause against the making of an order. No definite ruling has been given as to what constitutes "sufficient ability." Hence, to use the words of an Inspector, "the enforcement by Boards of Guardians of their decisions, depends a good deal upon the caprice of individual magistrates."** This introduces a second element of inequality and uncertainty. Finally, when the order is obtained, it depends on the mood of the Board of Guardians, or on the caprice of its clerk—perhaps, also, on the method of remuneration of its collector—whether or not the order will be enforced by distraint or by proceedings for committal to prison. The extent of the real hardship on the relations against whom such orders are made may be gauged by the fact that the number of those annually committed to prison for default can in the whole of England and Wales hardly fail to reach several hundreds. But in the majority of cases, the proceedings are not pushed to such an extremity. Those who have undertaken

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* Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1898–1899, Appendix B., p. 108 (Mr. Bagenal's Report).

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 41761 (Par. 30). "Some limit," suggested another witness, "should be placed on a man's income before he is compelled to contribute towards the maintenance of parents chargeable." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. CLIII. (Par. 13 (c)) to Vol. IV.)

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 43299. "In the majority of the cases," declared another witness, this insistence on sons contributing to their parents' maintenance "is infinitely hard." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 46346.)

§ In one case heard by one of our Committees, it was sought to make two sons contribute to the cost of relief given to their mother in respect of other children. "It was suggested . . that these two sons should contribute. A Guardian said that the relief was given to the children, and that the Guardians could not make them pay towards their brothers' and sisters' maintenance. Another Guardian suggested that they should relieve the mother too, and then make two sons repay. After a time the clerk said that relief given to the children was relief given to the mother. It was moved that the sons repay 1s. each. This suggestion seemed to meet with the approval of the Board, when up jumped one of the Guardians and proposed that the question be voted on, and the votes recorded. His proposal at once so influenced the members that only four voted for the proposal to make the sons repay, while eight voted against it" (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 47, p. 118). Even if so gross a perversion of the Elizabethan Statute as to compel a man to repay the relief afforded in respect of his brothers and sisters were held to be technically legal, the course proposed was wholly unwarranted, as the mother was, on the Guardians' own showing, an able-bodied woman, towards whose support the sons were accordingly not legally liable to contribute.

‖ It has been brought to our notice that the Guardians cannot legally recover anything in respect of relief given prior to such a Justice's order (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 50096, Par. 13 (xix); nor can they obtain such an order after the person has ceased to be chargeable. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1433, 1434.)

¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 11135.

** *Ibid.*, *Q.* 13768.

to pay presently fall into arrears, and the Board of Guardians "wipes off the debt." * In fact, those who pay are the honest and the simple. The man who knows how to take advantage of the Guardians' difficulties, and is obstinate in refusing to pay, usually escapes scot free. "There are," we were told by the Clerk to a Board of Guardians, "many of those cases." † This tends to bring the whole system into contempt.

We desire to refer here once more to the practice of some Boards of Guardians of attempting to exact repayment of the cost of maintenance of paupers from relations who are under no legal liability to contribute to their support. We find that it is a common practice of some Unions to make inquisitorial investigations into the economic circumstances of persons who have been discovered to be relations of applicants of relief—though relatives not legally liable to contribute—with a view to ascertaining whether, according to the judgment of the Board of Guardians, they ought to be supporting the relations who have fallen into destitution, and whether the Board of Guardians should not apply for a contribution towards their maintenance. We think this practice open to grave objection: and we are glad to find, among experienced Poor Law officers, a certain hesitation in undertaking investigations of this kind, for which there seems no lawful warrant. "I dare say they may not make perhaps the same inquiries," said a Guardian, with regard to the Relieving Officers' investigations of the means of relations not legally liable, "indeed they would not, into the particulars of such a case, as they would where there was a legal liability. Perhaps for instance, they might not apply to the employers to ascertain the wages of the son-in-law. I do not know that they have any right to make such inquiries." ‡ But the process of seeking to exact contributions from persons who are not legally liable to make them does not stop at these inquisitorial inquiries, objectionable as these may be. When the Relieving Officer has ascertained that the uncle or the nephew, the son-in-law or the cousin, has an income which, in the opinion of the Board of Guardians, suffices to permit him to undertake a liability which the law does not place upon him, there begins, in some Unions, a systematic policy of pressure upon his will to induce him—possibly to the detriment of his own children—to shoulder the burden of the ratepayer. Beyond an application or two, the pressure on him is not direct, for the Board of Guardians is powerless to alter his position. But the Guardians calculate that they can apply some pressure on his will indirectly, by deliberately making things unpleasant for the unfortunate pauper who has come under their control. He may be stinted in his Outdoor Relief, by a deduction equal to what the Guardians are pleased to think that his relations ought to allow him weekly. He may even be refused Outdoor Relief altogether, though Outdoor Relief would admittedly be appropriate to his case, and compelled to come into the General Mixed Workhouse. § We can see no justification for a Destitution Authority to exercise its discretion as to the relief that it will grant, or the kind of that relief, on any other consideration than that of what is the treatment most appropriate to the destitute person himself. For the Destitution Authority to use the discretion with which Parliament has entrusted it, as a means of deliberately seeking to enlarge the circle of liability to support relations which Parliament has established, appears to us wholly unwarranted. We have already expressed our objection to this policy from the standpoint of its effect on the destitute person himself. Here we wish to emphasise the objection to it from the standpoint of the relation who is under no legal liability in the matter. We have ourselves found cases in which such an illegitimate use of the Guardians' powers has worked with partiality and injustice. A kindly and

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 12465.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 36872.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 15284, 15285, 15289.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 12420–12426. It has been urged upon us that the area of liability for relations should be widened, so as to include, on the one hand, sons-in-law for their parents-in-law, and grandchildren for their grandparents; and, on the other, illegitimate children for their mothers—we do not know whether this would extend also to liability to maintain their putative fathers! We doubt the wisdom, the advantage, and the practicability of any attempt to widen the area of liability imposed in 1601. The vast majority of the persons concerned are found to have very small means, and in many cases there is no public advantage in diverting these means from the proper maintenance of their own children. Moreover, it would certainly be necessary, in connection with any proposal to impose new liabilities, to give a clear definition of "sufficient ability." It would be against public policy to attempt to enforce payment on anyone whose income was not more than sufficient to bring up properly his own children. Moreover, there is no ground, in equity or commonsense, for making any person liable for that over which he has had no control. What a person should be held responsible for is his own action. There is thus more to be said for limiting the liability to that of parents for children; and then really enforcing it.

With regard to the proposal to put illegitimate children, in respect of liabllity, upon much the same footing as legitimate children, we do not think that this could be done without at the same time giving them the rights of legitimate children with regard to inheritance, etc.

humane man, with means no greater than suffice for his own household, may find himself driven to undertake onerous responsibilities, which the law has not intended for him, in order to save a brother, a father-in-law or an uncle from being left to linger on with admittedly inadequate Outdoor Relief, or forced into the General Mixed Workhouse, or even, as we have occasionally found, denied admission to the Poor Law Infirmary. The careless or inhumane man laughs at the efforts of the Boards of Guardians to extract money from him by threatening to oppress, or even actually oppressing, destitute relations for whom he is not legally liable; and, leaving these to the fate decreed for them, he escapes scot free. A special defence of this practice of throwing the burden of the destitute upon individuals not liable for their support is made when the applicant for relief actually resides with non-liable relations, and the aggregate income of the household is, in the eyes of the Board of Guardians, sufficient for its complete support. In such cases many Boards of Guardians refuse all relief.* The effect of this policy is to prevent persons offering lodging and personal attendance to their aged relations, unless they can also find them in food and clothing without stinting their own families.† It adds to the hardship of the situation that the same Boards of Guardians will refuse Outdoor Relief to the old person if he tries to live alone, on the plea that he has no one to look after him. It is urged in defence of the policy of reckoning the whole income of the household as communistically available for the support of all its members, including a mere lodger if in any way related to the others, that any other course would involve the grant of relief where there was no actual destitution. We do not see that this follows. It is for the Destitution Authority to ascertain in each case whether or not the applicant is, as a matter of fact, suffering from insufficient food, clothing, warmth and shelter. "The party's wants," said one of our witnesses, "would be the primary consideration in the case." ‡ If he has, in fact, nourishment insufficient for health, inadequate clothing and warmth, or a lodging that is not sanitary, and if he has himself no means of providing these, it is the legal duty of the Destitution Authority to grant relief, even if some other persons in the household, not legally liable for his maintenance, have means that might, as an act of charity, be given to him for this purpose.§ There is, in law, no justification for a Destitution Authority denying relief to a person legally eligible for it, merely as a means of inducing some other person, out of charity or kindly feeling, to give alms. Thus, the fact that the aggregate income of the household would, if communistically dealt with, suffice to feed all its members, is, in itself, no evidence that the lodger—or, for that matter, the child found unfed at school—is not destitute. It may well be that the Relieving Officer of a Board of Guardians is not qualified to investigate and to judge whether destitution, in the sense of insufficiency of nourishment, clothing, warmth or shelter, from the standpoint of physiological efficiency or health, does or does not exist, and that such a Destitution Officer can get no nearer than an arithmetical computation of weekly income per head, to whomsoever the income belongs. But this is only to say that a mere Destitution Authority, with merely Destitution Officers, is not well-adapted to deal with what is essentially a Public Health problem. It is significant that, in Scotland, the opinion of the Medical Officer would be taken in every such case, at any rate so far as adult male applicants were concerned.

(ii.) *The Device of Relief on Loan.*

We have already noted that under the Elizabethan Poor Law, the Overseer's dole was a free gift for the relief of the destitute. Under the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, the obligation to grant relief as a free gift to destitute applicants was in no way abrogated. But a clause of that Act established a new and additional kind of relief previously quite unknown to the Poor Law, namely, that of a loan. It was enacted that any relief that the Central Authority might declare or direct to be by way of loan should be legally recoverable by the Board of Guardians as a debt due by the person relieved, even by attachment of wages.‖ The Central Authority promptly directed, by its Orders, that the Boards of Guardians might, at their discretion, declare any lawful relief to adult persons to be made by way of loan. This practice has continued in some Unions, and under certain circumstances, down to the present day. But it is one thing to declare that your assistance of a destitute person is by way of loan, and quite another thing to get the money back. The process of recovery of relief made by way of loan is even more difficult than in the case of contributions from

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 8635–8639, 16426–16428.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 36263 (Par. 19).

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 16178.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 12806–12808, 16164–16178, 36328–36334.

‖ Secs. 58 and 59 of Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834. Relief on Loan is unknown in Scotland.

relatives. The loan is a civil debt, for which the Board of Guardians can sue in the County Court; and on getting judgment, can proceed by way of distraint upon goods; or, upon proof of means, can obtain an order for committal of the defendant to prison for Contempt of Court. Or, when the person relieved by way of loan has got into wage-earning employment, the Board of Guardians may apply to a magistrate for an order requiring the employer to pay over to the Guardians, in repayment of the loan, such part of the wages as the magistrate, taking into consideration the circumstances of the man and his family, sees fit to direct.*

We have been unable to discover exactly what Parliament intended to effect by its establishment of Relief on Loan. Three distinct uses of this device have been suggested to us; and the Legislature may have intended any one of them. There is, first, the use of the device of Relief on Loan as a way of giving assistance to a destitute person supplementary to the mere relief of destitution, for the purpose of enabling him to better his position: as when he is provided with an outfit of tools or stock for trading—the kind of "relief" which could not be given to everybody, but which, as the experience of voluntary benevolent societies shows, may be advantageously afforded to selected persons, likely to repay the sum advanced. A second and quite different use of the device of granting relief by way of loan is to strengthen the legal position of the Destitution Authority with regard to recovering the amount of the relief, in the event of the person relieved (though momentarily destitute of food or lodging) having property that could presently be converted into money, or coming, at some future time, into possession of property or an income enabling him to repay the debt. The third use of the device of Relief on Loan is as a deterrent accompaniment of the ordinary relief of destitution, in order, by holding over him the threat of exacting repayment at some future time, to deter a destitute person from accepting, or even applying for, such relief. These three distinct uses of the device of Relief on Loan—as Supplementary Assistance to persons to enable them to better their condition, as a Method of Recoupment from the property of the persons relieved, and as a Deterrent Clog on ordinary relief—have all been advocated before us.

The use of the device of Relief on Loan as a means of affording Supplementary Assistance to necessitous persons, in order to enable them to better their condition, is seen at its best in the work of the admirable Voluntary Institution in London and Manchester, known as the Jewish Board of Guardians.† This body does not confine itself to relieving the momentary destitution of its clients, but habitually makes small advances to many of them, in order to enable them to change their occupations, to obtain tools, or stock, or even industrial training, so that they may be enabled to better their condition. During the first few years of the New Poor Law, some of the Boards of Guardians seem to have assumed that this was the use of Relief on Loan that Parliament had intended; and they made certain attempts to give this kind of Supplementary Assistance.‡ The Poor Law Commissioners imagined, at any rate, that nothing would be granted by way of loan, except with the real intention of the loan being repaid.§ Presently, however, the Poor Law Board intervened, and prohibited any such use of the device of Relief on Loan. It was held, in effect, that Relief on Loan was not a new or additional relief, but only another form in which the ordinary relief of actual destitution might be given. What could not lawfully be given was not to be lent.‖ Accompanying this prohibition of Relief on Loan as Supplementary Assistance to enable people to better their condition, the Poor Law Commissioners suggested what we have termed the second use of the device, namely, as a Method of Recoupment from the property of the person relieved or from that of those liable to maintain him. As an example of occasions suitable for Relief on Loan, the Poor Law Commissioners adduced, not, be it noted, any case of Medical

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 9497; Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 17533, 18067, 18072, 21460, 30175–30587; and Appendix No. XLI. to Vol. IV.

‡ We find, for instance, the following rule adopted by the Atcham Board of Guardians in 1837: "Resolved that no sum of money under 10s., nor above 30s., be advanced by way of loan, and that repayment of the sums advanced be, in every instance, strictly enforced." (MS. Minutes, Atcham Board of Guardians, June 19th, 1837.) Various of our witnesses have advocated the adoption by Boards of Guardians of this use of Relief on Loan, more especially in starting afresh deserving men who have been for some time unemployed through sickness; *see*, for instance, evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 50024, 50025, 50993.

§ *See* their instructions in *Official Circular*, No. 23, p. 47 (February, 1843).

‖ Circular of July, 1850, in *Official Circular*, No. 39, N.S., 1850, p. 108; Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, August 25th, 1852, and December 14th, 1852; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority, 1834 to 1907, p. 72.

Relief, but the destitution of a mentally defective person enjoying a regular and sufficient income, but nevertheless, from incapacity to manage his property, sometimes without food. Other examples given were those of the wives or children of persons having means, who were found apart from their husbands or fathers in a state of destitution. A further instance supplied was that of the mother of an illegitimate child, who had the right to receive periodical payments from the putative father.* This use of the device of Relief on Loan seems, however, never to have prevailed to any considerable extent, and it was, perhaps, presently rendered unnecessary by amendments in the law, which made clear the legal right of the Destitution Authority to recoup itself by appropriating any property or valuable securities found in the pauper's possession, or after his death ; † to recover, as an ordinary civil debt, the cost of any Poor Law relief afforded to lunatics ; ‡ to claim from the husband the cost of any relief afforded to his wife ; § and to proceed against a wife having separate estate for relief afforded to her husband. || Nevertheless we find, to-day, one or two Boards of Guardians—perhaps as the result of some unfortunate legal experience—formally declaring, with regard to all the relief that they grant, indoor as well as outdoor, whatever may be the circumstances of the recipient, that it is " on loan " ; these words being printed as a matter of course on all the orders for relief of any kind, on the supposition that they would, in some way, strengthen a possible future claim to recover the cost of the relief in case any pauper eventually became entitled to a legacy, or otherwise came into a fortune.¶

The third use of the device of Relief on Loan—that of making it a Deterrent Clog on the grant of relief—was, we gather, introduced by the able Inspectorate of the Local Government Board between 1871 and 1890, as a part of their campaign against Outdoor Relief of any kind.** By affixing this Deterrent Clog to relief, or to some particular kinds of relief, these Inspectors hoped to prevent many persons from applying to the Destitution Authority, or to prevent them from accepting the relief when offered. It was suggested, in particular, that the device might advantageously be used with regard to Medical Relief, on the ground that this was often the " first step to pauperism," among a class " not wholly destitute of means." ††

We have sought to discover what exactly is the legal position of the Destitution Authority in making this use of the device of Relief on Loan. A Board of Guardians has clearly the power, under the Statutes and the Orders, to declare any lawful relief that it offers to be granted by way of loan. But it is equally clear that a destitute person is under no legal obligation to accept the relief in that form or subject to any condition of future repayment. It was, for instance, definitely laid down by the Local Government Board in 1880 that " the Relieving Officer has no power to compel any applicant to accept relief on loan."‡‡ Moreover, in order to incur legal liability to repay, it must definitely

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* Circular of May 25th, 1849, in *Official Circular*, No. 25, N.S., 1849, p. 70 ; Circular of September, 1850, in *Official Circular*, No. 41, N.S., 1850, p. 131 ; Outdoor Relief Regulation Order of August 25th, 1852, and December 14th, 1852 ; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 73.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 110 ; Poor Law Amendment Act, 1849, Sec. 10.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 345 ; Lunacy Act, 1890, Secs. 296–300, and 314.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 103 ; Poor Law Amendment Act, 1850, Sec. 5 ; ditto, 1868, Sec. 33.

|| Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 105 ; Married Women's Property Act, 1882, Sec. 20.

¶ Regulations of Bristol Board of Guardians.

** Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 125.

†† So far as we have ascertained, it was in Mr. Corbett's Report of 1871 that was revived the suggestion thrown out in 1840 that Medical Relief in particular might be given on loan ; and even that it should be " generally granted by way of loan " (Third Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1873–1874), without regard, it would seem, to the probability of its being recovered. This opinion of the inspectorate, though constantly pressed on Boards of Guardians, did not, in 1877, receive the explicit endorsement of the Central Authority. An influential proposal to make all relief (and especially all Medical Relief) recoverable as if given on loan was definitely negatived. " The policy of the existing law," it was declared, " is that the question whether or not relief shall be granted on loan, or in other words, whether it shall be recoverable at a future time, is to be determined by a consideration of the actual circumstances existing at the time the relief is granted." (Local Government Board to Chairman of Central Poor Law Conference, May 12th, 1877 ; Seventh Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1877–1878, p. 54.)

‡‡ *Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board*, Vol. II., 1883, pp. 70, 110. Nevertheless, various Unions have rules requiring the Relieving Officer to make all " sudden or urgent necessity " relief by way of loan. (Rules of the Chard, Leominster, Hemel Hempsted, and Stockport Boards of Guardians.)

be made known to the person to be relieved, at the time of making the relief, that it is by way of loan ; the person relieved must presumably be in a position to accept the relief as a loan ; and he must, by implication at least, by himself or by someone having authority to pledge his credit, consent to receive the relief as a loan. Thus, relief cannot be given to a lunatic by way of loan in such a way as to render the amount recoverable from him if he became sane.* Similarly, we were authoritatively advised that relief could not be given, as by way of loan, to a person suffering from *delirium tremens*, unless, indeed, he had a lucid interval.† Nor can the grant of an order of admission to the Workhouse to a man so drunk as to be incapable of understanding be made by way of loan. ‡ And if a destitute person refuses to consent to receive the relief as on loan, or is not in a state in which he can consent, the Destitution Authority is nevertheless under a legal obligation to give him the relief that his necessities require.§ Thus, if all destitute applicants were made aware of the actual state of the law, this use of the device of Relief on Loan, so ingeniously invented by the Inspectorate of 1871–1890, would become impossible. Moreover, it is not easy to see how the legal position of the Guardians in the way of recovering the cost of the relief if the recipient should afterwards prove to have means, is, at the present day, in any way strengthened by the relief having been given by way of loan. Thus, whether or not the relief has been granted by way of loan, where a pauper has in his possession any money or valuable security for money, or is found at his death to have had such, the Board of Guardians may recoup itself from such property to the extent of twelve months' relief.‖ Further, the Guardians have a right to recover, as ordinary creditors, for six years' maintenance of a pauper lunatic to whom any legacy or other debt becomes payable.** Army and Navy pensions accruing to paupers can be attached and appropriated to the cost of their relief.¶

We have to report that, notwithstanding the uncertainty as to the legal position, the device of Relief on Loan, as a Deterrent Clog on relief, or "as a form of test," †† is still employed by various Boards of Guardians—more especially in the rural Unions—to a not inconsiderable extent. According to the published rules of a dozen or more Unions, relief is, with the avowed object of deterring applicants, to be granted only by way of loan to all men, whatever their likelihood of ever being able to repay the amount, who are disabled "by accident" or by "temporary illness" ; and in midwifery cases ; and for funeral expenses ; and to all single men and women under sixty.‡‡ We have it in evidence that the Bradfield Board of Guardians, by making all its Medical Relief by way of Loan, and by charging as much as 6s. for the service of the District Medical Officer, reduced the number of its Medical Orders from 700 a year to 47.§§ A similar practice prevails at St. Neot's.‖‖ There is evidence that in the case of Medical Relief, the practice of giving it only on loan has, especially when first established and with regard to any but the most serious ailments, a very deterrent effect on applicants. "It has," even in the Metropolis, "a certain effect in preventing persons applying who would otherwise have applied."¶¶ Hence, some of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, who still aim at restricting as much as possible the services of the Poor Law, continue to recommend

* Though if he is entitled to a weekly allowance or has any property, this can be made available to repay the relief. (*Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board*, Vol. I., 1880, p. 184.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 755, 1083, 1084, 2480–2484. Notwithstanding this absence of power to consent, the Hampstead Board of Guardians insists "that all relief given to persons suffering from delirium tremens be by way of loan, and that all applicants for such relief be so informed (!) by the officer giving the Order for the admission," a provision of very doubtful legality. (MS. Minutes, Hampstead Board of Guardians, May 19th, 1904.)

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 17087–17089.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 2482.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 110 ; Poor Law Amendment Act, 1849, Sec. 10.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 110 ; and the case there cited. The position is different in Scotland, where the Parish Council has no recourse against a pauper for recovery of the relief granted, even if the pauper has come into a legacy. The relation of debtor and creditor never obtains. (Kilmartin *v.* Macfarlane, 1885, 12. R. 713 ; P.L.M. 1885, 244).

** Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 111 ; Pensions Act, 1839.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 7826.

‡‡ Rules of the Monmouth, Pontypridd, Williton, Hardingstone, Blandford, Whitchurch, St. Neot's, Chard, Long Ashton, Horncastle and Glanford Brigg Boards of Guardians.

§§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 9499, 19781, and Appendix No. CCXI. (A) to Vol. VII.

‖‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 6255.

¶¶ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 23077.

this use of the device of Relief on Loan.* But the more usual opinion, alike of Clerks to Boards of Guardians and Local Government Board Inspectors, is that Relief on Loan "appears to be almost an empty threat," † any deterrent effect being found to "gradually pass away." ‡ It is, in fact, quickly discovered that there is very little practical power of recovering the loan by legal proceedings. Those to whom the so-called loans are made are seldom in a position to repay them, and the Board of Guardians does not find it profitable to take legal proceedings to recover its debt. § The amount voluntarily repaid is "comparatively trivial," and "more trouble than it is worth," even when collectors are spurred to activity by a 20 per cent. commission. ‖ The process of obtaining a magistrate's order for the attachment of wages has gone entirely out of use. ¶ If the Board of Guardians goes to the trouble and expense of proceedings in the County Court, it may get judgment, but it will probably find no goods worth distraining on, even if it deemed it good policy to strip the miserable apology for a home of those whose destitution it would then have again to relieve. If an order for committal to prison is applied, proof of means must be given; and, as a Guardian of a large Metropolitan Union deposed, "we have never yet, although we have tried several times, been able to get a case in which we could give . . . clear evidence that the man could pay," without which the proceedings were "merely a costly process with no result." **

But apart from the difficulty of recovering the loans, the whole policy of using the device of Relief on Loan as a Deterrent Clog has fallen into disrepute. Even those Poor Law administrators who still believe in the desirability of "deterring" destitute persons from applying for relief recognise that it is demoralising to pretend that a liability exists which can be denied, which will be ignored by the practised pauper, and which will bear hardly only on the really deserving, guileless applicant. "It would be rather absurd," said the present Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, "to give a man relief on loan when it is perfectly obvious that he cannot repay it." †† The practice may, moreover, work in a direction exactly opposite to that intended by its advocates. Those who watch it in operation have misgivings as to whether it does not lead to a more lax and less discriminating grant of Outdoor Relief than would be the case if there were no pretence that the money was going to be repaid. ‡‡ It may even induce people to apply who would otherwise have abstained. "My experience," said the Clerk of a Metropolitan Board of Guardians, "is that it is unworkable and in many cases undesirable, and my reason is that the pauper gets to regard it as a sort of loan society, and thinks that he does not get [Poor Law] relief. He comes and says, 'I require a certain thing, an order for my wife, and I am going to pay you back,' and he never does pay it back. . . . The amount recovered was so infinitesimal and so much labour was attached to getting anything, that we have practically discontinued it." §§ If a charge is made for the services of the District Medical Officer, and this relief is granted "on loan," and actually repaid, it has been suggested to us, on high authority, that the Board of Guardians runs a risk of competing with Medical Clubs and other forms of medical insurance. ‖‖ Relief on Loan is objectionable, says another witness, because "in the first place it is a very serious deterrent. In the next place, the Guardians get very little repaid, so it is of very little good. And in the third place, it impoverishes the family just at the time when they

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 9503, 22618, 22702.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 23079.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4296, 7827, 8215, 18699, 19203, 19889, 23087, 31748, 44372, 44478, 50425–50429, 52196.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4296, 7827, 18698, 19881, 23087, 20780–20783, 44372, 44478, 44479, 50489, 52196.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 9497, 9498.

** *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 17092, 19688–19690.

†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 2739.

‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 2739.

§§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 19201, 19203. In Manchester, the amount recovered, out of relief on loan, varies from £2 to £9 per annum, out of £12 to £34 so granted, only one order for payment being obtained from the County Court in the course of six years. (Report of Superintendent of Relief to Manchester Board of Guardians, for 1903–5, p. 22.)

‖‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 2738. To make any substantial charge for Medical Relief is, in the case of destitute persons, an absurdity; whilst the making of a nominal charge was objected to by an experienced Poor Law Official as being actually "an inducement for persons to apply for Medical Relief, if they found they could get it so cheaply." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 20271–20275.)

want more money, when there is illness in the house—which costs a great deal of money, as we all know. That is just the time when you should not burden the family. Then it is demoralising in most cases, because the man does not pay it back and in many cases he cannot, and there is the debt hanging on his back. Altogether making relief a loan is usually a very bad thing."* Finally, even in the case where a deserving man has accepted, with the utmost integrity, the relief as a loan, it is seldom desirable that he should have to repay the amount. "It would be at variance with" a proper Poor Law policy, declared the Local Government Board itself in 1877, "if every recipient of relief were to feel that, after he had again succeeded in obtaining employment, any savings he might be able to put by would be liable for the repayment of the relief which he might have received."† "The loan system," declared a medical witness, "should be abolished, as it is calculated to increase pauperism , . . . and discourage thrift."‡ In fact, a Relieving Officer informed us that, in his opinion, "there is nothing more absurd than relief on loan of any kind." §

(b) Charge and Recovery by the Public Health Authority.

Individual chargeability is not confined to the realm of the Poor Law. The Local Health Authority may, in England and Wales only, under the Public Health Acts and Isolation Hospitals Acts, make a definite charge for maintenance in its hospitals, for which it can sue the patient. But it is a personal charge only; the relations of the patient come under no liability.‖ If the patient is a minor it does not appear that any such charge is legally recoverable; and if the patient dies it seems doubtful whether the charge could, in the absence of any agreement, be enforced against his estate. Under these provisions of the Public Health Acts and the Isolation Hospitals Acts, all sorts of arrangements are made by different authorities for the recovery from the patients of a part or the whole of the cost of their maintenance and medical treatment. In a few towns, in the cases of some or all of the patients, the patient himself, or the father or other responsible person, is invited to enter into an agreement for the payment of various sums, any such special contract being in all cases only voluntary. In some towns the patient, without a contract, is charged according to his ability to pay, the rough test being the rateable value of his domicile; under £25 a year free, or a nominal sum; £25 to £50 a year a substantial contribution; over £50 a year the whole cost. This scale is, however, criticised as logically inequitable, those patients who are large ratepayers already contributing in larger proportion to the municipal expenditure than those who pay less in rates. Hence some Local Health Authorities prefer to take income as the test of ability to pay, admitting, for instance, ratepayers earning less than £1 a week free of charge; those earning between 20s. and 30s., at half-a-crown a week; those between 30s. and 40s., at 5s. a week; those between 40s. and 50s., at 7s. 6d. a week; those between 50s. and 60s., at 10s. a week; those between 60s. and 80s., at 15s. a week; whilst those over 80s. are charged £1 a week. Others, again, make a discrimination between local ratepayers and strangers or "visitors"; the latter, as at Romney Marsh, "being asked to pay the entire cost of their maintenance and treatment"; or, as at Bridlington, being charged from 10s. to 40s. according to circumstances, as may be decided by the committee.¶ In another town it is usual to make no charge to local residents having incomes under £2 per week. In the great majority of instances, however, no charge whatever is made, either for medical treatment or for maintenance, in the general wards of the municipal hospitals. Experience soon showed that if it was desired to get these hospitals generally used—and this was most keenly desired in the case of small-pox and other demonstrably dangerous diseases—it was necessary to make them absolutely free. Accordingly, with the approval of the Local Government Board, all attempt to make a charge has been generally abandoned.**

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 25553.

† Local Government Board to the Chairman of the Central Poor Law Conference, May 12th, 1877; Seventh Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1877–1878, p. 54; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 125.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 44421, par. 4.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 68091 (par. 10), 68142–68149.

‖ It has been definitely held that the patient alone was chargeable; a parent is not even chargeable for his child. (*Selections from the Correspondence of the Local Government Board*, Vol. I., 1880, p. 18.)

¶ Scale of charges of Municipal Sanatorium at Bridlington (Yorkshire), 1905.

** Thus, in the municipal hospital of Newcastle, out of 502 patients admitted, 501 came in free, whilst one only was paid for, and that not by himself, but by a private guarantor. (Report on the Health of Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1905, by Medical Officer of Health.) "There was," it is given in evidence, "in Huddersfield an attempt at one time to recover the cost, or to make the people pay. I was always personally strongly against it. My reason was that if people were segregated for the benefit of the community, the community ought to pay for it. It was tried for a short time and given up at last." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 41526.) In Scotland no charge is made, or would be lawful.

"The more enlightened sanitary authorities," says a Local Government Board Inspector, "make no charge for patients in the isolation hospitals, and this is the proper line to take. The cases are not removed as a matter of relief, but for the protection of the public health. All classes of the community are made to contribute to the support of the hospitals, and all classes are entitled to the benefits they confer. Directly a payment is imposed an influence adverse to the use of the hospital is introduced. The great object in view is to do everything possible to get all the cases which cannot be effectively isolated at home into hospital at the earliest possible date. It is by this means that the patients stand the best chance of favourable treatment, and that the spread of disease is stopped at once."* Parliament has expressly sanctioned this view, so far as the Metropolis is concerned, first by a provision in the Diseases Prevention (London) Act of 1883,† and then, in 1891, by omitting from the Public Health (London) Act of that year, ‡ all provisions as to making a charge or recovering any contribution.

On the other hand, a few Town Councils make charges for the use of their Municipal Hospitals at such prohibitive rates as to cause them to remain practically empty. Thus, at Shrewsbury, the Town Council admits persons suffering from infectious disease to its Isolation Hospital, the only one in the whole county, upon terms of their finding their own doctor and nurse, providing their own food and other necessaries, and paying, in addition, 20s. per week during their stay by way of rent. The result is that the Hospital usually stands empty; and cases of scarlet fever and enteric fever, like diphtheria and measles, have to be treated at home, however little possibility of isolation there may be. Even the local Board of Guardians (that of Atcham) has to treat paupers suffering from infectious disease in the General Mixed Workhouse, "in the midst of a community of four or five hundred, many of whom are children," § rather than comply with the prohibitive terms by which the Shrewsbury Town Council chooses to nullify the intention of the statute. This would be incomprehensible in Scotland.

The more usual adoption of the principle of gratuitous admission to the Municipal Hospitals does not mean that none of the inmates contribute to their maintenance. At the Brighton Town Council's Sanatorium for Consumption, there are among the patients some paying as much as 30s. a week. These are allowed private bedrooms. In other cases even more may be charged, in return for particular privileges, such as a special nurse. The Town Council of Eastbourne reserves four of the pavilions of its hospital for the Eastbourne schoolmasters' and schoolmistresses' associations, for the admission of the pupils of their expensive private boarding schools, in return for retaining fees of £150 and £180 per annum respectively.‖ What is most remarkable is that the Town Council often obtains payment for the admission to its hospitals of precisely the very poorest class of patients. The Local Government Board has decided that the Public Health Authority is under no obligation to provide hospital accommodation for the not inconsiderable proportion of the inhabitants of its district who happen to be destitute. For these persons, whether already in receipt of Poor Relief or not, it is the duty of the Board of Guardians to provide what is necessary, even in cases of infectious disease.¶ Accordingly, some Public Health Authorities refuse to admit to their hospitals Workhouse

* Thirty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1903–1904, Appendix B., p. 179, Mr. Fleming's Report.

† 46 and 47 Vict., c. 35.

‡ 54 and 55 Vict., c. 76. By a curious anomaly, the cost of each patient, although not a pauper, is still charged to and paid by the Board of Guardians of the Union in which he resides; and the amount is then repaid to the Board of Guardians from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 21315 (par. 17), 24223.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 70186 (Par. 3), 70193–70201.

‖ Report on the Health of Eastbourne, 1905, by Medical Officer of Health, pp. 3, 10.

¶ "When a person suffering from illness, including infectious disease, is destitute, it is the duty of the Guardians, or, in the interval between their meetings, of the Relieving Officer, to give such relief as the case may require, and if necessary to give an Order for the admission of the patient to a hospital in which he can be properly treated. . . . The test of the Guardians' duty in the matter is the destitution of the patient, and this will not necessarily depend upon his being in the actual receipt of poor relief, but may consist in his being unable to obtain at his own cost the requisite medical attendance, nursing and accommodation. Where it devolves upon the Guardians to deal with cases of infectious disease which require hospital accommodation, they are not restricted to providing for the treatment of such cases in the Workhouse. On the contrary, the Board consider it very desirable that the Guardians should arrange with the Sanitary Authority for the reception into their hospital, when necessary, of any destitute persons suffering from infectious disease upon such terms as may be mutually agreed upon between the Guardians and the Authority, and that this arrangement should include cases occurring among the inmates of the workhouse." (Local Government Board to Holbeach Board of Guardians, March 15th, 1905.)

inmates (including occupants of the casual ward) suffering from infectious disease. In other cases they have agreed to receive such patients only on payment by the Board of Guardians. The status of the patient so admitted, his liability to refund the cost of his maintenance, and the obligation of his relations to contribute in default, as we have already mentioned, all depend, in law and in practice, on the particular character of the voluntary arrangement entered into between the Poor Law and Public Health Authorities. In those Unions in which the Board of Guardians prefer to pay a fixed annual sum, which ranges in fact from £2 (as at Yeovil) to £300 (as at Bristol)—as also in those Unions in which the Public Health Authority admits the Poor Law patients, like others, free of charge—the pauper admitted to the Municipal Hospital thereupon instantly ceases to be a pauper; and neither he nor his relations are liable for any part of his cost, or subject to any stigma or disqualification. On the other hand, in those Unions in which the Board of Guardians pays at a rate per head—sometimes as much as 7s. per diem—the pauper patient, lying in the general ward among non-pauper patients who are admitted free, remains a pauper; he is liable to repay the full cost of his maintenance; he is disqualified for the franchise; and his relations are liable to contribute. Thus, we have the paradox that under the present conflicting jurisdictions of the Poor Law and Public Health Authorities, it is in respect of the most destitute of its patients that the Public Health Authority recovers the most; whilst when such most destitute patients or their relations contribute—being perhaps the only patients who contribute at all—they nevertheless remain paupers, subject to a stigma and to disqualifications from which those patients who are maintained and treated wholly free of charge are entirely exempt.

(c) Charge and Recovery for the Maintenance of Children by the Education Authority and the Police Authority.

With the almost universal abolition of fees in the Public Elementary Schools, the Education Authority has given up the bulk of the charges that it formally made on parents for the education of their children. In the rapidly extending field of Secondary and University Education, so far as the institutions are maintained by the Local Education Authorities, the charging of substantial fees (which do not, however, cover more than a fraction of the cost) is almost universal. This is mitigated by an abundance of Scholarships, usually carrying whole or partial maintenance, as well as free schooling, by means of which somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 of the poorer children, including a few who are or have lately been in receipt of Poor Relief, are now being educated. What is more nearly akin to the practice of the Destitution and Public Health Authorities is the provision of maintenance in residential schools, and the charges made for it.

So far as the residential institutions of the Education Authorities of Secondary or University grade are concerned (boarding schools, pupil-teacher centres or training colleges), admission is purely a matter of voluntary agreement, the fees charged are usually received in advance, and, if not paid, they are recovered only as civil debts. But, for the most part, the pupils at these institutions are maintained and educated free of charge, as a method of training teachers.

In London and some other large towns where there are residential schools for mentally or physically defective children, the parents are required by the Council to pay 1s., 2s. or 3s. per week towards their maintenance, which charges are in practice agreed to by the parents, and are then recoverable as civil debts. Where the parents are really unable to pay (and this is, in London, the case only in about one-eighth of the families) no charge is made. There are even some scores of blind or deaf children "boarded-out" by the London Education Authority, so that they may reside near schools suitable to their needs; and in these cases the parents are charged a weekly sum. Taking the whole of the defective children thus provided for by the London Education Authority, paying and not paying, a sum of 11d. per week for each child was, in 1906–7, actually collected from the parents.* In the day schools for blind, deaf or crippled children in London, which contain nearly 3,000 boys and girls, meals are provided for all the pupils, towards which the parents are required to make a weekly contribution for the cost of the food; and an average of 1d. per day per child is thus collected.

On the other hand, for the 100,000 children who, as we have seen, were supplied with meals last winter under the auspices and largely at the expense of the Education Authorities,

* Report of the London County Council (Education Committee) . . . dealing with schools for blind, deaf, etc., children, for 1906–1907 (No. 1183 of 1908).

practically nothing is charged to or recovered from the parents. In a large number of cases—in London alone about 1,600—the families are simultaneously in receipt of Outdoor Relief from the Destitution Authority; in a small number they are being relieved of the maintenance of one or more children by the Industrial Schools of the Education Authority or the Reformatory Schools. There is no co-ordination, or even mutual knowledge of these various activities; and if the Education Authority were seriously to attempt to recover the cost of the meals, we should have the curious anomaly of three different authorities endeavouring to collect charges from the same family.

For the 30,000 children maintained in the schools under the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts, by County and County Borough Councils and by voluntary Committees under the supervision of the Home Office, the parents are required, by magistrate's order, in about 40 per cent. of the cases, to make some weekly payment, usually of 1s., 2s. or 3s. each, according to their means. The practice is to leave a definite sum per head, over and above the rent, for the family maintenance, and to limit the order to such payment as can then be afforded out of the wages. In about 30 per cent. of the cases, mostly those in which there are no discoverable parents, or the parents are absolutely destitute, no order for payment is made. The payments are generally collected by the police, acting as the agents of the Home Office, and are paid in to the Exchequer.* Failure to pay can be followed by an order by the magistrate committing the defaulting parent to prison for a short term—not, as in the case of the Board of Guardians' recovery of Relief on Loan, on proof of means, for Contempt of Court—but in mere consequence of the failure to pay, without evidence of means, as if the amount due had been a fine or penalty.

We have had suggested to us that Destitution Authorities should be given the same powers of collecting their personal assessments, by putting summarily into prison, without any evidence of means, those who fail to keep up their weekly payments, as is used by the Home Office in the case of payments for children in Reformatory and Industrial Schools. It must be remembered, however, that in the latter cases, the charge itself is made by a judicial authority, after inquiry into means, not by a mere resolution of an administrative body; and that it is to some extent in the nature of a penalty upon the parent for allowing his child to become liable to be detained in a Reformatory or Industrial School. Moreover, we gravely doubt the advantage of putting a man in prison merely because he does not pay his debts. We have ourselves come across cases—though we believe that the Home Office endeavours in all such instances to excuse payment—in which, whilst the agents of the Home Office were exacting a weekly payment from the father, the local Board of Guardians was having to relieve him and his family as destitute—was, in fact, partly supplying, week by week, from the Poor Rate, the money which was being collected from him for the Exchequer. In other cases we have found the family reduced to pauperism, because the father had been committed to prison for non-payment of such a contribution for a child in an Industrial School.†

(D) The Need for Uniformity of Principle and Judicial Adjudication in Personal Assessments.

The foregoing survey of the process of charge on and recovery from individuals of the cost of maintenance, by all the various Local Authorities concerned, reveals a lack of principle and uniformity, and a chaos of careless laxity and arbitrary oppression, which are demoralising alike to the Authorities themselves, to their officers, and to the persons upon whom these special assessments are levied or not levied. The first need appears to be the adoption by the Legislature of some definite principle according to which these special assessments should be made, and its uniform application, by express enactment,

* In London, Bristol, Salford, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen, the Home Office has special agents, and does not use the police.

† Of the cases heard by one of our Committees at a single meeting of a Board of Guardians, "two were cases of parents having been sent to prison for the non-payment of the maintenance of their children in an Industrial School. In one case the father was actually in receipt of relief when committed to prison, and during his imprisonment the whole charge for the maintenance of his family fell upon the Guardians." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 3, p. 112.) In another Union, our Committee reported the case of an "outdoor labourer, earning about 12s. a week, with wife and three children at home," who "had been sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment at the instance of the Police Authorities because he had neglected to contribute to the maintenance of his eldest two boys, aged respectively seventeen and fifteen, who are in a reformatory, to which they had been committed after conviction for theft. This seemed to us to be a particularly hard case. The ages of the boys are such that they should be earning their livelihood (or at least part of it), but instead of this being so, their father was suffering imprisonment on their account, and the Guardians were having to keep the wife and three children. [The father] was said to be a most respectable, quiet living man." (*Ibid.*, No. 51 B., p. 105.)

to all the various kinds of services. At present, there is no common or consistent principle discoverable in the medley of clauses in the different statutes of the past three centuries, defining the pecuniary obligations of individual citizens for services rendered by the Local Authorities to themselves or their relations. We do not mean merely that some of these public services are, by law, made gratuitous, like elementary schooling and ordinary sanitation, whilst others, such as compulsory residence in a lunatic asylum, or the treatment of illness in a Poor Law Infirmary, are made the subject of personal assessments on the patients themselves and even on their relations. Some such differentiation among services, so that some are gratuitous and others charged for, is plainly only reasonable; though here, we think, it would be well for the Legislature to reconsider the anomalies into which it has been led. What, however, is urgent is the adoption of some uniform principle, with regard to charging or not charging, throughout the whole of each service, whether it is administered by one Local Authority or by another. Thus, in the maintenance and treatment of sick persons in the Isolation Hospitals maintained out of the Poor Rate, the Metropolitan Asylums Board cannot charge even the patients themselves, however rich they may be; outside London, the Public Health Authority may treat any disease, and insist on payment from the patients in its hospitals, however poor they may be, but cannot make a charge on any of their relations—not even upon fathers for their dependent children; whilst the Destitution Authority may recover the cost of those sick persons whom it treats, whether they are suffering from infectious disease or not, not merely from the patients themselves, but from their relations—even from a grandfather for a grandson whom he has never seen. A similar diversity prevails in the liability of parents to contribute towards the support of their young children, according to whether the children fall into the hands of the Poor Law Authority, the Education Authority, or the Police Authority under the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts; the legal powers of recovery being far more drastic in the last case than in the first. Moreover there have crept into the law certain anomalous procedures which require to be considered. One of these is the device of Relief on Loan, established under the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, and, strangely enough, limited to the Authority which can lawfully deal only with persons who are destitute, and therefore the very last to whom credit should be given. This legalised procedure of empty threats, and deterrent clogs on the performance of the service, appears to us wholly injurious, and ought to be at once abolished.

The inconsistencies of the law with regard to these personal assessments are, however, less important in their demoralising partiality than the chaos of arbitrary inequalities that prevails in the administration. This chaos results from leaving the decision, as to whether or not these personal assessments should be made, to the unguided discretion of innumerable administrative bodies, occupied with heterogeneous services, with different views as to policy, and having shifting memberships.

There is, first of all, the absence of co-ordination among the different Local Authorities with regard to their decisions as to personal assessments. It is nothing short of scandalous that the Education Committee of the Town Council should be putting a father in prison for not contributing to the maintenance of one of his children in an Industrial School, at the very moment that the Board of Guardians is granting him Outdoor Relief to maintain his other children.* It is equally absurd for a Board of Guardians to be levying a contribution on a man for the maintenance of his aged father, whilst the Education Committee is exempting him, on the ground of poverty, from paying for the meals supplied at school to his hungry children. It does not seem reasonable that the Medical Officer of Health should be supplying an infant with milk and medical advice absolutely free of charge, whilst the Asylums Committee is insisting on being paid by the father for the maintenance of the mother as a person temporarily insane. Still more objectionable is it that the practised and unscrupulous "cadger" can get help free of charge from all the different Authorities in the town—his children fed and medically attended to at the school, his wife gratuitously taken in for her confinements at the Workhouse, and his own ailments cured in the comfortable hospital of the Public Health

* In the Report of "the Lord Mayor's Unemployed Committee" at Liverpool, for 1905, we read that "a good deal of unnecessary suffering is caused by the action of the Education Committee in sending men to prison for arrears of Industrial School, and other dues. The Committee dealt with a considerable number of families who were left with no one to provide for them whilst the father was in gaol; in one case, we paid the arrears."

Committee—all without any of these public authorities necessarily having any knowledge of what the others are doing. It is imperative that there should be in each locality at least a common register of these different forms of public assistance of one and the same family.

But the existence of a common register of public assistance, to which all the Local Authorities of the area concerned had easy access, though it might prevent the overlapping due to ignorance of each other's activities, would not cure the inconsistencies of policy and inequalities of execution of the different Local Authorities, with regard to the personal assessments levied on the families with whom they dealt. In such a matter we do not think that the policy of charging or not charging ought to be left to be determined by the Local Authority at all. The charge is a compulsory levy, to be enforced by all the power of the law. These special assessments upon individuals in respect of particular services, as to the acceptance of which they have practically no option, amount, in reality, to taxation; and taxation is a matter upon which, if only for the sake of geographical uniformity, the decision of the Legislature should prevail. It is, for instance, inequitable that in one Welsh town the Public Health Authority should be maintaining a free hospital for the gratuitous treatment of all ailments whatsoever, whilst in an English town on the Welsh Border, the Public Health Authority levies a charge of almost prohibitive amount for the treatment even of scarlet fever cases. It is inequitable that in one Union a lax Board of Guardians should be allowing negligent parents to thrust their children into expensive Poor Law schools absolutely free of charge, whilst, in the very next Union, compulsory contributions are rigorously levied for all children in the Workhouse, even (in Great Britain, but not in Ireland) on grandfathers in the position of agricultural labourers.

The work of adjudicating upon particular cases—of assessing how much each person should pay, or whether he should be excused on the ground of poverty—appears to us no less unsuitable for a local administrative body than the general decision of whether or not the tax should be levied at all. Whether the policy to be pursued is determined by Parliament or by the Local Authority, its application to individual cases, according to the evidence adduced with regard to each, is work for which a many-headed tribunal, mutable in its membership, is inherently and inevitably wholly unfitted. We do not need to repeat what we have said on this point with regard to the decision whether or not a particular case comes within the rules entitling it to receive Outdoor Relief. The same considerations—the need for excluding neighbourly partiality, personal friendship, individual idiosyncracies or personal views as to policy, and for avoiding variations in decisions according to the presence or absence of this or that member—apply with doubled force when what is at issue is whether the case comes within the rules, not for the grant of money but for the levying of a tax. Nor are these arguments affected by the substitution of a nominated for an elected body. When the levying of taxes on individuals is at stake, a nominated committee is even less satisfactory than one resting upon the authority of popular election. But there is an additional argument, in this matter of charges or personal assessments, against the performance of the work by an administrative committee. With regard to Outdoor Relief at present, the same body that awards it orders its issue. With regard to the charges to be made on individuals, the administrative body which tells a man that he must pay cannot itself enforce the payment. For this purpose the Local Authority must have recourse to a judicial officer—it may be (as under the Elizabethan statute or under the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act) for a magistrate's order charging a definite sum per week; it may be (as in the recovery of Poor Law relief from the recipient, and Relief on Loan) by way of civil suit in the County Court. The magistrate or County Court Judge before whom the case happens to be brought has to exercise his own discretion, and inevitably sometimes takes a different view from that of the administrative body, either as to the legal liability, or as to the policy of making a charge at all, or as to what constitutes means of repayment. This division of authority enables many to escape payment who expected to be made to pay; and this brings both the law and the Local Authority into contempt. Thus, it seems desirable that the Authority deciding, according to the law and policy otherwise determined, upon the charges to be made upon particular individuals, ought itself to have the power, by whatever means are lawfully appropriate, of actually enforcing the payment. It is clear that such powers of enforcing payment could not be granted to an administrative committee.

These arguments apply, it will be seen, equally to the charges or personal assessments made by the Local Education Authority and the Local Health Authority, as to those made by the Destitution Authority. Moreover, as all the Local Authorities may be

dealing with the same persons, or the same families, it seems essential that the work of adjudication, in this matter of personal assessments, should be performed for all of them by a common Authority—in fact, by one and the same officer, specially versed in the law, and acting in a judicial capacity. The same officer might appropriately be placed in charge of the common register, to which we have already referred, of all the public assistance, whatever its kind, afforded to the residents within his district.

(E) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report :—

1. That the existing provisions of the law for charging to, and recovering from, particular individuals, the cost of various forms of public assistance afforded to them, to their dependents or to other persons for whom they are legally liable to contribute, are confused and inconsistent with each other, and are based on no discoverable principle.

2. That the practice of the multifarious Local Authorities, with regard to charging or recovering the cost of public assistance, varies, for identical services rendered to persons in identical economic circumstances, from place to place, from case to case, and even from time to time in one and the same case, according to the idiosyncracies of the members who happen to be present at successive meetings.

3. That the confused and uncertain state of the law, and the haphazard conflict of practice, lead to hardship and oppression on the one hand, and to demoralising laxity on the other ; the net result being that a serious loss of revenue is incurred, the law-abiding citizen paying, and the habitual " cadger " escaping scot-free ; with the additional absurdity that the patient for whom the cost is repaid is often classed as a pauper, whilst other patients suffering from the same disease get wholly gratuitous treatment and retain their *status* of citizenship.

4. That we recommend that a Departmental Committee should be appointed to consider the whole question of what forms of public assistance can properly be made the subject of these " Special Assessments," and upon what persons these assessments should be made ; in order that the law may be amended on some definite principle, and consolidated by Parliament into a single statute.

5. That the duty of determining what Special Assessments are due according to the law, and from whom, together with the decision whether the person liable is of sufficient ability to pay, and the duty of enforcing payment by proper legal process, ought to be entirely separated from the work of administering the public assistance ; and it would be most suitably undertaken, for all the forms of public assistance afforded in a given district, by a salaried officer of adequate *status*, appointed by and acting under the County or County Borough Council, but unconnected with either the Health, Education, Mentally Defectives or Pension Committees.

6. That we wholly disapprove and condemn the practice of some Boards of Guardians in England of varying the treatment, or threatening to vary the treatment—offering the Workhouse, for instance, instead of Outdoor Relief—in respect of persons entitled to relief from them, with a view to extracting contributions from other persons, whether or not these are legally liable for the payment. We think that it should be definitely laid down that the kind and amount of relief or assistance granted in any case should be determined solely by a consideration of the circumstances of the applicant or patient himself, and ought never to be made dependent on whether somebody else fulfils, or does not fulfil, a legal or moral obligation.

CHAPTER IX.

Settlement and Removal.

Closely connected with the conception of Charge and Recovery of the cost of the relief or treatment afforded by Local Authorities is that of Settlement and Removal.

(a) The Game of "General Post."

As the law now stands, a Board of Guardians in England and Wales, whilst bound to afford relief in some form to every destitute person within the area of the Union of whose destitution it becomes aware, is empowered, under certain circumstances, to obtain from the Justices an order for the compulsory removal of the person relieved to his "parish of settlement," where the responsibility for his maintenance falls upon the Board of Guardians of the Union in which that parish is situated.* This legal provision for safeguarding Destitution Authorities against having to maintain paupers who do not "belong" to their districts, has, from 1795 down to 1900, been so far modified by successive statutes, and is now so far left unutilised by the increasing good sense and humanity of the Destitution Authorities, that the number of cases in which paupers are compulsorily removed is probably less than at any previous date.† Thus, a settlement in a parish in England and Wales is nowadays acquired, not only by birth there, but also by apprenticeship, the ownership of real estate, renting a tenement or paying rates there, or by being the child or becoming the wife of a person having a settlement there, and even by mere residence there for three years. Moreover, even if a settlement has not been acquired, whole classes of paupers cannot legally be removed. There can, of course, be no removal of a person whose settlement is unknown and cannot be ascertained. There is no power to remove mere Vagrants relieved as such. No person can be removed who has continuously resided for one year within the Union in which he applies for relief.‡ A widow cannot be removed for one year after her husband's death in the parish.§ Finally—most important exception of all—no warrant can be granted for the removal of any person relieved in respect of sickness or accident, not only unless the sufferer is fit to be moved, but also not unless it is expressly certified by the Justices that they are satisfied that the sickness or accident will produce permanent disability.‖ Hence, a very large proportion of the pauper population are, in practice, for one reason or another, outside the sphere of removal altogether. The result is that the expense now incurred in the administration of the law as to Settlement and Removal, and especially the cost of litigation among different Destitution Authorities as to which of them shall bear the expense of maintaining particular paupers has steadily decreased. Nevertheless, there are to this day, in England and Wales alone, upwards of 12,000 poor persons actually deported annually, under compulsory orders, and often against their will, from one Union to another—occasionally from one end of the Kingdom to the other; a form of "exile by administrative order" which in some cases causes great hardship. The various stages of this process of shifting citizens—not to the places in which they are wanted, or where they would be most useful, but simply to the

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 351–358.

† In Scotland, where the Law as to Settlement is more complicated than that of England, removals appear to be less frequent, in spite of the division of the country into no fewer than 874 separate settlements and rating areas, owing to a greater liberality in the grant of non-resident relief, and to the policy of the Local Government Board for Scotland in holding that such non-resident relief ought to be granted, instead of removing the pauper, whenever removal is not "reasonable and proper," and that in such decision the "wishes of the pauper himself to continue in the parish of residence" are not to be "lost sight of." (Rules, Instructions, etc., of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1907, p. 202.) No such consideration for the paupers' wishes has been officially enjoined in England. There is even (since 1898) an appeal by the pauper (and by the parish of settlement) to the Local Government Board for Scotland, against the projected removal; and there are one or two such appeals monthly. This appeal is available also in the case of projected removals from Scotland to England or Ireland; but there is no corresponding power of appeal in the converse case. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 53068 (Pars. 143–182), 53510 (Pars. 93–103).) Ireland is unfortunately situated under the law. Any person of Irish birth, who has not acquired a settlement in Great Britain, and has not resided five years there, may, if he becomes chargeable to the poor rate, be compulsorily removed to the Irish Union to which he belongs. There is no corresponding power of removal to Great Britain of any person of English or Scottish birth who becomes chargeable in Ireland; and this inequality of treatment is naturally made matter for complaint. (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, Cd. 3202, 1906, p. 13.)

‡ 28 and 29 Vict., c. 79, sec. 8.

§ 9 and 10 Vict., c. 66, sec. 2.

‖ *Ibid.*, sec. 4.

parishes in which they are deemed to have their legal "settlement"—absorb, in every Union, a large amount of official time; and in some large Unions there are even officers wholly devoted to the service.* "A large amount of preliminary clerical work," we are told, "is involved in ascertaining the particulars of the chargeability of these cases; in eliminating those who cannot at the time be legally removed on account of their suffering from sickness of only a temporary character; and in making a separate oral examination as to the previous history of each case taken in hand. In addition to which there are numerous cases in which expert personal inquiry by the Settlement Officers in towns and villages in both near and distant parts of England are essential, in order to gather evidence on which to base applications to the Magistrates for the removal of paupers elsewhere."† The Manchester, Chorlton and Prestwich Unions have accordingly agreed, for the past twelve years, not to raise any question of settlement as among themselves. Nevertheless, the cases investigated in Manchester alone exceed 3,000 annually. In England and Wales the actual expense of removal and litigation alone, without official salaries, cost over £20,000 a year. In Scotland the controversies between the 874 parishes are incessant, and, in spite of arbitration by the Local Government Board for Scotland, there is still an absurd amount of costly litigation on the subject. We estimate that, in the whole United Kingdom, including the cost of the official staff engaged, there is an expense not far short of £100,000 a year still incurred, directly or indirectly, in this troublesome and, from a national standpoint, entirely useless game of "general post," in which each Union succeeds in getting rid of some paupers, at the cost of having others thrust upon it.‡

(B) The Proposal to abolish Settlement and Removal.

It is to be noted that this peculiar arrangement is characteristic of the Destitution Authorities alone, and those only of Great Britain. In Ireland under the Poor Law there is no Law of Settlement, and no power of Removal. Every destitute person is relieved where he happens to be. There is nowhere in the United Kingdom any protection analogous to the Law of Settlement in the case of the services of other Local Authorities, even when these are obligatory. The Local Health Authorities and the Local Education Authorities are under a statutory duty to provide their obligatory services for all local residents, however recent their migration or however transient their stay, without power either of ejecting them from the district or of recovering the cost of their treatment from any other district to which they may be assumed "to belong."

Notwithstanding these facts, if we were proposing the continuance of a general Destitution Authority, we should be in agreement with the majority of our colleagues in not recommending the abolition of the Law of Settlement, nor yet the total abrogation of the power of removal. The Parliamentary experience of the past three quarters of a century, during which innumerable proposals have been made for the abolition of the Law of Settlement, shows that any such proposal, though often popular at first sight, arouses after a short time considerable apprehension in many, if not in most, districts. The Metropolis becomes concerned about the possible attraction of poor persons from the country. The rural districts become alarmed at a possible "backwash" of worn-out persons from the towns. The seaports fear the influx of destitute seamen and travellers, who could not be passed on to their inland homes. The result has hitherto always been an irresistible opposition to the proposed reform.

We are even more impressed by the possible dangers of an abolition of the Law of Settlement, in its effect on the minds of local administrators. The gross evils, existing both in the institutional and in the domiciliary treatment of the poor, that we have described in the preceding chapters, make it imperative that great improvements should be effected in nearly all districts. Experience shows that it will be more difficult to induce Local Authorities to effect those improvements, especially in the cases of the aged, the sick, and the children, if it can be alleged in opposition that the expense to be thereby thrown on the local ratepayers will cause an influx of destitute persons from other districts to enjoy the new advantages. We think that it would prejudice the chances of securing the reforms which are, in our judgment, essential to the well-being of the community, if all barriers against such an influx were simultaneously to be removed. Thus, any con-

* In the three adjacent Unions of Birmingham, Aston, and King's Norton, as we were informed, no fewer than five officers are wholly occupied with the service of Settlement and Removal. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 43877–43879.)

† Seventh Annual Report on the Work of the Relief Department (Manchester) for the year ending March 27th, 1897.

‡ "It is absurd," said the Chairman of a Board of Guardians, "to keep an expensive army of officials to move people from place to place throughout the Kingdom." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 43566 (Par. 9).)

tinuance of a general Destitution Authority makes it necessary to continue the Law of Settlement and Removal. Hence, whilst we cannot but feel that it is an immense advantage that, under the scheme of reform to which our conclusions in respect of each service in turn have irresistibly led us, the Law of Settlement and Removal, being exclusively a Poor Law provision, would automatically cease to exist, we have still to consider to what extent and in what way provisions analogous to those of the Law of Settlement and Removal need to be instituted to give the necessary safeguards to the administration of the several specialised services, under different Authorities, that we recommend as the successors of the Destitution Authorities.

(c) The Provisions necessary in the Reformed Administration.

We may note, in the first place, that the provision for the aged by a National Pension Scheme, especially if the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908 is amended as we propose, will, in itself, remove a large and constantly increasing proportion of the aged from any application of the Law of Settlement and Removal. As the provision for the aged pensioners comes out of national funds, no Local Authority will be affected by any migration of these old people. And we must here mention that, when in Part II. of this Report we deal with the different sections of the Ablebodied—the Vagrants, the adult male inmates of the ablebodied wards of the General Mixed Workhouses or Poorhouses, and the Unemployed—we shall have to recommend that the expense of providing for them should fall upon the National Exchequer. In their cases, too, we may assume generally that few questions as to Settlement will arise. Moreover, with the classes who will remain a local charge—the infants and children, the sick and mentally defective, the infirm and the aged unprovided for as National Pensioners—the substitution of the County or County Borough, for the Union or Parish, as the unit of administration and of rating, will, in itself, enormously diminish the number of cases in which any question of Settlement would need to occur, or in which any removal would take place. We find at present, for instance, that in the Metropolis nine-tenths of the Settlement cases occur between two Unions, and will not arise when the services pass to the County Authorities. Everywhere, we are informed, the great majority of the cases arise with closely adjacent Unions, most—though of course, not all—of which would, under the new organisation, form part of the same County Service.

(i.) *Safeguards for the Local Health Authority.*

It will be found that, under the scheme of breaking up the Poor Law that we propose, a majority of the persons at present maintained by the Destitution Authorities—the mothers in the lying-in wards, the infants under school age, the sick and the infirm of all kinds, and the institutionally-treated aged—will fall to the charge of the Local Health Authority. That Authority has at present nothing in the nature of a Law of Settlement. Whatever it provides in the way of sanitation and health visiting, milk dispensaries and hospital accommodation, it provides for all who happen to be residing within its district. Moreover, as we have seen, even under the Destitution Authorities, the Law of Settlement and Removal has practically no application for the sick, as distinguished from the permanently incapacitated.* It might accordingly well be argued that, even with the enlarged sphere of the Local Health Authority of the future, there would be, especially in a County Service, no need for any such safeguard of the local ratepayer.

We do not altogether share this view. We believe that in the vast majority of cases no question of eligibility will be raised; especially if, as we recommend, a substantial Grant-in-Aid from the National Exchequer is paid expressly in respect of the cost of the work of the Local Health Authority. Nevertheless, we are so much impressed with the importance of removing all possible hostility to the provision of suitable institutional treatment for the sick that we are inclined to propose that the Local Health Authority should be empowered, in respect of certain of its services, to confine its benefits (except on adequate payment), if it thinks fit, to those who have resided for not less than twelve months in the district. This proposal relates entirely to specialised institutional treatment. It is clear that, for a long time to come, some Local Health Authorities—notably those of London, Liverpool, and Manchester, and many other of the County Boroughs—may be expected to provide specialised hospitals and sanatoria which will be in advance of those of

* In Scotland, it has been made a condition of Medical Relief Grant-in-Aid, that "neither a participating parish nor the Medical Officer of that parish is entitled to recover from another participating parish the cost of medical attendance." Thus, the Law of Settlement and Removal has been virtually abrogated so far as the Outdoor sick are concerned, with general contentment. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 53510 (Par. 93).)

the majority of the rural Counties. It will be possible, in a large town, to provide such specialised treatment for disease after disease. The necessary institutional provision for tuberculosis, for instance—with the vital importance of which we have been deeply impressed—is not likely, for many years to come, to be made everywhere to the same degree of adequacy. Even at present the Local Health Authority sometimes makes a special charge to persons not belonging to its district. The Brighton Town Council, for instance, does not necessarily admit to its Municipal Hospital for Tuberculosis, free of charge, patients coming into Brighton from the surrounding villages; in fact, it does not admit any patient who has not, immediately before admission, resided for two years within the Borough. Unless some corresponding provision is made with regard to all the various forms of specialised institutional treatment, it will, we fear, be difficult to persuade Local Health Authorities to make those progressive developments on which the health of the community depends. We propose, therefore, that whilst (following the precedent set by the conditions of the Scottish Medical Relief Grant) it should be made a condition of the Grant-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Local Health Authority that no question of past residence should be raised with regard to the domiciliary treatment of the sick, or with regard to the admission of patients to the general infirmaries or similar institutions of its district, or to the admission of urgent cases anywhere, the Local Health Authority should not be legally bound to admit to any specialised institution that it may establish, except in cases where the refusal of admission would involve risk of death, any but persons who have resided there for not less than twelve months next previously to their application. For any other persons admitted, whether in cases of urgency or by agreement, there should, we think, be power to make a charge (or an extra charge over and above that made to local residents) equal to the net cost of the service, abstraction being made of any Grant-in-Aid. Power should be given to the Local Health Authority of the district to which the patient belongs to pay the charge thus made if it chooses to do so. In default of payment, the admission of the patient to the specialised institution might be refused, or if already admitted he might be removed, under much the same formalities and with much the same safeguards as under the present law, either to the local general infirmary, or to the specialised institution of the district to which he belonged. We think that the same law should apply to all parts of the United Kingdom.

(ii.) *Safeguards for the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective.*

With regard to the Mentally Defective of all grades, the case is more simple. We see no reason why the same condition of eligibility—one year's residence as applied to persons certified to be of unsound mind, and who are maintained in a County or Borough or District Board Asylum, should not be applicable, alike as to chargeability to other districts and as to removal, to all the patients placed under the care of the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective whether in England and Wales, Scotland, or Ireland. The adoption of the County or County Borough, instead of the Union or Parish, as the unit of residential eligibility and of rating, will, however, enormously reduce the number of cases in which any question will occur.

(iii.) *Safeguards for the Local Education Authority.*

At present the Local Education Authority in Great Britain provides for all the residents within its district, and nothing akin to the Law of Settlement has any application. It is, however, protected in England and Wales against having to provide schools for other than residents by the power to exclude those who live in one area and wish to go to school in another, unless the Local Education Authority concerned will contribute towards the cost. It is also protected against the deliberate invasion of its district by children sent by any Destitution Authority to be "boarded-out," by a statutory provision enabling a proportionate contribution to be made towards the cost of providing any additional school accommodation that the invasion may occasion.* In view of the importance of keeping open every possible opportunity of "boarding-out," we propose that this provision should be continued. With regard to the provision for the maintenance of necessitous children, we think it undesirable that any part of the existing Law of Settlement and Removal should be made applicable to the Local Education Authority. The very large Grants-in-Aid from the National Exchequer which that Authority receives in respect of each child may, we think, fairly be held to compensate for any temporary inequality of local burden, first here and then there, that may be caused by the migration of the necessitous child population;

* 63 and 64 Vict., c. 53, s. 2.

and again, following the precedent of the Medical Relief Grant in Scotland, we suggest that it should be made one of the conditions of these grants that (apart from the special provision as to school accommodation for " boarded-out " children) no question as to the admissibility or eligibility of children born elsewhere but actually resident in the district should be raised.

(D) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report :—

1. That the existing Law of Settlement and Removal, wasteful in its cost and occasionally the cause of hardship to the poor, will, under the scheme of reform which we are proposing, automatically cease to be applicable ; and all the statutes bearing on the subject should be definitely repealed.

2. That the assumption of the greater part of the charge for the aged by the National Government, and the proposed transfer to a Government Department of the provision for all sections of the able-bodied, will, in a large proportion of cases, obviate the necessity for raising the question of eligibility of an applicant for public assistance in respect of his previous residence.

3. That the reorganisation of the various services now included in the Poor Law on the lines of a County or County Borough administration under the several committees concerned, with the County or County Borough as the unit for rating, will, in the great majority of cases, render it unnecessary to raise the question of past residence.

4. That with regard to services rendered by the Local Health Authority, it should be made a condition of the proposed Grant-in-Aid that no question of the past residence of any applicant should be raised, except only with regard to admission to any specialised institution ; and in the latter case admission may, if thought fit, be confined, except on terms to be prescribed, to persons who have resided in the district for one year—any other persons being, if thought fit, refused admission (except when such refusal would involve danger to life,) and relegated to the General Infirmary, or removed, under proper conditions and safeguards, to the specialised institution of the County to which they belong.

5. That (beyond the retention of the power to contribute towards school accommodation for " boarded-out " children) there is no need for any question of past residence to be raised in connection with the work of the Local Education Committee ; and this should be made a condition of the Government Grants.

6. That whatever provisions are made in this respect, there should be identical and reciprocal rights as between England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

CHAPTER X.

Grants-in-Aid.

When the various Local Authorities providing for the poor have recovered what they can from the persons benefited, and from those liable for their support, and when they have, as among themselves, adjusted the burden as far as is permitted by the Law of Settlement and analogous provisions, they are further aided by extensive subventions derived from the National Exchequer. These Grants-in-Aid have, on the various Local Authorities, a three-fold effect, differing according to the amount and the conditions of the subventions. In all cases they relieve the ratepayers in the particular localities of a portion of their burden. In most cases, by the mere selection of one particular service for subvention, and still more by the conditions attached to that subvention, they may specially encourage the increase and development of one kind of expenditure rather than another. Finally, if the grant is, by appropriate conditions, made to depend upon a certain prescribed efficiency, and on the sanction of the Central Authority, a greatly increased effectiveness may be given to the power of suggestion, criticism and control possessed by that Authority. The Grants-in-Aid of the Boards of Guardians and the various Local Authorities making provision for the poor differ greatly among themselves in all three respects; and we have received many suggestions for their improvement.*

So far as Great Britain is concerned, a special complication has been introduced by the changes made with regard to most of these Grants-in-Aid by the Local Government Act of 1888 (England and Wales),† and the Local Government Act of 1889 (Scotland), both of them modified by the Finance Acts of 1907–8 and 1908–9. The total effect of these successive changes has been, so far as the Exchequer is concerned, to substitute, for nearly all the Grants-in-Aid to different Local Authorities, definite lump sums or specific revenues assigned, in England and Wales, to the County and County Borough Councils, whilst requiring these bodies to distribute, on certain fixed principles, Grants-in-Aid to the minor Local Authorities, if any, within their areas. Thus, from the standpoint of the Treasury, the Grants-in-Aid of the Poor Law expenditure of English Boards of Guardians have ceased, being merged in larger payments to the County Councils, etc. So far as the Boards of Guardians are concerned, these Grants-in-Aid still continue, only they are received through the County or County Borough Council, instead of direct from the Treasury.‡ The change was, indeed, made the occasion of a new Grant-in-Aid to Boards of Guardians, both in London and the provinces; but while in the provinces the new grant was payable by the County or County Borough Council out of the lump sums received from the Exchequer, in London the grant (calculated on a different basis) was made payable out of the County Fund, the sums allocated to London being insufficient to meet it.§ And as the balances of these lump sums, if any, are retained by the County Councils for their own purposes, the final effect is that it is virtually on the funds of the County or County Borough Councils that the payment of these Grants-in-Aid now falls, though these funds are subsidised by the Central Government, which retains in its own hands the whole of the control over the service, giving none to the County Council, its intermediary. No such change has been made with regard to the Grants-in-Aid made to the Local Education Authority, to the Local Unemployment Authority, or to the Industrial and Reformatory Schools under the Home Office; nor yet with regard to any of the Grants-in-Aid made to Local Authorities in Ireland. All these continue to be made direct from National Funds, without (in the case of bodies other than Committees of the County Councils, etc.) the intervention of the County Councils, etc. In Scotland too, though definite sums or assigned revenues are paid to a Local Taxation Account, the subventions received by Burgh and Parish Councils, as well as by County Councils, are paid direct to these Authorities. It will, therefore, be convenient for the purposes of this Report, to

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1239–1244, 1831, 2015, 2052, 2206, 2370–2372, 2449, 2995, 5508, 7642–7651, 7679, 8570, 9482–9494, 9564–9569, 10932, 10933, 11059–11070, 11421, 11422, 12485–12489, 14036, 14095, 14807–14814, 24741, 24930–24939, 24972, 25075–25077, 25245, 28796, 28960–28969, 40085 (Par. 38), 46956–46958, 49303, 49381, 50096, 50132, 52600–52703, and various Appendices to Vols. I., IV., V. and IX.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 305.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 9485, 14682–9.

look at the question from the standpoint of the Local Authorities receiving the Grants-in-Aid, irrespective of whether they are paid direct from the Exchequer, or paid by the County Council out of larger sums received from the Exchequer—thus ignoring all the "Exchequer Contribution Accounts" and "Local Taxation Accounts" and "assigned revenues," by which the whole subject of Local Government Finance has, since 1888, been needlessly mystified.

The Grants-in-Aid received by the Destitution Authorities amount, in the United Kingdom, to nearly three and a half millions sterling per annum, or between one-fifth and one-sixth of the total expenditure connected with the relief of the poor under the Poor Laws. But they differ so considerably in their amount, in their kind, and in their conditions, among the three parts of the United Kingdom, that we can only consider their effects by taking them separately.

(A) England and Wales outside the Metropolis.

The Grants-in-Aid receivable by the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales now amount to more than £2,600,000 sterling annually, payable in five separate grants.*

Grants-in-Aid Receivable by Boards of Guardians in England and Wales.

Grant.	Amount in 1907–8.
Fixed Grant under Local Government Act, 1888 (Sec. 43 for London Unions, Sec. 26 for those elsewhere).	£ 1,350,000
Fixed Grant under Agricultural Rates Act, 1896 - - - - -	461,000
Four shillings per head per week for lunatics in asylums, etc. - -	800,000
Payments in respect of teachers in Poor Law schools - - - -	25,000
Repayment of school fees paid for children sent from Workhouses to public elementary schools.	2,000
£	2,638,000

In considering the effect of these Grants-in-Aid on the administration, we must omit, for the moment, the Boards of Guardians of the Metropolis, where the position is further complicated by an internal system of local equalisation of rates and the existence of a federal Poor Law Authority.

(i.) *The Relief to the Local Ratepayers.*

Taking first the relief afforded outside the Metropolis to the local ratepayer, we have to note that, owing to the arbitrary manner in which the two principal fixed Grants were allocated, and the changes that have taken place in the last two decades, the amount and the proportion of the relief varies enormously from Union to Union, and that it bears no relation whatever to the policy or to the relative efficiency and economy of the Boards of Guardians. The amount by which the rates are lowered owing to the whole of these Grants-in-Aid appears to be less than 1d. in the £ in the Fylde Union; less than 2d. in the £ in the Lancaster and Bootle Unions; and less than 3d. in the £ in some other Unions. On the other hand, owing to these same Grants-in-Aid, the ratepayers in the little Caxton and Arrington Union find their burdens lightened by nearly 1s. 6d. in the £; and those in Fordingbridge and Anglesea Unions by more than 1s. in the £. In the little Union of Longtown the total Grants-in-Aid now amount to over 58 per cent. of the expenditure of the Board of Guardians; in that of Belford they amount to over 50 per cent.; whilst in some other Unions they come to over 40 per cent. On the other hand, in the Bedwellty Union the whole of the Grants-in-Aid are less than 13 per cent. of the expenditure; in the King's Lynn Union they come to less than 15 per cent.; and in the Unions of Bury St. Edmunds and Great Yarmouth, to less than 18 per cent. The result is that the Poor Rates vary from less than 3d. in the £ in the Fylde and Garstang Unions, up to more

* *Ibid.*, Appendix No. III. to Vol. I.

than 2s. in the £ in the Mildenhall, King's Lynn, Risbridge and Carnarvon Unions.* Whatever may be thought of the policy of contributing a sum of £2,600,000 in relief of the payers of Poor Rate in England and Wales, we cannot conceive of any argument that would justify the continuance of such gross and entirely arbitrary inequalities between Union and Union, not in any way dependent on the conduct of the local administrators, as the present system involves.

(ii.) *Discrimination in favour of Desirable Expenditure.*

The second effect of Grants-in-Aid may be to encourage particular forms of expenditure as compared with others. Here we must ignore the two fixed Grants which are, in effect, made in aid of the Guardians' funds generally, however these are expended.† The three smaller Grants vary according to the amounts expended by the Boards of Guardians on particular services, and thus tend to encourage the growth of these services. One of these Grants, that for the payment of school fees, has with the almost universal adoption of free schools, become of trivial amount.‡ Another, that towards the salaries of teachers in Poor Law Schools, whilst still serving to encourage the Boards of Guardians to staff these schools with more qualified teachers, has, with the continuous tendency to cede the educational work connected with pauper children to the Local Education Authorities, become of little consequence,§ and may even tend to discourage the most approved methods of dealing with pauper children.|| The other Grant, that of 4s. per head per week for every certified pauper lunatic placed in proper asylums under the care of the Lunacy Authority, still has important results.¶

By paying the grant only for such persons as have been transferred to lunatic asylums, etc., and withholding it in those cases in which the person of unsound mind is retained in the General Mixed Workhouse, Parliament and the Central Authority have striven to

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* *Ibid.*

† *Ibid; see also Qs.* 2449, 9485, 14684, etc. The grants under the Local Government Act, 1888 (Secs. 26 and 43) to the Metropolitan and extra-Metropolitan Unions respectively, purport to have relation to particular forms of expenditure. That for the Metropolitan Unions is professedly fixed as being 4d. per head per day for each indoor pauper (*Ibid., Qs.* 1254-5, 2449, 14684, 14691). But as the grant to each Union was definitely fixed, once for all, in 1888, as it has long ceased to be proportionate to the actual numbers of indoor paupers and as it does not vary with those numbers, it cannot be said to have any effect in encouraging one form of relief rather than another. Similarly, the grant to the extra-Metropolitan Unions was professedly fixed as being the sum paid in remuneration and superannuation allowances of the officers of Poor Law Unions (other than teachers), in the year 1887-8, together with the cost of drugs and medical appliances. (*Ibid., Qs.* 1288, 2010-2011, 2015, 2995.) But being a fixed grant, definitely allocated to each Union twenty years ago, it does not now bear any relation to the total of salaries, etc., and is not affected by any increase or decrease in that item. In fact, the assumed special appropriation of these fixed grants-in-aid of 1888 to particular parts of the Guardians' expenditure, rather than to others, was a mere sham, for which we can see no justification. The grant in respect of the deficiency arising from the provisions of the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, is made to Boards of Guardians as to other rating Authorities. It professes not to be a grant-in-aid of the expenditure of such Authorities, but merely a substitute for the revenue which, but for the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, they would have continued to receive in rates from the occupiers of agricultural land, whose payments were then greatly reduced. (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. III. to Vol. I.). But as it is a grant of fixed amount, which now bears no definite relation to the local assessments, and as the new basis of assessment has now become the customary and accepted one, the lump sum annually received by each rating Authority under this head has all the psychological and economic attributes of—and is, in fact—a grant-in-aid of the aggregate expenditure. *See*, to this effect, the weighty argument of Lord Balfour of Burleigh in Final Report (Ireland) of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Cd. 1068), 1902, p. 25.

‡ In 1905-6, it was only £585 for all England and Wales.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 4039.

|| "Instituted in 1848, when all public education was in its infancy, the grant has continued without much alteration down to the present day, except that since 1888 it has been charged upon the County Exchequer Contribution Accounts instead of on Parliamentary Votes. The complete change of policy of the Central Government and the Local Authorities which has occurred in the meantime may be seen from the fact that whereas in 1883 more than two-thirds of the Boards of Guardians educated their children in special Poor Law schools, in 1898 four out of every five Boards sent their children to the ordinary elementary schools. The Local Government Board records with satisfaction every year in its Report the progressive diminution in the number of children in Poor Law schools, and the grant for teachers is also growing smaller. It can thus hardly be maintained that it has operated as an incentive towards the most modern form of administration, and it is now palpably unfair between districts, since those Unions which send their children to ordinary schools get their education paid for largely out of the Parliamentary Education Vote, while the special grant for Poor Law teachers remains a charge upon county revenues, and a charge which in the Metropolis is considerable in amount." (Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (England and Wales), 1901, pp. 82, 83; Separate Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.)

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 305, 1236, 2688, 2372, 3004, 7642, 7643, 7679, 7680, 9490, 11063-11070, 12485, 14036, 14096, 14621-14624, 14740, 24741, 25069-25077, 25245, 28796, 40085, 50096, 52700-52703.

encourage that elimination of lunatics from the Workhouse which is so desirable.* Under this encouragement, the number of paupers of unsound mind in the asylums of the County and Borough Councils has risen from 16,369 in 1859 to 85,990 in 1906. So far the Grant may be said to have attained its object. It has, however, as has been forcibly represented to us, three grave defects. It offers a standing inducement to Boards of Guardians to get people certified as persons of unsound mind who are not really lunatics or idiots, merely as a means of getting rid of them from the General Mixed Workhouse, and obtaining the Grant in respect of them. We have had it brought to our notice † that some Unions, particularly those in which additional Workhouse accommodation would otherwise have to be provided at great cost, make a practice of sending to the very costly "mental hospitals" of the County and Borough Councils a large number of aged men and women who are suffering only from the feeble-mindedness of senility, and who ought not properly to be certified to be of unsound mind.‡ This result is due, in great measure, to the arbitrary separation of some classes of mentally defective persons from others; to the putting of some under the Lunacy Authorities and leaving others to be dealt with only by the Destitution Authorities; and to the confining of the Grant-in-Aid to some only of these classes of the mentally defective whilst withholding it from others.§ On the other hand, where there is ample Workhouse accommodation, the sum of 4s. has proved insufficient to bribe the Boards of Guardians to remove even those who are really lunatics or idiots from the General Mixed Workhouse.‖ Especially in the country Workhouses, where the actual expenditure per head on food and clothing is only 4s. or 5s. per week, there is, even counting the 4s. grant, still a considerable additional expenditure to the Union involved in sending the lunatic or idiot to the County Asylum, where the charge made to the Board of Guardians is usually about 12s. per week. Hence, as we have ourselves seen in our visits, and as has been stated by many witnesses, many lunatics and idiots are still, out of motives of mere parsimony, kept in the General Mixed Workhouse, where they mix freely with the other inmates, even with the children, where they are often the cause of annoyance, sleeplessness and disgust to their associates, and where they themselves can neither be scientifically treated nor properly cared for. The number of certified lunatics and idiots in the General Mixed Workhouses has, in the last fifty years, even increased from 7,963 in 1859 to 11,151 in 1906. Owing to the insufficiency of the rate, this Grant of 4s. per head per week has therefore failed—and still fails—to get the ordinary Destitution Authority to see the necessity of doing anything more than "relieve the destitution" of the harmless lunatic or the village idiot, who accordingly remains in the General Mixed Workhouse, to his own hurt and the annoyance of the other inmates.

The third defect of the Lunacy Grant is of another character. By a condition, for which we do not see any reason at all, the grant of 4s. is only allowed in those cases in which the weekly cost of the lunatic's maintenance, *after deducting sums recovered from relations, or otherwise*, is not less than this sum.¶ The result is that if, as is usually the case, the asylum charge is 12s. a week, a Board of Guardians is under no inducement to get relations to contribute more than 8s. a week, as anything more than that will not benefit the Board of Guardians or the local ratepayer. Nay, more; if the relations pay a shilling or two per week more than will just leave 4s. to be borne by the Union, the

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 2367–2370, 14036.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 2372, 12485, 14036, 14095, 14857, 24741.

‡ "With regard to pauper lunatics the present grant has, no doubt, secured a great improvement, not only in the lot of this unfortunate class, but also in that of the other paupers from whose society they have been removed. On the other hand, by its action in offering inducements to Boards of Guardians to send to asylums as many paupers as possible, it is stated that many cases are now unnecessarily receiving asylum treatment." (Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (England and Wales) 1901, p. 82; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.) We cannot refrain from adding that the practice by which, in some places, certain of the officers of the Union obtain fees and emoluments from all the cases in which persons are certified to be of unsound mind, is open to the objection that it offers an improper inducement to those officers to get persons so certified. We consider that all such work should be covered by inclusive salaries.

§ The recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, advocating the total withdrawal from the Destitution Authority of all the mentally defective of every kind, include a proposal for the substitution, for the present 4s. grant for lunatics and idiots, of one applicable to all kinds of mentally defective or epileptic persons. (Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 337.)

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2370, 7643, 24741, 25077.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 305, 1236, 14621–14624, and Appendix No. XXVII. (Par. 4) of Vol. I.

Union will actually lose by their liberality, as it will have to bear the whole balance itself, and will not be able to draw the 4s. grant.* The result is that the relations' contribution tends to be restricted as a maximum to what will just leave a balance of 4s. to be borne by the public.† We have ourselves heard cases discussed by Boards of Guardians in which, for this very reason, the amount to be contributed by relations has been deliberately restricted. Incidentally, this course serves to maintain the stigma of pauperism in cases where the lunatic's estate or relations could furnish the entire cost of maintenance. It is not generally known that, if this were done, the patient would no longer be classed as a "pauper lunatic."

We see, therefore, that there is, on several grounds, the most urgent need for an alteration in the Lunacy Grant. And whilst the selection for a special Grant-in-Aid of the particular service of providing for certified lunatics and idiots has led to these equivocal results, no attempt has been made so to arrange the Grants-in-Aid as to encourage other developments which the Local Government Board has been, for several decades, pressing in vain on the Boards of Guardians. Whilst wishing devoutly to get the children out of the General Mixed Workhouses, the Local Government Board has (outside the Metropolis) made no suggestion that any Grant should be made dependent on the number of children more properly provided for. Whilst striving continuously to get the provision for the sick brought more up to the level of contemporary hospital administration, the Local Government Board has (outside the Metropolis) made none of the Grants bear any proportion to the expenditure on Poor Law infirmaries, or the maintenance of the sick poor, nor made any of them conditional on the local arrangements for medical attendance and nursing attaining what its Inspectors report to be an adequate standard. The result, as we have seen, is that a large proportion of Unions fall, in these respects, deplorably short of even a decent provision.

(iii.) *Giving Authority to Central Control.*

Finally, we have to consider these Grants-in-Aid to the English Boards of Guardians from the standpoint of their effect on the suggestions, criticisms and authoritative instructions by which the Central Authority seeks to secure greater efficiency and economy of administration. This, indeed, is by far the most important aspect of Grants-in-Aid. The verdict of administrative experience is that, properly devised, they afford a basis for the best of all relations between the National Government and the Local Authorities. A century of experience has demonstrated that it is undesirable for Local Authorities to be subject to no administrative control whatsoever from a Central Authority, for them to be left without independent inspection or audit, without access to centralised experience and specialist knowledge, without any enforcement of the minimum indispensably required for the common weal, and without mitigation of the stupendous inequality of local rates that complete autonomy involves. On the other hand, the grant to a Government Department of arbitrary powers to sanction or disallow, or peremptorily to order this or that, is felt, in this country, to be derogatory to the independence, the dignity and the spontaneous activity of freely elected representatives of local ratepayers, spending their own funds. Such mandatory instructions from a Government Office in Whitehall can be enforced only by cumbrous legal processes; and they have proved, in practice, to give the Government Department little real power over recalcitrant local bodies. It is in vain that Parliament endows the Local Government Board with ample statutory powers—on paper—to compel typhoid-smitten Little Pedlington to provide itself with a proper drainage system and water supply. Little Pedlington flatly refuses, or stubbornly neglects to do so. The Local Government Board, for all its paper powers of coercing Little Pedlington by Mandamus or by independent action in default, finds itself practically impotent; and hundreds of Little Pedlingtons retain to this day their primitive insanitation triumphantly. Very different has been the experience of the influence of a Central Authority wielding the instrument of a well-devised Grant-in-Aid. Between

* "Therefore, when maintenance is 11s. 4½d. per week, and the Guardians assess the contributions by relatives at 7s. 6d. per week, the grant is forfeited. If they make it 7s. 4½d., it is allowed." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXVII. (A), Par. 4, to Vol. I.)

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14621–14624, 14740. The imperfections of the Lunacy Grant are officially admitted. "I can only account," said Mr. Davy, "for the fact that the grant has been allowed to remain as it is by the fact that there are three bodies responsible for it; I mean to say the Home Office, the Lunacy Commissioners, and the Local Government Board. If the whole matter had been in the hands of one Department, I do not think that grant could have existed, because I think it can be demonstrated that it has resulted in a loss to the ratepayers." (Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 283; Statement by Mr. Davy, Chief General Inspector to the Local Government Board.)

1830 and 1856 there was felt to be urgent need of a well-organised constabulary force in the provincial boroughs and counties. By the Act of 1835 Parliament attempted to make it compulsory on the Municipal Boroughs to establish such a force. In the Counties the Justices were empowered to establish one. In both Boroughs and Counties the constabulary remained weak and inefficient. By an Act of 1856 the establishment of an efficient force was not only made everywhere obligatory, but what was far more important, the Government agreed to contribute one-fourth—after 1874, one-half—of whatever expense the locality incurred on its police force, provided that the Home Office was satisfied, after inspection, that the force was adequate and efficient. Under this combination of pressure and inducement, all the provincial police forces have steadily improved, rapidly rising, indeed, to a common level of adequacy and efficiency. At every inspection the defects have been pointed out in a way that could not be ignored. The mere intimation that, unless these shortcomings were, somehow or another, remedied before the next annual inspection came round, the Secretary of State might have to consider the propriety of withholding a portion of the grant (now the certificate without which the Exchequer Contribution cannot be paid), has usually sufficed to induce the Local Authority—not necessarily next month, but gradually, in due course—to effect more or less of the necessary improvements—not necessarily in exact compliance with any Government pattern, but with the fullest sense of local independence, exercising its own judgment in its own way, and often apparently on its own initiative. In the course of fifty years, though the official criticisms have been incessant, and though the Home Office has not been afraid, in, at any rate, one bad case of recent years, actually to withhold the Government contribution, it has seldom been necessary to take this course. Of legal proceedings, by Mandamus or otherwise, to compel a recalcitrant Local Authority to do what the statute required there has, in this matter of providing a constabulary force, been no question.

Let us now examine the Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of the English Boards of Guardians from this point of view. What authority does this sum of two and a half millions annually give to the suggestions, criticisms and orders made for the promotion of efficiency and economy by the Local Government Board? We have to report that in practically the whole realm of Poor Law expenditure, no use is made of the Grants-in-Aid, as a means of affording the much-needed additional strength to the directions of the Central Authority. In this important respect the existing Grants-in-Aid are—with the partial exception of the small sum in respect of teachers' salaries—entirely useless. The two fixed Grants (amounting to £1,350,000), and even the 4s. a week for lunatics and the trifling recoupment of school fees, are made in no way dependent on the Boards of Guardians fulfilling, as a whole, even their statutory obligations, let alone attending to any criticisms of the Local Government Board.* A Board of Guardians may be flatly defying the Local Government Board—refusing to build a Poor Law Infirmary, when the mortality in the overcrowded insanitary Workhouse is excessive, retaining the children without segregation in the General Mixed Workhouse, giving or refusing Outdoor Relief against the whole spirit of the authoritative Orders, stinting the Medical Officer in salary and drugs, and appointing an altogether inadequate staff of nurses—and the Local Government Board has nevertheless unquestioningly to watch a huge Grant being paid over, amounting often to half the total expenditure which is being thus incurred in the locality in defiance of its authoritative criticism and advice. Thus, the present Grants-in-Aid of the Boards of Guardians stand, in this respect, wholly condemned. We can see no justification whatever for the community as a whole having to provide this large proportion of the expenditure of Local Authorities who, as many Boards of Guardians do, deliberately and persistently disobey the instructions, or flout the authoritative recommendations of the Central Authority which Parliament has established in order to get carried out the policy decided on by the community as a whole. It has become axiomatic that, to ensure progress, Grants-in-Aid should in all cases be made dependent on efficiency of administration.† A locality that, to the detriment of efficiency, rebelliously insists on its own autonomy, should, at least, be left to bear its own burdens.

(B) The Metropolis.

In the Metropolis, the arrangements with regard to the Grants-in-Aid receivable by the Boards of Guardians are even less satisfactory than elsewhere. In addition to the two fixed grants, and the 4s. grant for lunatics and the grant for teachers that we have described, the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians receive also what are, in effect, two

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1831, 5508, 9486, 9564–9569, 11059, 11070, 11421, 11422, 14807–14814.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 5508, 9426, 9564–9569, 11059, 11070, 11421, 11422, 14807–14814.

additional Grants-in-Aid, by the operation of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund * and the existence of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. By the former arrangement, the cost of certain specified parts of Poor Law administration in each Metropolitan Union, (the salaries, etc., of officers, the net cost of lunatics in the county asylums, the maintenance of paupers other than children in the Workhouse or infirmary to the extent of 5d. per day, the maintenance of children in Poor Law schools or "boarded-out," the erection as well as the maintenance of the Casual Wards,† and the whole cost of medicines and surgical appliances) were made chargeable to a common fund, which was provided annually by equal assessment according to the rateable value of each Union. This has a two-fold effect. To every Union in the Metropolis, rich or poor, it amounts to the same thing as a Grant-in-Aid in respect of the particular services charged on the fund, each Board of Guardians being credited with more, if it develops those particular services rather than other services. But as the fund is raised by precepts on all the Unions according to rateable value, the two-thirds of the Unions that are relatively poor receive an actual subvention of some £400,000 a year in aid of their general funds and in relief of their local rates. The total amount charged on the Common Poor Fund now approaches one and three-quarter millions sterling annually, being one-third of the total expenditure in the Metropolis under the Poor Law. Much the same financial effect is produced by the existence of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, an independent Poor Law Authority which maintains, not only asylums for pauper idiots, and schools for pauper children suffering from ringworm, ophthalmia, etc., but also hospitals for infectious diseases, maintenance in which is now, by statute, not deemed Poor Law relief. As the expenditure of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, now exceeding a million a year, is now, in effect, all levied on the Unions in proportion to their rateable value, and not in proportion to the use that they severally make of its various institutions,‡ these institutions are, in effect, open to Boards of Guardians gratuitously; that is to say, no Union and no Board of Guardians pays more because it sends more cases. Thus, to the extent that they relieve each particular Board of Guardians of the cost of maintaining pauper idiots, pauper children, or patients in the infectious diseases hospitals who would otherwise be paupers, the existence of these virtually free institutions is equivalent to a Grant-in-Aid, though at the expense of the London ratepayers generally, to that Board of Guardians for these particular services.

The effect of these elaborate, complicated and very extensive Grants-in-Aid upon the finances of the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians can only be described as extraordinary. They amount, in the aggregate, to no less than 70 per cent. of the total Poor Law expenditure of the Metropolis.§

(i.) *The Relief to the Local Ratepayers.*

Taking the various Grants-in-Aid together,‖ the relief thereby afforded to the local ratepayer in the different Unions varied in 1907–8 from as much as 3s. 5d. in the £ in St. George's-in-the-East, 2s. 4d. in the £ in Bethnal Green, over 2s. in the £ in Stepney, and 1s. 9d. in the £ in Poplar, down to practically nothing in Wandsworth and Hammersmith. On the other hand, the Grants-in-Aid to half-a-dozen of the Metropolitan Unions, whilst financially assisting certain forms of relief as compared with others, resulted (owing to the "equalisation" provisions) in a positive increase of the Poor Rate, which involved an additional charge of a few pence in the pound, and in the City of London Union of as much as 7d. in the £. The Boards of Guardians of St. Saviour's, Southwark, St. Pancras, and Bethnal Green, find themselves bearing locally less than a quarter of what (apart from their fixed quota to the Common Poor Fund) they themselves spend in Poor Relief, whilst the Board of Guardians of the City of London Union bears a burden equal to the cost of all the Poor Relief that it dispenses. The Rate that has actually to be levied for the relief of the poor in the different unions (in addition to a uniform 9d. in the £ for the Common Poor Fund and 5d. in the £ for the Metropolitan Asylums Board) varies from less than 2d. in the £ in the Westminster Union and less than 4d. in the £ in the Paddington,

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 310–313, 3413, 3418, 4623, 14817–14880, and Appendices No. XXVII. (A), and XXVIII. to Vol. I.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 14817.

‡ We omit minor complications, of which there are many. Thus the Boards of Guardians are charged by the Metropolitan Asylums Board so much per patient belonging to the Union, and they actually pay these amounts. But as the amount so paid by each Union is charged to the Common Poor Fund the financial effect to each Union is (at the cost of much unnecessary book-keeping) precisely the same as if no charge were made. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14706–14711.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 14825, and Appendix No. XXVIII. (Par. 57) to Vol. I.

‖ Leaving aside the rate of between 5d. and 6d. in the £, levied practically on all Unions alike for the common charges of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.

St. Georges, Hanover Square, and Hampstead Unions, up to as much as 1s. 6d. in the £ in Hammersmith, 1s. 8d. in the £ in Mile End Old Town and St. George's-in-the-East, and to as much as 2s. 6d. in the £ in Poplar—even after Poplar has been aided to the extent of 1s. 9d. in the £.

(ii.) *Discrimination in Favour of Desirable Expenditure.*

Turning now to the influence exercised by these Grants in encouraging or discouraging particular services or forms of relief, we notice that the throwing upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund of the cost of all the Poor Law officers and fivepence per day per adult indoor pauper, including those in the Poor Law infirmaries, and the omission of any similar subvention to Outdoor Relief, affords a considerable encouragement to Indoor as compared with Outdoor Relief.* Whatever may be thought of this result in the abstract, we cannot avoid the conclusion that it is largely due to this peculiar arrangement of the Grants-in-Aid that the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians have been induced to incur enormous expenses for the erection and maintenance of gigantic Workhouses and Poor Law Infirmaries, and that the whole cost of Poor Relief in London, however computed—whether per pauper, per head of population or per £ of rateable value—is proportionately far in excess of that incurred in any other part of the Kingdom.† Similarly the placing upon the Fund of the whole cost of maintenance of the Poor Law Schools, and refusing all subvention to children in the Workhouse, whilst distinctly discouraging the retention of children in the General Mixed Workhouse, has greatly promoted the development in the Metropolitan Unions of the most costly of all the alternative methods of providing for the children, namely, the residential school.‡ It is a minor consequence of the arrangement of the Metropolitan Grants-in-Aid that they actually discourage the provision of proper accommodation for children who are sick. As the Poor Law infirmaries are technically Workhouses, the establishment in these institutions of the most ideal ward for sick children brings no Grant, whilst if the sick children are sent to, or retained in, the Poor Law residential schools, where they ought not to be, the whole of their cost is borne by the Common Fund.§ Finally, we may observe that the effect of the Grants-in-Aid in actually restricting the contributions of relatives, that we have already described outside the Metropolis in the case of the Lunacy Grant, *is seen in London to operate over the whole field of indoor pauperism.* Instead of allowing each Board of Guardians to retain, for the benefit of its own ratepayers, whatever sums could be recovered from relations of paupers in the Workhouse, Poor Law Infirmaries and residential schools—which would seem to be the course most calculated to encourage the exaction of such contributions—all such contributions have now to be credited to the Common Poor Fund, in which the pecuniary interest of any particular Union is small and scarcely noticeable. The result, we are told, is to check the efforts that the Boards of Guardians might otherwise make to exact contributions where these ought to be paid.‖ The throwing upon the Fund of the whole expense of the Casual Wards and of the relief of Vagrants has the effect of discouraging any particular Board of Guardians from attempting, by the maintenance of a strict regimen, to deter persons from applying to its Casual Ward; and at the same time does nothing to discourage any Board from maintaining so lax a regimen as to attract to its Casual Ward as many Vagrants as it will hold. The arrangements for persons of unsound mind amount, in effect, to relieving each Board of Guardians of the whole cost of this class of paupers, and throwing the cost upon London as a whole, provided they are sent, either as lunatics to the asylums of the London County Council or, as imbeciles or idiots, to those of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. There is, accordingly, a great encouragement to get these paupers (and any others whom the doctors can be induced to certify as of unsound mind) out of the Workhouses,¶ but no encouragement to any proper discrimination between those who should be sent to the institutions of the London County Council and those who should be sent to the institutions of the Metropolitan Asylums Board; with the result that, whilst all Metropolitan Boards of Guardians get what seems to be an unduly large proportion

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14674, 14794.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1572, 1573, and Appendix No. II. to Vol. I.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14671–14673.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14651, 14652, 14828, and Appendix No. XXVIII. (Par. 27) to Vol. I. It is one of the minor absurdities that those Unions which have combined to form "Sick Asylum Districts," maintaining a joint infirmary called a "sick asylum," can charge children in it to the Common Poor Fund, even though there is no separate children's ward, whereas those Unions which provide the best possible accommodation in a separate Infirmary cannot do so. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 14828.)

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14653–14658, 14763–14768, 14821–14825, and Appendix No. XXVII. (A), Par. 23, to Vol. I. The total amount recovered from relations, and from the property and repayments of the paupers themselves, for the whole Metropolis, was, in 1902–1903, only £22,083, or only slightly over 1d. for every £ expended.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14857–14861.

of their Workhouse inmates certified as persons of unsound mind,* some of them class these predominantly as lunatics and others predominantly as imbeciles or idiots.

(iii) *Giving Authority to Central Control.*

On the most important point of all, the extent to which the Grants-in-Aid enable due control to be exercised over the expenditure, the position in the Metropolis is, with regard to one of the Grants, a shade better than elsewhere. The fact that the approval of the Local Government Board is required to the charging of any item to the Common Poor Fund, would seem, in theory, to give that Department an opportunity for exercising a really effective control over all the branches of expenditure charged to the Fund. So far as the matter is not governed by statute, it would seem as if, by refusing to sanction the charging to the Fund of officers' salaries otherwise than according to the scale which it prescribed, or of the cost of any Casual Ward not maintained in exact accordance with its regulations, or of the five-pence per day each for indoor paupers in any workhouse that is overcrowded, the Local Government Board ought to be able, in the Metropolis, to attach a sanction to its instructions and suggestions that is elsewhere lacking. We cannot say that we are convinced that the Local Government Board has made the fullest use of the power which its control of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund affords.† However disobedient and recalcitrant during all these past forty years has been a Metropolitan Board of Guardians, however scandalously overcrowded and insanitary its Workhouse, however gross the scandal of its "barrack school," however harsh or however lavish its policy of Outdoor Relief, however lax its Casual Ward, however deficient its arrangements for the sick poor, *never once—as Sir Hugh Owen informed us—has the Local Government Board made use of the power entrusted to it by statute of declaring the Board of Guardians to be in default, and of withholding its share of the Common Poor Fund.*‡ Whether by reason of some defect in the regulations, or of some defect of organisation in the Local Government Board itself, it is clear that practically no use has been made of the potent instrument of Grants-in-Aid as a means of giving authority to the central control that, on paper, exists. On the other hand, the fact that so enormous a proportion of the expenditure of Metropolitan Boards of Guardians is borne otherwise than by the rates that they themselves impose, and that the conditions of most of the subventions received by them are so framed as to give no control to the Authority by which they are paid, will unquestionably have had an even greater effect in encouraging lavish expenditure than is elsewhere the case.§ On all counts, therefore, the present arrangements for the Grants-in-Aid of the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians—good as they were in their intention—must be condemned as nothing short of fantastic in their absurdities, and grossly inequitable in their results.

(c) Scotland.

The Grants in Aid of the Parish Councils in Scotland, which amount to £244,000 a year, or nearly one-fifth of the total expenditure connected with the Poor Law are, in many respects, analogous to those of Boards of Guardians in England and Wales.

Grants in Aid of the Expenditure of Parish Councils in Scotland.

Grant.	Amount in 1907–8.
	£
Fixed Grant to Parish Councils in respect of the deficiency in the Poor Rates arising from the operations of the Agricultural Rates (Scotland) Act, 1896.	58,500
Relief of Rates Grant (total fixed)	50,000
Poor Law Medical Relief Grant (total fixed)	20,000
Lunacy Grant (total fixed)	115,500
Total	244,000

* We must note again here the undesirability of the existing arrangements under which Medical Officers have, in the fee which they receive for examining each case, a direct pecuniary interest in getting as many persons brought before them as possible as being presumably of unsound mind. We think that payment by inclusive salary should as soon as possible be substituted.

† *See*, for instance, *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14639–14643, 14712–14715, 14771–14776. 14779–14788.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 14818–14820.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 14791.

There is the same kind of fixed Grant in respect of the deficiency of revenue arising from the operation of the Agricultural Rates Act, a Grant which, as in England and Wales, is now essentially one in aid of the expenditure generally. There is a second Grant of £50,000 made in relief of the local rates, and distributed among the Parish Councils, and thereby differing from all the Grants in England, Wales and Ireland, partly in proportion to their valuation and partly in proportion to their population. This, too, so far as any relation to the Parish Council expenditure is concerned, is a fixed Grant. There are two other Grants, now received, like those of England and Wales, out of the Local Taxation Account, which, though fixed in total for Scotland as a whole, are allotted among the Parish Councils in proportion to their expenditure on particular services. Thus, the Poor Law Medical Relief Grant of £20,000 a year is annually distributed among such Parish Councils as have complied with the prescribed regulations, which include the appointment of legally qualified medical officers at fixed salaries, and the expenditure of at least a prescribed minimum amount on Medical Relief. The Grant is distributed in such a way as first to defray practically half the cost of the trained sick-nursing in Poor-houses, and then to be shared *pro rata* according to the total expenditure of the various parishes on Medical Relief. This comes, in effect, to a Grant to each Parish Council of about one quarter of its expenditure on that service. Similarly, the Lunacy Grant, fixed at £115,500, is shared among all the Parish Councils *pro rata*, according to the total net expenditure incurred on the maintenance of pauper lunatics, not exceeding 8s. per week. This comes, in effect, to a Grant to each Parish Council of about two-fifths of its expenditure on pauper lunatics.

We have now to consider what is the result of this system of Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Scottish Parish Councils, in the three ways of reducing the burden on the ratepayer, encouraging one service rather than another, and strengthening the influence for efficiency of the Central Authority.

(i.) *The Relief to the Local Ratepayers.*

We note, to begin with, the same extraordinary diversity and inequality in the relief afforded to the local ratepayers as in England and Wales, but carried even to greater extremes, as Lord Balfour of Burleigh has pointed out. "One Scottish parish may by some fortunate circumstance have within its boundaries an amount of rateable property out of all proportion to its needs, while another may be composed of property which represents a taxable capacity inadequate for the barest needs of civilisation. For instance, the parish of Temple, in Midlothian, has a gross valuation of over £44 to each inhabitant, whilst Barvas, in Ross and Cromarty, has only 9s. per inhabitant, and 1d. rate will, therefore, produce nearly 100 times as much per inhabitant in Temple as in Barvas."* This inequality is frequently not mitigated, but actually increased, by the distribution of the subventions from the National Exchequer. To quote again Lord Balfour of Burleigh: "The parish of Ettrick, in Selkirk, which is almost wholly agricultural, has an assessable value of nearly £20 per inhabitant, and is, in this respect, one of the wealthiest parishes in Scotland. Its expenditure upon Poor Relief is equal to 9s. 4d. per inhabitant, an amount which is considerably above the average for the whole of Scotland, but which, owing to the high assessable value, would involve a rate of less than 6d. in the £, even if it received no assistance from central funds whatever. Notwithstanding these circumstances it receives grants (including those under the Agricultural Rates, &c., Act) from the Local Taxation Account, amounting in the aggregate to more than one-half of its expenditure, and representing 5s. 1d. per inhabitant—one of the largest amounts, if not the largest amount, throughout Scotland. Of the total it appears that about one-quarter, or 1s. 2d. per inhabitant, is derived from the 'grant in relief of parochial rates,' and with this and the other grants the Poor Rate is reduced to less than 3d. in the £.

"The parish of Old Monkland (Lanark), which is partly within the burgh of Coatbridge, has less than one-quarter of the assessable value per inhabitant possessed by Ettrick, and administers its Poor Relief much more economically, having an expenditure equal only to 4s. 2d. per inhabitant, or less than one half of the amount spent in Ettrick. But notwithstanding the more restricted resources and greater economy in Old Monkland, the parish only receives grants amounting to 8d. per inhabitant, a sum which is only just over one-half of the amount granted to Ettrick under the head of 'relief of rates' alone, and is left with a rate of 8¾d. in the £." †

* Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Scotland), 1902, p. 33. (Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Lord Blair Balfour.)

† *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Since the date of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Report, the inequalities seem to have become even more extreme. There are more than fifty parishes in Scotland to-day in which the result of the Government Grants, quite irrespective of parish property or "mortifications," church collections or voluntary contributions, is to relieve the local ratepayer of more than one-half of the burden of Poor Relief—in nearly a dozen cases going so far as to enable a Poor Rate on occupiers * to be entirely dispensed with. On the other hand the ratepayers of the little parish of Glendevon (Perthshire) only got, in 1906–7, £1 in Government Grants towards their expenditure of £32; those of Stranraer (Wigtonshire) only £126 towards an expenditure of £1,283; those of Blantyre (Lanarkshire) only £492 towards an expenditure of £4,720; whilst those of Glasgow, Leith and Aberdeen on the one hand, and Polwarth (Berwickshire), Dalziel (Lanarkshire) and Kirkintilloch (Dumbartonshire) on the other, found themselves relieved only to the extent of one-seventh or one-eighth of their respective burdens. As a consequence it may occasionally happen that, in a particular year, a fortunate Parish Council may need to levy no Poor Rates at all, either on owners or occupiers, as was actually the case with the Dunsyre (Lanarkshire) Parish Council, though without either "mortifications" or voluntary collections, in 1906–7, whilst nine other parishes had no rate on occupiers and only a fraction of a penny on owners; and whilst hundreds of other parishes found their Poor Rates reduced to only a few farthings or a few pence in the £, the Parish Council of Barra (Inverness-shire) had a Poor Rate of 9s. 6d. in the £, (4s. 2d. on owners and 5s. 4d. on occupiers); that of Lochs (Ross and Cromarty) one of 12s. 3d. in the £, (5s. 9d. on owners and 6s. 6d. on occupiers); that of Barvas in the same county one of 13s. 8d. in the £, (5s. 8d. on owners and 8s. on occupiers).† Such stupendous inequalities, dependent as they are on the assessable value of the parishes,‡ bear no relation to the relative population, area, or industrial character of the parish—still less, to the economy or efficiency of the Parish Council—and need only to be stated to be condemned.

(ii.) *Discrimination in Favour of Desirable Expenditure.*

With regard to the encouragement of particular services or particular forms of relief rather than others, we may note that, in Scotland, a much larger proportion of the total Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Parish Councils is framed so as to achieve this end than is the case with the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales. Of the total sum of £244,000, more than half is accounted for by the Lunacy Grant of £115,500 and the Medical Relief Grant of £20,000. The Lunacy Grant, which began in 1875, is so framed as to encourage the certification of paupers as being of unsound mind, as the larger the proportion of lunatics among its paupers, the larger is the Grant-in-Aid that the Parish Council receives. It is not without significance that the lunatic poor, who, between 1868 and 1875, had remained nearly stationary at between 1·8 and 1·9 per 1,000 of the population, have, since the year in which the Lunacy Grant was first payable, increased by leaps and bounds, the proportion rising from 1·9 in 1875 to no fewer than 3·1 in 1907 per 1,000 of the population. Whereas, in 1875, only 64 out of every 1,000 paupers were certified as of unsound mind, there were, in 1907, no fewer than 139 out of every 1,000 so certified.§ This Lunacy Grant is not, as it is in England and Wales, payable only for such persons of unsound mind as are maintained in lunatic asylums; but is payable for all persons of unsound mind maintained by the Parish Councils, whether in asylums, in Poorhouses, or "boarded-out," with regard to whom the General Board of Lunacy are satisfied that proper care and treatment are afforded. Notwithstanding this payment of the Lunacy Grant for lunatics still retained in the General Mixed Poorhouse, to which there is so much objection, we must, in fairness, record that the General Board of Lunacy insists on there being separate "licensed wards," and that a much smaller proportion than in England and Wales of the pauper lunatics—in fact only 782 out of the 15,031—are so retained in Scotland, partly, perhaps, because 2,771 are "boarded-out." We may entirely accept the evidence that has been given

* In Scotland, one-half of the amount required is levied from owners, and the other half (less the amount of the Agricultural Rates Grant) is levied from occupiers. Owing principally to losses by empties and exemptions on the ground of poverty, the assessable valuation of occupiers is usually smaller than that of owners, and hence the rate in the pound often has to be higher.

† For all these statistics, *see* Thirteenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland (Cd. 4142), 1907, pp. 153–193. The total rates of Barra in 1905–1906 went up to 17s. 11d. in the £; *see* Reports . . . on the Burden of the existing Rates and the . . . Position of the Outer Hebrides (Cd. 3014), 1906.

‡ "It is somewhat anomalous that at least three of the present grants are still distributed, wholly or in part, in direct proportion to valuation. *This system undoubtedly results in the granting of greater relief to wealthy districts than to poorer districts*, and we trust that it will not again be adopted in any amendment or extension of the grants." (Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Scotland), 1902, p. 43. Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, etc.).

§ Thirteenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland, 1907, p. xi.

that " the result of the Grant," under the watchful supervision and the incessant suggestions for amendment of the General Board of Lunacy, " has been a great improvement in the care of the insane." * But we think it objectionable that, owing to the selection of this one section of the pauper host for a heavy Grant-in-Aid, there should be so great a temptation offered to Parish Councils to get poor persons certified as of unsound mind.†

The Medical Relief Grant has less equivocal features. Here indeed, as in the English Police Grant, we have an example of a Grant in-Aid operating—because framed upon sensible lines—in such a way as enormously to increase the efficiency of the service selected for encouragement.‡ By means of the deliberately contrived scale of minimum expenditure on the medical service, as well as the requirement (which had not been embodied in any statute as to Poor Relief) that there should be a salaried doctor, which alone entitled a Parish Council to participate in the Grant, its distribution was prevented from being merely a dole to the ratepayer. By making the Grant to each Parish Council not in proportion to its population or valuation but directly proportionate to its own actual expenditure on Medical Relief, with an additional bonus for the provision of trained sick nursing in the Poorhouses, the Central Authority effected " an immediate and lasting improvement in the administration of Poor Law Medical Relief, outdoor and indoor," from one end of Scotland to another. " By means of the Grant, a system of trained sick nursing has been established in Poorhouses ; schools of training Poor Law nurses have come into existence ; and recently the system has culminated in State Certification of Poorhouse Nurses after three years' training and a high class examination. The whole system of Indoor Medical Relief has thus been greatly improved." It is interesting to find the Local Government Board for Scotland itself making it a matter for congratulation—very natural, if rather prematurely optimistic—" that the best Poorhouse sick wards are now as well staffed as the wards of any first-class general hospital." §

Unfortunately, the Medical Relief Grant has one accidental defect. In 1889, when this Grant was, with others, merged in the Local Taxation Account, it was provided ‖ that it should be distributed according to the scale and regulations then in force. This statutory enactment has had the unintended effect of stereotyping the regulations of twenty years ago, so that certain parishes are now unfairly excluded from participation in the Grant, and, moreover, it has not been possible to enlarge its scope so as to encourage such new developments as salaried nurses for the Outdoor poor and probationer nurses in the Poorhouses, or to amend certain technical defects which experience has revealed.¶ What is required is merely to enable the Local Government Board for Scotland to revise the scale and the regulations from time to time.**

It is to be regretted that in no other branch of the Scottish Poor Law than Lunacy and Medical Relief, have the Grants-in-Aid been made to work an equally beneficent improvement. Thus, there is no financial encouragement to the Scottish Parish Councils, as there is to the London Boards of Guardians, to provide for their pauper children otherwise than in the General Mixed Workhouse or Poorhouse. The result is that—

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* Memorandum . . . relating to Exchequer Contributions towards Expenditure on Poor Relief.

† Here, again, we must note that it is objectionable that the officers of the Parish Councils should find it a source of extra emolument to get a pauper certified as of unsound mind. In some parishes the Medical Officers get no fees for lunacy certificates ; in others they get half a guinea each ; in others, again, a guinea, but only in the cases of persons belonging to other parishes. (Report of Departmental Committee . . . on Poor Law Medical Relief (Scotland), Cd. 2022, 1904, Vol. II., *Qs.* 3430–3432, 4383–4399.)

‡ As to the Medical Relief Grant, *see* Report of the Departmental Committee . . . on Poor Law Medical Relief (Scotland) (Cd. 2022), 1904, Vols. I. and II. ; Memorandum . . . relating to Exchequer Contributions towards Expenditure on Poor Relief ; Report of Royal Commission on Local Taxation, 1899, Vol. III., p. 295 ; Final Report (Scotland), 1902, pp. 15–18.

§ Memorandum . . . relating to Exchequer Contributions towards Expenditure on Poor Relief.

‖ Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, Sec. 24.

¶ Report of Departmental Committee . . . on Poor Law Medical Relief (Scotland) (Cd. 2022), 1904, Vol. I., pp. 90–96.

** It may be noted that the effect of the ill-considered scheme of distribution of the other Grants in Aid is, to a small extent, actually to counteract the influence of the Medical Relief Grant. At least three of the Parish Councils which get more than half their expenditure from the Government Grants are excluded from participation in the Medical Relief Grant, because their medical service is not up to the minimum standard.

notwithstanding the prevalent belief that Scottish pauper children are nearly all "boarded-out"—there are to be found in the Poorhouses of Scotland at any time, a very large proportion of children under sixteen, numbering, indeed, on March 31st, 1906, no fewer than 1,845; * whilst in London, with a greater population and a greater amount of pauperism, but under the operation of financial encouragement of the removal of children from the Workhouse, there were on March 31st, 1906, only 174 children under sixteen in the Workhouses (other than sick), and only 965 in the sick wards of Workhouses, making only 1,139 in the General Mixed Workhouses altogether.

(iii.) *Giving Authority to Central Control.*

Passing now to the third effect of Grants-in-Aid, the extent to which they strengthen, in the interests of efficiency and economy, the influence of the Central Authority, we need add little to what we have already said. Half the total Grants are, as we have seen, flung out in such a way as to do nothing to improve the relationship of the Local Government Board for Scotland with the Parish Councils. The Lunacy Grant gives the General Board of Lunacy the power to see that the care and treatment of the pauper lunatics are up to a minimum standard, and thus lends a certain amount of weight to its criticisms and suggestions. The Medical Relief Grant has enabled the Local Government Board to get a salaried Medical Officer appointed to attend to the poor of nearly every parish, and to get trained nurses appointed in many Poorhouses, including all the larger ones, but the accidental stereotyping of the regulations of 1889 has prevented the making of further requirements. But, for the most part, the beneficent influence of these Grants has operated automatically from the conditions under which they are payable, rather than from any increased weight that they have given to the influence of the Central Authority.

(D) IRELAND.

The Grants in Aid of the expenditure of Boards of Guardians in Ireland, which amount to £528,000 a year, being no less than 40 per cent. of the total expenditure, offer few points of difference from those in England and Scotland.

GRANTS IN AID OF THE EXPENDITURE OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS IN IRELAND.

Grant.	Amount in 1907-8.
	£
Fixed (Agriculture) Grant to Boards of Guardians in respect of the deficiency arising from the operation of Clause 48 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.	316,731
One-half of Estate Duty Grant (Sec. 3 of Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888); total not varying in any way dependent on Boards of Guardians, and allocation among Unions fixed on basis of 1886–1887.	126,055
Medical and Educational Salaries Grant - - - - - - -	85,996
Total - - - - - - - - - - - -	528,782

There is the same kind of fixed Grant in respect of the deficiency caused by the relief afforded to the owner of agricultural land, a Grant, which, as in Great Britain, is now essentially one in aid of expenditure generally. There is a second Grant in aid of expenditure generally, varying in total amount according to the yield of the Estate Duties, but in no way dependent on any action of the Board of Guardians, and allocated among the various Unions in a ratio that was fixed, once for all, in 1886–7, and has now ceased to bear any relation to the relative expenditures. These two Grants, amounting to no less than £442,786, or 86 per cent. of all the Grants-in-Aid, have thus the effect of lump sum subventions in aid of the local expenditure, of which they amount, on an average, to as much

* Census of Paupers (Scotland). At one time or other during the year 1906–1907, no fewer than 5,677 children under fourteen were inmates of the Poorhouses of Scotland; nearly a thousand of them for the whole year. (House of Commons Return, No. 284 of 1908.)

as one-third. The third Grant, that in aid of medical and educational salaries, is now limited in total; but, as with the Medical and Lunacy Grants in Scotland, this fixed maximum sum is allocated among the Boards of Guardians in proportion, to some extent, dependent on their own expenditure. The Boards of Guardians may claim for recoupment one-half the duly approved salaries of their medical officers of Workhouses and dispensaries; one-half the cost of medicines and of medical and surgical appliances, obtained in accordance with the regulations; half the salary of one trained nurse in each Workhouse; one-half the remuneration of substitutes of doctors or nurses absent on vacation; and the whole of the duly approved salaries of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses in Workhouses. But, by a provision of the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1902, the maximum sum to be received by any Board of Guardians under these heads was fixed at what it actually paid under these heads in 1901–2, so that an enterprising Board, which had then already attained the low minimum standard imposed, may presently find that it has little or no financial encouragement to effect further improvements. Moreover, under the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898, it was provided that if the total sum provided for this Grant proved insufficient to meet the claims, the Grants payable to each Union were to be proportionably abated. This, in fact, happens now every year, so that the amounts payable to each Union (like the Scotch Medical and Lunacy Grants) bear each year a smaller proportion to the Guardians' expenditure on the services which it was desired to encourage. It should be added that the maintenance of persons of unsound mind in lunatic asylums is, in Ireland, entirely divorced from the Poor Law and from pauperism. There is a Grant of £160,000 made direct to the County Councils in aid of this service at the rate of 4s. per week per lunatic, or one-half the net cost if this is a smaller amount.

(i.) *The Relief to the Local Ratepayers.*

Coming now to the results of these Grants in Aid of the expenditure of the Irish Boards of Guardians, we find them, in respect alike of the relief to the ratepayer, of the encouragement of particular services and of the strengthening of the influence for efficiency of the Central Authority, almost exactly parallel with what we have already described for England and Scotland. There are the same heedless inequalities in the extent of the relief afforded to the ratepayers of different Unions, entirely irrespective of their circumstances; whether the test be population, area, poverty, amount of pauperism, efficiency of service or economy of administration. These inequalities between the relief thus afforded to the Irish occupiers appear all the more inexcusable when we realise that it is the unfortunate districts of the West, where it may almost be said that chronic starvation prevails, which are most unfairly dealt with. Throughout the whole of Ireland the Government Grants are arranged almost as if it had been deliberately designed that those districts which needed help most should receive the least assistance, whilst those which required the least aid had this aid heaped upon them in profusion. We have worked out the figures for six of the richest and six of the poorest Unions in Ireland:—

Union.	County.	Death Duty Grant. 1906–7.	Medical and Teachers' Grant. 1906–7.	Agricultural Rates Grant. 1906–7.	Total Grants in Aid. 1906–7.	Population 1901.	Valuation 1906.	Valuation per head.	Grants per head.
		£.	£.	£.	£.		£.	£. s. d.	s. d.
Dunshaughlin-	Meath -	399	332	2,383	3,114	7,979	105,242	13 4 0	7 9
Trim - -	Meath -	485	408	3,568	4,461	13,973	109,054	7 16 0	6 4
Celbridge -	Kildare -	579	456	2,122	3,157	14,225	106,057	7 9 0	4 5
Delvin - -	Westmeath-	316	250	1,717	2,283	8,477	53,200	6 6 0	5 4
Croom - -	Limerick -	597	402	2,677	3,676	10,806	63,836	5 18 0	6 9
Killmallock -	Limerick -	1,477	757	6,104	8,338	25,551	140,273	5 10 0	6 1
Glenties -	Donegal -	669	539	1,059	2,267	33,191	22,314	13 0	1 4
Dunfanaghy -	Donegal -	364	194	392	850	15,781	12,036	15 0	1 0
Belmullet -	Mayo -	504	304	765	1,573	13,845	10,942	16 0	2 3
Oughterard -	Galway -	393	366	921	1,680	17,732	16,053	18 0	1 10
Swineford -	Mayo -	758	490	2,123	3,371	44,162	42,374	19 0	1 6
Clifden - -	Galway -	507	370	1,020	1,897	18,768	19,010	1 0 0	2 0

In the Dunshaughlin Union, amid the rich grazing lands of Meath, where the valuation amounts to no less than £13 4s. 0d. per head of population, the Government relieves the occupier from his burden of local expenditure to the extent of as much as 7s. 9d. per head. In the Dunfanaghy Union, amid the bare rocks of Donegal, the Government relieves the occupier of his local burden to the extent of no more than 1s. per head. There are unfortunate Unions in the West, in which the inhabitants are habitually unable to earn a living (such as Glenties, Swineford and Caherciveen) where the total of Government Grants in aid of the expenditure of the Board of Guardians on Poor Relief does not amount to a third of its cost—these Unions being aided no more than is flourishing Belfast. On the other hand, in some of the districts of Ireland where the valuation per head is highest (such as Dunshaughlin, Delvin, Croom and Celbridge), the fortunate Board of Guardians finds that it has to bear only one-fifth of the amount that it chooses to spend. Nor have these enormous inequalities any relation to the policy, to the efficiency or to the extravagance of the different Boards. Among the Unions where pauperism is relatively high, and the numbers on Outdoor Relief are most considerable, we find the names of those (such as Kilmallock, Navan and Croom) in which the Government Grant is relatively the largest. The result is that whereas some Unions, richly endowed by the Government Grant and spending in Poor Relief two or three times the average for the whole country, escape, whatever their extravagance, with a Poor Rate on occupiers of 6d. or 8d. in the £; others—by what seems almost like a bitter irony, those where the soil is poorest—have (like Belmullet and Dingle) to bear a burden, notwithstanding a starved administration costing only a third or a fourth as much per head as that of some other Unions, of between 3s. and 4s. in the £. We can find no excuse for the continuance of so anomalous and so unfair a distribution of the Government Grants, to which pointed attention was called in 1902 by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir E. W. Hamilton and Sir G. Murray,* without any reform being effected; and to which renewed attention has now been called by the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland.†

(ii.) *Discrimination in Favour of Desirable Expenditure.*

In the matter of the encouragement of particular services, the expansion of which is considered desirable, the Grants in Aid of the expenditure of the Irish Boards of Guardians are so arranged as to have the very minimum of effect. Four-fifths of the sum thus paid by the Government has no such discriminating effect at all. The remaining fifth—the Medical and Teachers Grant—had originally a considerable influence in the improvement of the Medical and Educational staffs of the Union. But owing to what seems to have been a wholly mischievous change in 1902, when the expenditure of that year was stereotyped as the limit of the Grant which no Union might hereafter exceed, however much it subsequently developed its medical and educational services, the beneficial effect of the Grant in this respect has diminished, though it still serves as a stimulus to prevent the most backward Unions from sinking below the minimum. There is no financial encouragement given to the Irish Boards of Guardians to provide for their pauper children otherwise than in the General Mixed Workhouse, where they are usually taught as well as boarded and lodged; there is, for instance, no Grant paid in respect of children boarded-out or placed in certified schools; there is no financial encouragement to them to provide more than the minimum of nursing in the Workhouse; there is no financial encouragement to them to give relief to the sick, the widows or the aged and infirm in one way rather than another.

(iii.) *Giving Authority to Central Control.*

On the last, and in some ways the most important feature of Grants-in-Aid, the extent to which they are arranged so as to strengthen the influence for efficiency of the Central

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* Final Report (Ireland) of Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Cd. 1068), 1902, pp. 24–27.

† "A rate of 1d. in the £ of Poor Law valuation produces a sum of only £45 11s. 10d. in the altogether rural and very poor Union of Belmullet, County Mayo; a sum of £438 10s. 2d. in the altogether rural but highly valued Union of Dunshaughlin, County Meath; and a sum of £6,515 12s. 7d. in the Union of Belfast, which is mainly composed of the city and suburbs. For the year under consideration the amount necessary for all indoor maintenance, including lunatic asylums and county infirmaries and hospitals, required off non-agricultural hereditaments, a rate of 2s. 3d. in the £ in Belmullet Union, of 4½d. in Dunshaughlin Union, and of 10½d. in Belfast Union. In poor Unions such as Belmullet, the most rigid economy has to be observed; and a patient in the hospitals of such Unions cannot, owing to want of funds, be treated according to what would be regarded as a *minimum* standard in an ordinary well-managed hospital. The peasant in the hospitals of very poor rural Unions necessarily receives much inferior accommodation and diet, if not treatment, to what would be possible in the wealthier parts of the country." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 68.)

Authority, the Grants to the Irish Boards of Guardians are always wholly useless. Four-fifths of the Grants are made unconditionally in lump sums. Thus, an Irish Board of Guardians may go to the utmost limit of contumacy; it may violate in the spirit, if not actually in the letter, all the commands of the law, and all the injunctions of the Local Government Board for Ireland; it may be as extravagant in its expenditure and foolishly lavish in its Outdoor Relief as it chooses; it may set at naught all the advice of the Inspectors; its members may be grossly partial, politically biassed and virtually corrupt in their administration—nevertheless the Local Government Board for Ireland must, by law, unquestioningly hand out, year after year, the funds which provide one-third or one-half—sometimes even four-fifths—of what the Guardians are playing with. Such a position needs only to be stated to be condemned. Nor is the matter much better with regard to the remaining fifth of the total Grants, that in aid of the medical and educational salaries, etc. Here the conditions secure that the appointments and salaries shall have had the approval of the Local Government Board, and that the medicines, etc., shall have been procured in accordance with its regulations. But the Grant is not in any way dependent on the efficiency of either the medical service or the Workhouse school. The doctor may have got very old or taken to drink; the teacher in the Workhouse school may have got worn out in the service and be utterly incapable of keeping the school apace with educational progress—nevertheless the Local Government Board for Ireland must go on paying the Guardians the Grant towards the salaries of officers whom its Inspectors report to have become wholly inefficient.

(E) What should be the Terms of the National Subvention.

We attribute the present chaotic condition of the Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Destitution Authorities mainly to the lack of consideration with which the several Grants have, from time to time, been made. The desire merely to relieve the local ratepayer, or to bring new sources of revenue to the aid of rates on occupiers, has sometimes obscured the object of effecting a greater geographical equalisation of burdens and the still greater importance, as it seems to us, of strengthening the control of the community as a whole over local parsimony or local extravagance. Moreover, it does not seem always to have been borne in mind that, apart from the particular monetary necessity which led to the concession, each Grant-in-Aid necessarily affected, by its amount, its geographical allocation and its conditions, the psychological and financial effects of all the Grants to the same Local Authority that were already in existence. But without dwelling further on these points, we have to observe that part of the evil appears to us to be inherent in the very nature of Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of Local Authorities charged merely with the "relief of destitution." So long as it could be said that the business of Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and of Parish Councils in Scotland, was merely to relieve "destitution," it followed that the policy of the Central Authority tended to be one of seeking to diminish their total expenditure; the "best" Local Authority was the one which contrived to spend the least; and any Grant-in-Aid was apt to be looked upon as mischievous encouragement of the unnecessary and positively harmful expenditure that resulted from lax administration.* It is, therefore, natural that, the Grant being regarded as wholly evil in its tendency, no consideration should be given by the Department concerned to the conditions of its distribution. Where the Grant-in-Aid is made to Local Authorities charged with the performance of a specific service, which it is wished to encourage, as is the case with the Education Grant and the Police Grant, in England and Wales, and the Poor Law Medical Grants in Scotland and Ireland, we see the Departments concerned framing elaborate regulations for making the Grant not merely relieve the ratepayer, but also promote the efficiency of the service. We doubt whether it is possible to frame similar conditions for a Grant-in-Aid of the expenditure of a Destitution Authority generally, which would be really effective in promoting efficiency and discouraging a lax administration of Poor Relief. If, therefore, Destitution Authorities continue to exist, there is much to be said for the view that all general Grants-in-Aid of their expenditure ought, as tending, in their hands, merely to local extravagance and inefficiency, to be withdrawn, or, as we should rather say, diverted to other Local Authorities administering services, the development of which it is desired to encourage.

But the very great variations in the weight of the rate-burden imposed upon localities by their administration of the service of Poor Relief, which was declared by the Royal

* *See* the evidence of Mr. J. S. Davy, C.B., Assistant Secretary and Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1831, 2206, 2221, 2449, 2691.

Commission on Local Taxation to be predominantly national in character, render it absolutely necessary that Parliament should speedily make provision for the re-arrangement of the incidence of this burden. Such a re-arrangement involves the existence of some central or national fund; and it is not, therefore, practicable to dissociate the present expenditure of Destitution Authorities (to whomsoever it may be transferred) from any scheme of Imperial subventions in aid of local expenditure. In any case those evils of distribution which, so far from mitigating, even increase the burdens of poor districts, should promptly be reformed.

We have, however, already seen that the administration of the Poor Law is becoming more and more differentiated into its constituent services, such as the education of the children and the curative treatment of the sick. We have seen, moreover, that, even within the range of the Poor Law, it is the Grants-in-Aid of specific services, such as the Lunacy Grant and the Medical Grant, which have had the most satisfactory results. We think it is clear that, whatever subventions from national revenues may from time to time be accorded in relief of the local ratepayers, these should always take the form, not of general grants, but of Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure on particular services, or particular methods of administration that it is considered desirable to encourage, relatively to other services or other methods of administration.

(i.) *It should be a Grant, not merely an Assignment of Revenue.*

We have carefully weighed the relative advantages of Grants-in-Aid, as compared with the assignment to the Local Authorities of specific branches of revenue, or the proceeds of particular taxes. For reasons which will have become sufficiently clear in our preceding analysis of the existing subventions received by the Destitution Authorities we object altogether to the latter plan.* For Parliament to assign specific sources of revenue to the Local Authorities, or dedicate to their use the proceeds of particular taxes, is to deprive the community as a whole of part of its public resources without securing to the National Government, in return, any practical means of enforcing upon the Local Authorities that minimum of efficiency which the interests of the community require; and without giving to the National Government that effective backing of its supervision and control, and that effective strengthening of its counsel and advice, without which it is powerless to check local extravagance and local waste. The psychological effect upon the Local Authorities of assigned revenues instead of Grants-in-Aid, is, moreover, wholly to the bad. To a Local Authority, the proceeds of assigned revenues soon become regarded as its own property, which it ought to be able to spend at its will, as freely as the rates which it levies upon its constituents, or even more so, and yet without the check to extravagance that is supplied by the consciousness of having to face, at the elections, those from whom the money has been raised. In fact, as things are, "the Local Authorities enjoying the Grants are said to spend them without consideration, and with a recklessness which would be absent if they were dealing with moneys directly provided out of their own pockets. . . . Experience shows that Grants do not reduce the rates, these being, as a rule, as high now as before such Grants were in operation. Grants should be given for special purposes, and not in aid of rates generally. . . . At present they are too much given to regard these grants in the light of doles." † Whilst it is desirable, in our view, that considerable aid should be afforded to the local ratepayers, both for the sake of equalising local burdens, and for the sake of strengthening the influence for efficiency of the National Government, we regard it as of the highest importance, both as a check upon extravagance, and as a means of securing effective popular assent and control, that the Local Authorities, while receiving generous assistance from the Exchequer in respect of National burdens they cannot avoid, should feel that the results of their own actions seriously affect the amount of a definite local rate, varying from year to year. With regard to the aid that they get from the National Exchequer,

* One principal object of the change in 1888 from Grants-in-Aid to Assigned Revenues was a clear separation of Imperial and local finance. But "no separation of Imperial and local finance has, in fact, been accomplished, for it has been found necessary to include the Local Taxation moneys in nearly all statements concerning Imperial finance. Nor would such a separation be altogether desirable, it is contended, on the ground that, so long as a complete separation of the functions of the Imperial and Local Authorities is not possible, the duties of the former can be most effectually performed if accompanied by a system of Imperial grants." (Final Report of Royal Commission on Local Taxation (England and Wales), 1901, p. 70; Separate Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, concurred in by Sir George Murray and the late Sir Edward Hamilton.)

† *Ibid.* (Scotland), 1899, Appendix XXX. to Vol. III., pp. 285, 286; Memorandum by Mr. Patten-Macdougall, Vice-President of the Local Government Board for Scotland.

it is desirable that they should feel that it comes as a recognition of the fact that the local service thus aided is one which is performed, not for the locality alone, but, in part at least, in furtherance of the interests of the community as a whole ; and that accordingly the community as a whole has a right to satisfy itself, by the inspection of the expert officers of the central departments concerned, that the service is performed at least up to the extent, and with at least the degree of efficiency, that the community may, in its own interests, from time to time prescribe.*

We do not think that it is within our province to suggest what should be the total amount of the subventions to be made to the Local Authorities, or the proportion that they should bear to the local expenditure. It is only for the sake of convenience that we assume that, at any rate, the present annual subvention of between three and four millions sterling received by the Destitution Authorities will not be withdrawn from the ratepayers,† and that definite parts of it will continue to be allocated to England and Wales, to Scotland, and to Ireland respectively.‡ Before, however, we proceed to consider in what way, and upon what conditions some such amount should be issued to the Local Authorities, a question may arise whether the sum now payable to the Destitution Authorities, in respect of the deficiency arising under the Agricultural Rates Act—commonly called the Agricultural Rates Grant—can properly be included in the re-distribution. We are decidedly of opinion that it can and should be dealt with exactly like the other Grants-in-Aid. We are supported in this contention by the high authority of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir George Murray, and the late Sir Edward Hamilton, whose lucid argument on the subject we now append. "The circumstances which we have thus briefly indicated," they state in their Minority Report (Ireland) of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, "point with irresistible force to the desirability of a re-distribution of the aid to Local Taxation given from the Imperial Exchequer. With regard to most of the existing Grants, such a proposal would meet, we believe, with ready concurrence. But the case of the Agricultural Grant, which is by far the largest item, may appear at first sight more doubtful, and needs careful consideration.

"In the provisions of the Irish Local Government Act, 1898, as to the Agricultural Grant, there is no limit of time, and consequently it might be supposed that any modification of the whole arrangement would be a sort of breach of faith. We think it is possible to draw some distinction.

"The feature of the Act, which was of the nature of a bargain, and which is irrevocable, was this: That, whereas landlords had hitherto paid half the Poor Rate, they should, in future, be relieved of that liability. . . . This relief was given for various reasons, but more especially in consideration of the risks which a more representative system of Local Government in Ireland would undoubtedly bring to them. Consequently, all rates in rural districts (as well as most urban rates) are to be henceforth paid by occupiers, and this arrangement is admittedly beyond alteration.

"At the same time it was provided by the Local Government Act that the rates in respect of agricultural land should be relieved to the extent of the Agricultural Grant. We do not consider that it is desirable or practicable to depart from the general policy of that Grant; but we do not think it can be assumed that the arrangements as to the aggregate, and especially the distribution of the Grant, are fixed to the last penny

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* "In the administration of national services it is of the utmost importance that the Central Authority should endeavour to secure uniformity, efficiency, and economy, and with this object I am of opinion it should be invested with extensive powers of control. Such powers may be most effectively exercised if accompanied by a system of Grants in Aid. Those in force before 1888 were, no doubt, a powerful lever in the hands of the Central Authority, and were, in most cases, devised with a view to guiding local administration in the desired direction, *e.g.*, in the case of police and sanitary officers. A system of assigned revenues distributed without regard to service rendered, is *prima facie* hardly compatible with such objects." (*Ibid.* (England and Wales), 1901, p. 82; Separate Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.)

† "Effective control of Poor Relief administration is more easily secured by the Central Government, if accompanied by financial inducements ; and we think it essential that the Grants should nowhere be reduced to such an extent as to weaken the control already exercised." (*Ibid.* (Scotland), 1902, p. 37; Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, etc.)

‡ We note that the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation recognised the injustice of the present allocation between Great Britain and Ireland ; and recommended an additional grant to Ireland of £150,000 (*Ibid.* (Ireland), Cd. 1068, 1902) ; a recommendation endorsed by the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland (Cd. 3202, 1906, pp. 71–72).

for all time. Indeed, demands have already been made for the increase of the Grant, in order to bring it up to date. And, while the distribution is not, in our opinion, satisfactory at present, it may, owing to various possible changes in local finance, become grossly absurd. For instance, if the valuation of any district was considerably increased or diminished—as it probably should be in some cases—the rate in the £ would be altered, and the Agricultural Grant, based on the standard year, 1896–7, might become very anomalous. A considerable increase of buildings or railways might have a similar effect, or such a result might follow from changes of administration. Thus, if a Union which has hitherto been very profuse in poor relief were to change its policy, it is not outside the bounds of practical possibility that the Agricultural Grant might be enough to cover more than the whole charge on the land. Or, if the other subventions in any district were varied, the rate would vary, and the Agricultural Grant would again become anomalous. Again, if it is held impossible to vary the distribution of the Agricultural Grant, it would seem equally impossible to alter the distribution of any other Grant, for the effect on the ratepayers would be just the same.

"Now, we are of opinion that, as between ratepayers, the relief afforded to the occupier of agricultural land by the Local Government Act was equitable, and should be continued, on the ground that the ability as measured by the occupation of the land is less than the ability represented by the occupation of other property of equal annual value. We, therefore, propose that henceforth, as at present, the rate on agricultural land should be in each area less than the rate on other property by half the standard rate. If the position of the agriculturist be thus safeguarded, we hope that this further proposition may be admitted, viz., that the Agricultural Grant ought not to be regarded as an inalienable endowment of particular districts and particular ratepayers, but that equitable revision from time to time, as fairness and administrative policy demand, is legitimate and necessary." *

Similar considerations, it is clear, apply with equal force to the Agricultural Rate Grants in England and Wales, and in Scotland. Whether or not it is just and proper to continue the beneficial arrangements as to the assessment of agricultural land at only half its value, or the payment by the occupier of only half rates upon it, whichever system is found most convenient, there is clearly no obligation on the part of Parliament to continue to pay, *in one way rather than in another*, the Grant which it made to Local Authorities in 1896–7 in respect of the deficiency thus arising.

(ii.) *It Should be Dependent on Local Efficiency.*

We think it essential, in the interests alike of economy and efficiency, that the present arrangement of making to the Destitution Authorities definitely fixed lump sum Grants, irrespective of the use that is being made of them, should be promptly and completely brought to an end.† Such an arrangement operates almost as an encouragement to extravagance and laxity of administration, and makes the National Government a helpless accomplice in the crime. Such a system has, to recommend it, only the advantage that it affords to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of knowing in advance exactly how much the total sum to be provided in aid of the Local Authorities will amount to. We recognise the advantage of thus separating the fluctuations of local expenditure from those of the National Exchequer. But this object can be completely attained, without sacrificing the other important advantages of making Grants-in-Aid vary according to efficiency of service. There is no objection to the aggregate total of the Grants-in-Aid being fixed in advance, for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, either permanently

* Final Report of Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Ireland), 1902, p. 25.

† "The largest of the Poor Law Grants, that corresponding to the expenditure on Union officers in 1887–1888, is fixed in amount, and has probably little effect on administrative policy, since the Guardians receive the payment, no matter whether they spend it upon Union Officers or not. That it has, in practice, failed as an inducement to the Guardians to appoint sufficient and sufficiently paid Relieving Officers in the more backward Unions, is evident from the Reports of Mr. Preston Thomas and other Inspectors of the Local Government Board. Moreover, the actual expenditure upon officers is not an efficient test of the real requirements of a Union, and consequently, as a matter of equity, the distribution of a grant upon this basis bears hardly on the backward districts, for, the grant being fixed, no action of theirs, not even the reform of their administration, will secure for them the full amount of the grant to which, under other circumstances, they might have been entitled." (*Ibid.* (England and Wales), 1901, p. 82; Separate Recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.)

or for a term of seven or ten years.* This total could then be distributed among the Local Authorities according to certain fixed principles, leaving the amount to be allotted to each to vary according to the amount or the efficiency of the service. Thus, the total amount of Grant receivable by the Scottish Parish Councils in respect of their expenditure on Lunatics is definitely fixed, but the proportion which each Parish Council receives varies according to the number of lunatics provided for to the satisfaction of the General Board of Lunacy for Scotland in each particular parish.

(iii.) *It Should be Applied to Definite Deliberately Selected Services.*

Of the several distinct services at present aggregated together under the Destitution Authorities, that of providing for the aged in their homes will henceforth be, to a large and, we may believe, an increasing extent, borne by the National Exchequer in the form of Old-Age Pensions. The provision to be made for the Able-bodied, including the Vagrants on the one hand, and the Unemployed on the other, must necessarily, as we shall show in Part II., be undertaken, at least in some of its forms, by the National Government. We do not think it desirable, therefore, that any part of the expenditure of the Local Authorities in providing for the maintenance of the Aged in their own homes or in providing any form of relief or maintenance for able-bodied men in health, should be aided by Government Grants. A third service, that of providing for the children of school age, including, when necessary, maintenance as well as schooling, should, we recommend, become part of the work of the Local Education Authority, which has its own elaborate system of Grants-in-Aid ; and with this system, notwithstanding the enlargement of sphere of the Local Education Authority, we do not suggest any interference ; unless, indeed, it should be thought desirable, in accordance with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, to add a specific new Grant in respect of the maintenance of the children for whom more than schooling has to be provided.† A fourth service, that of provision for the Mentally Defective of all ages, kinds and grades, will, we may assume, in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, be undertaken, exclusively and entirely, by the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective, in succession to the present Local Lunacy Authority, which receives its own simple grant of so much per head per patient suitably provided for. We agree with the Royal Commission that this grant should become payable equally for all kinds or grades of the Mentally Defective. We think that it would be an advantage if it could be arranged on the same basis as the Grant to be made towards the cost of other inmates of institutions, whatever that basis may be, so as to avoid any financial encouragement to certify patients as mentally defective.

Thus, there remain for consideration, out of all the several services at present entrusted to the Destitution Authorities, only those that we propose should become part of the work of the Local Health Authority, namely, the provision for the sick poor of all ages, the provision for birth and infancy, the provision for the infirm under pensionable age, and the whole of the institutional provision for the aged. All this, as we have indicated, should become part of the ordinary work of the Local Health Authority, which, vital as it is to the community as a whole, receives, at present, the stimulus and assistance of practically no Grants-in-Aid,‡ and (we may almost say, consequently) no systematic inspection or supervision.

We recommend, therefore, that a sum equal to at least the whole amount now received in Grants-in-Aid by the Destitution Authorities (apart from what is now received in respect of lunatics) should be received in future by the Local Health Authorities ; and that it

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* "I am strongly of opinion that the most important point is to see that the contribution given should bear some relation to the cost of national services, and should be dealt with in such a way as to afford a lever for improving local administration, both in regard to its efficiency and economy. Having regard, therefore, to all the considerations involved, I am of opinion that it will in the end be found more convenient and more economical to the State if the necessary relief be provided by a fixed sum payable from the Consolidated Fund to the Local Taxation Account, and revised from time to time as occasion requires." (*Ibid.* (England and Wales), 1901, p. 71 ; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.)

† *Ibid.*, pp. 26–28.

‡ The only exception being less than £100,000 annually towards the salaries of Medical Officers of Health, Inspectors of Nuisances and Registrars of Births and Deaths, and the payments to Public Vaccinators.

should become available, under suitable conditions, not for specific items, but for the whole expenditure of these Authorities upon the services which include all those matters which we propose should be transferred to their jurisdiction.*

(iv.) *It should be Conditional.*

It follows from our whole argument that the Grants-in-Aid of specific services should be administered by the Departments of the National Government charged with the supervision of those services, and that, in order to emphasise, year by year, the conditional character of the Grants, they should be paid by, or on the instructions of, these Departments direct to the Local Authorities concerned.† The conditions on which the Grants are to be payable should not (as the examples of the English Poor Law Teachers Grant and the Scottish Medical Grant emphatically warn us), be stereotyped in a statutory enactment, but should be formulated and revised from time to time by the Department concerned.‡

It would, of course, be essential that the accounts of all Local Authorities receiving Grants-in-Aid should be duly audited by District Auditors, who should, in Scotland,§ as is already the case in England, Wales and Ireland, be officers specially appointed for the purpose, and giving their whole time to the work. We shall later draw attention to the importance of definite qualifications (as to age, experience, and competency in financial and administrative knowledge) being required from candidates for this important appointment, and to the desirability of the auditor's report (*though not his disallowances*) extending to more than the bare question of the legality of the expenditure.

No Grant should be payable unless a certificate is given by the Department concerned that the Local Authority is administering the service to be aided in general accordance with the law and with the authoritative regulations of the Department; that the service, alike in adequacy of supply and degree of efficiency—taking into account all the circumstances of the locality—reaches at least what may be considered the National Minimum; and that the Local Authority is applying itself to remedy any shortcomings according to its means. We recommend that immediately the Department has reason to anticipate, owing to a report from its Inspector or otherwise, that it may not be in a position at the proper time to give this certificate, it should send instant warning to the Local Authority concerned. Finally, where the certificate cannot be given, the Department concerned should be empowered to withhold, after due warning, either the whole Grant or any portion of it,‖ and, if thought necessary, to require that the deficiency should be made good by the levy of a special additional rate, before any future Grants will be paid.

(v.) *It should be based on a Scale of Distribution according to Need and Ability.*

We think it desirable, on the whole, that (assuming the requirement of general efficiency to be made) the Grants should not be allocated on any basis of the number of persons treated, or the number of officers engaged, at so much per head or at such a proportion of the salaries paid. The simplicity of calculation gained by any such arrangement is out-weighed, in our opinion, by the impossibility of doing justice to the special circumstances of particular

* "It appears to me that the system of direct payments from the Central Government to the responsible authorities in respect of definite services, and not for particular items of expenditure, affords by far the easiest basis for judicious participation in the solution of administrative problems." (*Ibid.* (England and Wales), 1901, p. 83; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.)

† *Ibid.*

‡ "The stereotyping of the items towards which assistance is to be given may impede the Central Authority in its endeavour to secure the best forms of administration in the different districts and at different times." (*Ibid.*, p. 82.)

§ The Scottish Audit has been long felt to be defective. The Local Government Board for Scotland stated in 1899 that they had "done their utmost to make the audit under the Local Government Act of 1894 effective, and have issued several Circulars on the subject. They have also issued instructions to Parish Councils in regard to exemptions from taxation, which they had reason to believe were previously very loosely given. They feel satisfied that considerable savings would be effected by the introduction of an efficient system of Government audit for all local accounts, as suggested by some of the witnesses." (*Ibid.* (Scotland), 1899, Appendix XXX. to Vol. III., p. 286. Memorandum by Mr. Patten-Macdougall, Vice-President of the Local Government Board for Scotland.)

‖ "Regulations should continue to be framed by the Central Authority, which should be given the power of withholding the whole or any part of the grant, if not satisfied with the general efficiency of the service." *Ibid.* (England and Wales), 1901, p. 83; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.)

localities, by the difficulty of securing any approach to an equalisation of local burdens, and by the danger of establishing a basis which becomes rapidly obsolete. The provision of a service adequate in extent to the local needs, and yet not unnecessarily expensive, can, we think, be better secured by appropriate regulations, compliance with which is enforced by a Grant, than by offering what comes to be a standing bonus on further extensions. Similarly, we think that a rising standard of efficiency, and the introduction of new improvements in service, can be better secured by advisory Circulars and a periodical revision of regulations, coupled with a Grant varying with the total amount of service, than by specific grants for teachers, nurses, drugs, etc., which can never be made to cover all the various improvements that are being made by one Local Authority or another.*

It is to be noted, moreover, that the adoption of the County and County Borough as the unit for administration, which (subject to due consideration of the position of, and possible sharing of services with, the Non-County Boroughs and populous Urban Districts of England, Wales and Ireland, and the smaller Burghs in Scotland) we have throughout assumed, will greatly facilitate both the complete re-modelling and the future administration of the Grants-in-Aid. Instead of having to deal with 1,679 separate Destitution Authorities, the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland will be dealing only with about 210 County and Borough Councils.

We recommend, after carefully considering all the alternatives, that, subject to a fixed aggregate total, the Grants for each service should be allocated among the Local Authorities concerned in amounts varying in proportion to the *total expenditure* † (apart from loans) of each such Authority upon the whole of the particular service. Thus, the Local Health Authorities would, subject to compliance with all the other conditions, share among themselves the aggregate Grant allotted to the Public Health service, in proportion to their several expenditures, on "maintenance" or "rate" account, on all the various branches of their work.

But, unless it is thought to be too complicated, we would go a step further. We feel that it is very desirable to afford some special encouragement to poor districts, and to make the Grant-in-Aid for each service to each Local Authority vary, not only in proportion to the expenditure of that Authority on the service, but *also in proportion to its poverty*, as measured by the assessable value of its area per head of population. We agree on this point with the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, though with a wider application of their words. "As matters now stand," they say, "it is, we think, impossible for counties with a low assessable value, and many claims on the County Rate, to make a provision that, in our opinion, is absolutely necessary in the interests of the community . . . . and the mere fact that the subsidy of the Exchequer is increased, even largely increased, will not, of itself, meet the difficulty. On the other hand, by the application of definite standards to administrative finance, the methods which we recommend would further economy." ‡ In fact, "so long as the burden of the necessary expenditure upon national services falls with greater severity upon one district than another, it is difficult to insist upon general administrative reforms." § That Commission accordingly recommended for adoption, with regard to the Grant for all the Mentally Defective, the plan submitted to the Royal Commission on Local Taxation by such high Authorities as Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir George Murray, and the late Sir Edward

* "To confine the grants to certain unvarying items of expenditure is apt to tie the hands of the Central Authority, and to prevent the necessary elasticity in administration which natural variations in the circumstances of different districts and periodical changes in public opinion demand. Nor is this the only objection which can be urged against such grants, for, in enforcing any improvements which involve expenditure, no matter how essential those improvements may be, the Central Authority is bound to meet with greater opposition in poor districts than in wealthier districts, and that opposition, although it may be reduced by *per capita* grants, or grants in proportion to expenditure, will not be entirely removed until both districts are placed upon an equal footing, and the burden of the expenditure is, so far as possible, equalised." (*Ibid.* (Scotland), 1902, p. 43; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Lord Blair Balfour.)

† There is, we suggest, no reason why the receipts-in-aid, which the Local Authority recover from the patients or their relations, should be first deducted, as is at present the case. To do this is to discourage the recovery of these sums. To let the Local Authority enjoy the benefit of whatever it recovers is to encourage the recovery. But any receipts-in-aid, which are mere deductions from the nominal cost of the service, might properly first be deducted.

‡ Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, Cd. 4202, 1908, Vol. VIII., p. 285.

§ Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Scotland), 1902, p. 32; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Lord Blair Balfour.

Hamilton.* This plan proceeds on the basis of fixing what we may call a "National Minimum" rate of expenditure per head of population—taking something like the minimum which experience shows to be anywhere necessary for efficiency—and a Standard Rate in the £—taking, we suggest, something like the average of the rates of the country as a whole. If the product of the Standard Rate does not produce, in the area of any Local Authority, the "National Minimum" of expenditure for its population, the deficiency might be made wholly good by what we should call the Primary Grant. The actual expenditure of the Local Authority would, however, practically always be in excess of the National Minimum rate of expenditure per head of population—this necessarily having to be at the lowest customary standard—and towards the excess the National Government should contribute, as the Secondary Grant, a moderate proportion only—an amount which we suggest should be whatever can be afforded from the balance of the fixed total aggregate Grant (after deducting the sum of all the Primary Grants), in exact proportion to the actual expenditures of the several Local Authorities over and above the standard expenditure per head of population. The amounts of the Primary and Secondary Grants to each Local Authority would be added together, and paid over as a single block Grant. It must, however, be borne in mind that any scheme of Grants-in-Aid depending wholly or partially upon the factor of rateable value can be fairly or properly administered only if steps are taken to bring to a common standard the various methods of assessment now prevailing in different parts of the country, otherwise equity in distribution will be impossible. The necessity of this reform as a condition precedent is insisted on by all the members of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation in their first Report on Valuation.

Another factor, too, requires more frequent revision in this connection than is possible under existing law, namely, the factor of population. A Census Bill will doubtless be passed through Parliament in the Session of 1909; and we suggest that (as repeatedly urged by the Royal Statistical Society, the Institute of Actuaries, the Society of Medical Officers of Health and the London County Council) the opportunity should be taken to provide for an enumeration of the population—a much less expensive business than the regular census—in 1916, and, thereafter, midway between the dates of the decennial censuses.

If the Grants-in-Aid to the Local Health Authorities and the Local Authorities for the Mentally Defective were made somewhat on this basis—the exact figures being worked out according to the circumstances of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively—the poorest and the most backward localities would—*provided that they brought their administration up to a reasonable standard of efficiency*—receive larger Grants in proportion to their assessable value, as well as a larger proportion of their expenditure, than the richer and more progressive districts. We do not object to this result. We agree with Lord Balfour of Burleigh that "so long as the poorer districts are not treated with greater liberality than the richer ones, it will be almost impossible to secure reforms in administration, which would entail an additional burden upon the rates, without constant appeals to the Central Government for assistance, such appeals mainly coming from the poorer districts in which the burden is already very high. If the rich and poor districts were once placed, so far as possible, upon the same footing . . . . these demands upon the State would be less frequent and persistent, and . . . . administrative reforms would be more easily effected." † It is, in fact, practically impossible to press upon a Local Authority the adoption of a higher standard of efficiency of service—essential as it may be in the interests of the community—if the improvement would, owing to the poverty of the district, involve a rate actually higher than that of the average of the country as a whole. It appears to us a most valuable feature of the plan of distribution advocated by Lord Balfour of Burleigh that it ensures, even to the poorest district of the United Kingdom, the ability to attain, at any rate, the "National Minimum" of efficiency in its local services, at no greater rate in the £ than that which is the average for the country as a whole. On the other hand, even the richest and most progressive Local Authorities, on whose continued experimenting in improved methods of treatment all further advance in efficiency of Local Administration will depend in the future, as it has depended in the past, will (whilst retaining full autonomy to make whatever experiments they choose) receive Grants which will, subject to the sanction of the Departments concerned, vary with the amount of their expenditure on the services of Public Health in which the community, as a whole, has so vital an interest.

* *Ibid.* (England and Wales), 1901; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and Minority Report of Sir Edward Hamilton and Sir George Murray.

† *Ibid.*, p. 83; separate recommendations by Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

(F) Conclusions.

We have accordingly to report :—

1. That alike in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, the Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Destitution Authorities are urgently in need of revision. In return for the sum of three-and-a-half millions annually, which is being contributed to Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils, the various Departments of the National Government, which are charged with the supervision and control of the Local Authorities, now obtain the very minimum of power to prevent either extravagance or inefficiency, or of influence towards a greater efficiency of service. The relief afforded to the local ratepayer is so unequal and so arbitrarily distributed as to amount to a gross injustice, which is all the more intolerable in that, especially in Ireland, the poorest districts and those most heavily burdened often obtain the least relief. And the conditions of the Grants, whilst seldom so framed as to cause a wise discrimination in favour of the more desirable methods of expenditure rather than others, sometimes result in positively encouraging extravagance, laxness and refusal to carry out the policy desired by the Legislature.

2. That, in our opinion, in view of the large share of the cost of providing for the aged in their homes now borne by the National Exchequer under the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, and of the share which we think it necessary for the National Government to take in the administration of the provision for the Unemployed and Able-bodied, we consider that no Grant-in-Aid should be made to the Local Authorities in respect of these two services.

3. That when all grades of the mentally defective are placed in the hands of the proposed new Local Authorities for the Mentally Defective, a Grant should be made to those Authorities in respect of all the persons satisfactorily provided for by them. It would be desirable that this Grant should be made on the same basis as that to the Local Health Authorities.

4. That a Grant-in-Aid should be made to the Local Health Authorities in respect of all the work now done by them, or to be hereafter entrusted to them.

5. That it is essential that all Grants-in-Aid should be administered by the particular Government Departments concerned with the particular services to be aided ; and paid direct to the Local Authorities.

6. That all Grants should take the form of Grants-in-Aid of local services ; that they should be conditional on the efficient performance of the services ; that they should be governed by detailed regulations, and accompanied by systematic inspection and audit ; and that they should be withheld, wholly or in part, on failure to comply with the law and the regulations in force.

7. That they might, for the convenience of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, be fixed in aggregate total, which might remain unchanged for a term of seven years ; but that the allocation of the total among the several Local Authorities should be proportionate to their several expenditures from time to time on the services to be aided, subject to such expenditure being allowed by the Department to count for this purpose, as not being extravagant or improper. If not considered too complicated, the scale of distribution proposed by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, determined jointly by expenditure and by the poverty of the district, might advantageously be adopted.

CHAPTER XI.

Supervision and Control by the National Government.

It was an essential feature of the recommendations of the Report of 1834 and of the Poor Law Amendment Act of that year, that there should be established a strong, well-informed and ably-administered Central Poor Law Department; and that this Department should, in the interests of National Uniformity and of a sound Poor Law policy, prescribe the general lines of administration of the Boards of Guardians, prohibit any misguided deviations from the policy so prescribed, and by means of Orders having the force of law and specific approvals of appointments and salaries, together with a system of inspection and audit, exercise a close supervision and control over every act of the local authorities.* This was the most novel feature of the new Poor Law, and it was the one on which the reformers placed the most reliance. When the Poor Law was extended to Ireland (1838), and remodelled in Scotland (1845), powers of central supervision and control, essentially on the English model, were expressly provided for, though in the case of Scotland with some significant and suggestive variations of detail.

The Local Government Board in each of the three countries has inherited all these powers of supervision and control of the administration of the Local Destitution Authorities; and has even acquired, by successive statutes, new and additional authority over these bodies. Nevertheless, as our survey has revealed, the minute supervision and authoritative control of the Local Government Board in England and Wales does not prevent, in one district or another, the most gross and persistent divergence from its declared policy, either on the side of laxness, or on that of harshness; it has failed completely to secure the National Uniformity that the reformers of 1834 thought of such importance; it does not, as we have seen, secure the proper treatment of any class of the poor; and it has not prevented either an almost unmeasured extravagance or, in a few bad cases, widespread and long continued corruption. In Scotland and Ireland the Local Government Boards seem more seldom to have initiated changes of policy—a fact which serves somewhat to conceal their lack of control over the vagaries of the Local Authorities. But, so far as we have been able to judge, the criticism that we have to make, with regard to the failure of the Local Government Board for England and Wales to secure a National Uniformity of policy, is applicable also to Poor Law administration in Scotland and Ireland.

(a) The Orders.

We take, as the chief exemplar, the Local Government Board for England and Wales, from which, as we have said, the corresponding Departments for Scotland and Ireland differ only in details. Here we have, as the principal foundation of its authority over the Boards of Guardians, a voluminous code of "Orders," which have the force of law, prescribing in minute detail how the Workhouses and other institutions shall be managed; what officers each Union shall have, at what salaries and under what conditions of appointment; and what classes of persons shall be alone eligible for this or that kind of relief, and under what conditions it shall be granted.† These Orders, some of them "General," or applicable to two or more Unions, whilst others are "Special," or applicable to a single Union only, but all alike having the force of law, exist in bewildering and literally uncounted numbers. They extend over the past seventy-five years; and they are nowhere collected or published in a complete series. The principal Orders alone are dealt with in the legal text-books which private enterprise has provided, some of which extend to over 1,000 pages. Many witnesses have complained to us of the impossibility under these circumstances of any Poor Law Guardian being able to find out what it was that the Local Government Board required him to do or not to do; and they have suggested to us that the Orders should be codified into a single new "General Consolidated Order," containing the whole law.‡ We are unable to concur in this suggestion. The three main Orders, upon which the whole fabric depends—the General Consolidated Order of 1847 as to Indoor Relief, the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order of 1844, and the Out-

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2027–2029.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 70–73. 164–175. 195–204. 232–246.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 10842, 12472, etc.

door Relief Regulation Order of 1852—are all of them more than half a century old. They were prepared for a state of things essentially unlike that of the present day. They embody a policy which has, for all the several classes of persons to be relieved, been virtually repudiated by Parliament in successive statutes.* So far as concerns the various classes of the non-able-bodied, they are diametrically at variance with the later policy of the Local Government Board itself, as expressed in its subsequent Orders and Circulars.† We gather from all official documents issued since 1890, and from the evidence given on behalf of the Department, that the Department, at any rate for the vast majority of the non-able-bodied poor, wholly disapproves of the General Mixed Workhouse, and of indiscriminate, unconditional and inadequate Outdoor Relief—a disapproval in which we concur. Yet when a zealous clerk or conscientious member of a Board of Guardians, anxious to carry out the policy of the contemporary Local Government Board, turns to the authoritative text-book supplied to him, he finds that the General Consolidated Order of 1847 actually prescribes the General Mixed Workhouse, with all its hideous detail of unspecialised management, uniformity of deterrent discipline for all classes, and, notwithstanding the nominal classification system, practical promiscuity of intercourse in work.‡ And if, seeking direction as to the Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied, he turns to the Outdoor Relief Orders, by one or other of which his Union must be regulated, he discovers, to his surprise, that they do not deal with the subject at all.§ Although all but an insignificant fraction of the three or four millions sterling of Outdoor Relief that is annually granted by the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales is distributed among the sick, the aged and infirm, the mentally defective, the widows, the deserted wives, the mothers of illegitimate babies, and the children of non-able-bodied fathers, there are no Orders of the Local Government Board stating whether Outdoor Relief should or should not be given to such persons, or if given under what conditions.‖

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* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907.

† *Ibid.*

‡ As finally settled by the General Consolidated Order of 1847 (still in force), the classification prescribed is as follows :—"(i.) Men infirm through age or any other cause ; (ii.) able-bodied men and youths above the age of fifteen years ; (iii.) boys above the age of seven, and under that of fifteen ; (iv.) women infirm through age or any other cause ; (v.) able-bodied women and girls above the age of fifteen years ; (vi.) girls above the age of seven years, and under that of fifteen ; and (vii.) children under seven years of age." Explicit rules are made that each class is to remain in the separate apartments or buildings assigned to it, without communication with any other class. Thus, no segregation is required of the sick, or of particular diseases ; none of the lunatics, imbeciles, feeble-minded or epileptic (sane or insane) ; finally, no provision is made for segregation by past or present character or conduct. In all these respects, though the Local Government Board has repeatedly suggested the desirability of further classification, it has never made this obligatory, admittedly because the structure of the General Mixed Workhouse stands in the way, in many Unions, of any more minute classification than into the seven main divisions required by the General Consolidated Order. What is even more important, the very nature of the General Mixed Workhouse, as experience only too plainly proves, prevents any real and effective separation one from another, even of those seven main classes to which the Local Government Board, like all acquainted with workhouse administration, attach so much importance. From the very beginning of the General Mixed Workhouse, it was assumed and provided that all the Workhouse service was to be performed by the paupers themselves, and every pauper who was capable of work was to be incessantly occupied in that service. The able-bodied women who formed Class V. might be supervised by the aged and infirm women of Class IV. The children under seven who formed Class VII. might be supervised either by the able-bodied women of Class V. or by the aged and infirm women of Class IV., or by the girls of Class VI. The boys over seven who formed Class III. might be supervised by the aged and infirm men of Class I. The girls over seven who formed Class VI. might be supervised by the aged and infirm women of Class IV. These girls, so far from being confined to the premises assigned to their class, were to be employed in the able-bodied women's wards, in the wards for the children under seven, and in household work generally, provided only that they were somehow kept from communicating with able-bodied men or boys. The sick, whether male or female, whether of good character or of bad, have necessarily to be waited on, and even to this day the paupers assist the paid nurses. Consequently, the provision allowing all the sick wards to be attended by the able-bodied women, by the girls between seven and sixteen, by the aged women, or by any combination of these, that the master might direct, in itself necessarily destroys all real segregation. Since 1847, this permission has been so far restricted as to confine the attendance on the sick males to the aged and infirm men, and the aged and infirm women ; though such girls over seven, such able-bodied women, and such aged or infirm women as the master may deem fit may still be employed indiscriminately in the service of any of the wards except those for men and boys, and generally for household work throughout the Workhouse.

§ Appendices I. (C) and I. (D), to Vol. I.

‖ All the Unions in England and Wales are under one or other of two Orders, which regulate the grant of Outdoor Relief to the able-bodied, and do not apply to the non-able-bodied. But just as we have seen that the term "able-bodied" in the Workhouse is used in an ambiguous sense, so we find in the formal Orders about Outdoor Relief, an equally remarkable ambiguity in another direction. This ambiguity leaves in doubt whether, in the eyes of the Local Government Board, a woman without an able-bodied husband can, at any time, be regarded as able-bodied in the sense of being expected to earn her keep. The Out-relief Prohibitory

There is no prohibtion of relief to persons of disorderly lives, or living in insanitary conditions positively dangerous to the public health. There are no conditions prescribed as to the way the infants on Outdoor Relief shall be reared, or the children placed out in the world. Thus, whilst the Guardians find themselves unable to dismiss a porter, give a £5 rise of salary, or open a doorway between two rooms without the express consent of the Local Government Board, on the question of administration of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied, the most difficult and dangerous of all their tasks, the whole of the tens of thousands of General and Special Orders from 1834 down to the present day are dumb.* And even where the Orders give precise instructions, our zealous Clerk or inquisitive Guardian will know that they are often neither observed nor capable of exact observance. With regard, for instance, to the structural accommodation required, it will suffice to say that, of all the Workhouses that we have inspected, we have never seen one in which all the requirements of the General Consolidated Order of 1847, devised as they were for Workhouses in the abstract, were fulfilled in every detail, or could possibly be fulfilled in the particular building which, with the approval of the Board itself, is being used as a Workhouse. When we come, in Part II. of this Report, to describe the relief of able-bodied men, as actually carried out by the Destitution Authorities, we shall show that, in direct disobedience to the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order and the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, some Boards of Guardians give, continuously, week by week, Outdoor Relief to able-bodied men, without any labour test; some Boards carry on what are essentially Relief Works for the Unemployed; whilst others maintain town labourers on farms with the avowed object of training them to take up small agricultural holdings. In short, the three principal General Orders, though purporting to have actually the force of law, are, both in the letter and in the spirit, wholly out of date; and they are accordingly, to a large extent, ignored or evaded by all concerned. Any expenditure of money or time on their codification—a task of colossal magnitude—would, in our judgment, be wholly wasted.

Quite apart from their particular contents, however, the Orders of the Local Government Board appear to us unsuited for modern administration, owing to their failure to distinguish in form between peremptory laws which have to be applied judicially and inflexibly, and administrative injunctions serving as ideals and patterns which can only be carried out with such modifications as local circumstances require. We may illustrate this distinction by some examples. As an instance of the first type, we may cite the "rules" made by the Home Secretary under the Factories and Workshops Acts, which are in every detail as binding on every person concerned as the statutes themselves; which have to be strictly construed by the judiciary; and non-compliance with which is punishable by fine or imprisonment. In the realm of the present Poor Law there are subjects appropriate for Orders of this sort; such, for instance, as the definition of the classes of persons liable to contribute towards the maintenance of other persons, or the definition of the classes of persons to whom pensions are to be awarded, or even the conditions in the absence of which no allowance at all (other than on "sudden or urgent necessity") is to be granted to persons living in their own homes. Such Orders are useful instruments for formulating, in more minute detail than is possible in an Act of Parliament, those imperative commands which are to be enforced by judicial procedure of one kind or another; which must, therefore, be expressed with the same precision and

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Order of 1844 definitely includes within its terms women in health, without able-bodied husbands, and unburdened with legitimate children. In the Unions to which this Order and this Order alone applies, such women are thus held to be "able-bodied," and cannot, with certain definite exceptions, lawfully receive Outdoor Relief. The other Order, the Out-relief Regulation Order of 1852, relates expressly only to the "male" able-bodied. In the Unions to which this Order applies, women, whether single or married, sick or in health, with an able-bodied husband, or without, with or without children, legitimate or illegitimate, may lawfully be relieved in their own homes, wholly at the discretion of the Guardians; and are thus classed with the non-able-bodied. If the woman has an able-bodied husband, she can—whatever her character or circumstances—in the Unions under the Out-relief Prohibitory Order only, be relieved only in the Workhouse. In the Unions under the Out-relief Regulation Order (or, where the Out-relief Prohibitory Order is combined either with a Labour Test Order or the Workhouse (Modified Test) Order), such a woman may be relieved in her own home if the able-bodied husband fulfils the conditions of work or residence. We have been unable to discover what is the explanation, or what is the justification, for these purely geographical discriminations as regards the Poor Law relief of women, which have now lasted for more than half a century. It may be noted that, in discriminating, in the Out-relief Prohibitory Order, against women with illegitimate children, the Central Authority deviated also from the recommendations of the 1834 Report deprecating relief according to the past conduct of the applicant; whilst in the variation between the two Orders, it deliberately departed from the principle of national uniformity so strongly advocated in that Report (Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907).

* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907.

construed with the same continuous and consistent strictness as if they were statutes. To permit deviations from these formal Orders by private letters to particular Authorities, or by the oral sanction of an Inspector—still more, to advise, by published circular, wholesale evasions or violations of the spirit or the letter of these Orders—and this, as we shall presently describe, has been the practice of the Local Government Board—is to destroy the moral authority, and prevent the enforcement of the Orders themselves. On the other hand, the day by day administration of institutions, or the domiciliary treatment to be afforded to particular cases—and it is these things which make up the bulk of the existing Orders, and nine-tenths of the business of the Destitution Authorities—is not work which can properly be prescribed in detail by legally binding "Orders," any more than it can by Acts of Parliament. This administrative work does not consist of a series of judicial decisions as to whether a case falls within one category or another; and it is not to be accomplished by even the most minute and persistent torturing of the terms of a statute or mandatory Order. Administrators must be free to make the most of the actual material with which they have to deal and to act as seems best in all the complex circumstances of each case; whilst if there is to be any social progress they must be perpetually devising new ways, undreamt of before, of coping with the new needs that from time to time emerge. It is exactly this day by day administration of specialised institutions that is the sphere of the representative body—a sphere in which the "many-headed" and mutable membership of such a body is actually an advantage. To cope with all the varied difficulties, unthought of by the bureaucrat at his desk, which actual administration has to face, to meet the new issues that the changing environment is always producing, and to keep the whole Government in necessary touch with the public opinion of the moment, we need the representatives of every social grade, of every kind of training, and of every variety of opinion. Above all, what is essential to successful administration is the common consent of the community, which the local representative body brings from its dependence on popular election. To attempt, by peremptory Orders, meticulous in their detail, having the force of law, to convert the thousands of representatives of the ratepayers, in all this work of administration, into mere mechanical agents of a Central Government Department is, in our opinion, at once to court failure and to destroy Local Government.

It is highly significant that, in this criticism of the whole machinery of Orders, we are but expressing the present practice of the Local Government Board itself. The great General Orders of 1844–52 have had no successors. It has not even been thought worth while, obsolete as they have become in so many respects, systematically to revise them. The Special Orders, each equivalent in law to an amendment of the General Orders, by means of which the circumstances of particular Unions used to be met, have, for many years, become comparatively infrequent, and have ceased to be of significance. When new developments have had to be provided for, such as Poor Law Schools or Infirmaries, nursing or boarding-out, they have been dealt with by separate General Orders, which have silently thrown into the background (though without expressly repealing) large sections of the earlier code.* But even this has not sufficed to give to the clumsy machinery of mandatory Orders the elasticity necessary to any administrative work. In our investigation of the actual administration of the Destitution Authorities, we have been struck by the fact, in Union after Union, that things were being done in flagrant contravention of the General Orders that were supposed to be legally binding. We assumed, at first, that these experiments had been authorised by Special Orders of equal validity. But we discovered, in case after case, that no such legally authoritative instrument had been issued. What had happened was that the Board of Guardians, by persistently arguing the matter with the Local Government Board, had so far convinced that authority of the desirability of the experiment that—ignoring its illegality under the Orders—some sort of permission had been given for it to continue, in some cases orally by the Inspector,† but more usually by an official letter (not generally promulgated) from the Local Government Board itself.‡ And even when—often as the result of such illegal but privately permitted experiments of

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 174, 175.

† "Papers are frequently referred to the Inspector, with the direction: 'Settle this matter according to your own judgment.' . . . It would require sanction legally." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1771–1774.)

‡ We may cite as one instance the interesting experiment by which, with the written (but unpromulgated) permission of the Local Government Board, the Lambeth Board of Guardians is disobeying Article 153 of the General Consolidated Order of 1847, by combining the medical treatment of the indoor and outdoor poor under a single Medical Officer, having assistants under him. (Report . . . on the Medical Services of the Poor Law and Public Health Departments, p. 28 n.)

Boards of Guardians—it has been thought right by the Local Government Board to promulgate generally some new development of Poor Law policy, this new policy has often not been embodied in any new Order, nor in any amendment of the great General Orders of 1844–52, but has been pressed on the Boards of Guardians by way of Circular Letters,* which cannot of course, in law, supersede or vary the formal Orders, and have, indeed, no legally binding authority. This was the course adopted, for instance, between 1871 and 1879, when the Local Government Board was in favour of a general restriction of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied. This, too, was the course adopted when, in 1886, 1892, 1895, and 1904, the Board instructed the Destitution Authorities to co-operate with the Municipalities in providing, for the able-bodied and unemployed workmen, the "work at wages" which had been, and continued to be, prohibited by the Orders. The same course was followed in 1895–1896 and 1900 when, with regard to the deserving aged, the Local Government Board reversed its policy of non-discrimination by past character in the relief of destitution; and, in flat contradiction of the General Consolidated Order of 1847, directed the provision of the special quarters for the deserving aged which had been aimed at by the Report of 1834.† This perpetual nibbling away of the General Orders by Special Orders, and of both kinds of Orders by oral or written "permits," and by official Circulars, makes both useless and impracticable any codification of the General Orders. It has, in fact, been found, by the Local Government Board itself, impossible to frame any code of legally binding Orders on all the manifold subjects of administrative business, which should permit the inevitable variety and the desirable elasticity of Local Government, whilst securing, by means of such Orders alone, the necessary central control. It is in the main because the existing Orders of the Local Government Board mix up, in one and the same instrument which purports to have the force of a statute, what are essentially mandatory commands or prohibitions, such as forbidding any expenditure on setting up destitute persons in trade, or granting Outdoor Relief to able-bodied men employed for wages, with what are essentially advisory injunctions, such as the method of allocating the different classes of inmates of an institution among the different rooms in the building, the selection of the classes to serve other classes, and the detailed specifications of the duties of minor officers, that the whole authority of the Orders has fallen into disrepute, and that they are neither respected as having the force of law, nor sympathetically received as advice to be acted on if possible.

The regulative instructions of the Local Government Board for Scotland, with regard to the whole realm of administration, as distinguished from judicial procedure under law, seem to us preferable in form to those of the Local Government Board for England and Wales. The Scotch Board has no power to issue Orders having the force of law. Each Parish Council having a Poorhouse is required by statute to frame rules and regulations for its management, which have to be approved by the Local Government Board. That body issues model rules, with such amendments from time to time as experience dictates. The Parish Councils adopt, as their own, these model rules, with whatever modifications are required by the size, situation or structure of their Poorhouse, the staff at their disposal, the numbers and distinct classes of poor to be provided for in each institution, the Council's own organisation for business, and any other local circumstances.‡ The rules so framed are, if considered suitable, approved by the Board. This procedure has the advantage of allowing variations from place to place, and from time to time, without the commission of any illegality. It leaves it open to the representative body which will have to obey the rules to suggest in what way they need to be varied from the general model. On the other hand, it enables the Central Authority to understand what exactly the local body is aiming at, and affords an opportunity for timely criticism and argument. In the last resource the Central Authority can refuse its sanction to any regulations which represent any falling below the National Minimum of efficiency of service, which has to be enforced from one end of the kingdom to the other, or to any regulations which are otherwise against public policy. If the Local Government Board for England and Wales had chosen, instead of prescribing by Mandatory Orders all the details of administration, to require all Boards of Guardians to submit for its approval suitable By-laws with regard to Outdoor Relief, it might have secured the essential "National Uniformity" which the Report of 1834 so

* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 2310.

† Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 116.

‡ This procedure is essentially that of the Home Office with regard to the general By-laws of Municipal Corporations, that of the Local Government Board for England and Wales with regard to the By-laws under the Public Health Acts, and that of the Board of Education with regard to the curricula of Public Elementary Schools, which have to be approved by an Inspector.

strongly advocated, whilst not resisting the variations and experiments required by local circumstances and local initiative. We should, at any rate, have been saved the "Babel of Principles" and the demoralising inequalities between Union and Union that we have described in our analysis of the local By-laws; where, to cite only one instance, one Board of Guardians prescribes what are virtually Old-Age and Invalidity Pensions of 5s. a week, and its next-door neighbour ordains that even the most deserving aged and infirm person shall be relieved only in the General Mixed Workhouse.

(B) Audit.

An essential auxiliary of any organisation of central control is an official audit of the accounts of the Local Authorities. The systematic audit of the accounts of the Boards of Guardians was one of the most important features of the new Poor Law.* It has since been greatly improved and extended not only to Scotland and Ireland, but also to other branches of Local Government.† This audit has a double object. It aims, on the one hand, at preventing and revealing all peculation, fraud or corruption in the dealings of the officers or members of the local body. On the other hand, by surcharging any expenditure not legally authorised, the audit seeks to prevent the local body not only from travelling outside its sphere, but also from disobeying the law or the mandatory instructions of the Central Authority.‡ We cannot say that the audit of the accounts of the Destitution Authorities, whether in England and Wales, Scotland or Ireland, appears to us to be completely successful in attaining either of its objects. Recent official investigations into certain Unions, and the criminal proceedings to which they have given rise, prove that, under the present audit, gross peculations by Relieving Officers and others, corrupt dealings in the matter of contracts, and fraudulent practices by individual members of the Local Destitution Authority may occur, and may remain undiscovered for years. How far this is due to imperfections in the audit itself, and how far to defects in the official regulations—especially in the General Order as to accounts which is more than forty years old §—we have not had time to determine. We cannot, for instance, see how any audit can prevent or discover frauds by Destitution Officers, so long as one and the same person, as is the practice in many districts, "controls the case from start to finish"—receives the application, visits the home, advises on the relief, communicates the decision and pays the money week after week to the helpless applicant—without at any stage being automatically checked by the intervention of some other officer, by any obligation to prove that the recipient is still living, or even by the necessity of obtaining a receipt or other documentary voucher.‖ Nor does the audit appear to us to be any more successful in preventing continued expenditure disapproved of by the Central Authority. The Board of Guardians of one London Union, for instance, has adopted a costly administrative policy with the repeated approval of its constituents, which, whether it was right or wrong, intended by Parliament or not intended, has at any rate been strongly condemned and objected to by the Local Government Board.¶ This policy has continued for years, to the knowledge of the Local Government Board, and is still being continued, notwithstanding the official inquiry, without being brought to an end by the official audit.** And when the disobedience of the Destitution Authority takes the form, not of expenditure considered improper, but of a refusal to incur expenditure considered imperative—when a Destitution Authority refuses for years to build a new Poor Law Infirmary or Poor Law School, and persists, notwithstanding injunctions from the Central Authority, in retaining the sick and the children in a General Mixed Workhouse which is overcrowded and insanitary, the audit, as a means of enforcing the control of the Central Authority, is powerless.††

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 87–91, 1037, 2090, and Appendix No. IX. to Vol. I. In Scotland the audit differs from that in England, Wales and Ireland. The auditor is not a Government officer, but (usually) an accountant appointed at a fee by the Parish Council. He has no power to disallow or surcharge, but merely the duty of reporting to the Local Government Board for Scotland any items which he thinks should be disallowed or surcharged; when that Board, if it thinks fit, may disallow or surcharge accordingly. We think that the audit system of the rest of the country should be extended to Scotland, where the Inspector of Poor usually combines the office of Collector of Rates, and collects for the School Board as well as for the Parish Council, without simultaneous audit of the two accounts.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4180, 4257, 4669.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 88, 89, 2030–2032, 3025.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 87; General Order of January 14th, 1867.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2518, 2752–2755.

¶ Report on the Administration of the Poplar Union, by Mrs. Spencer, B.A., D.Sc.

** *See* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2120–2124 2137, 2138, 2184–2186.

†† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1704–1711.

We do not, however, under-value the importance of an efficient and authoritative audit of the accounts of Local Authorities. Though such an audit will not, in itself, either ensure honesty or give effective central control, experience has shown that it is both a valuable adjunct and ally of good administration. Though it cannot make good any deficiency in the regulations for the conduct of business or the absence of a technically qualified Inspectorate—still less the lack of a carefully thought-out and consistent policy of the Central Authority—such an independent and external audit may be of the highest value, not only by preventing and discovering fraud, but also by calling attention to administrative deficiencies and financial mistakes. For this purpose it is necessary that the Auditors should not be permitted to confine themselves to peremptory disallowances of payments that are actually contrary to law.* It is or should be their duty to call attention to any shortcomings in the regulations, or the system of business of the Local Authority whose accounts they are auditing—such, for instance, as the automatic checks on peculation or waste, or the procedure with regard to the acceptance of tenders for supplies—and also to report as to any grave errors in financial policy; not with any view of peremptory interference by the Central Authority in matters which must be left to the discretion of the representative body, but merely for the information of the Local Authority itself and, if necessary, of its constituents.† We cannot say that we are satisfied that the fullest advantage has yet been afforded to the Local Authorities and to the ratepayers by the Local Government Board's system of audit. Here, as in the analogous case of the Orders, there seems to have been no clear distinction drawn between the intervention in local administration which should be mandatory, and that which should be advisory only. A District Auditor, under the Public Health Act, 1875 (England and Wales) has power to disallow and surcharge any payment made by the Local Authority *ultra vires*, or any payment that is contrary to law; but he has no power to disallow and surcharge any payment that the Local Authority is legally authorised to make, however mistaken, or extravagant, or financially disastrous he may consider such payment, or the policy or administration of which it is a part. The District Auditor may also charge "*against any person accounting*" the amount of any deficiency or loss incurred by the negligence or misconduct of that person. This does not warrant him in individually charging any member of the Local Authority, *not himself individually being* "*a person accounting*," for any negligence or misconduct whatsoever, least of all for participation, merely as a member of the Local Authority, in any corporate act of that Authority or its committees which the District Auditor may think to amount to negligence or misconduct. In both these cases—that of extravagant or financially unwise policy within the powers of the Local Authority, and that of negligence or misconduct of members of the Local Authority in their corporate acts or of any person not being himself "a person accounting"—to which the District Auditor may quite properly take exception, his criticism must, under the law, be confined to reports for the information of the Local Authority, the Local Government Board and the ratepayers. Unfortunately, just as the Local Government Board includes much in its mandatory Orders which should be only matter of advice, so the District Auditor in his sphere has been tempted to stretch his legal powers, so as to disallow and surcharge in questions of policy and administration, when he ought only to report. Thus there have been cases in which District Auditors have disallowed and surcharged payments of Outdoor Relief, and many in which they have threatened to do so, because, as they alleged, the Guardians ought to have adopted more frequently the policy of "offering the House." There have been cases in which District Auditors have disallowed and surcharged relief granted to persons who have had relations, not legally liable to maintain them, but in a position to do so.‡ There have been cases in which District Auditors have, at any rate, threatened to disallow and surcharge the expenses incurred by Guardians in visiting pauper children in certified schools and homes, on the ground that no such inspection was necessary. There have even been cases in which District Auditors have surcharged members of Local Authorities because they have not accepted the lowest tenders for supplies, or because they have thought fit to pay

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 4227, 4245.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1019, 2197, 2210–2212.

‡ L.G.B. to Ashby-de-la-Zouch Union, 21st June, 1907; *Poor Law Officers' Journal*, 20th November, 1908 (Auckland Union).

what the District Auditor thought unduly high rates of wages.* In all these cases it was open to the District Auditor, by way of report, to have called attention to what he considered financially unwise policy or administrative acts on the part of the Local Authority. Unfortunately, this part of the function of the Local Government Audit has been too much neglected. As a consequence of this neglect, the District Auditors have sometimes assumed to themselves an authority and a jurisdiction by way of disallowance and surcharge which has created resentment,† and really impaired the efficiency of their service. Fortunately, the Court of Appeal, in a recent case, has definitely laid it down that the District Auditor's power of disallowance and surcharge is confined to "a checking of accounts, not a checking of policy;" though his duty to report may be of much wider scope.‡ We think it indispensable, in view of our proposals for an extension of the work of the District Auditors that this limitation of their power of disallowance and surcharge, and this distinction between items which they may disallow, and items as to which they ought to report, should be authoritatively specified, and scrupulously observed.

We may add that we are not altogether satisfied with the qualifications of some of the District Auditors for their important task. We find that no limits of age§ and no

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* In one recent case, which became the subject of legal decision, "the Auditor surcharged jointly and severally upon certain members of the Highways Committee of the Council several sums representing losses incurred by the Council in respect of contracts for horse forage, fine crushed ballast, carbolic acid, and boots, respectively, by reason, as the Auditor alleged, of the negligence or misconduct of such members in the selection of tenders for the articles in question. The certified amount of the surcharge for horse forage was £71 3s. 7d., and the reasons stated by the Auditor in his certificate for making this surcharge were because a deficiency or loss to the funds of the Council to at least the extent of the surcharge, had been incurred by the selection of a tender for the supply of horse forage to standard sample for the use of the Highways Department in the second half of the financial year, which exceeded the lowest quotations, and likewise the tenders of other single firms in every item, and was, in fact, the highest of the seven tenders received, and which, when worked out on the purchases of the half-year, showed an excess over the lowest quotations of £101 15s. 2d., and over the tender of another single firm of £7 13s. 7d., and because the members therein surcharged were jointly and severally responsible by their negligence or misconduct for the said deficiency or loss, in that they did, at a meeting held on July 19th, 1905, select this tender for recommendation to the Council, and did neglect the lower tenders referred to above, and had neither recorded any reason for doing so nor submitted any explanation in reply to the inquiries made at Audit" . . . "They were liable to surcharge in respect of the short delivery of ballast and in respect of the loss arising from undue or unexplained preference in the selection of tenders for the supply of the several articles already referred to." (Rex v. Roberts, 1 K.B., Law Reports, Part III., March, 1908.)

† "The legal position taken up by the Auditor is certainly a very remarkable one, and raises questions of great public importance. The reasons he gives for the surcharges show that he claims to have the right to call on any member or officer of the Corporation to account for any act done by him as such, and to find him guilty of 'negligence or misconduct' (without specifying which), and to amerce him in what he considers suitable sums, should he think that the Corporation would have benefited by some other course of action than that adopted. This is not confined to questions of account. It is applied to cases in which the members have given advice to the Corporation which he considers to have been undesirable, and to have led to increase of expenditure. . . . It is clear that persons answering to either of these descriptions must necessarily be persons who are before the auditor in his capacity as such, and must be persons who either have had money of the Corporation for which they must properly account, or have had control of funds of the Corporation which they have had authority to pay away, and for the proper expenditure of which they have, therefore, to account. . . . In all cases the Auditor is acting strictly as an Auditor and nothing more, and the subject-matter of his decisions is items which are, or ought to be, in the accounts before him. . . . His duty is to examine, correct, and pass such accounts, if any, as the assistant engineer has to bring before him, and that is all. He has no jurisdiction to pass judgment on the diligence or wisdom of an employee of the Council, any more than he has to pass judgment on his sobriety. . . . It is inconceivable to me that the Legislature should have intended to set up a general Court of Conduct with the widest jurisdiction and well-nigh unlimited powers by these simple, and I might almost say, meagre, provisions. . . . But if they are intended to institute a Court with power of inquiry not limited to examining and rectifying accounts brought before it, but possessing general powers to make charges of negligence or misconduct against any one connected with the Corporation either as corporator or employee (and the contention of the appellant must go so far as this), and to try these charges and assess damages in respect of them, they are wholly inadequate. . . . I wish to add that I do not agree with the view that a properly conducted independent Audit offers but slight protection to the ratepayers. It is unquestionably within the powers of an Auditor, and, indeed, it is his duty, should the occasion render it desirable, to report fully on any matters which, in his opinion, ought to be called to the attention of the Corporation, and if this duty is adequately performed, it offers a most efficient safeguard against improper practices. The responsibility of acting upon such report must, of course, remain with the Corporation; but the individuals forming it change from time to time, and we have no right to assume that, even if for a time there is a disposition to hush up derelictions of duty, such a state of things will continue, especially when the corporation is affected with formal notice of the circumstances by a report of a public Auditor." (Rex v. Roberts, Court of Appeal (Law Reports, March, 1908), Judgment of Fletcher Moulton, L.J.).

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1621, 4793–5, 4808, 4863, 4872, and Appendix No. IX. (A) Par. 22, to Vol. I.

technical qualifications are prescribed for the office. It is not necessary that a person, before being appointed a District Auditor, should have had any experience in administration or finance or should possess any economic knowledge, or should even have passed any examination in accountancy. Under these circumstances, as with the Relieving Officers, the absence of any prescribed qualifications inevitably leads sometimes to the appointment of persons on other grounds than that of fitness for the particular office. We recommend, therefore, that there should be prescribed some definite qualifications without which no person should be eligible for appointment as District Auditor.

(c) A Court of Appeal.

We find established in Scotland an interesting instrument of control over the Destitution Authorities, in the form of an appeal against their decisions. To this, in England and Wales, or in Ireland, there is scarcely anything corresponding.* In Scotland, a person totally refused relief has a right of summary appeal, without delay and without formality, to the Sheriff; and this right is exercised in hundreds of cases annually, especially by those who have been refused because they are deemed able-bodied. Moreover, if relief in any form has been given, the recipient has a right of appeal against the inadequacy of the relief to the Local Government Board for Scotland; and this right is exercised, on an average, in eight or nine cases every month.

We have taken much evidence as to the working and the results of this system of appeal. We find that the appeal to the Sheriff against a total refusal of relief has many unsatisfactory features. This officer, who, in Scotland, is a legal stipendiary, engaged in multifarious civil and criminal business, has usually no specialist experience or knowledge of Poor Law, Public Health or Education, either as to the law or as to the administrative practice. He has no officers at his command to investigate the physical state or the economic and domestic circumstances of the appellant. He receives no Report from the Public Health or Education Authorities, nor even from the Inspector of Poor. He hears, in fact, no other evidence than the quite informal uncorroborated statement of the appellant himself, which there is no opportunity of disproving. If the appellant has been refused relief on the ground that he is able-bodied, he often comes to the Sheriff armed with a certificate obtained from a "sixpenny doctor" that he is suffering from some ailment or another. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that most Sheriffs make it a practice to give the appellant the benefit of every doubt; and, in fact, to order "interim relief" in all but glaring cases of imposture. Once the Sheriff has given his decision, the Inspector of Poor must instantly give the "interim relief" ordered. He may then if he chooses, lodge with the Sheriff a written statement of the grounds of his original refusal of relief. The Sheriff then directs it to be answered, and appoints an agent to act on behalf of the appellant, when the case comes in due legal form before his Court for final judgment. But all this involves the Destitution Authority in expense, so that, as we are informed, "in very few cases is a formal deliverance given by the Sheriff. When the Inspector of the Poor finds that the Sheriff takes the view that the applicant has a *prima facie* claim, he usually acquiesces and grants relief." † The Inspector of Poor prefers to settle the matter, without lodging a statement, by withdrawing his refusal, and offering the appellant immediate admission to the poorhouse. He even tends to anticipate the Sheriff by giving relief in all cases in which he fears an appeal.

After carefully considering all the evidence, we have come to the conclusion that the right of appeal to the Sheriff has been, and still is, injurious to Poor Law administration in Scotland. Its only practical advantage is that it serves as one of the many methods by which the legal prohibition of relief to the able-bodied has had to be evaded. We can see

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* It is usually stated, on the authority of Sect. 15 of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, that the Local Government Board for England and Wales is legally precluded from interfering with the decision of Boards of Guardians in the grant or refusal of relief to particular cases. But this must be taken subject to large exceptions and qualifications. For instance, under both the Orders relating to Outdoor Relief, the Guardians are authorised to grant relief, in contravention of the terms of the Order, to any cases in which they may deem it expedient, subject to the particulars of each such case being reported to the Local Government Board for its approval. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 196, 200.) The specific approval thus afforded to each of these cases may presumably be withheld; and it is not infrequent to find the formal approval coupled with an intimation that it will not be given again, so that a continuance of the relief in these particular cases is virtually prohibited under penalty of surcharge. There are other exceptions that might be quoted; for instance, the Board issues Special Orders allowing the expenses attending the emigration of particular persons at the expense of the Poor Rate, though this is, perhaps, not Poor Relief. (Special Order of February 23rd, 1897, to the Bethnal Green Union as to one William Green.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 53510, Par. 48.

no advantage in it over the English and Irish practice of offering admission to the Workhouse or Casual Ward in the first instance to anyone who persists in claiming relief and alleges that he is destitute.

There is, perhaps, more to be said for the right of any recipient of relief to appeal to the Local Government Board on the ground of its inadequacy. Such an appeal, which may be either as to the amount, the character, or the description of the relief ordered, has to be made on a prescribed form, through the local Inspector of Poor. The Board is bound, without delay, to investigate the nature and grounds of the complaint. If the complaint is found to be justified, and if the evil is not remedied by the Parish Council, the Board issues a minute declaring that the pauper has a just cause of action against the Parish Council, and such a minute enables the pauper to take legal proceedings to enforce his right to adequate relief. But the case hardly ever gets thus far. Out of an average during the past five years of 111 appeals per annum, half are summarily rejected as disclosing no valid ground of complaint, and half of the others are dismissed after a satisfactory explanation from the Parish Council. The remaining quarter drop owing to the ground of complaint having, in the meantime, been removed by the Local Authority.* In these latter cases, averaging two or three per month, the appeal must be considered as having resulted in improvement of the administration, and possibly in the removal of some real grievance. Only in two cases in the last five years has it been necessary for the Local Government Board to issue a Minute stating that the pauper has a just ground of complaint.† In the whole sixty-two years that the system has been in operation such a Minute has been issued in thirty-five cases only.‡

We see no objection, in principle, to this formal right of appeal to the Local Government Board virtually against what is alleged to be improper treatment of the poor by the local Destitution Authorities. We understand that, in its practical working, this form of the Scotch system of appeal amounts to little, if anything, more than actually prevails in the practice of the Local Government Boards for England and Wales and for Ireland, as indeed, in that of other public departments. If a letter is received from any person, pauper or otherwise, making specific allegations of improper treatment of any sort by any Local Authority, and disclosing in the allegations what would, if they were accurate, be a valid ground of complaint, the Department concerned does not refuse to make the matter the subject of inquiry, usually referring it for report to the Local Authority concerned. As in Scotland, the vast majority of such letters either disclose no real ground of complaint, or the complaint is found, on inquiry, to be unfounded. In nearly all the remaining cases, we trust that, as in Scotland, the Local Authorities, on their attention being drawn to the grievance, will have promptly removed any real ground for complaint. If this is not done, we think that in these cases of rare occurrence, the Central Authority, whether in England and Wales, Scotland or Ireland, after due inquiry by its own Inspectors, and after further consultation with the Local Authority, ought to have power, without any expensive legal proceedings, peremptorily to require the Local Authority to remedy what will have been proved to be a genuine grievance.

We may mention here another type of decision by the Central Authority, by which its view is made to prevail over that of the Destitution Authorities, namely, Arbitration between two such Authorities, in cases voluntarily submitted to it. This device has been made use of both in England and Wales and in Scotland, as a means of reducing the heavy expenses formerly incurred over disputes as to which particular Local Authority was liable to bear the burden of maintaining particular paupers. In England and Wales it has for more than half a century been open to any two Boards of Guardians to agree to refer any disputed "settlement" of a pauper to the Local Government Board, whose decision is, under such agreement, binding on the Unions concerned.§ There is a similar provision in Scotland, under which any two Parish Councils differing as to the settlement of any poor person, but agreed as to the facts, may refer the case to the Local Government Board for Scotland for determination. This provision is freely made use of, to the great saving of

* Thirteenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland (Cd. 4142), 1907, pp. xxii, xxiii.

† *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. xxii. For more than half a century no case had ever been taken into Court; but one is now actually before the Court of Session.

§ 14 and 15 Vict., c. 105 (Poor Law Amendment Act, 1851); Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 25136, 25139, 25264 (Par. 9), 36081–36084, 39826, 39827, 43825 (Par. 13), 74259–74265, 75202, 75345 (Par. 10), 77007 (Par. 9), 77605, and Appendix No. CIII. (Par. 13) to Vol. XIV.

litigation. In Scotland, other cases of dispute between Parish Councils are voluntarily submitted to and habitually decided by the Board. Moreover, a peculiar feature of the Scottish Law is the appeal of the pauper against removal to his parish of settlement. Under the Poor Law Act of 1898 any person who has continuously resided for one year in the parish from which he has to be removed, may appeal against being removed.* The Board decides, according to all the circumstances of the case, so as to avoid harshness or injury to the poor person. If the appeal is allowed the Board determines also which Parish Council shall be liable for the maintenance.†

We consider that all these experiments in the direction of using the Central Authority as an arbitrator in disputes between two Local Authorities have worked well, and have resulted in a great saving of time and expense. We agree with a large number of our witnesses in thinking that the practice should be extended to any case of disputed settlement on the application of any Local Authority concerned, whether or not both Local Authorities agree to such arbitration, and whether or not the facts are agreed.‡ We think that it would be an advantage if some similar arrangement could be made to settle by arbitration other disputes between Local Authorities in each country as to relief, and also disputes between such Authorities in the different parts of the United Kingdom.

(D) The Inspectorate.

The control exercised by a Government Department over Local Authorities, whether it be by regulative Orders or advisory Circulars, financial audit or jurisdiction in appeal. powers over the local officials or Grants-in-Aid conditional on compliance with central advice, depends always for its efficiency on the existence of a staff of peripatetic agents of the Department concerned, who can keep the local administration constantly under observation, help the Department to form its judgments, and convey to the Local Authorities the advice and instructions, in which the policy of the Department is from time to time embodied.§ This condition of successful central control was recognised by the reformers of 1834. For the first time in English administration there was established, as a link between the National Executive and Local Governing Bodies, an organised salaried staff—called at first Assistant Commissioners, and now General Inspectors—to serve as the eyes, hands, and voice of the Poor Law Department. The present General Inspectors of the Local Government Board have inherited, so far as the Destitution Authorities are concerned, a unique position and exceptional powers.‖ Unlike the Inspectors of other Government Departments, they are not only empowered to visit and inspect the work of the Local Authorities, but they are also authorised and required to attend the meetings of the Boards of Guardians whenever they think fit, and (without voting) to take part in the proceedings.¶ They are, in fact, so far as the Poor Law is concerned, not merely the Inspectors, but also the appointed Counsellors of the Local Authorities. This is true of Ireland as of England and Wales. In Scotland, the Inspectors—designated General Superintendents of the Poor—do not enjoy either the salary or the status of their English colleagues.

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* If the place of settlement is in England or Ireland, either the Guardians of the Union to which the removal is to take place, or the poor person himself, may appeal.

† During the nine years that this right of appeal has existed, 125 cases have arisen between Parish Councils in Scotland, 13 of which were summarily rejected as informal or incompetent, and 3 were dismissed. In 25 cases the order for removal was withdrawn, and in 20 the appeal was sustained. Ninety-nine cases have arisen between Parish Councils in Scotland and Boards of Guardians in England or Ireland, but of these 51 were summarily rejected as informal or incompetent, and 3 dropped, whilst 35 were dismissed. In 6 cases, the order for removal was withdrawn, and in 4 the appeal was sustained. (Thirteenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland (Cd. 4142), 1907, pp. xxiii, xxiv.)

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 25136–25139, 25264 (Par. 9), 36081–36084, 39826, 39827, 43825 (Par. 13), 74259–74265, 75202, 75345 (Par. 10), 77007 (Par. 9), 77605, and Appendix No. CIII. (Par. 13) to Vol. IV.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 1952.

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1598–1613, 1741, 4576, 9560–2.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1758, 1968, 6054, 6338.

This Inspectorate has, in the past, achieved remarkable successes. In England and Wales, for instance, between 1834 and 1847, it was very largely due to the tact and ability, the knowledge and conviction of the Assistant Commissioners that the new Poor Law was brought successfully into operation all over the country. Between 1869 and 1885, again, the Inspectorate, as a means of counteracting an evil laxity which had become prevalent, created a new ideal of Poor Law administration, to which the progressive and enlightened Boards of Guardians tended everywhere to approximate.* But for the last twenty years, during which, as we have seen, the control of the Local Government Board in England and Wales has been very far from effective, the Inspectorate has lost much of its former influence over the Destitution Authorities. Regarded as an instrument of central control, it has, in fact, of late years, been wholly unsuccessful. It has failed to get carried out the older policy of the Central Authority, which is still embodied in the General Orders. It has not succeeded in formulating any systematic and consistent new policy in substitution for the old. It has failed to get adopted, with any thoroughness or uniformity, the authoritative views on the treatment of the sick, the children and the deserving aged, to which the Local Government Board has, since 1895, given repeated utterance. It has failed even to prevent the persistent defiance of the instructions of the Central Authority; a defiance resulting, on the one hand, in continued refusals to provide the new buildings deemed to be requisite, and, on the other, with a few urban Unions, in a rising tide of extravagance and corruption.

Meanwhile the Local Government Board, for what reason we do not understand, *has allowed to continue without any inspection at all* what amounts to one-third of the total Poor Law expenditure, and probably to more than one-third of the work of the Guardians, namely:—

(i.) The administration of Outdoor Relief in accordance with the Orders.

(ii.) The whole activities of the 3,700 officers of the Outdoor Medical Service.

(iii.) The Poor Law Dispensaries.

(iv.) The 6,000 children "boarded-out within the Union"; and

(v.) The 3,000 others placed, with the approval of the Local Government Board, in uncertified homes.

No part of this extensive range of Poor Law work, costing more than £4,000,000 annually, has, to this day, the advantage of any official inspection whatever.

We do not attribute the general failure of the Inspectorate during the past two decades to any shortcomings of the existing staff. There are among the Inspectors of to-day, as there have always been, men of great ability, belonging to the best type of English administrators, combining detailed knowledge of the technique they were appointed to control with wide views of policy, an understanding of general principles and considerable capacity for handling men. We attribute the present ineffectiveness of the Inspectorate, as an instrument of central control, to the fact that, almost without its being observed, the duties imposed upon it have been changed. Inspection, to be efficient, must always be performed by a person technically expert in that which he inspects. The Assistant Commissioners of 1834–47, and the Poor Law Inspectors of 1869–85, had a single function to supervise, and a single technique to invent or acquire, namely, the relief of destitution in such a way as to render the relief deterrent. Dispauperisation was, in fact, their sole aim. For this they devised and made themselves masters of an appropriate technique—the General Mixed Workhouse of the General Consolidated Order of 1847, and the penal task of the Outdoor Labour Test Order of 1852; the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, the grant of Medical Relief on Loan, and the application of the Workhouse Test to the Aged, that were characteristic of 1869–85—which they could press on Boards of Guardians with all the power that comes from knowledge and conviction. But this elaborate machinery of Clogs and Deterrents on relief, applied to all applicants alike, has, as we have seen, been swept out of the minds of the Guardians by the newer policy vaguely demanded by Parliament and public opinion and actually prescribed by the Local Government Board.† The more enlightened and the more progressive Guardians of to-day find themselves, not merely administering "relief" under deterrent conditions, but building and equipping hospitals for the sick, lying-in homes for young mothers, institutions for the epileptic, sanatoria for

* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 75.

† *Ibid.*

the phthisical, comfortable almshouses for the aged, homes and schools for children, nurseries for infants, farm colonies for the able-bodied unemployed and what not. We have already drawn attention to what may be called the anarchic and uneven hypertrophy of the Destitution Authority—its virtual transformation from an *ad hoc* to a "mixed" Authority—as the fundamental cause of its failure. The same transformation has put it out of touch with the Destitution Inspector. The General Inspector of the Local Government Board—as the Poor Law Inspector is now designated—is, in fact, without fault of his own, in a hopeless position. The old technique, of which he was fully possessed, has been repudiated with regard to one class after another, by Parliament and public opinion, and even by the Presidential Circulars of his own Department. The task that he is now supposed to perform would demand a mastery, not of one technique, but of many techniques.* It would be impossible for any man, however versatile his natural talents, and however varied his professional training, to be an authority alike on the medical treatment of the sick, at home or in institutions; on the rearing of children whether by their own mothers or by others; on the education and starting in life of boys and girls; on the rescue of fallen women and the nurture of their infants; on the management of imbeciles and idiots; on the ameliorative treatment of the crippled; on the provision of almshouses for the aged—not to mention such nascent services as the training of the unemployed, and the penal detention of the wastrels. Every Board of Guardians embarking on one or other of these enterprises finds in the Inspector either amiable tolerance or silent disapproval, but never the guidance, the suggestiveness and the effective control that come only with superior knowledge. In short, with the transformation of the service the General Inspector of the relief of destitution—like the Destitution Officer, and the Destitution Authority itself—has become an anachronism.

The transformation of the duties of the Inspector has gone even further. With the designation "General Inspector" have come duties unconnected with the Poor Law, duties relating to Public Health Bylaws and hospitals and drains and sewage, for which he has no pretence of knowledge or qualification. Medical Officers of Health have remarked to us on what seemed to them the anomaly of their Annual Reports being referred to "General Inspectors" who were merely laymen. The very idea of having "General Inspectors" of Local Government in the abstract is, we need hardly say, diametrically at variance with the conception of an Inspectorate supplying to the Local Authorities the counsel and guidance, together with the supervision and control, that can come only with specialised expert knowledge.

The "mixed" character of the duties of the General Inspectors has had a subtle influence on the recruiting of the staff. As the work which the Inspector has now to supervise is so enormously varied that no man can be professionally qualified to discharge the duties, there is no prescribed qualification at all for the appointment.† Successive Presidents of the Local Government Boards, for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, finding that no particular professional training could be said to be essential, and latterly, not even any particular conviction as to "Poor Law principles," have, not unnaturally, felt themselves free to appoint any person in whose integrity of character they placed reliance. We have already described how, on a lower plane, a similar absence of any definite professional requirements results in persons being appointed as Relieving Officers and Masters of Workhouses on other grounds than that of fitness for the office. We have referred to the same tendency in the case of the District Auditors. We cannot refrain from the inference that, in some cases, persons have been appointed as General Inspectors in England and Ireland, and as General Superintendents in Scotland, for reasons of personal favour or political service. This will, we fear, always be the case, with the highly paid Inspectors as with the lowly paid Relieving Officers or Workhouse Masters, so long as the duties of these important posts remain so "mixed" as to make it impossible to insist on any professional qualification.

It would be unfair not to record that these essential disadvantages of such a "mixed" office as that of General Inspector have already been noticed by the Local Government Board for England and Wales, and to a lesser extent by the Boards for Scotland and Ireland. It has been recognised, for instance, in England, that it was absurd to rely on the General Inspectors, who naturally can know nothing about educational technique, as the only

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 7407.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1608–1609, 1764, 8027.

official source of information about the condition and progress of the Poor Law Schools and the Certified Schools. The duty of inspecting these schools, so far as their educational work is concerned, has accordingly been transferred to the Board of Education, to be carried out by its Educational Inspectors.* It was plainly impossible for the General Inspectors, if only because of their sex, properly to supervise the boarded-out children; and for this work the Local Government Boards for England and Ireland have now the advantage of lady Inspectors,† whose specialist knowledge and experience has kept this branch of Poor Law work, so far as their inspection has been allowed to extend, up to a high standard. The steady expansion of the "hospital branch" of the Poor Law has made necessary also the appointment, in England, of two Medical Inspectors of Poor Law infirmaries and Workhouse sick wards,‡—who, unfortunately, are not charged generally with the inspection of all treatment of the sick poor—to whose professional training and specialist knowledge we attribute the very marked improvement which has taken place in that part of the work of the Boards of Guardians that they have been permitted to supervise. It appears to us desirable that further developments should be made in this direction. It is, we believe, a necessary condition of any efficient administration that each kind of treatment, involving a separate technique, requires to be supervised, not by a General Inspector knowing none of the techniques, but by a professionally trained specialist.

(E) The Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board.

No mere perfecting of the instruments of central control can result in efficiency of local administration, unless the Department from which the control emanates is itself organised on such a basis of efficiency as will enable it to formulate a definite and consistent policy, and to apply it in its dealings with the Local Authorities, with the authority of wider experience and superior technical knowledge of the service concerned. In 1834, when there existed no Government Departments for the supervision and control of the Local Authorities, the authors of the New Poor Law, feeling it essential that there should be such Central Control, were necessarily driven to the establishment of a new Department, that of the Poor Law Commissioners, from which the existing "Poor Law Division" of the Local Government Board is the direct descendant. There was at that time no Local Education Authority, no Local Health Authority, no Local Unemployment Authority and no Local Pension Authority. All the forms of public assistance which then existed were necessarily grouped together under the new Local Authorities at that time established, the Boards of Guardians, and were covered by the single term of relief of destitution. The fact that the new Central Authority was also a "Destitution Authority" regarding all forms of public assistance as constituting essentially a single service—the relief of destitution—kept it in close touch with the Local Authorities of the time. The Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47 had their own definite and consistent policy, for which, with the aid of the Assistant Commissioners, they developed their own specialist technique, and imposed it, with great success, upon the Boards of Guardians.

But, as we have abundantly shown, the administration of the Poor Law has, in the course of the last generation, ceased to constitute a single service, with a single technique. In place of the mere relief of destitution, with the constant aim at "dispauperisation," Parliament and public opinion—indeed, the very nature of the case—have compelled the Local Government Board to advocate, and have led the Boards of Guardians to start, nurseries and schools and hospitals and sanatoria and farm colonies and homes for the aged, each of them involving its own technique, demanding its own expert policy, and necessitating, in the Central Authority as in the Inspectorate, its own kind of specialised knowledge. We have already seen how inadequate the Destitution Authorities have proved, just because they are Destitution Authorities, successfully to discharge so many different kinds of duty. From the General Inspectors, just because these are "Destitution Inspectors," the Local Authorities can get neither helpful suggestiveness nor effective control in these heterogeneous services. Unfortunately the Central Authority has failed equally to keep pace with the growing diversification of the services actually undertaken by the Boards of Guardians. The treatment of the sick is not dealt with by one branch, the education of children by another, the provision for the able-bodied by a third, and the

* Report on the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, etc., by Mr. J. Tillard and Miss M. B. Synge (July, 1908). We refer later to the incompleteness with which this transfer of the duties of inspection has been made.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1605, 1781, 1881, 3978, 9738–9745, 9884–9890, 9576, 10052–10069.

‡ *Ibid. Qs.* 1606, 1790, 1852, 10177, 10365, 10375, 10437, 10534–10573.

treatment of the aged by a fourth. The Local Government Board, so far as the supervision and control of the "relief of the poor" are concerned, has remained a single undivided unit. Its "Poor Law Division," to which comes all Poor Law business, and from which must emanate all Poor Law control, remains to-day, like the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–47, and the Poor Law Board of 1847–71, essentially a "Destitution Authority," grouping together all the varied activities of the Boards of Guardians as "relief of destitution," and regarding this still as having a single technique of its own, to be guided by one simple policy, which can only be of a negative and restrictive character. Thus, when the progressive Boards of Guardians of the present day strive to improve the education of the children committed to their care, or to make more efficient the hospital service which they maintain for the sick, their aspirations and proposals do not get the advantage of the specialist knowledge and professional criticism of the Board of Education or of a Public Health Department respectively. What happens is that they are dealt with exclusively by the "Poor Law Division," which, by its very nature, necessarily lives and moves and thinks in terms, not of education or of public health, but of the relief of destitution, just as it was started to do in 1834.

It follows, from this unfortunate failure of the Local Government Board to develop specialised departments for the different social services under its control, that the business heaped upon its "Poor Law Division" is of the most heterogeneous kind. The 30,000* letters which it has annually to dispose of deal not only with "the adminstration of Indoor and Outdoor relief," and "the appointment, qualifications, remuneration, duties and resignation or dismissal of all the more important officers of Boards of Guardians"; but also with the management of "schools and grouped or scattered homes for pauper children" and their "education and employment." It approves the plans of schools, and the equipment provided. It decides how many teachers shall be allowed in each school and what their qualifications shall be. It has to supervise the administration of "infirmaries" and "district sick asylums," and "the medical care and nursing of sick and mental patients," and the "practice as to surgical operations and midwifery." It approves the appointment of medical officers, and the arrangements for the supply of drugs. It has to settle the "tasks of work to be performed by vagrants and able-bodied paupers" and also decide on "emigration." It deals with the "reports of the Lunacy Commissioners" on the treatment of the insane. It advises when new infirmaries are required and approves the plans in accordance with the latest hospital science. It watches over the "boarding-out of pauper children." It supervises the small-pox and scarlet fever hospitals of the Metropolis, though these are non-pauper institutions; and it settles what staff of doctors and nurses shall be employed in each of them, and the salaries that these professional officers shall receive.†

We think it will be clear that no one officer and no one department can possibly be the possessor of expert knowledge, or the exponent of consistent policy—and, therefore, the source of successful central control—for such a hotch-potch of services. The head of the Poor Law Division, Mr. J. S. Davy, C.B., who is both Chief Inspector and Assistant Secretary, is an officer of great ability and wide experience. He is assisted by a staff which has acquired an efficiency of its own. But Mr. Davy would be the first to avow that, assuming it is desired that the schools and hospitals and other specialised services of the Boards of Guardians should each be as wisely economical as it is possible for schools and hospitals to be, and at the same time should be efficient in its own line, neither he nor anyone in his Division is qualified to judge or to advise what is the right policy or what are the right methods of attaining this end. He has himself explained to us how completely his Division has failed, notwithstanding its absolute power to refuse to sanction extravagant plans,‡ to prevent the most extraordinary variation of capital cost of schools and hospitals; and how, in consequence, the expenditure on many of these buildings has run up to an immense, and altogether disproportionate figure,§ without, as we have already mentioned, the buildings thus provided by Destitution Authorities, with the

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 1597.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 94, 1596, 1597; Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, Sec. 46. This distribution of business has not even the plausible advantage of concentrating in one branch all the work relating to one Local Authority Some of the duties of Boards of Guardians (*e.g.*, vaccination and valuation and assessment) are dealt with in other Divisions of the Local Government Board; and this is true also of many of the questions relating to their Poor Law functions (*e.g.*, loans, local Acts, audit, statistics, etc.). A Board of Guardians sometimes has before it at a single meeting a dozen different letters from the Local Government Board, emanating from three or four different Divisions of the office. Curiously enough, its work in inspecting baby farms is under the Home Office.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 1642, 1649, 1650.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1633–1645.

approval of a Destitution Department, being at all well suited to their use as schools or hospitals. We attribute no blame for this failure either to Mr. Davy, or to the Poor Law Division. As he has explained, it is almost impossible for an unspecialised Department, having no continuous experience, and no expert knowledge of schools or hospitals, to cope successfully with the medical and architectural experts who are advising the Boards of Guardians.* When "the two architects and the Board of Guardians cannot agree . . . . the administrative part of the [Local Government] Board is," to use Mr. Davy's own words, "rather helpless." † We think it is clear that no mere General Department, attempting simultaneously to supervise and control such entirely distinct services as education and the treatment of the sick, the provision for the imbeciles and that for the able-bodied, the care of maternity hospitals and of asylums for the senile, can possibly acquire the technical experience or possess the specialised knowledge necessary either for the formulation and enforcement of a consistent policy, or for the exercise of any effective control over expenditure.

(f) The Need for Specialised Central Control.

We have accordingly to report that the existing organisation of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, the Central Authority in Poor Law administration, is, from the standpoint of efficiency of central control, wholly unsatisfactory. It is, in our opinion, a necessary preliminary to any improvement that the so-called "Poor Law Division," which professes to instruct and control the Local Authorities in such entirely different services as education and the cure of the sick, the relief of able-bodied workmen and the management of imbeciles, the provision for the aged and the care of newly-born infants, should be broken up, and its duties allocated to departments having knowledge and experience of the several services. It is significant that the need for some such specialisation of function has already been recognised by Parliament, by Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees and by the Local Government Board itself. The Poor Law Division, in fact, no longer deals either with all the work of the Boards of Guardians or with all the public provision for the destitute. When, under the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, a new service of public assistance for the Able-bodied was established, this was placed under the guidance and control of another division of the Local Government Board—leaving, however, the guidance and control of the relief of the other sections of the Able-bodied still with the Poor Law Division. When, in 1906, the provision made for another section of the Able-bodied—the Vagrants—was inquired into by a Departmental Committee, appointed by the President of the Local Government Board, and including two of the principal officers of that Department, the cardinal recommendation of that Committee was that the guidance and control of this service should be taken away from the Poor Law Division,‡ and transferred to a Department (the Home Office), which could specialise upon the able-bodied man "on tramp." The same tendency has manifested itself with regard to other classes of the poor. When, under the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, a new service of public assistance for the Aged was established, this was placed, not under the guidance and control of its own new Division of the Local Government Board nor yet under that having the guidance and control of the provision for the rest of the Aged, but under the Division having to deal with Public Health By-laws, motor-cars and the Unemployed. With regard to the children the process of disintegration has gone on in several ways; not only has the Board of Education undertaken the guidance and control of the Local Authorities in the provision of medical inspection and treatment, and the feeding of destitute children at school, but also the Local Government Board itself has, in tardy accordance with the recommendation of the Departmental Committee on Metropolitan Poor Law Schools,§ voluntarily ceded to the Board of Education the duty of inspecting and reporting upon the education of pauper children. Finally, even whilst we were considering the subject, the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded has recommended that the guidance and control of the Local Authorities in respect of the large proportion of the pauper population who are in any way mentally defective should be wholly transferred

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1642–1655, 1792.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 1795.

‡ Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy (Cd. 2852), 1906, Vol. I., Sec. 146.

§ Report of Departmental Committee on Metropolitan Poor Law Schools (Cd. 8027), 1896, Vol. I., p. 171

from the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board, and placed under a separate specialised Department (the Board of Control).* In fact, as we have seen to be the case with regard to the Local Authorities, we have now, for each separate class of destitute persons, rival Central Departments promulgating conflicting policies and each purporting to exercise guidance and control—the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board still assuming to supervise all relief to the destitute, in respect to their destitution ; whilst other Departments or Divisions of Departments deal with the public provision made for the several classes in respect of the cause or character of their needs.

We think it is clear that there should be, for each class for which public provision is made, a single Central Department or Division, from which should emanate the policy to be recommended, and from which should be directed the necessary inspection and control of the Local Authorities concerned. Only in this way is it possible to secure for the Local Authorities the assistance of any consistent or helpful guidance in the development of their several services. Only in this way is it possible to secure such an administration of Grants-in-Aid of particular services as will promote good local administration and give the necessary strength to the Central Authority. Only in this way is it possible to exercise over local expenditure of the rates and taxes any effective supervision and control. With regard to the children of school age (not being actually sick or mentally defective) we consider it essential that the whole duty of supervision and control of the provision made by the Local Authorities for this class—whether for their schooling, or for their feeding—should be exercised by one Department, which cannot be other than the Board of Education. The present arrangement, under which the policy, the supervision and the control of children of school age for whom public provision is made are divided among three different Departments (the Board of Education, the Home Office, and the Local Government Board)—each having its own Grants-in-Aid, and its own staff of Inspectors, who in some cases visit the same institutions, without even conferring with each other—is hopelessly inefficient and extravagant. In particular, the peculiar arrangement by which the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board continues responsible for inspecting the board and lodging of the children in the Poor Law schools, whilst the Board of Education is responsible for inspecting the schoolrooms and the instruction provided for these same children,† is one which cannot possibly be continued. This has been forcibly brought to our notice in the first General Report on the schools made by the Inspectors of the Board of Education.‡ Nor can it be justified that the Home Office, a Department having no other work connected with education,

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* Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded (Cd. 4202), 1908, Vol. VIII., pp. 338, etc.

† The present division of work between the Local Government Board and the Board of Education is, as we have already mentioned, even more illogical than is here stated. Although it has been understood that the Board of Education was to inspect the education of all Poor Law children, the Local Government Board has transferred to the Board of Education only the inspection of certain arbitrarily selected schools, namely, the residential schools maintained by Poor Law Authorities themselves, and twenty-three out of the 269 "certified" schools and homes; these twenty-three being Roman Catholic schools, and comprising only half the Roman Catholic schools, and only about a quarter of the certified institutions which themselves provide schooling. For all the rest, the Local Government Board continues to do the inspection ; though its Inspectors are admittedly unqualified to inspect schools, and, as a matter of fact, are not instructed to report on the education, and do not regard it as part of their duty. We think that this anomalous position, which we imagine must have come about by inadvertence, should be promptly remedied, by the Board of Education assuming responsibility for inspecting all educational institutions whatsoever that receive any pupils from public authorities, or are in any way aided from public funds.

‡ "In regard to the part taken by the Board of Education Inspector in the Inspection of Poor Law schools, it has been borne in upon us in the course of our inquiry that the work in the schoolroom is, under any circumstances, so intimately related to the general conduct, discipline and life of the institution as a whole that it is very difficult for an Inspector to form an adequate judgment of what goes on on one side of the line, without a full knowledge of what is being done on the other side. The advantages of a single controlling authority in respect of such points as the school hours and time-table, the periods and character of recreation, the supervision of the children out of school, and the place of domestic and industrial work in the institution, as distinguished from the school, are obvious. . . . Dual control . . . produces special difficulty in cases where repairs or improvements to premises, additions to staff, or any matters entailing expenditure, are to be dealt with. . . . It seems fairly clear, however, that if the supervision and control of the educational work of the Poor Law schools by the Board of Education is to be really effective, the Board's influence cannot be confined strictly to what takes place in the schoolrooms and during the hours of the ordinary instruction, but some means must be found whereby the requisite improvements can be secured in regard to the general direction of the Institution of which the school is the most important part." (Report upon the Educational Work in Poor Law Schools, and in the twenty-three Schools, certified under the Poor Law (Certified Schools) Act, 1862, which are inspected by the Board of Education, by Mr. J. Tillard, His Majesty's Inspector, and Miss M. B. Synge, July 1st, 1908, pp. 6–7.)

should pay Grants to, and should keep an Inspector to visit, industrial schools which are sometimes provided by Local Education Authorities, contemporaneously in receipt of Grants from the Board of Education, and sometimes inspected also by the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, which certifies them as fit for use by the Destitution Authorities. The arguments for the transfer, from the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board and the Home Office to the Board of Education, of all matters relating to children of school age, whether such children are in schools of one designation or in schools of other designations, will become even more overwhelming in strength when, as we have recommended, the actual provision for all necessitous children in each locality, not being actually sick or mentally defective, including industrial and reformatory schools, and " boarding-out," is made by a single Local Authority (the Local Education Authority). We anticipate much advantage to the Board of Education itself, in this enlargement of its functions. It has been suggested to us that the Inspectors of the Board of Education, confined as they are at present to the scholastic instruction of the children, are apt to take too exclusively a literary view of education. We think that the widening of view which must come from having to deal, not merely with schooling, but with all the needs of the child, and the experience of those who in industrial and reformatory schools and in Poor Law schools have had always to consider the whole up-bringing of the children, their industrial training, and the actual starting them out in the world, will be of special value in correcting the " defects of the qualities " of a mere Education Department, apt to think only of what can be taught in class. We do not, of course, suggest that the same Inspector would deal with all the different aspects of the child's life and the child's needs. There will, it is clear, be a much greater differentiation and specialisation among the Inspectorate than has heretofore existed. In particular, the transfer to the Board of Education of the specialised Inspectors of boarded-out children, with their intimate knowledge of the interaction of the school and the home, would add a valuable element to the educational staff.

The same general arguments support the placing of the whole central control of the local medical services and of the public provision for the sick in the hands of a single specialised Department. We have seen how necessary it is that the present Poor Law Medical Service and the Public Health Service in the several localities should be merged in a unified Local Medical Service on Public Health lines. It is, in our judgment, equally essential that this unified Local Medical Service should have the guidance and control of a single Central Department, having the supervision of everything relating to the public health. We have even received representations in favour of the establishment of a separate Ministry of Public Health with a representative in the Cabinet. Leaving aside, however, this larger question, we were surprised to find that, notwithstanding the strong recommendation of the Sanitary Commission of 1869, there does not exist to-day even a self-contained Division of the Local Government Board dealing with the subject. The supervision and control of the public provision for the prevention and cure of disease—a service on which the nation is spending altogether many millions sterling annually—is scattered among no fewer than five Divisions or Departments of the Local Government Board, each having its own staff, its own experience of administration, its own expert consultants, its own views of policy, and its own permanent head responsible for advising the Permanent Secretary and the President of the Board. Thus, all questions relating to the Poor Law Infirmaries and the Isolation Hospitals of the Metropolis go to the Poor Law Division; and about these the Secretary and President are advised as to policy by Mr. J. S. Davy, C.B. The Isolation Hospitals everywhere else, and the vaccination business of the Boards of Guardians (though not their administration of the Infant Life Protection Act) are dealt with by quite another Division; and the Secretary and President are advised as to policy by Mr. J. Lithiby, C.B. But this Division, called the " Public Health, Local Finance and Local Acts Division " also deals with Public Libraries and Canal Boats, and is encumbered, curiously enough, with the entire subject of Local Finance, including rates, assessments, loans, and the accounts of Municipal Corporations. It is also responsible, moreover, for the supervision of water supply, rivers pollution and the purity of food and drugs. Nevertheless the whole activity of Local Authorities under the Public Health Acts and the Gas and Water Facilities Act is looked after by yet another Department, the " Sanitary Administration and Local Areas Division," which also deals with Housing, Drainage, Roads, and Burial; and on all these matters the Secretary and President are advised as to policy by Mr. N. T. Kershaw, C.B. On the other hand, the vital question of By-laws under the Public Health and other Acts, and of regulations as to water supply and milk, as well as those relating to motor-cars—together with the whole administration of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, and, curiously enough, also of the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908—is

in the hands of yet another Division, under Mr. H. C. Monro, C.B., who has the responsibility of advising the Secretary and President as to the policy to be pursued with regard to these heterogeneous services. Apart from all these Divisions, with a department of a dozen or more doctors and inspectors, stands the Chief Medical Officer of the Board, Dr. A. Newsholme, who, as we have learned from the complaint of his distinguished predecessor, Sir John Simon, may or may not advise the President with regard to these health matters, according to whether or not the other Divisions, which are charged with one or other of the fragments of the Public Health service, send the papers to his department.

We are satisfied that there can be neither adequate control of expenditure nor efficiency of service, whether on the side of the Poor Law Medical Service or on that of the Public Health Medical Service, so long as this illogical and demoralising distribution of the central control among five rival divisions or departments of the Local Government Board continues to prevail. To-day, as it was authoritatively stated in 1869, "the causes of the present insufficiency of the central sanitary authority are obvious:—

"(1.) The want of concentration . . . .

"(2.) The want of central officers, there being, for instance, no staff whatever for constant, and a very small one for occasional, inspection.

"(3.) The want of constant and official communication between central and local officers throughout the kingdom.

A new statute, therefore, should constitute and give adequate strength to one Central Authority . . . . not to centralise administration, but, on the contrary, to set local life in motion—a real motive power, and an Authority to be referred to for guidance and assistance by all the Sanitary Authorities for Local Government throughout the country."* In short, we cannot help attributing to the scattering of the knowledge, the power and the responsibility among five different heads of Departments, all offering advice to the Permanent Secretary and to the President of the Board, and all having other matters to attend to besides the Public Health, the lack of any strong and consistent policy with regard to the public provision for the prevention and treatment of disease, the disabling lack of co-ordination among the several parts of this service, the failure even to keep the work of the Local Authorities under supervision by any systematic medical inspection of the various public hospitals and infirmaries, the absence of medical statistics of their work, and the lack of guidance and control of the manifold activities and frequent omissions of the Local Authorities in the whole domain of Public Health, with which, as we have seen, the work of the Boards of Guardians is so closely connected.† We recommend that the responsibility for the supervision, guidance and control of the Local Authorities in all their action in the prevention and treatment of disease, including the administration of the Grants-in-Aid in respect of this service, should be placed upon a single Public Health Department, whether that Department be represented by a Minister of its own, or form one of several Divisions of the Local Government Board. To this Public Health Department—which should be self-contained and complete in itself, with its own specialised legal and architectural experts—there would naturally fall the supervision of all public hospitals and infirmaries, whether now administered by Boards of Guardians or by Town Councils, etc.; of all domiciliary medical inspection and treatment, whether by the District Medical Officers or the Medical Officers of Health; of all developments of vaccination and the use of anti-toxins; of all the provision made for infants under school age, including the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act, now re-enacted in the Children's Act, 1908; of all the institutional provision made for the aged; of the measures taken to secure the wholesomeness or purity of milk, meat, and other food, and of drugs; of the By-laws and regulations relating to matters of health; and of water supply, drainage and house sanitation. The Department would, of course, have its own staff of qualified Inspectors; among which there would, no doubt, be developed a Hospital Inspection

* Report of the Royal Commission on Sanitation, 1869.

† Beyond sanctioning the loans for hospitals under the Public Health Acts, the Local Government Board has, we gather, no other official knowledge of the 700 municipal hospitals than it can glean from the Local Taxation Accounts, and from reading the Annual Reports of the 1,800 Medical Officers of Health, with which it is supplied, but which it does not, for publication, summarise or review statistically. We have found it impossible to ascertain exactly how many sanitary authorities, or what proportion of the whole, either maintain their own hospitals, or make arrangements to use other hospitals, or make no provision at all. It is indeed surprising how little is known at the Local Government Board of what the several Local Authorities are doing, or leaving undone, in the domain of public health. We have been unable to find any statistical or other information as to municipal hospitals, health visiting, the treatment of phthisis, the campaign against infantile mortality, the areas and the diseases with regard to which voluntary notification is in operation, and many other points.

Branch, dealing systematically with all the institutional provision for the sick, to which the present "Medical Inspectors for Poor Law Purposes" would bring their valuable experience. Such a Public Health Department would, of course, need more than one Assistant Secretary; would have, as its immediate permanent head, an officer combining administrative with Public Health experience, and would include among its administrative staff (and not merely as consultants) men of medical qualifications. We think, in fact, that the office of Chief Medical Officer should be combined, if not with that of the permanent head, at all times with that of one of the Assistant Secretaries (just as the office of Chief General Inspector is now combined with that of Assistant Secretary for the Poor Law Division), in order that—as is already the case in Scotland and Ireland, to the great advantage of the Public Health Service—the Chief Medical Officer may on the one hand be in direct communication with the Local Authorities, and on the other, be directly responsible for advising the Permanent Secretary and the President of the Local Government Board as to policy in all matters relating to Public Health.

We do not presume to suggest whether any of these Departments should be placed under Ministers of their own, by whom they would be directly represented in Parliament. But for such of them as remain associated together in the Local Government Board we recommend that a proper organisation for conference and co-ordination should be provided. We have been much impressed by the arrangements in this respect of the Local Government Boards for Scotland and Ireland.* These Boards are real boards of consultation, composed of the permanent heads of the several Divisions with the permanent head of the office as Vice-President. We may cite as other examples the Army Council at the War Office and the Board of Admiralty. We think that if the responsible permanent heads of Departments, each administering a single service, met weekly in formal conference with the Minister (or in his absence the permanent head of the office) in the Chair, it would secure, on the one hand, full opportunity for bringing to notice the urgent needs of each service, and on the other, that automatic co-ordination of policy which is as requisite for the wisest economy as for the fullest efficiency.

In the case of the large class of the mentally defective—whether lunatics, idiots, inebriates, epileptics or merely feeble-minded—we are relieved from the necessity of arguing in favour of the concentration in a single specialised Department of the whole of the central control, by the emphatic recommendations just made by the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded.† Whether that Department be designated the Board of Control, as recommended by the Commissioners, or whether it be given some more expressive title, we think it indispensable that it should be a self-contained Department, administering all the Grants-in-Aid of the service under its control, directly responsible to whichever Minister of the Crown may be entrusted with its supervision, and in direct

* The Local Government Board for Scotland, which is the Central Authority for Poor Law, Public Health, Unemployment, Old-Age Pensions, and all the Local Authorities dealing with these subjects, is constituted as follows:—"The Board shall consist of a President, being the Secretary for Scotland, the Solicitor-General for Scotland, and the Under-Secretary for Scotland, together with three appointed members of whom one shall also be appointed Vice-President and Chairman of the Board in the absence of the President, the second shall be a member of the Faculty of Advocates, of not less than seven years standing, and the third shall be a registered medical practitioner, who is also registered on the medical register as the holder of a diploma in sanitary science, public health, or State medicine, under Sec. 21 of the Medical Act, 1886, or has been for a period of not less than five years Medical Officer of a County or Burgh. Such third appointed member shall not hold any other appointment, or engage in private practice or employment." The President of the Board is, as Secretary for Scotland, the Parliamentary head of the Board. He is, therefore, the ultimate source of executive power, both initiative and regulative. The constitutional position, as we understand it, is that he is the *ultima ratio*. He has the full power of veto on all that the Board does; he has the power to give instructions that any given order shall be carried out. If, therefore, any difference of opinion should exist between the other five members of the Board and the President, he, as responsible head, would prevail. This fundamental constitutional doctrine necessarily governs all the actions of the Board; but, in practice, we understand, it affects for the most part only questions involving policy, *e.g.*, the principle of the distribution of grants to unemployed, staff appointments, etc. All the ordinary routine work of administration—Poor Law, Public Health, etc.—necessarily falls to be carried out by the three appointed members, acting as the whole Board. No individual member acts as such. We gather that, theoretically, every member of the Board deals with all the Board's work and sees all papers; but, for convenience of practice, there is a certain amount of specialisation—legal questions falling to the legal member, medical questions to the medical member, and general questions to both—all passing to the Vice-President as to the Permanent Head of an English Department and, if necessary, to the Minister. In practice, the great mass of questions are settled after discussion by the Board members. At the meetings of the *whole* Board, all the appointed members take part in the discussion of every question submitted. Theoretically, the decisions are ultimately decisions by the Parliamentary head; but, practically, they are, for the most part, corporate decisions by a body of six men.

† Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. VIII.

communication with all the Local Authorities making provision for any class of the mentally defective. We think that this Department should have its own specialised legal and architectural advisers, as well as its own medical officers and inspectors.

The administration of the service of national pensions for the aged is so inchoate, and the character of the local organisation is as yet so vaguely determined, that, whilst it necessarily impinges upon our subject, we hesitate to make definite recommendations in the matter. The present situation is anomalous. The orders and regulations are made by the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively. The executive officers representing the Government in the different localities, and actually doing the bulk of the work of enquiry and determination, are not officers of these Departments, but of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, whose sphere extends to the whole of the United Kingdom. The Inspectors who are to see that these executive officers carry out the orders and regulations, not of their own department but of the three Local Government Boards, are at present responsible only to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. The Pension Committees of the Local Authorities are in correspondence, not with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, but with the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, to which the appeals are to be made. These appeals will have to be determined severally by these three Local Government Boards; and there does not seem to be any provision for ensuring that the appeals from England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively will be decided on uniform principles. We presume that this curious arrangement is only a temporary one.

We regard it as essential that there should be a single, self-contained Central Department for this pension service, having its own executive staff and its own Inspectorate, supervising and controlling the Local Pension Authorities and determining all appeals from the local decisions. In view of the necessity of securing uniformity in the decisions on these appeals, and having regard to the fact that the whole of the funds are provided directly from the National Exchequer, we do not see how the Central Pensions Authority can be other than national in its scope, dealing directly with the whole of the United Kingdom. This consideration appears to exclude it from the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, and to point to its administration as a subordinate Department of the Treasury.

There remains the class of the Able-bodied, for whom provision is now made as paupers or Vagrants by the Destitution Authorities, and as unemployed by the Distress Committees of the Town Councils, etc. The central control is exercised, so far as England and Wales are concerned, in part by the "Poor Law Division" of the Local Government Board under Mr. J. S. Davy, C.B., and in part by the "Legal and Order Division" of that Department, under Mr. H. C. Monro, C.B. A further disintegration of the central control with regard to the able-bodied has been recommended, as we have mentioned, by the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, in the transfer to the Home Office of all supervision of the action of the Local Authorities in regard to the Able-bodied who are relieved outside their own parishes. We shall deal with the whole subject of the provision for the Able-bodied in Part II. of the present Report. It suffices here to say that we regard it as absolutely essential to economy and efficiency that one Central Department, and one Central Department only, should be responsible for the supervision and control of the treatment of able-bodied persons in receipt of public assistance; and that this Central Department should be self-contained and distinct from those Departments of the National Government which have to lay down a policy, and to guide the Local Authorities, in the treatment of the various classes of the non-able-bodied.

(G) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report:—

1. That the Local Government Board for England and Wales—and in a lesser degree the Local Government Boards for Scotland and Ireland—have failed to secure the national uniformity of policy with regard to the relief of the poor, which was aimed at in the establishment of a Central Authority upon the Report of 1834.

2. That this failure has contributed to the extraordinary variations in Poor Law administration in different districts, and to the present demoralised state of the majority of the Destitution Authorities.

3. That we attribute the failure, not to any shortcomings in the persons concerned, but to the obsolete character of the administrative machinery with which they have had to work; and notably to their not having been able to keep pace with the virtual transformation of the Destitution Authorities, from bodies set to "relieve destitution" under a deterrent Poor Law, into Local Authorities which, in response to public criticism, have started to provide, for this or that class of their patients, not deterrent relief, but curative and restorative treatment.

4. That the "Poor Law Division," with its General Inspectors, adhering to the old technique of a deterrent "relief of destitution," is unqualified to secure the efficient and economical administration of the different kinds of nurseries, schools, hospitals, asylums, custodial homes, farm colonies, and what not, that are now being run by the hypertrophied Destitution Authorities.

5. That each of the separate services—such as education, public health and care of the insane—administered by the Local Authorities imperatively requires the supervision, guidance and control of a distinct and self-contained Department or Division of a Department, having its own regulative orders, its own technically qualified Inspectorate, and its consistent line of policy; and that just as the Local Destitution Authorities should be broken up and merged in the several Committees of the County or County Borough Council dealing with the several services, so the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board should be abolished, and its work distributed among the several Departments or Divisions of Departments to which may be entrusted the supervision and control over the Local Education Authorities, the Local Health Authorities, and the Local Authorities for the Mentally Defective, respectively.

6. That we cannot refrain from animadverting on the fact that, notwithstanding the enormous importance and steady expansion of the Public Health work of the Local Authorities, there exists, in England and Wales, no Department, and not even a distinct and self-contained Division of a Department, responsible for their supervision, guidance and control in this important service, and for maintaining in it a definite and consistent policy—the work of dealing with the questions as they arise being intermixed with the business of other services and scattered among five different Divisions of the Local Government Board; none of them having, under its control, any staff of inspectors for the systematic visitation of all the Local Health Authorities, or the administration of any Grant-in-Aid of the services of those Authorities; and none of them being charged with the duty of formulating and maintaining a consistent policy for the service as a whole.

CHAPTER XII.

The Scheme of Reform.

The state of anarchy and confusion, into which has fallen the whole realm of relief and assistance to the poor and to persons in distress, is so generally recognised that many plans of reform have been submitted to us, each representing a section of public opinion. In fact, throughout the three years of our investigations we have been living under a continuous pressure for a remodelling of the Poor Laws and the Unemployed Workmen Act, in one direction or another. We do not regret this peremptory and insistent demand for reform. The present position is, in our opinion, as grave as that of 1834, though in its own way. We have, on the one hand, in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike, the well-established Destitution Authorities, under ineffective central control, each pursuing its own policy in its own way; sometimes rigidly restricting its relief to persons actually destitute, and giving it in the most deterrent and humiliating forms; sometimes launching out into an indiscriminate and unconditional subsidising of mere poverty; sometimes developing costly and palatial institutions for the treatment, either gratuitously or for partial payment, of practically any applicant of the wage-earning or of the lower middle class. On the other hand, we see existing, equally ubiquitous with the Destitution Authorities, the newer specialised organs of Local Government—the Local Education Authority, the Local Health Authority, the Local Lunacy Authority, the Local Unemployment Authority, the Local Pension Authority—all attempting to provide for the needs of the poor, *according to the cause or character of their distress.* Every Parliamentary session adds to the powers of these specialised Local Authorities. Every Royal Commission or Departmental Committee recommends some fresh development of their activities. Thus, even while our Commission has been at work, a Departmental Committee has reported in favour of handing over the Vagrants and what used to be called the "Houseless Poor," to the Local Police Authority, as being interested in "Vagrancy as a whole," apart from the accident of a Vagrant being destitute. The Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded has recommended that all mentally defective persons now maintained by the Poor Law should be handed over to the Local Authority specially concerned with mental deficiency, whether in a destitute, or in a non-destitute person. The increasing activities of these specialised Local Authorities, being only half-consciously sanctioned by public opinion, and only imperfectly authorised by statute, are spasmodic and uneven. Whilst, for instance, the Local Education Authorities and the Local Health Authorities are providing, in some places, gratuitous maintenance and medical treatment, for one set of persons after another, similar Authorities elsewhere are rigidly confining themselves to a bare fulfilment of their statutory obligations of schooling and sanitation. Athwart the overlapping and rivalry of these half a dozen Local Authorities that may be all at work in a single district, we watch the growing stream of private charity and voluntary agencies—almshouses and pensions for the aged; hospitals and dispensaries, convalescent homes and "medical missions" for the sick; free dinners and free boots, country holidays and "happy evenings" for the children; free shelters and soup kitchens, "way tickets" and charitable jobs for the able-bodied, together with uncounted indiscriminate doles of every description—without systematic organisation and without any co-ordination with the multifarious forms of public activity. What the nation is confronted with to-day is, as it was in 1834, an ever-growing expenditure from public and private funds, which results, on the one hand, in a minimum of prevention and cure, and on the other in far-reaching demoralisation of character and the continuance of no small amount of unrelieved destitution.

(a) Schemes that we have rejected.

We may distinguish, amid the various proposals for reform that have been brought before us, three main policies to be carried out by new legislation in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland alike. These all contemplate the continuance, under one constitution or another, of an Authority specifically charged with the relief of destitute persons, and of destitute persons only. As each of these policies has received substantial support, we think it expedient to state briefly what they involve, and our reasons for not adopting them.

(i.) *The Continuance of a Denuded Destitution Authority alongside of other Local Authorities Providing for the Poor.*

The easiest policy to pursue, by way of bringing the chaos into some sort of order, would be to restrict the Destitution Authorities to a "deterrent" and "less eligible" relief of actual destitution, whilst giving free play to the other Local Authorities to develop assistance out of the rates and taxes on their own specialised lines of prevention and treatment. This policy has not been explicitly recommended to us as a definite scheme of reform. But it is implied in many of the fragmentary proposals that have been laid before us; as, indeed, it is in much of the legislation of the last few years. It was this policy which seems to have inspired the momentous Circular of 1886, by which Mr. Chamberlain, when President of the Local Government Board, inaugurated the Municipal Relief Works for the Unemployed, and the same policy is plainly embodied in the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905. "Any relaxation," said Mr. Chamberlain, of the ordinary deterrent tests in Poor Law Relief, "would be most disastrous."* But another form of public assistance of men who would otherwise have been relieved by the Poor Law was to be provided by another Local Authority. Similarly, as an explanation of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, we were informed by Mr. Walter Long, that, in his view, "the object of the Poor Law," in respect of the able-bodied, was "to check" the manufacture of paupers "by imposing upon those who are thriftless, idle or intemperate the strictest possible regulations," in which he desired no relaxation whatsoever. But for "strong, healthy, industrious men," who are "by force of circumstances" in distress, "some fresh powers and new machinery are required.† The same idea lay at the root of the persistent advocacy, by Mr. Charles Booth, of a national scheme of pensions for the aged. A wise system of non-contributory pensions for the aged, together with municipal hospitals for the sick, would, he held, enable the Poor Law to be made wholly deterrent.‡ The same idea has been embodied in nearly all the legislation on these problems of the last few years; and it has inspired the recommendations of nearly all the Royal Commissions and Committees of Inquiry, in favour of providing, outside the Poor Law, milk depots and school dinners for the infants and children, municipal hospitals for all sorts of diseases, "custodial homes" for the feeble-minded, and pensions for the aged.

This policy offers to-day the attraction of requiring no reversal of recent legislation, and no discouragement of municipal efforts to raise the standard of life. It involves, however, the denudation of the English Boards of Guardians and the Scottish Parish Councils of all the forms of specialised provision for the children, the sick and the aged that we have described; and the rigid curtailment of the activities of these Destitution Authorities to the maintenance of a deterrent Workhouse. This means, in England and Wales, the abrogation of nearly all the Orders and Circulars of the Local Government Board since the date of the General Consolidated Order of 1847 and the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order of 1844. It would, by depriving the elected members and the officials of all the interest of managing educational, curative and philanthropic institutions, take the heart out of Poor Law administration; and make it more difficult than ever to induce men and women of zeal and integrity to devote themselves to what would be nothing but a hateful service. Moreover, experience with regard to vagrants and the "Ins-and-Outs" has shown that the most deterrent Workhouse does not prove continuously deterrent, unless its administrators can apply powers of compulsory detention. To grant such powers would be to make the Destitution Authorities very nearly akin to the Prison Authorities. It was on such grounds that the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy was constrained to recommend that the Vagrants should be taken out of the Poor Law, and entrusted to the Police Authorities, and that a penal colony for their detention should be provided by the Prison Department under the Home Office. Indeed, it is difficult to discover what class of destitute persons would, under this scheme, be found, in practice, to remain under the jurisdiction of the denuded Destitution Authority, after all those who required curative treatment, all those for whom honourable maintenance ought to be provided, and all those subjected to penal detention had been withdrawn. Meanwhile, the other Local Authorities, specialising on particular services, would be free to go ahead in their several ways, increasing the municipal debt in all directions, and relieving whole classes of persons and whole forms of destitution, without any check against overlapping, without any insistence on charge or recovery, without inquiry into economic circumstances before the grant of food or money in the

* Circular of March 15th, 1886; Sixteenth Annual Report of Local Government Board for England and Wales, 1886–1887, Appendix A., pp. 5, 6.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78461 (Pars. 11, 12).

‡ *Pauperism and the Endowment of Old Age*, by the Rt. Hon. Charles Booth, 1892, pp. 208–210; *Old-Age Pensions and the Aged Poor*, by the same, 1899 (re-issued in 1906).

home, and without, in fact, any safeguards against developing afresh all the evils of an unregulated Poor Law. On the other hand, as rigid deterrence is found to leave much destitution unrelieved, and as the other Local Authorities would have no responsibility for preventing starvation, we should have, in some districts, practically the evil of there being no relief of distress; whilst nowhere would the Local Authorities be under any obligation to make whatever provision they chose to develop, in any one service, adequate to the needs of the poor.

(ii) *The Monopoly of Public Assistance by a Deterrent Destitution Authority.*

The idea of limiting all assistance out of rates and taxes to the operations of a Deterrent Poor Law was unreservedly advocated, with regard to the Able-bodied, by the Royal Commission of 1834, and put into practice by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834–1847. Some students of the 1834 Report consider that this policy was also intended to be applied to the non-able-bodied.* But the application of this policy to the "Disabled" was reserved for the talented Inspectorate of 1869–86. It was then argued that just as under the Act of 1834 the introduction of a Deterrent Poor Law had "obliged the Able-bodied to assume responsibility for the able-bodied period of life, an application of the principle to the other responsibilities would produce equally advantageous results." † To ensure the maximum of deterrence, it was suggested that the "Workhouse Test" should be universally applied, so that the only relief offered to any class, "the Disabled" as well as the Able-bodied, should be bare subsistence in a disciplinary Workhouse, combined with the humiliation and disgrace that—so it was argued—should be attached to "living upon funds that have been raised by compulsion." This policy, it was fervently believed by its advocates, would, by reason of its very harshness to the aged, to the sick and to the children, so stimulate private charity and voluntary agencies, and so encourage parental and filial, brotherly and cousinly feeling, that every aged person, every sick person and every child, who was at all "deserving," and many even of those who were not deserving, would be maintained without "pauperism," and without cost to public funds.

The uniform enforcement of this policy throughout the country has been advocated by many of our witnesses, including some having great experience of the actual administration of the Poor Law. The official representatives of the Poor Law Officers' Association, for instance, presented this policy to us as embodying "the fundamental principles of the English Poor Law." ‡ They laid it down that the principles upon which we ought to insist, with regard to all assistance from public funds, were that "the condition of the person relieved should not in any respect be better than that of the lowest class of independent labourer; and the next, that it is essential to associate with the receipt of relief such drawbacks as will induce the poor, so far as lies in their power, to make provision for the future." §

We find some difficulty in estimating the exact changes that would be required for universal adoption of this policy, owing to the fact that its advocates are not clear whether they really desire it to be applied to all classes of paupers. Mr. Crowder, for instance, whose long and devoted service as a Poor Law Guardian in St. George's-in-the-East is so well known, emphatically declared to us that all relief of distress from public funds should be through the Poor Law, ‖ and that all such relief should be "less eligible," should be

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 29405, 29406 (Bonar).

† *History of the English Poor Law*, by Sir G. Nicholls, Vol. III. (by T. Mackay), p. 154.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 28796 (Par. 2).

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 28938.

‖ "The business of the Poor Law is the relief of destitution as distinguished from poverty. The fundamental principle with respect to legal relief is that the condition of the pauper ought to be, on the whole, less eligible than that of the poorest class of independent labourer. That all distribution of relief, in money or in goods, to be spent or consumed by the pauper in his own home (*i.e.*, all outdoor relief), is inconsistent with the principle in question. Where cases of real hardship occur, the remedy must be applied by individual charity, a virtue for which no system of relief derived from a compulsory tax can or ought to be a substitute. That the bane of all pauper legislation has been the legislating for extreme cases, and that every exception, every violating of the general rule to meet a real case of unusual hardship, lets in a whole class of fraudulent cases by which that rule must in time be destroyed." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 17387 (Par. 21).)

17676. Do you agree with the principle that all relief of distress from public funds should go through the Poor Law?—(*Mr. Crowder.*) Yes.

17677. Whether it is caused by unemployment, or sickness, or in any other way?—Yes, public relief.

17678. You believe that that would be healthy as a means of compelling people to rely on their own resources, and make provision for unemployment or sickness during the working period?—I do.

17679. You approve also of attaching the stigma of pauperism practically to all people who are in receipt of relief?—I do.

17680. You would not hide the fact, in any case, that these people are receiving relief from public funds?—No.

17681. Because of its weakening the character of the people and increasing the number of the persons relying on getting relief in a similar way?—Quite so.
(*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 17676–17681.)

"deterrent," and should be subject to "the stigma of pauperism." But it subsequently appeared that Mr. Crowder was unprepared to apply this policy to the not inconsiderable section of the paupers who are children, nor yet (except "to some extent") to the still larger number who are sick.* Some witnesses, however, were more consistent. Mr. T. Mackay, for instance, would have us boldly apply this historic policy to the aged and to the sick, as well as to the Able-bodied.† One important witness, the Rev. Canon Bury, who was so long mainly responsible for the Poor Law administration of Brixworth, frankly advocated the application of the same principles even to the children, for whom he recommended ‡ residence in the General Mixed Workhouse, as the only way of making their condition less eligible than that of the children of the lowest grade of independent labourer. "I think," said Canon Bury, "the child must bear, as it were, the sins of the father . . . and I should not like Poor Law relief to interfere with that." § Thus, we have maintenance in the Workhouse advocated as the sole form of public assistance to be afforded to any class. The only alternative appears to such reformers to be a grant of Outdoor Relief which cannot be made either adequate or conditional. For "it is evident," remarks one of the Inspectors, "that if out-relief were granted in sufficient amount to afford adequate relief (which may be defined as relief which would place the recipient in reasonable comfort) it would raise the pauper class to a better condition than the independent persons in a similar position of life (miserable as that position may be in the estimate of more favoured sections of society) and would offer a premium to dependence upon the rates. Besides, no out-relief can teach cleanliness and decency (again, according to a higher standard), or can prevent persons in great poverty from parting with any article they can turn into money."

The adoption of this policy would involve the repeal of the various Acts of recent years enabling the Local Education Authorities to feed necessitous children, and to provide medical treatment for those who need it. It would involve, not only the abandonment of all this activity by Local Education Authorities, but also their closing their residential schools for defective children, and their day industrial schools. The Local Health Authorities would have either to close their 700 hospitals, or else—what indeed, the Legislature seems originally to have intended—make such a substantial charge for admission to them as would automatically throw back on the Poor Law every destitute person stricken with fever. Similarly the most progressive of the Local Health Authorities would have either to close their Municipal Milk Depots, and dismiss their Health Visitors; or else make such charges for these services as would render them self-supporting, and, at the same time, leave to the Destitution Authority the monopoly of public assistance in the poorest districts. We should have to ignore the recommendations in favour of specialised provision for particular classes, which have emanated from every Royal Commission, every Select Committee of the House of Commons, and every Departmental Committee which has, during the last twenty years, been set to consider any one of these problems. We should, in particular, have to neglect the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy and those of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded. Finally, we should have to repeal the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 and the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908. The Destitution Authorities themselves would have to be revolutionised. The Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board would have to revert to the policy and the Poor Law technique of the Inspectorate of 1869–86; and this would involve the reversal of nearly all the official Orders and Circulars of the last sixty years with regard to the children; of all those of the last forty years with regard to the sick; and of all those of the last twenty years with regard to the aged. The Boards of Guardians of England and Wales would have to give up their Cottage Homes and Scattered Homes, their Infirmaries and Sanatoria. The Parish Councils of Scotland would have to give up their Parochial Homes and pensions for the aged, and their roll of widows with children on exceptional home aliment, far above what is enjoyed by the wives of the lowest class of independent labourers. We do not think that any such revolution is possible or desirable.

What, indeed, has become apparent is that the condition of the lowest grade of independent labourers is unfortunately one of such inadequacy of food and clothing and such absence of other necessaries of life that it has been found, in practice, impossible to make the conditions of Poor Law relief "less eligible" without making them such as

* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 17726–17736.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 29884, 29885.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 48221.

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 48187, 48188.

are demoralising to the children, physically injurious to the sick, and brutalising to the aged and infirm. Nor do private charity and Voluntary Agencies suffice as a substitute or as an alternative for the public provision for the destitute. It is not merely that private charity has at least as many evils of its own, and at least as many dangers, as the public provision has. What has been abundantly demonstrated is that, without State action, private charity and Voluntary Agencies nowhere fit the need—they are in most places and for most purposes lamentably insufficient, and in some places and for some purposes demoralisingly superabundant. Finally, they never rise above the individual hard case. With such problems as the excessive infantile mortality of a whole district, the wide prevalence of tuberculosis, or the preventable illnesses of school children, it never occurs to them to attempt to cope.

(iii.) *The Extension of Public Assistance by a Disguised and Swollen Poor Law.*

We pass now to the recommendations of the majority of our colleagues in respect of the functions and constitution of the bodies which they suggest should take the place of the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales. We confess to some difficulty in discovering or understanding what it is that they propose. They sweep away all existing Poor Law Authorities—doing, as it seems to us, grave injustice in the terms they apply to the existing Guardians *—but they recommend the creation of a new Poor Law Authority under another name. They are emphatic in laying down the principle that "the responsibility for due and effective relief of all necessitous persons at the public expense should be in the hands of one and only one Authority."† Moreover, they declare that they "do not recommend any alteration of the law which would extend the qualification for relief to individuals not now entitled to it, or which would bring within the operation of assistance from public funds classes not now legally within its operation."‡ So far we might be dealing with the plan of "a Monopoly of Public Assistance by a Deterrent Destitution Authority" that we have just described. But our colleagues reject that plan. They carefully avoid any recommendation in favour of a return to the "principles of 1834." These principles, hitherto acclaimed as the basis of any sound policy, are left aside as antiquated and inapplicable. "The administrators of the present Poor Law," we are told, "are, in fact, endeavouring to apply the rigid system of 1834 to a condition of affairs which it was never intended to meet. What is wanted is not to abolish the Poor Law, but to widen, strengthen and humanise the Poor Law." § The new Poor Law Authority is, therefore, no longer to be confined to dealing with "the destitute"; it is to provide for the much larger class of "the necessitous." || Its work is no longer to be "relief," but to be concentrated mainly on curative and restorative treatment of the most varied kind. This policy, it will be perceived, involves not only the continuance of the array of specialised institutions which a few Boards of Guardians in England have latterly established, but their multiplication in every district, and the development of new varieties. Besides the Poor Law residential Schools (or Cottage Homes, or Scattered Homes), there is to be established in every populous district a Poor Law day school, providing meals for the children of widows on Outdoor Relief, as well as an improved form of education, better adapted than that given in the Public Elementary Schools for the preparation of pauper children for industrial careers. There are to be also Poor Law almshouses or Cottage Homes for the deserving aged, and Poor Law Rescue Homes for destitute young women of immoral life.¶

What puzzles us is how the new Poor Law Authority can provide all these things for "the necessitous," without enormously increasing its present costly overlapping and rivalry with the Local Education Authority and the Local Health Authority. For it is

* We wish, in particular, to dissociate ourselves from such a statement as the following: "The work is tending more and more to fall into the hands of persons who, caring more for their own interests than for those of the community, direct their administration more towards the attainment of popularity than towards the solution of the real problems of pauperism" (Par. 92 of Chapter II. of Part IV. of the Majority Report). We know of no branch of the public service in which there is a larger proportion of zealous and devoted men and women than among the 24,000 Poor Law Guardians, who suffer unmerited unpopularity and disrepute from having to work an antiquated and impracticable system, imposed on them by Parliament and the Local Government Board.

† Par. 609 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report.

‡ Par. 4 of Part IX. of Majority Report.

§ Par. 337 of Chapter I. of Part VI. of Majority Report.

|| "We prefer the term necessitous," for we believe that it more accurately describes those who are at present held to be qualified for relief. We recommend, therefore, that the term "necessitous" take the place of "destitute." (Par. 4 of Part IX. of Majority Report.)

¶ Par. 420 of Chapter VIII. of part IV.; Pars. 92, 99–100, and 148*a* of Part IX. of Majority Report.

very far from being true that, under the plan to which our colleagues have committed themselves, there would be "one and only one Authority" administering public assistance. Some classes which have lately been withdrawn from the Poor Law are, it is true to be thrust back. The respectable mechanic temporarily out of a job, who is now obtaining "Employment Relief" from the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, is again to come under the jurisdiction of the Poor Law Authority. The necessitous child now being fed at school, or medically treated under the newly constituted organisation of the Education Authority, is once again to depend on the Poor Law Authority, and on the Poor Law Authority alone. We gather that in England the phthisical patients who are now being treated in Municipal Hospitals are to be transferred to the Infirmaries of the Poor Law Authority. These changes will involve the repeal of the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, and the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1906. On the other hand our colleagues concur with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded in advocating that all mentally defective persons, however destitute, shall cease to be paupers and be transferred to the Local Lunacy Authority.* They also repeat (though whether or not with approval we are unable to ascertain) the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy in favour of divorcing the whole provision for this section of the Able-bodied from the Destitution Authority, and of entrusting it to the Watch Committees of Borough Councils and (outside the Metropolitan area) to the Standing Joint Committees of County Councils.† With regard to these not inconsiderable portions of the destitute—amounting to at least one-fifth of the entire pauper host—our colleagues are proposing, to use their own condemnatory words, to break up into sections "the work previously performed" by the Boards of Guardians, and to transfer it to "existing committees of County and County Borough Councils."‡ We fail to understand the reasonableness of a change, involving great expense and disturbance, which withdraws the Vagrant, the Lunatic, the Epileptic, and the Feeble-minded person from the Poor Law and throws back into the hands of the Poor Law Authority the respectable artisan in want of work, the child found hungry at school, and the phthisical patient requiring isolation, who are now being dealt with by other Authorities. Nor do the recommendations of our colleagues even approach, still less attain, their own ideal of there being "one and only one Authority," dispensing Public Assistance. We should still have the overlapping between the hospital provision made by the 700 institutions of the Local Health Authorities in all diseases other than phthisis, and the sick wards and infirmaries of the Poor Law Authorities; between the residential schools, day feeding schools, and "boarding out" of the Local Education Authorities and the exactly similar schools and boarding out of the Poor Law Authorities.

But it is with regard to the Able-bodied that our colleagues depart most widely from their principle of having "one and only one Authority." Besides the vaguely suggested Local Police Authority, for relieving such of the Able-bodied as are vagrant, and the new Poor Law Authority for such of them as are stationary, there are to be, in every district, a Labour Exchange managed by the Board of Trade, providing Migration Relief in the form of railway tickets at the expense of the Treasury for such of the Able-bodied as are Unemployed; a Local Insurance Organisation, of uncertain constitution, dispensing Treasury subsidies as Unemployment Relief to insured workmen; and a Detention Colony giving "Continuous Treatment" at the expense of the Home Office to those "who will not work, or whose recent character and conduct are an insuperable bar to their re-entering industrial life." The situation is to be further complicated by the existence of a semi-statutory Voluntary Aid Committee, which is evidently intended to direct the operations of all the other authorities; for, we are told, "a first application for assistance will naturally be made to the Voluntary Aid Committee,"§ to be dealt with at its discretion. If it decides to refuse its own aid, it is to be a principle that the Poor Relief afforded "shall be in some way less agreeable than"‖ what the Voluntary Aid Committee would have given. Thus, the Voluntary Aid Committee is to set the standard which the new Poor Law Authority is never to exceed. "In course of time," we are told, "the practice of the committees would be so well-known in the district that the applicants for assistance themselves would know to which of the two committees they ought to

* All the references which the Majority Report makes to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded express concurrence; *see* par. 512 of Chapter IX. of Part IV.; pars. 153 and 167 of Chapter IV. of Part VIII.; and Par. 151 of Part IX.

† Chapter V. of Part VIII. of Majority Report.

‡ Par. 12 of Part IX.

§ Par. 612 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report.

‖ Par. 623 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report.

apply." * But, so far as we have been able to follow the maze of Authorities to be set up, there will be, not two, but six different Authorities more or less supporting the Able-bodied of any one district. We fear that we must agree with our colleagues when, in another part of their Report, they say that "it is difficult to conceive any system in which different public Authorities have power simultaneously to administer relief to much the same class of applicant in the same locality which will not result in overlapping, confusion and divergence of treatment and practice." †

Our colleagues seem to us to be even less successful in carrying out, in their detailed recommendations, their axiom that they do not desire "to bring within the operation of assistance from public funds classes not now within its operation." We have already alluded to the proposed substitution for the classic, narrow category of "the destitute," of the far wider category of "the necessitous." The same desire, as they express it, "to widen, strengthen and humanise the Poor Law," is shown, we think, in an almost morbid wish to alter the names of things, in order to give a flavour of generosity, if not of laxness, to the new Poor Law. Their new Poor Law Authority is to be euphemistically designated the "Public Assistance Authority"; its Relief Committees are to be "Public Assistance Committees"; the Able-bodied Test Workhouse is to be known in future as the "Industrial Institution"; the Outdoor Labour Test is described under "Outdoor Relief"; and simple Outdoor Relief, far from being abolished, obtains consecration in the official phraseology of the future as "Home Assistance." The good old-fashioned term "detention" is deemed "infelicitous," and whenever the new Poor Law Authority wishes to detain a pauper against his will, the instrument will be disguised as an "Order for Continuous Treatment."‡ But passing from these innocent devices of "illusory nomenclature," we find, in some of the proposals—not, as the "principles" would lead us to expect, a restriction of the area of pauperism, but actually an extension of its area, and an increase in its amenities. With regard to the sick in particular, the new Poor Law axiom is to be, "Investigation should follow upon Treatment." § Whether the medical treatment is to be peremptorily terminated whenever the enquiry discloses pecuniary resources, is not stated. But being necessitous is not always to be the condition of eligibility under the new Poor Law. It is expressly recommended that institutional treatment, including maintenance, should be provided by the Poor Law Authorities *without charge and without disfranchisement*, for all persons who are members of Provident Dispensaries and are recommended by their own doctors for such treatment, apparently in rivalry with the Local Health Authorities, and equally whether or not the patients have sufficient means to obtain such institutional treatment for themselves.‖ This extension of entirely gratuitous treatment to persons who are not necessarily destitute, and from whom the cost of this treatment is not to be recovered, involves a serious extension of the area of Public Relief, and of the work of the new Poor Law Authority, and no inconsiderable increase of expenditure. What seems to us even more extraordinary is the proposal to grant to every destitute sick person the privilege of a free choice among the doctors of the town, exactly as if such sick persons had belonged all their lives to a well-organised Provident Dispensary. If it is desired to make relief less desirable than maintenance by individual exertion and foresight, we should have thought that "free choice of doctors" was exactly the privilege to be withheld from the person coming on the rates for treatment. The proposal seems to us all the more dangerous as it is plain that the poor patient will tend to choose the doctor who interferes least with his habits, and whom he finds most sympathetic in ordering "medical extras"; from which, it must be remembered, food and even alcoholic stimulants are not excluded. We cannot but agree with our colleague, Dr. Downes, who states in his Dissent that "the scheme . . . appears . . . to offer what amounts to a large measure of free medical relief without adequate safeguard either to the medical profession generally, or to the ratepayer." ¶

The promoters of this scheme seem not unnaturally to feel that the present Boards of Guardians in England and Ireland, and the present Parish Councils in Scotland, would not be equal to the administration of so multifarious an array of services, each having its own technique. The failure of the present Destitution Authorities to cope with the difficulties presented by the existing mixture of classes with which they have to deal makes it clear, in fact, that to administer the new congeries of functions would demand instruments of "high finish and fine temper,"** which cannot, it is contended, be ensured

* Part 613 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report
† Par. 609 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report.
‡ Par. 150–3 of Part IX. of Majority Report.
§ Par. 232 of Chapter III. of Part V. of Majority Report.
‖ Par. 236 and Conclusions, Sec. 16 and 17 of Chapter III. of Part V. of Majority Report.
¶ Dissent signed by Dr. A. Downes.
** Par. 11 of Part IX. of Majority Report.

by popular election. Thus the new Poor Law Authority, though in form a Committee of the County or County Borough Council, is to have its own autonomy, even as to the rate to be levied or the capital outlay to be made; and is not to be subject to the control of the Council. Though Councillors will sit upon it, it is to consist largely of co-opted and nominated members, who are to be drawn from amongst men and women of greater experience, wisdom and local knowledge than popular election can supply. The powers and duties of the new Poor Law are not even entrusted to this packed Poor Law Committee disguised under a new name, but are to be distributed among a whole series of "Public Assistance Committees" and "Medical Committees," the bulk of the work devolving upon these nominated local committees, each with its own dilution of non-elected members—the Medical Committees largely composed of the doctors who are going to be selected by their pauper patients, and paid their fees out of the rates; and the Public Assistance Committees made up to a great extent of persons nominated by voluntary charitable agencies. But this is not all. What might seem the generous laxness of the whole terminology of the proposed new Poor Law, if not also of some of its provisions, is to be counteracted by statutory "Voluntary Aid Committees"; constituted on the lines of the Charity Organisation Society; eligible to receive grants from the Public Assistance Authority out of the County Rate;* but in no way under public control. *To these irresponsible Committees of benevolent amateurs all applicants will apply in the first instance*;† and in case of refusal of aid, the Public Assistance Committee is to be bound to assist the applicant, if at all, "in some way less agreeable" than the Voluntary Aid Committee would have done!‡ We have found some difficulty in unravelling the complicated details of the constitution recommended in this scheme for the administration of an annual expenditure from the rates and taxes of, in England and Wales alone, at least £15,000,000 sterling. What is clear is that the unconcealed purpose of constructing this elaborate and mysterious framework,

> "With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
> Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb,"

is to withdraw the whole relief of distress from popular control.

But apart from this undemocratic constitution, which, in our judgment, makes the scheme politically quite impracticable, we consider the whole conception of a Swollen Poor Law, under whatever name disguised, unsound in principle. The experience of the past, as shown by the analysis contained in the preceding chapters of this Report, demonstrates, we think, beyond possibility of doubt that when a Destitution Authority departs from the simple function of providing bare maintenance under deterrent conditions, *it finds it quite impossible to mark off or delimit its services from those which are required by, and provided for, the population at large.* The function of preventing and treating disease among destitute persons cannot, in practice, be distinguished from the prevention and treatment of disease in other persons. The rearing of infants and the education of children whose parents are destitute does not differ from the rearing of infants and the education of children whose parents are not destitute. The liability of persons to be compulsorily removed from their homes, because they have become a public nuisance or a source of danger, must surely be the same whether or not they are technically "destitute." The exercise of the power of compulsorily adopting the children of parents who are leading a vicious life, or who are cruelly treating them, has no reference to the "destitution" of such parents. In short, if we are going to provide preventive and curative treatment—if the treatment of each class, and of each individual within that class, is to be governed not by the fact of their destitution but by the conditions surrounding the particular class and the particular individual of the class—the category of the destitute becomes an irrelevancy. *What is demanded by the conditions is not a division according to the presence or absence of destitution, but a division according to the services to be provided.*§ Each public service requires its own "machinery of approach" of the population at large, its own technical methods of treatment of the class entrusted to it, its own specialised staff, and its own supervising committee, bent upon the performance of the particular service. Those from whom the cost of their treatment ought to be recovered, can be effectively made to pay without vainly trying to separate the treatment of the destitute from the treatment of the poor. To seek to withdraw, from the elaborate specialised public services, already in existence for the population at large, the 5 or 10 per cent. of

* Par. 233 of Part VII. of Majority Report.

† Par. 612 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report.

‡ Par. 623 of Chapter IV. of Part VI. of Majority Report.

§ The disadvantages of continuing to fix our attention on the poor as a class have often been pointed out. As Mr. C. S. Loch has said, "The 'poor rate' as a poor rate keeps attention fixed *on the poor as a class*, from the point of view of the Poor Law and Official pauperism. It is suggestive of continuing dependence, and even an argument for a right to be dependent. It should be abolished." ("The Development of Charity Organisation," by C. S. Loch, in *Charity Organisation Review*. Vol. XV., N.S., February, 1904.)

each class who are technically "destitute," and to set up duplicate services for their separate treatment under the Poor Law, even if disguised under the name of Public Assistance, would be both injurious to themselves and unnecessarily costly to the public.*

(B) The Scheme we Recommend.

We have now to present the scheme of reform to which we ourselves have been driven by the facts of the situation. The dominant exigencies of which we have to take account are :—

(i.) The overlapping, confusion and waste that result from the provision for each separate class being undertaken, in one and the same district, by two, three, and sometimes even by four separate Local Authorities, as well as by voluntary agencies.

(ii.) The demoralisation of character and the slackening of personal effort that result from the unnecessary spreading of indiscriminate, unconditional and gratuitous provision, through this unco-ordinated rivalry.

(iii.) The paramount importance of subordinating mere relief to the specialised treatment of each separate class, with the object of preventing or curing its distress.

(iv.) The expediency of intimately associating this specialised treatment of each class with the standing machinery for enforcing, both before and after the period of distress, the fulfilment of personal and family obligations.

We have seen that it is not practicable to oust the various specialised Local Authorities that have grown up since the Boards of Guardians were established. There remains only the alternative—to which, indeed, the conclusions of each of our chapters seem to us to point—of completing the process of breaking up the Poor Law, which has been going on for the last three decades. The scheme of reform that we recommend involves :—

(i.) The final supersession of the Poor Law Authority by the newer specialised Authorities already at work.

(ii.) The appropriate distribution of the remaining functions of the Poor Law among those existing Authorities.

(iii.) The establishment of suitable machinery for registering and co-ordinating all the assistance afforded to any given person or family ; and

(iv.) The more systematic enforcement, by means of this co-ordinating machinery, of the obligation of able-bodied persons to support themselves and their families.

(i.) *The Supersession of the Destitution Authority.*

We think that the time has arrived for the abolition of the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland ; and, so far as any Poor Law duties are concerned, of the Parish Councils in Scotland. We come to this conclusion not from any lack of appreciation of the devoted public service gratuitously rendered on these Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils by tens of thousands of men and women of humanity, ability, and integrity, which, we feel, has never received adequate recognition. But it has become increasingly plain to us in the course of our inquiry—it is, in fact, recognised by many of the members of these bodies themselves—that the character of the functions entrusted to the Poor Law Authorities is such as to render their task, at best, nugatory ; and, at worst, seriously mischievous. The mere keeping of people from starving—which is essentially what the Poor Law sets out to do—may have been useful as averting social revolution : it cannot, in the twentieth century, be regarded as any adequate fulfilment of social duty. The very conception of relieving destitution starts the whole service on a demoralising tack. An Authority having for its function merely the provision of

* "It would be very undesirable," deposed one of our colleagues, before the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, "to set up two classes of Authorities, or more, to deal with the same class of infirmity. . . . It may happen, as it has happened in the past, that the pauper class would be better provided for than the class next above them. . . . *I think that if provision is made, it should be made in such a way that all classes of the community can be received.* . . . I think it is a principle which has a wide application. Take, for example, a case of phthisis. I should not like to see Poor Law sanatoria simply as Poor Law sanatoria." (Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, 1908, Vol. I., *Q.* 1813 ; Evidence of Dr. Arthur Downes.)

maintenance for those who are starving is necessarily limited in its dealings to the brief periods in each person's life in which he is actually destitute; and has, therefore, even if it could go beyond the demoralising dole—too bad for the good, and too good for the bad—no opportunity of influencing that person's life, both before he becomes destitute, and after he has ceased to be destitute, in such a way as to stimulate personal effort, to strengthen character and capacity, to ward off dangers, and generally to keep the individual on his feet. As regards the effect on individual character and the result in enforcing personal and family responsibilities, of the activities of the Destitution Authority on the one hand, and those of the Local Education Authority and the Local Health Authority on the other—even where these latter give food as well as treatment—there is, as all our evidence shows, no possible doubt on which side the advantage lies. Yet if a Poor Law Authority attempts to do more than provide bare subsistence for those who are actually destitute, for the period in which they are destitute; if it sets itself to give the necessary specialised treatment required for birth and infancy; if it provides education for children, medical treatment for the sick, satisfactory provision for the aged, and specialised compulsion for the able-bodied, it ceases to be an "*ad hoc*" Authority, with a single tradition and a single purpose, and becomes a "mixed" Authority, without either the diversified professional staff, the variety of technical experience, or even a sufficiency and continuity of work in any one branch to enable it to cope with its multifarious problems. Moreover, as has been abundantly demonstrated by experience, every increase in the advantageousness of the "relief" afforded by the Destitution Authority, and every enlargement of its powers of compulsory removal and detention, brings it into new rivalry with the other Local Authorities, and drags into the net of pauperism those who might otherwise have been dealt with as self-supporting citizens. If, as it seems to us, it has become imperative to put an end to the present wasteful and demoralising overlapping between Local Authorities, it is plain that it is the Destitution Authority—already denuded of several of its functions—that must give way to its younger rivals.

Besides this paramount consideration, there are two incidental reasons which support our recommendation for the abolition of the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and, so far at any rate as their Poor Law work is concerned, of the Parish Councils in Scotland. These are:—

(*a*) The grave economic and administrative inconveniences of the existing Poor Law areas; and

(*b*) The unnecessary multiplication of elected Local Authorities.

In the great majority of cases the population dealt with by the Destitution Authority is too small to permit either of economical administration or of proper provision being made in separate institutions for all the various classes of paupers. Out of the 1,679 districts into which the United Kingdom is divided for Poor Law purposes, four-fifths have populations which do not amount to 20,000 families each. Even in England and Wales more than two-thirds of the Unions include fewer than 10,000 families; and 81 of these Unions actually have populations of fewer than 2,000 families each. In Ireland, out of the 130 Unions, there are only 9 having as many as 10,000 families; and there are 12 having fewer than 2,000 families.* In Scotland where this *morcellement* is carried to an absurd extent, a population smaller than that of London is dealt with by 874 separate Poor Law

*An objection is sometimes raised to the adoption of the County, or of any area larger than that which happens to be the existing unit, that the classification of institutions, and their specialisation for particular classes, will involve hardship to the poor, as increasing the distance to which they and their friends will have to travel. We appreciate the fact that, however theoretical and even sentimental may be this particular objection, any change will cause temporary discontent, and possibly some hardship. The Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform had to face the same difficulty. They state that: "A more serious objection, and one deserving most attentive consideration is the opinion that aged and infirm people who have resided at a distance from the new central 'Almshouse' would feel exiled if they were obliged to leave the building in which they had been, and to go to a greater distance from their friends. We felt the force of such representations, and we therefore made special inquiries on the subject at many Workhouses, when we visited them. We found that, while the acutely sick were visited by their friends, the infirm and aged received very few visits from friends or relatives. This, we were informed, is because large numbers of these old people are among the last remaining survivors of their generation. In other cases, the old people are unmarried men and women in touch with few, if any, relatives. Again, some are fathers or mothers of children who have emigrated, but have not done well. Whatever may be the reason, the fact seems to be that there are very few visitors to the infirm and aged in rural Workhouses. We have learned the views of many of the old people, and in some cases they put forward their desire not to be taken away lest they should not be buried with their friends. If such representations were made to the governing body of the 'Almshouse' in any case, we think that they should be empowered to incur the necessary expenditure in having the remains of the person who had expressed such wish interred in the burial ground within their county where other members

Authorities, nearly three-eighths of which rule over fewer than 200 families each.* Any proper provision of specialised institutions for such small groups of people is absolutely impossible. In short, even apart from any other considerations, there are not more than about 100, out of all the 1,679 Poor Law districts of the United Kingdom, in which it would be possible to make decent provision for the many separate classes which have to be differentially dealt with. We have received a large amount of evidence demonstrating conclusively that, if any new area is adopted for administration and rating it cannot, on all sorts of grounds, practically be any other than that of the County and County Borough.† On this point, which we think needs no further argument, we are glad to find ourselves in agreement with the majority of our colleagues.

If the new area adopted be that of the County and County Borough, the Local Authority to be entrusted with the work cannot, we are assured by those best acquainted with local administration, be any other than the County Council and County Borough Council acting through its several committees. "You could not have two Authorities in the County area," declared to us a practical County administrator, "we should always be clashing." ‡ "It would have to be done by the County Council," Mr. Walter Long informed us.§ "Would you contemplate," he was asked, "setting up a new *ad hoc* Authority in the county area for any purpose whatsoever?" To this he replied emphatically "None." || The same testimony was given by Lord Fitzmaurice, who has so long worked in County government, and who declared himself opposed to any new County Authority for Poor Law purposes only.¶ The setting up in London or in the County Boroughs, of any separately elected body, for the same area, and levying rates on the same occupiers, appears equally impracticable. We therefore come inevitably to the proposal to transfer the duties of the Boards of Guardians to the Councils of the Counties and County Boroughs.

In favour of this course there are many different arguments. We think that it will be generally recognised that the mere reduction in the number of separate Local Authorities, having separate powers of expenditure of the rates, and making separate demands on the

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of the family are buried." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., pp. 35–36.) We have satisfied ourselves that the reform we propose can be carried out in England and Wales with even less hardship than in Ireland. We do not contemplate that, for the Aged, the County Council will have only one institution. On the contrary, we deprecate a large institution, and we hope to see a number of smaller "Asylums for the Aged," each accommodating a few dozen or a few score of inmates, in different parts of the County. And, under the Paupers Conveyance (Expenses) Order, 1898, travelling expenses are already paid to enable paupers to visit their relations in other institutions. It is not as if the existing Poor Law districts were arranged with a view to the utmost facility of access to their institutions and administrative centres. They have, in many parts of the country, the fundamental drawback of having been arranged before the construction of the railway system; and their institutions are to-day sometimes many miles distant from any railway station, and even from a telegraph office. In about forty cases, the Workhouse is more than four miles from a railway station; in nine cases it is more than seven miles; in one (in England), it is ten, and in one (in Wales), thirteen and a half miles. In many cases institutions placed with proper regard to present-day means of communication would be absolutely more easily accessible to a larger district than the present institutions are to small districts.

* "In each parish there must be . . . a Parish Council elected every three years; an Inspector of Poor, who may or may not also be Clerk to the Parish; a Medical Officer, and a Collector of Rates, each of whom receives an official salary. But many of the parishes have a very small population. There are, for instance, no less than 114 parishes in Scotland out of 887, having less than 500 inhabitants. There are, further, 204 parishes having between 500 and 1,000 inhabitants, each with the Poor Law machinery above-mentioned. Statistics further show that there are four parishes in Scotland which had at the date of the last returns no poor, either indoor or outdoor, three of these being in Berwickshire, where the parishes are smaller than in any other county. Again, in seventeen small parishes, taken at random, there is a population of 4,346; there are sixty-six paupers; the total cost of their relief being £1,397, of which £356 is the cost of Poor Law management in the parish, exclusive of other local administrative expenditure. It would be a considerable saving to these parishes if they were to amalgamate." (Report of Royal Commission on Local Taxation (Scotland), 1899, Appendix XXX. to Vol. III., p. 286. Memorandum by Mr. Patten Macdougall.) The number of Poor Law parishes seems now to be 874.

† The adoption of the County and County Borough as the general unit of area for administration and rating does not, of course, preclude the possibility of two or more such units, where geographical and statistical reasons make this desirable, combining either for one purpose or for any purposes; nor does it prevent a sharing of certain functions between the area of the County and that of a smaller unit, such as the non-county borough or urban district, or the Metropolitan borough. To these points we shall recur.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 76600 (Mr. Willis-Bund).

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 78576.

|| *Ibid.*, *Q.* 78579.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 77000, 77001. *See* other evidence to the same effect by Sir A. Cripps, K.C., *Qs.* 76494, 76495.

time and service of the citizens willing to stand for election, is an advantage in itself. It fortunately happens that, at any rate in the County Boroughs of England and Wales, which comprise one-third of all the population of that country, the various rivals to the Poor Law—the Local Education Authority, the Local Health Authority, the Local Pension Authority, the Local Unemployment Authority, the Local Police Authority and the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective—have one and all become committees of the Town Council. In the Metropolis, and in the counties, the several Committees of the County Council already deal with the same services, though they may share their administration, so far as local duties are concerned, with corresponding committees of minor local authorities. The abolition of the Boards of Guardians, and the adoption of the area of the County and County Borough would, in England and Wales at any rate—with appropriate arrangements to meet the cases of the Metropolitan Boroughs in London and of the non-County Boroughs and Urban and Rural District Councils in the other Counties—enable a very desirable unification of Local Government to be carried out. In this proposal to make the County and County Borough Councils financially responsible for all the duties at present performed by the Boards of Guardians, we are glad to find ourselves in agreement with a majority of our colleagues. We differ from them in this matter in the extent to which they seek to withdraw the new services from the control of the County or County Borough Council itself, and in the way in which they attempt to determine by what machinery of committees and sub-committees the Councils shall carry out the work entrusted to them. We cannot help thinking that these are matters which, in practice, the Councils will decide for themselves. We doubt whether any provision of Parliament will prevent a Town or County Council exercising whatever measure of control it chooses over a service entrusted to one of its committees for which it has to find the money. And we cannot help thinking that in adopting as their own the proposal that the unit of area should henceforth be the County and County Borough, and that the supreme authority should be the County Council and County Borough Council, the majority of our colleagues have rendered inevitable the adoption of the principle of distributing the Poor Law services among the committees already concerned in those very services. We cannot imagine, for instance, the Education Committee of the Manchester Town Council handing over to the tender mercies of any new statutory Poor Law Committee, the residential schools for defective children, the Day Industrial Schools, or the provision of dinners for hungry children, in which the Councillors take so much pride ; or the Health Committee handing over to the new Poor Law Committee the exact contingent of the patients in its Isolation Hospitals and Phthisis Wards who are declared to be destitute. If the responsibility for the administration of the various services of the Poor Law is imposed on the Manchester Town Council at all—if it has to levy the Poor Rate to support the Poor Law Schools at Swinton and the Poor Law Infirmary at New Bridge Street—it may confidently be predicted that it will make its own Education Committee and its Director of Education answerable for the one, and its own Health Committee and Medical Officer of Health answerable for the other.

(ii.) *The Distribution of the Services of the Destitution Authority.*

We have satisfied ourselves that, in England and Wales at any rate, and we think also in Scotland—Ireland presenting a somewhat different problem—there would be no serious difficulty in all the various functions of the Poor Law being undertaken by the several committees of the existing Local Authorities. We prefer to reserve for subsequent examination, in Part II. of this Report, the whole class of the Able-bodied, whether Vagrants, Paupers or the Unemployed, for whom we shall propose a national organisation. If, however, it were decided to leave this class also to Local Authorities there would be no difficulty in entrusting this branch of the work to its own appropriate Committee of the County or County Borough Council, in which the existing Distress Committee under the Unemployed Workmen Act would be merged.

(a) *The Duties to be Transferred to the Local Education Authorities.*

With regard to the children of school age at present dealt with under the Poor Law, the course is easy. We believe that public opinion is wholly in favour of the transfer, in England and Wales, of the entire care of the pauper children of school age to the Local Education Authorities, under the supervision of the Board of Education. We need not recapitulate the manifold advantages of dissociating, once for all, the whole care of the children from any connection with pauperism. Up and down the country the Local Education Authorities, as we have seen, are already providing not only schooling but also maintenance for many thousands of children ; they have actually, in some cases, their own residential schools and their own arrangements for "boarding-out" ; they

have their own machinery for searching out cases where the children are being neglected, and for the systematic medical supervision of practically the whole child population. Already, throughout Great Britain, there has been transferred to the Local Education Authorities the whole schooling of nine-tenths of the children under the control of the Destitution Authorities, and to the Board of Education for England and Wales the inspection of the remaining Poor Law schools, etc., in that country. The Local Education Authorities already deal with so many children that the addition to their work involved by this transfer is proportionately small. The Education Committee of the Gloucestershire County Council, for instance, has about 50,000 children under instruction. The dozen or so of Boards of Guardians in the corresponding area of the County have among them all scarcely 1,000 children of school age in their charge, and of these only between one and two hundred receive institutional care. The thirty-one Boards of Guardians of the Metropolis have in their charge perhaps as many as 25,000 children of school age, of whom some 15,000 receive institutional treatment. The supervision of this number would make no great difference to the work of the Education Committee of the London County Council, which deals already with nearly 1,000,000 children. Where educational administration is shared between the County Education Committee and a Minor Authority —as, for instance, where the Council of a Non-County Borough or of an Urban District administers its own elementary day schools—the responsibility for the custody and care of the children at present under the Board of Guardians would naturally pass to the County Education Authority, which might use the day schools of the Minor Authority just as the Board of Guardians does.

(b) *The Duties to be Transferred to the Local Health Authorities.*

The duties to be transferred from the Board of Guardians to the Local Health Authorities—the provision for birth and infancy, the treatment of the sick and the incapacitated, and the institutional provision for the aged—cannot be disposed of so simply as those relating to children of school age. Let us begin with the case of the County Boroughs, which now include one-third of the whole population of England and Wales. Here there is already a Health Committee of the Town Council, which has its own Medical Officer of Health, its own staff of doctors and sanitary inspectors, often also of Health Visitors and nurses. It usually has its own hospital or hospitals, and sometimes its own sanatorium. If it were made responsible for all the treatment of the sick, domiciliary as well as institutional, the addition of the Poor Law Medical Officers to its staff, and of the care of the pauper sick to its work, would involve practically no difficulties. Similarly the provision for birth and infancy and for the institutional treatment of the aged could easily be added to the existing duties of the Health Committee.

Outside the County Boroughs the functions of the Local Health Authority are at present everywhere shared between the County Council, with its County Medical Officer, and a Minor Health Authority, which may be (in the Metropolis) a Metropolitan Borough Council or the Corporation of the City of London ; or (in other Counties) the Council of a Non-County Borough, or that of an Urban Sanitary District, or that of a Rural Sanitary District. We have received much evidence in favour of the abolition of the smaller Minor Health Authorities, and of the extension of the Public Health functions of the County Council. But assuming the existing organisation in this respect to remain undisturbed, at any rate so far as the larger Local Health Authorities are concerned, it would, we think, not be difficult to divide the duties now performed by the Boards of Guardians in respect of Birth and Infancy, the treatment of the sick and incapacitated, and the institutional treatment of the aged, appropriately between the County Health Authority and the Minor Health Authority. To the former would fall, along with the general supervision of the Public Health of the County as a whole, the administration of all the institutions transferred from the Boards of Guardians, or established in order to provide for the classes of patients hitherto dealt with by the Poor Law Authorities. The advantages of a unified and properly graded institutional organisation for the County as a whole, together with the financial saving of such an organisation to every part of the County, appear to us so great that this unified County service should, at all hazards, be insisted on. In the Non-County Boroughs having over 10,000 population, and in the Urban Districts having over 20,000 population, we should be inclined, with regard to the Outdoor Medical Service of the Poor Law, to follow the precedent set by the Education Act of 1902 with regard to elementary day schools, and to allow these Minor Health Authorities, if they so desired, to take over the present District Medical Officers, and to undertake, under the general supervision of the County Medical Officer, the domiciliary medical service for their respective districts—

provided always that they were prepared to organise, out of these officers and the present Public Health staff, a unified medical service under the direction of an adequately salaried, qualified Medical Officer devoting his whole time to the work. With regard to the Non-County Boroughs of less than 10,000 population, the Urban Districts of less than 20,000 population, and the Rural Sanitary Districts, whatever their size, we are satisfied that these Authorities have neither the means nor the official staff that are requisite for the performance of the duties already assumed by them under the Public Health Acts. For them to bring their sanitary services, and especially their drinking-water supply and their drainage systems, even up to the National Minimum, would involve, in many cases, a local rate of crushing weight. To expect them to equip their little districts adequately with hospital accommodation for scarlet fever, let alone for tuberculosis, is, for the most part, hopeless. We cannot recommend the transfer to such Authorities of any part of the work now done by the Boards of Guardians in this department. This work should, in respect of their districts, be wholly assumed by the Health Committee of the County Council, under the direction of the County Medical Officer. The small Non-County Boroughs and Urban Sanitary Districts should be encouraged (as the former have been in the matter of their autonomous police forces) to cede even their present Public Health services, in whole or in part, to the County Council, in order that they may be merged in the unified establishment under the County Medical Officer. They should, for instance, receive no part of the proposed new Grant-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Local Health Authorities, payable as this would be in order to enable the larger Health Authorities to undertake new services which will not devolve upon these smaller Health Authorities. The same lines should be followed with regard to the Rural District Councils ; unless, indeed, these can be, on their ceasing to be also the Boards of Guardians, altogether abolished, and their duties with regard to road maintenance, sanitation, etc., shared between the County Council and the Parish Councils. In the Metropolis, pending a more complete re-organisation of Local Government, the transfer should proceed on analogous lines, all the Poor Law institutions, including the hospitals and special schools of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, passing to the Health Committee of the County Council ; whilst the District Medical Officers in each Metropolitan Borough would become part of a unified medical service for street and house sanitation and domiciliary treatment, directly under a qualified Borough Medical Officer, and subject to the general supervision of the County Medical Officer.

(c) *The Duties to be Transferred to the Local Pension Committee.*

Even whilst we were considering the matter there has been established, by every County and County Borough Council under the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, a Local Pension Committee, charged with the confirmation of the pensions to be granted to more than half the poor persons over seventy years of age. We propose that this Committee should deal also with those aged, who are for one reason or another not entitled to National Pensions, but for whom Local Pensions are recommended. The practical convenience of there being one and the same Committee to deal with both classes of aged—those whose pensions will be payable from the National Exchequer and those whose pensions will be payable from Local Funds—is so obvious that we do not think the point needs further discussion.

(d) *The Duties to be Transferred to the Local Committee for the Mentally Defective.*

The Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded makes it clear, we think, that there should be transferred to a new Local Committee for the Mentally Defective—virtually the existing Asylums Committee of the County or County Borough Council—the care of all persons legally certified to be of unsound mind, whatever their age or physical condition, whether these be lunatics, idiots, imbeciles, or epileptics ; whether they be certified under the Inebriates Act ; or whether they be registered as feeble-minded, or as morally defective, under the proposed extended classification. This conclusion, which we entirely accept, involves the transfer, to an enlarged Asylums Committee of the County or County Borough Council, of the institutions established by one or two such Councils under the Inebriates Act, of the special institutions here and there established for epileptics, of the special schools for mentally defective children, and of those inmates of Poor Law institutions—estimated, for England and Wales alone, at 43,000 in number—who may in due course be certified as feeble-minded. It involves also, in London, the transfer of the asylums for imbeciles, etc., of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to the new Mentally-Defectives Committee of the London County Council, in which its present Asylums Committee would be merged.

(iii.) *New Machinery for the Co-ordination of Public Assistance.*

At the present time, whilst much distress goes wholly untreated, some families are in receipt, at one and the same time, for one or other of their members, of regular Outdoor Relief from the Board of Guardians, school meals for the children from the Education Committee, milk below cost price, medical advice gratis, and maintenance in hospital from the Health Committee, and, in some towns, even gratuitous clothes from the police —besides a flow of doles from religious and charitable agencies. Whether or not any of the public assistance given to one family by the various agencies will be charged for, and whether or not the charge will be enforced, is, as we have seen, almost a matter of chance. One family may be getting everything free, even free of inquiry. Another family, in receipt of relief on account of its destitution, may find its head suddenly removed to gaol for not refunding the cost of the maintenance of his child in an industrial school. To abolish the Board of Guardians, and merge its duties in those Committees of the County or County Borough Council who are already dispensing their own forms of public assistance, will diminish the present overlapping but will not, of itself, end it. Some systematic co-ordination, within each local area, of all forms of public assistance and, if possible, of all assistance dispensed by Voluntary Agencies, is essential, if we are to put an end to the present demoralisation.

(a) *The Registrar of Public Assistance.*

The first condition of co-ordination is a centre of information about all the public assistance that is being dispensed in a given locality. We, therefore, recommend the appointment, by the County or County Borough Council, of one or more responsible officers, each having jurisdiction in a district of suitable area and population. For the less populous County Boroughs and the smaller Counties, one such officer, sitting on successive days in different parts of the district, would probably suffice. For the most extensive Counties, as for the Metropolis, there might have to be half a dozen, sitting weekly in as many as thirty different localities. We propose that these officers, who might be designated Registrars of Public Assistance, should have a threefold duty. They should be responsible for keeping a register, with " case papers " of the most approved pattern, of all persons receiving any form of public assistance within their districts, including treatment in any public institution. They should have the duty of assessing, in accordance with whatever may be the law, the charge to be made on individuals liable to pay any part of the cost of the service rendered to them or their dependents or other relations according to their means, and of recovering the amount thus due. Finally, we propose that these officers should have submitted to them any proposals by the several Committees of the Council for the payment of what is now called Outdoor Relief, but what should in future be termed Home Aliment, in connection with the domiciliary treatment of cases in which such treatment was deemed preferable to institutional treatment. The Registrar should also determine, in case of need, to which Committee of the Local Authority any neglected or "marginal" cases belonged for treatment.

(b) *The Public Register.*

To the first of these duties, the keeping of one common Register of all the various forms of assistance given in the locality, we attach great importance. This registration should be automatic and continuous, without regard to status or means, or the kind of treatment given. All public Authorities should be required to forward, daily or weekly, full particulars of every case in any way dealt with, whether it were that of a rich man admitted as a paying patient to the County Lunatic Asylum, or that of a poor man whose child was being fed at school, or whose wife was receiving milk at a nominal charge; whether it were a County Bursary to Oxford or compulsory admission to an industrial school. We should earnestly invite all voluntary hospitals, dispensaries, and other institutions regularly to send in similar information. In course of time, we should hope to get recorded in this Register the persons assisted by every public or private agency within its district. The Registrar would thus be able to see, at once, whether different members of the same family were receiving assistance without this being known, or whether different Authorities, in ignorance of each other's doings, were simultaneously aiding the same person. In this branch of his duty, he would confine himself to communicating the information to the various Local Authorities, to the Registrars of other districts where necessary, and to such voluntary organisations as had affiliated themselves.

(c) *Charge and Recovery.*

The second function of the Registrar would be to put on a systematic and impartial basis the recovery of the cost of the public assistance rendered, where any legal liability existed for its repayment, and where the recipients or other persons liable were really able to pay. We have already described the unutterable confusion that at present exists in this respect—a confusion in which the Local Health Authority and the Local Education Authority have their shares, no less than the Destitution Authority. We do not here discuss the question as to which public services should be charged for, to what extent relations of different degrees of kinship should be made to pay for those to whom they are akin, and what amount of earnings or income should be held to constitute ability to pay. These points must be determined by Parliament, in a consistent code. But, as we have seen, clearness and consistency of the law will not bring about impartiality and consistency in the practice, so long as the matter is left to the haphazard decisions of irresponsible committees of shifting membership. It is, we think, essential that the charge to be made in each case should be assessed, according to the exact terms of the law and the definite evidence as to means, after systematic inquiry, by a single officer dealing with the cases judicially. His decisions might, of course, be made subject to appeal.

We regard it as a special advantage of this proposal that, under it, the question of chargeability and recovery of cost is altogether removed from the consideration of the officers and Committees who are responsible for the decision of whether or not a case is in need of treatment, and of what kind of treatment. At present, some Local Authorities refuse to treat a person, who is admittedly in need of treatment, because they choose to think that he or his relations could pay for what he needs. The result is that, to the grave injury of the community, many cases remain untreated. Other Local Authorities go on the plan of treating all who need treatment, on the assumption that anyone found to be in actual need of treatment has not the pecuniary resources to enable him to get it at his own expense. The result is that many persons who might fairly pay something escape all contribution. If we desire that all those should be treated whom it is important, in the public interest, not to leave untreated, and that, in the interest of public economy and personal independence, all those should pay who can afford to do so, we must separate the two processes. If it is thought right to segregate all the different grades of the mentally defective, to leave no child uneducated, to prevent disease and restore as quickly as possible the sick to health, and to provide decent maintenance for the aged, we ought not to allow the Local Authorities responsible for the treatment to be hampered in their work by considerations as to whether or not the individual, or any of his relations, ought, according to the law of the land, to pay for what is required to be done; and whether or not he or they are of sufficient ability to do so. On the other hand, if we wish to put a check to the practice of getting gratuitously from the public what the individual is quite well able to pay for, and to restrict to the really necessitous cases the spread of gratuitous treatment by the Local Authority, we ought not to let those who are charged with the recovery of contributions be hampered by considerations of whether it will not be dangerous to let the case remain untreated, or by the natural desire of the managers of institutions to make them as widely useful as possible.

The Registrar of Public Assistance, having nothing to do with the treatment of the cases, would deal with them exclusively from the standpoint of legal liability to pay, and economic ability to do so. In whatever branches of public service Parliament decided that a charge should be made—for instance, maintenance in the County Lunatic Asylum—the Registrar would automatically investigate all cases reported to him; and would assess the charges on the patients' estates, or on their legally liable relations, exclusively according to the law and to the evidence of means, exactly as the Inland Revenue officers deal at present with the assessed taxes. For this purpose, the Registrar would be provided by the County or County Borough Council with a suitable staff of Enquiry and Recovery Officers, dealing impartially and on like principles with rich and poor. We feel no doubt that the additional revenue which would thus be obtained, from patients and from the relations legally liable for their maintenance—even after exempting all those who were not of sufficient ability to contribute—would be very large, and would more than cover the entire expense of the Registrar and his establishment.

The existence of such an officer would, if it were desired, enable effective measures to be taken to stop what is called "hospital abuse." It is complained that, among the crowds

of patients of the voluntary hospitals and dispensaries of the Metropolis, and of some other large towns, there are many persons well able to pay the whole or part of the cost of the treatment or maintenance that they are obtaining from the benefactions of the charitable. The hospitals, absorbed in the desire to treat cases, especially those that are instructive or interesting, and without any effective machinery for ascertaining the resources of their patients, have hitherto failed to cope with this problem. If the hospitals and dispensaries chose to make it a rule that the names and addresses of all persons whom they were benefiting should be forwarded daily to the Registrar of Public Assistance, he would be able, by means of his staff of Enquiry and Recovery Officers, to discover their economic circumstances. He might even, at the request of the hospital, be authorised to present a bill for the whole or part of the cost of the treatment, to such persons as might be found to be able to pay. Payment of this bill, under the present state of the law, would be optional; but we have been informed by trustworthy witnesses that in many cases such patients would willingly discharge their debt, if a bill were sent in. It might be a matter for further consideration by Parliament, whether the practice of charge and recovery for treatment in voluntary hospitals and dispensaries might not, with advantage, be put on the same legal footing as treatment in the hospitals and dispensaries of the Local Authority.

(d) *Sanction of Home Aliment.*

So far as institutional treatment is concerned, there would be no harm in letting all the various Authorities—for instance, the Health Committee, the Education Committee, and the Asylums (or Mentally-Defectives) Committee—admit, to the several institutions in their charge, all the persons whom they deemed in need of the particular treatment of these institutions, without any other co-ordinating machinery than that of the Public Register and the automatic recovery of the cost when legal liability and sufficient ability were found to exist. But in the great majority of cases—at present three out of every four—it is not necessary or desirable to incur the great expense of institutional treatment, especially as, in many instances, the cases can actually be more efficiently treated in their own homes. To permit the same freedom in the granting of Home Aliment to all the various committees of the County or County Borough Council, each one merely considering the needs of the particular member of the family—the child, the mother and infant, the sick father, the aged grandmother—might easily result, *as it frequently does at present*, in one family obtaining more than the current income of a respectable artisan. Nor will the establishment of a common register do more than mitigate this evil. What is required is that, before any (beyond temporary) public assistance is given in the home, there should be due consideration, not merely of the need, in respect of treatment, of any individual, but of the circumstances of the family as a whole. We cannot afford to have the Education Committee granting Home Aliment for the children of an admirable widow, who is living in an altogether insanitary home; or the Committee for the Mentally-Defectives deciding, for the sake of economy, to pay for the retention at home of a feeble-minded girl without regard to the consequences to the young children in that home. And it would never do to let all the several Committees be granting Home Aliment without a common standard of economic necessities, and due regard for the possible effect in subsidising wages. The only way to ensure that the family shall always be regarded as a unit, and that all the circumstances—educational, moral, sanitary, and economic—shall be taken in due proportion into account, is to make each Committee submit its proposals as to Home Aliment to an authority external to them all. For this purpose, the Registrar of Public Assistance, himself an officer of the County or County Borough Council, necessarily in constant communication with every department through his Public Register and his proceedings for charge and recovery, equipped with his own staff of income assessors, and able to hear evidence from the educational and sanitary officials of the various treating Committees, seems the ideal arbiter. We propose, therefore, that (apart from the provision for "sudden or urgent necessity") it should be necessary for any Committee thinking the domiciliary treatment of a case desirable, and proposing to grant Home Aliment, to submit the case for sanction to the Registrar of Public Assistance, who would be charged to satisfy himself that the circumstances of the family as a whole warranted the grant, and that the amount proposed was neither inadequate nor excessive. If the grant was sanctioned, we propose that the case should come up automatically before the Registrar for revision every three months, or even every month, whichever may be thought preferable. If sanction were withheld, it would still be open to the Committee to admit the patient to the appropriate institution; and where the need was urgent, it would be their duty to do so. But there should be an opportunity of appeal, *by the*

Committee responsible for treatment, against the decision of the Registrar; an appeal which, in view of the importance of securing uniformity of practice throughout the Kingdom with regard to Home Aliment, we think should lie, following the successful precedent of the present appeal to the Local Government Board for Scotland, to a Central Department; which (in order to keep it apart from Education, Public Health, etc.) might conveniently be that supervising Local Finance.

An incidental advantage of the distribution, among the various committees of the County and County Borough Council, of the different services now aggregated together under the Destitution Authorities, would be that it would thus enable us to bring uniformity and judicial impartiality into the grant of what is now called Outdoor Relief. As we have seen, it is impossible to expect to get either uniformity or impartiality in decisions on successive cases, if these decisions are arrived at, without automatic check or guidance, by such a many-headed tribunal, of such mutable membership, as is presented by a representative committee.* There is no reason to think that the several committees of the County or County Borough Councils, subject as they would be, though possibly to a lesser extent, to the same influences, would, if they had to perform exactly the same duties as a Board of Guardians, be able to arrive at much greater uniformity or impartiality between case and case, than the members of the Destitution Authority. Merely to transfer the work of the Board of Guardians to a single Poor Law Committee of the Town Council would, therefore, in this respect, produce no sufficient reform. Nor could the Outdoor Relief be withdrawn from their jurisdiction. So long as it can be assumed that all the members of the same family—the infant, the child of school age, the sick adult, and the helpless aged person—will all be treated by one and the same Committee, it will never be practicable to withdraw from that Committee the duty of considering all the economic and other circumstances of the family as a whole, and the right to decide according to its own view of what is desirable, how much Outdoor Relief should be granted. But when the services are divided among several committees the case is obviously altered. The Education Committee will admit that it is impossible to allow the Health Committee, the Mentally Defectives Committee and the Pension Committee—not to mention the possible Local Committee for Unemployment—all to be giving Home Aliment to the different members of one and the same family, without the proposals being made subject to some co-ordinating control. Thus, for the first time it will become possible, whilst leaving to representative committees, directly responsible to the ratepayers, the whole treatment of the cases, whether in the institutions or in the home, and even the full responsibility for proposing the grant of Home Aliment, to secure the advantage of a judicial consideration, case by case, of the economic and other circumstances involved.

(e) *The Registrar's Receiving House for Omitted Cases.*

Under the scheme we propose, each treating Committee would have its own arrangement (as, indeed, exists at present wherever the service is well-organised) of Receiving Homes, or Observation or Probation Wards, into which it would take its patients, on their way to one or other of its institutions. But there are "mixed" cases, in which several Committees may be concerned; there are the cases of persons without known abode, who have not been discovered by the searching officers; there are the cases of persons found "on the road" by the police, or reported by neighbours to be in distress without the nature of the distress being ascertained; there may even be cases in which treatment has been refused, and is alleged to have been wrongfully refused, by one or other of the Local Authorities. Moreover, if we are to distribute the various forms of public assistance among three or four specialised Committees, it will be necessary that there should be, in each district, one well-known public office where immediate relief can be obtained, in cases of sudden or urgent necessity, or when it is not known to which Department application for treatment should properly be made. We propose, therefore, that there should

* "The moral to be drawn from the story," sums up a representative of Poor Law administrators of the "strict" school, "appears to be that, as ever, Outdoor Relief is the crux; so capable of abuse, so difficult of regulation. The interests of so many are involved besides those of the actual recipient or possible recipient. The relatives, friends, neighbours, tradesmen, landlords, publicans, employers, all have indirect interests, apparently, or easily think they have, in the distribution of Outdoor Relief, while many of them do not consciously feel the burden. It cannot be abolished altogether, and there will always be as many hands stretched out for it as administrators choose to fill. And this distribution is, at present, entrusted to changing sets of individuals, elected chiefly by the foregoing persons (possibly, even, in part, composed of them), who are exposed to the risk of unpopularity and loss of office (with its opportunity of doing good) if they put their strength into resisting the natural temptation to be liberal at the expense of others." (Evidence to the Commission, of Mr. H. G. Willink, Bradfield Board of Guardians, Appendix No. CCXI. (Pars. 17, 18) to Vol. VII.)

be in each district, under the immediate direction of the Registrar, a small and strictly temporary Receiving House, which might often be combined with some other public office, and which should be always open.

The number and extent of such Receiving Houses would naturally differ from county to county. It should be rigidly insisted on that no person should be allowed to stay in them for more than the few days required for the adjudication of his case. In London and other populous places each Receiving House would have to be sufficient to accommodate all the cases coming in during, say, one week. In rural counties the number would be governed more by geographical considerations. But with a complete use of telegraph and telephone and a motor ambulance, it is suggested that very few Receiving Houses would be needed. With every police-station, every medical practitioner, and every county officer in telephonic communication—presently, we may assume, with every village post office on the telegraph, if not even on the telephone—and with a motor ambulance at call that would take a person 20 miles in an hour—the area that might be effectively served by a centrally-placed Receiving House in a rural district might be (even assuming only a 30 miles radius) as much as 2,800 square miles, which is much larger than most counties.* With the general specialising of institutions, it would be possible to set aside some of the smaller Workhouses as Receiving Houses.

It would be part of the function of the Registrar, on his daily or weekly visit to each part of his district, to "deliver" the local Receiving House of all the persons who had drifted in there since his last visit; allocating them, and directing their conveyance, to the Receiving Departments of the institutions appropriate to their state. It would be obligatory that the Registrar's instructions in this respect should be obeyed; but the Committees concerned would be free to bring the cases before him at a subsequent sitting and to show cause why they should be transferred to the care of some other Committee, or placed on Home Aliment, or summarily discharged as not needing treatment.

(f) *The Registrar as National Pension Officer.*

We think that the Registrar of Public Assistance—associated as he would be with all forms of public service, those enjoyed by persons in easy circumstances as well as those taken advantage of only by the poor—would be an ideal officer to adjudicate, on behalf of the National Government, on applications for Old-Age Pensions. He would have at his command his own permanent staff of Inquiry and Recovery Officers, who would possess an unrivalled knowledge of the economic circumstances of the great majority of the families of the district. After the first award of pensions has been made in 1909, the number of applications to be dealt with annually will be only about one-tenth of the numbers of that year; and, spread as they will be over the whole twelve months, will be insufficient to occupy the whole time of even one officer in each locality. Nevertheless, it would be very inconvenient to all concerned not to have Pension Officers available in each locality. We cannot help suggesting that there would be positive advantages in making the Registrar of Public Assistance act also as National Pension Officer; and in placing the Local Pension Committee—at any rate in respect of the Local Pensions which we propose that it should grant—in the same sort of relation to him as the Local Education Committee and the Local Health Committee will be when they propose to grant Home Aliment as an adjunct of their domiciliary treatment.

(g) *The Status of the Registrar.*

We propose that the Registrar of Public Assistance should be an officer of high *status* and practical permanence of tenure. We would leave the appointment freely in the hands of the County and County Borough Councils, relying on their choosing officers of tried experience in administration (especially in connection with the Poor Law), and preferably of some kind of legal training. As it is essential that the Registrar should be entirely independent of the committees concerned with the grant of Home Aliment, we propose that he and his staff, and his Receiving House, should be placed under the General Purposes Committee of the County or County Borough Council. If the Registrar were made use of, as we suggest, by the National Government, as the adjudicator of claims to Old-Age

* We are impressed by the extreme slowness and reluctance that has hitherto been displayed by Local Authorities in making use of the telegraph, the telephone and the motor-car. We believe that very great economy could be effected, much unnecessary building saved, and increased efficiency secured, if all institutions, public offices, and doctors', nurses' and policemen's residences were always connected by telephone; and if all institutions and all Inspectors and Public Medical Officers made full use of motor-cars.

Pensions, this would have the great advantage of enabling the Treasury to contribute a portion of the salary and expenses of his office; an arrangement which, whilst affording some financial relief to the County and County Borough Councils, would, of course, entail the concurrence of the Treasury in the appointment and dismissal, and thus secure, in the least invidious manner, that practical security of tenure which seems desirable.

(c) Conditions of Eligibility for Public Assistance.

In describing the overlapping and confusion of spheres between the Destitution Authority on the one hand, and the Local Health Authority, the Local Lunacy Authority, the Local Education Authority, the Local Police Authority, the Local Pension Authority, and the Local Unemployment Authority on the other, we found the position obscured by two rival and inconsistent conceptions—not explicitly stated or clearly realised—of what exactly constituted "destitution," or the condition in respect of which the public assistance was rendered. Under the Poor Law, whether in England or Wales, Scotland or Ireland, no one, it is asserted, can be relieved who is not in a state of destitution, and this term has a technical meaning. "Destitution," as we were authoritatively informed, "when used to describe the condition of a person as a subject for relief, implies that he is for the time being *without material resources* (1) directly available and (2) appropriate for satisfying his physical needs, (*a*) whether actually existing or (*b*) likely to arise immediately. By physical needs in this definition are meant such needs as must be satisfied (1) in order to maintain life or (2) in order to obviate, mitigate or remove causes endangering life, or likely to endanger life, or impair health, or bodily fitness for self-support."* It will be seen that, to the Destitution Authority, it is not the actual mental or physical condition of the patient, but the absence of material resources, that is the governing consideration. Thus, if a child is, in fact, suffering in health, or is even in danger of death, from lack of food, clothing or medical attendance, or from a total absence of home care, but the responsible parent, being present, has himself £2 a week coming in, and food actually in the house, the Destitution Authority cannot legally relieve the child. There is no lack of the necessary "material resources," and therefore in the Poor Law sense, the child is not destitute.† Similarly, the Destitution Authorities are advised that they can take no action in cases of disease, so long as the disease has not as yet interfered with a man's earning his livelihood, and so long, in fact, as he has money in the house. It is even doubtful whether a Board of Guardians can lawfully intervene when a miserly and half-imbecile old woman is lying alone in her cottage, in a state of filth, disease and neglect likely to lead to early death, and yet, to the knowledge of the Relieving Officer, has a bag of gold under her bed, and bread in the house.‡ There is no absence of material resources, and therefore, in the Poor Law sense, no destitution. And, as our analysis of the By-laws and practice of the Boards of Guardians shows, it is held not to be necessary that these economic resources should belong to the applicant, if he has, in fact, access to them. "Destitution," states the Clerk of Dudley Union, "is always a question of fact, and the Guardians are bound to take into consideration *all* sources of income or assistance which affect the applicant."§

There are two remarkable statutory exceptions, which, by their very existence, confirm this accepted interpretation of "destitution" under the Poor Law. In the case of the lunatic, the Relieving Officer intervenes whether or not there are material resources. But this action of the Poor Law Authorities required special legislation. Similarly, when it was thought expedient to give Poor Relief to members of Friendly Societies, in spite of the fact that they possessed definite incomes, it required an Act of Parliament. Thus, in the absence of special legislation, the view taken is that Poor Relief is only for those who are *pecuniarily* destitute. This view it is, whether or not legally correct, which has dominated the Destitution Authorities, and coloured all their activities.

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* Evidence before the Commission, Q. 973 (Mr. Adrian).

† This is found to be the case in practice, as it is also in law. "The position of the Guardians," explained Sir Charles Elliott, "is different from that of the School Authorities. They [the Guardians] look for destitution, the Relief Committee [of the Education Authority] look for insufficient feeding. Hence it may often happen that Guardians or Relief Committees may differ as to whether a case of want is genuine." (Report of House of Commons Committee on Education (Provision of Meals) Bill, 1906, Q. 194.)

‡ "I believe," deposed a witness, "it is really correct, as quoted by Mr. Mackenzie in his 'Poor Law Guardian' that, as the law lays down, an applicant must be really destitute of means from his own resources to obtain food, raiment, and shelter [and] in want of all three for his immediate necessities; and that unless he is so destitute, the Authorities cannot interfere." (Report of Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, Q. 5788.)

§ "Principles which should govern the Granting of Out-relief," by G. W. Coster, 1904.

Very different is the standpoint of the other Authorities. Under the various statutes which the Local Education Authority, the Local Health Authority, and even the Local Unemployment Authority carry out, the condition which sets them in motion is not destitution in the sense of the absence of *material* resources, but the existence in the person dealt with of conditions which, without the intervention of the public Authority, would produce consequences inimical to the common weal. This we must designate, for lack of a better term, "personal destitution" or "physiological destitution." The necessary conditions may or may not co-exist with the presence of material resources—a consideration which may affect the pecuniary charge to be made in return for the services of the public Authority, but not the rendering of the services themselves. Thus, in the case of a child found destitute of education, of a person suffering from smallpox destitute of proper treatment and facilities for isolation, of a boy running wild in low company, destitute of proper parental control, *the presence or absence of material resources is wholly irrelevant to the rendering of the appropriate service.* Moreover, these specialised Local Authorities are not required to wait, and do not, in practice, wait until the injury to the community has actually begun. Thus, the School Attendance Officer registers the child long before it actually attains school age, and advises the mother which school it should presently attend, so that there may never be any "personal destitution" in respect of this service. The Health Visitor counsels the mother, and even tenders municipal milk, before the infant is ill, deliberately in order that it may not become ill. The Medical Officer isolates "contacts," though they are not ill, and though there is no known contagion, merely out of precaution. But Boards of Guardians in England, Ireland and Wales, and Parish Councils in Scotland, take the view that they have no power to intervene until the state of destitution—however broadly they may choose to interpret this term—*has been actually entered upon.* "It is certainly not the duty of the Guardians to anticipate it."*

This contradiction between the two versions of the conditions of eligibility for Public Assistance has a large share in producing the confusion and overlapping that we have described. Moreover, a lack of appreciation of the exact contrast has, we think, on both sides, stood in the way of a proper exercise of the powers of Charge and Recovery. We think it important that this confusion of thought should be cleared up. It is essential for the attainment of the very objects for which the several "treating" Authorities are constituted, that they should continue to adopt, so far as their treatment is concerned, the definition that we have designated "personal" or "physiological" destitution. These Authorities must, in order to prevent injury to the community, take action whether or not there are material resources. We propose that they shall act on the same principles in the enlarged sphere that we assign to them. We consider that it is the maintenance of the contrary view by the Destitution Authorities—the insistence on pecuniary destitution—which has excluded them from the whole domain of preventive work, and has given to their operations, humane and philanthropic though they are, their characteristic barrenness. On the other hand, *after the appropriate service has been rendered to the person in need of it,* the question may quite properly be raised whether a Special Assessment ought not to be made upon him in repayment of the cost. At this point what is relevant is not whether he needs the service ("personal" or "physiological" destitution); but whether he or any one responsible for him has sufficient means to warrant a charge being made upon him. In our chapter on "Charge and Recovery" we have described the chaos into which this realm has fallen. It is one of the advantages of the Scheme of Reform that we advocate that, under it, the "treating" Authority—acting on what we have called "personal" or "physiological" destitution—is entirely divorced from the official machinery for Charge and Recovery, the Registrar of Public Assistance acting according to "pecuniary destitution," at whatever level of means Parliament may decide.†

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* "Principles which should govern the Granting of Out-relief," by G. W. Coster, 1904.

† This discrimination between the two senses of destitution, or need for public assistance, solves various problems which the Destitution Authorities find difficult. A person having no pecuniary resources whatever is living in a family—perhaps with a son-in-law or a brother, having no legal liability to maintain him—the income of which, taken as a whole, is sufficient to maintain the whole household: is he, or is he not, a fit subject for Outdoor Relief? Many Boards of Guardians refuse relief, or, at any rate, refuse Outdoor Relief. We think, that, in such a case, the question is whether, as a matter of fact, the applicant is actually in lack of food, clothing, warmth, medical attendance, or lodging. If not, there is no ground for public assistance. If he is actually suffering from want of the necessaries of life, according to the normal standard of the time, or in imminent danger of so suffering, the Local Authority concerned must intervene and relieve him in the most suitable manner. This would plainly not be to grant home aliment, in a household where, though material resources had been ample, the applicant had been allowed to suffer. The applicant must be rescued from

We pass now to the question of the degree of need—that is, of "personal" or "physiological" destitution—which should set the several "treating" Authorities in motion. The Legal Adviser of the Local Government Board informed us that a person was entitled to have satisfied, at the expense of the Poor Rate, if he was without the means of satisfying them, "such needs as must be satisfied (i.) in order to maintain life or (ii.) in order to obviate, mitigate or remove causes endangering life or likely to endanger life or impair health or bodily fitness for self-support." ‡ This would seem to entitle an artisan or small shopkeeper, able to maintain himself and his family, but needing, to save his life, an expensive surgical operation, not merely to have this performed at the expense of the Poor Law, but even to have provided for him whatever was necessary—expensive treatment, mechanical appliances, and maintenance in convalescence—to restore his "bodily fitness for self-support." It is clear that the Local Government Board's definition would involve a great increase in Poor Law expenditure in respect of specialised hospitals, convalescent homes and "medical extras." We are disinclined to go as far in the provision of Public Assistance as is involved in Mr. Adrian's words. We accept as a better working definition of the conditions under which Public Assistance should be granted that given by the Royal Commissioners on the Aged Poor, when they said that "Destitution might be taken in practice to mean a want of the reasonable necessaries of life, such as food, lodging, warmth, clothing, and medical attendance according to the normal standard of the times." § The "normal standard of the times" implies a changing standard, increasing with the customary expenditure of the ordinary man. This is a less alarming proposition, and one well within our means. As a matter of fact, we do not find that the expenditure on sanitation, education, etc., even keeps pace with the rise in personal incomes; still less does the total of all forms of Public Assistance keep pace with the growth of the public revenue of the country. Our whole expenditure on the poor, great as it is, bears a much smaller proportion to the aggregate revenue of the nation than it did a century ago.

(D) Disfranchisement.

It is, we think, one of the advantages of our Scheme of Reform that, with the break-up of the Poor Law and the abolition of Poor Relief, the whole apparatus of electoral disfranchisement,‖ of persons who have the residential qualifications for the franchise, will fall to the ground. We can see no practical advantage in disfranchising a person because he has received the treatment which Parliament has provided for his case. The evidence goes to show that, so far as disfranchisement has any effect at all, it is a "Test" of the very worst kind; deterring the good and self-respecting, and in no way influencing the willing parasite. Moreover, the present position is so illogical that it could not, in our opinion, anyhow, have been maintained. There is no disfranchisement for the person convicted of crime, even of the most shameful kind. There is even, contrary to the common opinion, nothing to prevent a pauper voting if he is on the electoral register; and many of them actually do vote. Moreover, although the Statute does forbid paupers

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such inhuman surroundings, and either placed in a suitable institution, or "boarded-out" with other friends. The case would be different if the son-in-law or brother, not having enough to support the applicant, had come forward in the first instance, explaining his pecuniary position, and offering to afford lodging, etc., if home aliment were allowed. The Registrar of Public Assistance would then have to satisfy himself: (*a*) That there was no liability to maintain the applicant that he could enforce against any relation; and (*b*) that the proposed home was a suitable one. On the latter point he would need to be satisfied, not that the family income was small enough to warrant home aliment, for if there is no liability to maintain, the resources of other people do not concern him; but that the family income was large enough to ensure that the home aliment will not be diverted from the person to whom it was granted.

Similar discrimination between the two meanings of destitution clears up the problem of whether the child found hungry at school should be fed, if the parents have means; or whether the sick man, who could afford to pay, should be admitted to a public hospital, or provided with domiciliary medical treatment, if this is the best way of curing him. The "treating" Authority has to consider only whether the treatment is necessary. It will be for the Registrar of Public Assistance to consider whether the pecuniary resources disclosed do not warrant charge and recovery of some, or the whole of the cost.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 973.

§ Report of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, 1895, p. xlvi.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2448, 2863–6, 3224, 6962, 14015, 18581–4, 24760 (Par. 9), 25226–8, 25476–8, 25880, 27306, 27840, 29542–6, 29843 (Par. 22), 29898–900, 30033–4, 34162–3, 37352, 40085 (Par. 39), 40310 (Par. 50), 41761 (Par. 36), 41864–5, 41862, 42781 (Par. 14), 42929, 44516 (Par. 21), 50973, 51098, 52840 (Par. 24), 68238 (Par. 8), 69925 (Par. 23), 70035–6, 71172 (Par. 15), 71281, 73580–2, 77468 (Par. 3). and Appendices Nos. LVIII., XC., CV., CXIII., CXX., CXXIV., and CXLIX. to Vol. IV.

in England and Wales to vote at an election of Guardians, no means are usually taken to prevent those paupers who happen to be on the electoral register from exercising their franchise at an election of Guardians; and there is nothing on the face of the register to hinder their votes being received. What does happen is that, once a year, when the register is being revised, those persons (usually men only) whom the Clerk to the Guardians reports as having received Poor Relief (other than Medical Relief) at any time during the preceding twelve months are struck off, whatever may have been the cause or occasion, or the momentary character of the destitution to which they were reduced. This does not prevent them from voting, although they are paupers, during the two or three months that the old register remains in force; and it does prevent them from voting, even if they have long since ceased to be paupers, during the ensuing twelve months that the new register will be in force. In strict law the disqualification is absolute, even if the whole cost of the relief be immediately repaid; and even if the pauperism be actually forced on the elector by law, as when a dependent is, by magistrate's orders, compulsorily removed to the County Lunatic Asylum. On the other hand, Medical Relief only does not disqualify, and Revising Barristers differ from place to place, how far treatment and maintenance in the sick ward of the Workhouse, or the Poor Law Infirmary, is merely Medical Relief. Where the patient is sent by the Board of Guardians to the Municipal Hospital, or to a voluntary institution, he may or may not find his name struck off the register according to the *form* in which the Board of Guardians takes the cost of his treatment out of the Poor Rate. If he is paid for at so much per case per week, he will lose his vote, because this is (by Local Government Board instructions) entered as Outdoor Relief! If (as is more usual) he is paid for in a lump sum, he will not lose his vote. Nor will he be disqualified (even for voting for the Home Secretary who has let him out of gaol!) if he has been maintained in prison at His Majesty's expense; and if he is a freeholder or a University graduate, he will not even lose his qualification for next year's register by his enforced residence in prison. Nor will he be disqualified (even for voting for the Town Council which provides his relief) if he is admitted to the Municipal Hospital by the Medical Officer of Health, or given relief under the Unemployed Workmen Act; or if his eldest son is maintained in a Reformatory School, his younger son in an Industrial School, and his feeble-minded daughter in a Custodial Home, or if his infant gets milk at the Municipal Milk Dispensary, or if his other children are medically treated and provided with spectacles out of the Education Rate; or even if they are regularly fed at school. The absurdities of the present position are, indeed, so gross that no Minister of the Crown would think of proposing, and no House of Commons would dream of entertaining their explicit re-enactment.

(E) The Sphere of Voluntary Agencies.

It is one of the advantages of the proposed distribution of the various services at present aggregated together under the name of Poor Law that it affords the opportunity for initiating a really systematic use of voluntary agencies and personal service, to give to the public assistance that touch of friendly sympathy which may be more helpful than mere maintenance at the public expense, and to deal with cases in which voluntary administration may result in more effective treatment than can be given by public authorities exclusively. It is a drawback of the Destitution Authority, which increases with its hypertrophy, that it is constantly becoming the rival of these voluntary agencies. Relief Committees have never known how to use volunteer helpers, and they seem even to look upon philanthropic institutions as interlopers, because they are not managed by the Board of Guardians itself.*

We think that it should be a cardinal principle of public administration that the utmost use should, under proper conditions, be made of voluntary agencies and of the

* This disinclination is, to a large extent, due to the feeling—under the circumstances not altogether unjustifiable—that the members of the Destitution Authority and the Destitution Officers have not, and cannot have, any adequate means of forming a right opinion of the quality of such specialised institutions as schools, maternity hospitals and Rescue Homes. The General Inspectors of the Local Government Board naturally feel the same doubt as to their qualifications to judge of the value of the education or medical treatment afforded. These disabilities would not be felt by specialised committees, dealing day by day with particular services and advised by technical officers. The Local Education Committee of a County Council has no difficulty in pronouncing on schools, or the Public Health Committee of a Town Council on the infantile mortality rate of a maternity hospital.

personal service of both men and women of good will. But it is, in our opinion, essential that the proper sphere of this voluntary effort should be clearly understood. In the delimitation of this sphere, a great distinction is to be drawn between the use of voluntary agencies in the visitation of the homes of the poor, and the use of these agencies in the establishment and management of institutions. In the one case there should be absolutely no finding of money. In the other case, the more private money the better.

With regard to the whole range of charitable work in connection with the home life of the poor, there is, in our judgment, nothing more disastrous, alike to the character of the poor and to the efficiency of the service of public assistance which is at their disposal, than the alms dispensed by well-meaning persons in the mere relief of distress. This distribution of indiscriminate, unconditional and inadequate doles is none the less harmful when it is an adjunct of quite kindly meant "district visiting," the official ministrations of religion or the treatment meted out by a "medical mission." Even when such gifts are discreetly dispensed by the most careful visitor, they have the drawback of being given without knowledge of what the other resources of the family may be, without communication to other agencies which may be simultaneously at work, and without power to insist on proper conditions. We are definitely of opinion that no encouragement whatever should be given to any distribution of money, food or clothing, in the homes of the poor by any private persons or charitable societies whatsoever. The only exception to this rule should be a regular pension to a particular person; and this ought, in all cases, to be notified to the Registrar of Public Assistance. It is not that we undervalue the utility of the personal visits of sympathetic and helpful men or women. On the contrary, we wish to see much more use made of this devoted service, which could, we think, be greatly augmented, if it were called for by public authorities. But this service of visitation, to be effective, must be definitely organised, under skilled direction, in association with a special branch of public administration.* Such specialisation of home visitation is the only means of keeping at bay the mere irresponsible amateur, and of ensuring that the volunteer has been sufficiently in earnest to undergo some sort of technical training. The utility of such a service of specialised visitation has already been demonstrated in many directions. Thus, there are now a thousand or two of unpaid Health Visitors, acting under the direction of the Medical Officers of Health. Another example is afforded by the members of the Children's Care Committees, established in connection with the public elementary schools, and the analogous committees of the special schools of the London County Council. We see no reason why some such voluntary assistance should not be organised in connection with the Local Health Authority and the Local Education Authority in every district. We think, too, that similar voluntary assistance could be usefully employed in connection with the work of the Local Pension Authority and the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective. Such a band of volunteer helpers, acting within the frame-work of a specific municipal service, forms, in the densely populated districts of the great towns, an almost indispensable supplement to official activity. Such volunteers, able to devote to each case as much time as it requires, and bringing to bear a wider experience of everyday life than the specially trained and hard-worked official can do, may not only "search out" those who need public assistance, but may keep them constantly under observation before and after the treatment afforded at the cost of the rates, and may ensure that nothing is overlooked by which they may effectively be helped, and that, when restored to self-support, no relapse occurs without its being noted. It is, however, we repeat, essential that such domiciliary visitors should not have the distribution of money or relief in the homes, whether this be from public or private funds, their own or other people's.

On the other hand, there is still enormous scope for beneficent gifts of money, to be administered under voluntary management. There are many kinds of institutional treatment which the various public Authorities are not likely themselves to initiate;

* The need for organisation of the voluntary help will not be disputed by any person of experience. "*Voluntary associations, if they are to be permanent and to do the greatest good, require official help.* As soldiers volunteers are useful on the lines of communication, but regulars are required for the fighting; and similarly in this social warfare it will be necessary to employ trained Health Visitors. This will be essential to the success of any scheme that may be adopted, for it must not be forgotten that once a beginning has been made, it will be necessary to continue the work day after day without intermission, and no matter what the conditions of the weather. Indeed, very frequently in cold, inclement seasons, when the volunteer worker might not feel called on to risk her health for the sake of others, conditions will be discovered probably with respect to the care of the infant which might pass unnoticed in fine weather." (Report on the Prevention of Infantile Mortality, by Alfred E. Harris (Medical Officer of Health, Islington), 1907, p. 33.)

and there are others that they are almost debarred from conducting. There is room for many pioneer experiments in the treatment of every type of distressed person. The whole tendency of modern applied science is to subdivision and the breaking-up of old categories into newer specialisations. We cannot expect our County and County Borough Councillors to launch out into experiments of this kind. Such private experiments in Industrial and Reformatory Schools, Technical Institutes, Farm Colonies, Inebriate Retreats, Rescue Homes, and what not, have already greatly advanced the technique of these services. In this field of initiating and developing new institutional treatment —whether it be the provision of perfect almshouses for the aged, or the establishment of vacation schools or open-air schools for the children; whether it be the enveloping of the morally infirm, or of those who have fallen, in a regenerating atmosphere of religion and love, or some subtle combination of physical regimen and mental stimulus for the town-bred "hooligan"—very large sums of money can be advantageously used, and are, in fact, urgently needed. And not the financing alone, but also the management of such institutions affords a sphere for unofficial work. Just as no public Authority can hazard the ratepayers' money in these experimental institutions, so no public Authority can assume responsibility for the desirable unconventionality of their daily administration. We should wish to see the several Committees of the County and County Borough Councils make full use of these voluntary institutions, entrusting to their care the special types of cases for which they afford appropriate treatment. But in this use there should be invariably two conditions. Any voluntary institution receiving patients from the Local Authority must place itself under the regular inspection both of that Local Authority and of the National Department having the supervision of the particular service. And if payment for the treatment is required, even without other subsidy, the Local Authority must be given the opportunity of placing its own representatives on the actual governing body of the institution.

(f) The Practical Application of the Scheme.

It is, of course, more easy to devise a scheme of reform on paper, than to be sure that it can be applied in practice. We have, therefore, individually taken means, not only by special investigation, but also by specific personal inquiry of Poor Law Guardians and County and County Borough Councillors, of still more experienced Clerks to Boards of Guardians, Masters of Workhouses, and Relieving Officers, and of various officers of County and County Borough Councils, to satisfy ourselves that what we are proposing could actually be put into operation, without serious difficulty. Those practically concerned in the working of the existing machine, whom we have consulted on this point, have given us very favourable opinions. We are accordingly convinced that what we are proposing is practicable as well as desirable. It is, in fact, a great advantage of the scheme that it does not involve the creation of any novel area, or the establishment of any new Authority. In fact, in all the County Boroughs it amounts only to the transfer of all the powers of the Boards of Guardians to the Town Council; though, instead of handing them over *en bloc*, it provides for their distribution among the Education, Health, Asylums, Pension and General Purposes Committees of that body, thereby greatly lightening the additional burden of work to be imposed on the Councillors, whose numbers might, of course, be increased if desired. As with the duties of education and lunacy at present, we propose that all business relating to the several duties should automatically "stand referred" to the appropriate Committees for consideration and report, the Councils being left free to give to their Committees as much or as little delegated authority as they choose (except as to actually levying the rate or raising money on loan), and subject to such conditions as they think fit. The troublesome re-adjustment of areas, too, would be reduced to a minimum. The merging in the County or County Borough, of all the Unions wholly within each of them, would involve the minimum of readjustment of property and liabilities. The only alterations of area required would be in those cases in which Unions at present cut County or County Borough boundaries. These, which in England and Wales are 197 in number, would be required in any adoption of the County as the new area.

Moreover, the scheme involves the minimum of expense for compensation of dispossessed officers. It would, of course, be necessary to give to all officers whose posts were abolished, the usual generous treatment that Parliament in such cases accords. But many of the Clerks to Boards of Guardians would make admirable Registrars of Public Assistance, and could be offered these appointments. The best of the Masters of Workhouses could be found places in the various specialised institutions (including the Receiving

Houses). Most of the Relieving Officers would become the Enquiry and Recovery Officers of the Registrars of Public Assistance. The District Medical Officers would be simply made part of the unified Medical Service under the Local Health Committee, at their existing emoluments, etc. The existing Workhouses, Casual Wards, Poor Law schools, etc., would, of course, be utilised for the various specialised institutions that would be required, being divided up among the various committees as might be found most convenient.

The scheme could be applied gradually. England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland could be separately dealt with. There would be no great difficulty in the transfer of the administration from the Boards of Guardians to the County and County Borough Councils taking place in one locality after another, on "appointed days" to be fixed as the arrangements made by the Executive Commission (which would in any case have to be appointed) were completed for the particular localities. We can even imagine the scheme being applied to one service after another; the functions of the Boards of Guardians with regard to the children or the sick or the mentally defective being successively dealt with, and the final abolition of the Destitution Authority being deferred until the last remnant of its duties could be handed over.

(i.) *The Rural Counties.*

In the application of the scheme to the counties of England and Wales, the only serious difficulty appears to be the division of the medical service between the County Council and the existing minor sanitary authorities (the Councils of Non-County Boroughs, Urban Districts and Rural Districts); and for this we have offered specific suggestions. The establishment of the Registrar of Public Assistance, visiting once a week or so every part of the County—which should, we suggest, be divided into districts at least as small as the present Unions—would go far to relieve the members of the County Council of the most burdensome part of the work. There could, of course, be local visiting committees of volunteers chosen from among the local residents attached to the several institutions.*

(ii.) *The Metropolis.*

In the application of the scheme to London, a similar division of the medical service would be necessary between the Health Committee of the London County Council and the Health Committees of the Corporation of the City of London and the Metropolitan Boroughs. The asylums for imbeciles and idiots of the Metropolitan Asylums Board would naturally pass to the new Committee for the Mentally Defective (virtually the present Asylums Committee of the London County Council) and the isolation hospitals to the Health Committee of that body. If there were appointed, say, half a dozen Registrars of Public Assistance for the whole of the Administrative County, they would be able to sit for an entire day in each week in districts somewhat smaller than the present thirty-one Unions. But an even prompter "delivery" of the Receiving Houses could easily be arranged if required. In London, too, there could easily be special local visiting committees for the several institutions. The scheme is not dependent on any general reform of London Local Government, or on any enlargement of the Administrative County, though it would fit in easily with either of these proposals.

(iii.) *Scotland.*

In the application of the scheme to Scotland, we speak with less assurance. We do not feel that our knowledge of Scottish Local Government warrants us in doing more than suggest that, so far as we can learn, the same principles of reform are applicable. The enlargement of the unit of area is—with 874 separate Parish Councils distributing relief—even more urgently necessary than in England. The new area can hardly be any other than that of the County and perhaps those of the larger Burghs. There are the same advantages to be gained by the distribution, among the existing specialised committees, of the various services now aggregated together in the Poor Law. With regard to the provision for all grades of persons of unsound mind, we can accept the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, which adopt and continue the existing Lunacy Authorities; or, on the other hand, these might be simply re-constituted as Committees of County and Burgh Councils. In the one-third of Scotland which is in the large towns, the care of the children would naturally pass to the School Boards. We assume that the other services would pass to the County and principal Town Councils, with a division of the medical service between the District (Health) Committee of the County Council and the Health Committees of the smaller Burghs within the County similar to that suggested for the English Counties. This District (Health)

* With any such joint arrangements as the union of Lancashire County and its County Boroughs in the Lancashire Lunacy Board there need, of course, be no interference.

Committee, or perhaps the County Committee of a District constituted under the Education Act of 1908 might take over the care of the children. Whether it would be desirable to continue in existence the Parish Council in Scotland, any more than the Rural District Council in England and Wales, once all the Poor Law functions had been assumed by other Authorities, we do not venture to decide.

(iv.) *Ireland.*

In the application of the scheme to Ireland, we wish to speak even more tentatively than with regard to Scotland. Yet Ireland has already progressed further in the direction of breaking up the Poor Law, and distributing its services among the other Authorities than either England or Scotland. The whole provision for persons of unsound mind, for instance, even for those who are destitute, is already entirely outside the Poor Law, and in the hands of the County Councils. The medical service of the public dispensaries, too, is not deemed to be Poor Law relief, and could apparently easily be re-organised as a County Medical Service on Public Health lines. The provision of a complete system of hospitals by the County Councils, admitting all patients requiring hospital treatment, whatever their diseases, is one of the recommendations of the recent Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland. And, though that Commission did not recommend the abolition of the Boards of Guardians, we feel that our own scheme proceeds almost entirely on the same lines as their proposals, and that the establishment of the Registrar of Public Assistance would probably make it easy to adopt our recommendations almost in their entirety. The one exception lies in the case of the children. Ireland has, at present, no Local Education Authority to which the care of the children could be transferred. We agree with the Vice-Regal Commission in recommending that the children for whom the community has to find maintenance should, wherever possible, attend the existing day schools under the National Elementary Education Board. We suggest that their further care should be entrusted to new "Boarding-Out Committees" of the County and County Borough Councils, on which women members should be co-opted, charged to find suitable homes for these children, either in the duly inspected cottages of foster-parents, or in institutions under voluntary management, properly certified by the Local Government Board for Ireland. The two existing Poor Law schools could probably be most advantageously utilised as schools for some special kinds of children who cannot be suitably dealt with by boarding-out.

(v.) *The Departments of the National Government.*

Whilst the scheme relates mainly to local administration, no reform of the Poor Law can be effected without, in England and Wales at any rate, considerable changes in the central departments. We have already described how important it is, for efficiency and economy alike, that the Local Authorities should have the assistance, in each of the various services they undertake, of the supervision of a Department of the National Government *charged solely with that service.* We feel that the confusion and inefficiency into which so much of Local Government has fallen is to be ascribed in some degree to the absence of this specialised central supervision and control. Incredible as it seems, forty years after the Report of the Royal Commission on Sanitation in 1869, there is to-day no Department, and no Division of a Department, charged solely with Public Health as such. Even the Education Departments of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, find, at present, a great deal of the public provision for children of school age outside their control. With the abolition of the Destitution Authorities, the existing "Poor Law Division" of the Local Government Board would, of course, come to an end; and a redistribution of functions and officers would be necessary. We do not presume to make any recommendations as to how the duties of the several Departments should be allocated among the Ministers who would be responsible to Parliament for their policy and administration. Nor need we consider which of the Divisions (each being self-contained and complete in itself) can conveniently be grouped together, under the name of the Local Government Board or otherwise, with the Permanent Heads of the Divisions (as in Scotland and Ireland) sitting at a Board or Council under the presidency of the responsible Minister. We are, however, convinced that it is of the highest importance that there should be separately organised and completely self-contained Departments—each having the supervision and control of all the local services falling within its subject-matter—not only for Education, but also for Public Health (including all the services entrusted to the Local Health Authorities); for all the provision for the Mentally Defective (including the feeble-minded and the inebriates, as well as the lunatics and idiots); for the National Pensions for the Aged; and (as we may here add) for the whole provision for the Able-bodied, the Vagrants, and the Unemployed. Each of these five separate Departments or Divisions of Departments should issue its own regulative orders, and have the administration of all the Grants-in-

Aid that may be made in respect of the services with the supervision of which it is charged ; and all such Grants-in-Aid should be conditional on proper efficiency in local administration, and proportionate partly to the local expenditure and partly to the local poverty, according to some such scale as we have suggested. Each such Department or Division of a Department would, of course, have its own specialist Inspectors, who should be chosen, in the first instance, from the technically qualified members of the present staffs. The existing General Inspectors of the Local Government Board would, we suggest, form a suitable nucleus for the new Inspectorate that will be required by any Department dealing with the Able-bodied Unemployed—a service in which no *technique* has yet been worked out, and in which the General Inspectors would start with greater knowledge than anyone else possesses. Alongside these five separate Departments or Divisions of Departments, there must, we think, be another, distinct and apart from them all, charged with the supervision of the audit, the sanctioning of loans, and local finance generally, and to this might be entrusted also the supervision of the Home Aliment sanctioned by the Registrars of Public Assistance.

In Scotland and Ireland, whilst the same principles are applicable, the local circumstances will require some modifications of these proposals. Where England and Wales need separate Departments, Scotland and Ireland may be able to do with separate Divisions of one Department, especially if, as we think advisable, the Permanent Heads of the several Divisions sit in a Board or Council under the presidency of the responsible Minister.

It may, in conclusion, be noted that any scheme of reform will involve the appointment of an Executive Commission to adjust areas and boundaries, and assets and liabilities, and to allocate buildings and officers according to the new organisation.

(G) Some Theoretical Objections Answered.

We have, of course, not failed to weigh carefully the various objections that have been made to our proposals. These objections, it need hardly be said, are theoretical. There is the objection that the breaking up of the Poor Law involves the breaking up of the family. There is the objection that the proposed scheme would lead to the harassing of the poor in their homes by a multiplicity of officers, each bent on enforcing his own conditions. There is the objection that the transfer to specialised committees of the Local Authority of the obligation to relieve the destitute may lead to an extravagant extension of gratuitous treatment at the cost of the rates. Finally, there is the objection, in exact contradiction to this fear of increased collective provision, that the abolition of the Destitution Authority may, somehow or other, abrogate the existing statutory right to relief.

(i.) *The Integrity of the Family.*

There are conditions under which the transfer of the functions of the Board of Guardians to the County or County Borough Council will undoubtedly cause more separation of the members of families than prevails at present. In our chapter on " The General Mixed Workhouse of To-day " we have described how all the members of a destitute family are now usually admitted simultaneously, by one gate, into one institution. These " mixed " institutions have undoubtedly the advantage—if it be an advantage—of keeping all the members of a family under the same roof, and even of permitting, especially in the smaller and less rigidly administered Unions, continued intercourse between husband and wife, and parent and child. In visiting some of the Workhouses in the wilds of Ireland, we have been struck by the homeliness of the arrangement, by which a whole family, rendered destitute by an eviction, will be found crouching round the peat fire of the one common day-room ; the able-bodied father smoking his pipe, the mother suckling her infant, the children playing around, and an aged grandparent dosing in the one armchair. When this domestic interior is supervised by a group of kindly nuns, visited by the parish priest, and illuminated by the dignity of agrarian martyrdom, the public assistance afforded has doubtless a charm of its own ; though we may question, not only its deterrent, but also its curative and restorative effects. But in the well-regulated English Workhouse—still more, in the mammoth Poor Law establishments which now characterise the great towns of England, Scotland and Ireland—the inclusion under one roof, or within one curtilage, of a whole family—the able-bodied man, the ailing woman and infant, the children of school age, the feeble-minded girl and the aged grandparent—means a promiscuous intercouse, not between the members of that family alone, but between all ages and different sexes, which is anything but edifying. It certainly does not conduce to the integrity of family relationships. And when the Destitution Authority, responding at last to the constant pressure of the Local Government Board, consents so far to " break up the family " as to treat the different members of it in different institutions—as the 1834 Report so strongly advised—it often

nullifies the very improvement at which the reform has aimed. In a desire, we suppose, to treat the family as a unit, at any rate at the moment of admission and the moment of discharge, the Guardians at present summon the wife and her infant from the Infirmary, the children from the Cottage Homes in the country, and the feeble-minded daughter from the laundry, to meet, at the lodge of the Able-bodied Workhouse, the husband and father who has claimed his discharge because he is tired of test work. It is this insistence on dealing with the family as a unit which gives the gravest aspect to the terrible problem of the "Ins-and-Outs." Let the man determine to take his discharge—however evil his character, however notoriously vicious his habit of life, however homeless he may be—all his dependents are at present summoned, from the specialised institutions at which they are being treated at great expense, as if to his death-bed! The children are brought in by an officer from the country boarding school, clean and even smart in their neat clothes and handed over to him at the Workhouse lodge, with the almost certain prospect that "the family," after unspeakable experiences, will be readmitted within a few days, in a state of filth and demoralisation.

In common with every experienced Poor Law administrator we accept the responsibilityof so far "breaking up the family" as to insist (with the authors of the Report of 1834) that, if there is to be institutional treatment at all, it shall be treatment of the different members of a family, according to age, sex and physical state, *in separate specialised institutions under distinct management and supervision.* We do not see any reason for imagining any greater dissolution of the family when these institutions are administered by different committees of a Town Council than when they are administered by different committees of a Board of Guardians. But we go further. In common with, we think, the majority of experienced Poor Law administrators, we recommend that no sick dependent should be discharged from the Infirmary, and that no child should be brought back from the school to be handed over to its father, unless and until some reasonable assurance can be given that there is a home for them to go to, offering, at any rate, minimum conditions of decency and safety. It is one of the advantages of our scheme that the Education Committee and the Health Committee, under the advice of their own officers, will certainly wish to satisfy themselves on this point before they forcibly eject any child or sick person committed to their charge. In our proposal of a Registrar of Public Assistance specially charged with the duty of proceeding against defaulting heads of families, we provide a far more effective means of enforcing parental responsiblity than the present remarkable practice of casting out the wife and child whenever the man chooses to leave.

A curious question has, in this connection, been asked of us. How, it is said, are the various members of a family, once sorted out into different institutions, under different committees of the Town Council, ever to get together again? What seems to puzzle some naïve objectors is the vision of the Health Committee's ambulance carrying off to its hospital the mother with puerperal fever, the Education Committee's officer conducting the children found wandering in the streets to the Industrial Schools, the Asylums Committee taking charge of the imbecile girl, the Unemployment Authority giving the man his railway ticket to the Farm Colony, whilst the police "run in" the hooligan son for commitment to a Reformatory School. The answer to this enquiry is that this very process is taking place daily under our eyes in any large city, without the difficulty arising. The existence of a Destitution Authority over and above all the existing specialised committees does nothing to bring these scattered members of the family together.* In practice, they find each other without difficulty when they emerge from their several institutions, just as they would if they had gone at their own cost to school, to search for work, or to get medical treatment. But in so far as any difficulty may arise—as, for instance, with the feeble-minded or with truant children, or with parents wishing to evade their responsibilities—our scheme provides, for the first time, effective machinery for "re-uniting" the family, either voluntarily or compulsorily. The Registrar of Public Assistance, advised daily of all admissions and discharges in every public institution, with an office at the Local Receiving House always open to applicants, and with his Inquiry and Recovery Officers instantly in pursuit of husbands and fathers who have run away from their responsibilities, will, in fact, make it very difficult for families not to re-unite.

There is, however, a far more insidious "breaking up of the family" constantly going on to-day, than any that could possibly be caused, whenever institutional treatment

* It has even been contended, on similar grounds, that it is absolutely necessary, at the present time, to admit all children to the Workhouse, so that there may be a record of the complete family lest any of the children should be "lost" when they are sent, as they may be, to different schools. It is said that otherwise on discharge a child might be "forgotten" and not sent for, as a parent might claim to have fewer children than he was really responsible for. These difficulties may be overcome by proper registration of every case.

becomes necessary, by there being separate institutions for each sex, age-period and physical condition. Owing to the unfortunate limitation of the action of the Board of Guardians to the period of actual destitution, thousands of families are disintegrating to-day under our eyes, from lack of the timely strengthening which might have prevented their becoming destitute. But when the cost and trouble of providing for the several members of the family when destitute fall upon committees which have, as part of their ordinary duty and machinery, the periodical visitation of the home, irrespective of destitution, these committees will have the families continuously under observation. Is the child unfed at school? A member of the Children's Care Committee calls to ascertain the cause. At every birth, at every death, at every occurrence of notifiable disease, the officer of the Health Committee becomes acquainted with the circumstances of the household. Thus, the several Committees of the Town Council, as a mere measure of economy, so as not eventually to incur the cost of institutional treatment, with its concomitant of "breaking up the family," will be perpetually doing whatever may be necessary to maintain the family intact, to encourage those members of it who are striving to keep the home together, and forcibly to restrain any member whose conduct is threatening it with ruin.

(ii.) *The Withdrawal of the Destitution Officer.*

The suggestion that the great expense to the ratepayer, and the "break up of the family," involved in the institutional treatment of the present Poor Law, can, in many cases, be obviated by friendly supervision and well-informed advice before and after the crisis of destitution, rouses another set of theoretical objections. Under the scheme of reform now proposed, it is objected that there would be a great increase in the number of salaried officials, all "harassing" poor families with inquisitorial enquiries and officious advice. This, however, is an error. As a matter of fact there would, under the reform proposed, be actually fewer officials on the salary list, and each of them would ask fewer questions than is at present the case in any well-administered district. An efficient Town Council has already its staff of Sanitary Inspectors and Health Visitors, of School Attendance Officers and School Managers or members of Children's Care Committees. These domiciliary agents at present investigate, not only questions of sanitation and the hygienic condition of the family, school attendance and the care of the children, but also—now that school meals, medical treatment, milk for the infant and so on, are being provided—find themselves compelled to inquire, however imperfectly, into the economic circumstances of the household. Meanwhile, the family, in many cases, is obtaining, or asking for, Poor Law Relief. The well-administered Board of Guardians accordingly sends to the house, one after another, in order to make successive enquiries, the Relieving Officer, the Cross Visitor, the Collector and Removal Officer, and, if the case presents any difficulty, also the Superintendent Relieving Officer. All the latter Destitution Officers inquire into exactly the same facts as have been inquired into by the officers of the Local Health Authority and the Local Education Authority. It is true that their primary investigation is into the pecuniary resources of the family, but the Guardians expect them to report also on the sanitary state of the home, the health of all the members of the family, the attendance of the children at school, and even whether the mother can or will suckle her infant. On these points the Destitution Officers, whether one, two, three or four in number, are unqualified to judge—a fact which does not make their inquiries less annoying. Incredible as it may seem to those unacquainted with the working of the conflict in Local Government to-day, this curious multiplicity of domiciliary visitors, all going, one after another to the same house, unaware of each other's visits, and all inquiring indifferently into subjects in which they may be assumed to possess some professional competence, and into those about which they frankly know nothing, is actually the present practice of town after town. It may be seen, for instance, in Edinburgh or Paddington, Glasgow or Bradford.

With the remodelling of the Poor Law that we are recommending, this overlapping and confusion will cease. The Sanitary Inspector or Health Visitor, the School Attendance Officer or the member of the Children's Care Committee, will still be found visiting the homes; but their hygienic or educational inquiries and advice, like their information as to the available public assistance appropriate to the case, will no longer be hampered by vague questioning as to the total earnings coming into the home, or about the existence of relatives able to contribute. The three or four Destitution Officers, with their unsavoury hotch-potch of inquiries into all sorts of subjects, will be replaced, in each locality, by the one Inquiry and Recovery Officer of the Registrar of Public Assistance. His business will be limited strictly to the ascertainment of the pecuniary resources of the family—not with any view of *preventing* the requisite treatment being afforded, for that will already have begun—but in order to ascertain what charge, if any, should be made for it, and upon whom it should be made. He, having no concern with the health or morals of the family, will have no more right than the agent of an insurance company

or the Assessor of Income-Tax to do what in the Relieving Officer excites such resentment, namely, pry into the bedroom, cross-examine the woman as to her relation with the male lodger, or comment on the cough and expectoration of the delicate daughter—all in order to find a reason for refusing Outdoor Relief and offering the Workhouse instead. Finally, this agent of the Registrar of Public Assistance will be in no sense a Destitution Officer. His visits will imply no pauperism. They will be paid alike to the family requiring Home Aliment for its bread-winner, and to the family regularly paying the full charge for the maintenance of a member in the Tuberculosis Sanitorium; to the old woman claiming a National Pension, and to the household which has distinguished itself by the gaining of a County Scholarship; to the husband of the woman using the Maternity Hospital, as well as to the propertied lady who is paying for her husband's detention in the most luxurious villa of the County Lunatic Asylum. In fact, therefore, the proposed "sorting-out" of the present multiplicity of officers, and the restriction of each to his own sphere, will positively diminish both their numbers and the multifariousness of their questions. And with the final abolition of the Destitution Officer, and his hateful combination of functions, any prejudice that the poor may have against domiciliary visitation as such will, we anticipate, disappear.

(iii.) *The Economy of Efficient Administration.*

We pass now to what appears to us the most genuine of the objections made to our proposals, namely, that they will involve :—

(*a*) A large increase of expense to the ratepayers; and

(*b*) An unnecessary multiplication of those for whom gratuitous service is provided.

Our answer is that whilst our proposals involve increased expense in some directions, they bring great saving in others. What is even more important is that the increases in expenditure will tend to be temporary only, whilst the saving is calculated to be permanent and cumulative.

To begin with the 234,000 infants and children on Outdoor Relief,* we accept the responsibility (in common, we think, with a majority of Poor Law administrators) of proposing increased expenditure on those among them who—to use the words of our own Children's Investigator—are now suffering, definitely, and seriously, from the circumstances of their lives. We do not think that it is possible, under any scheme, to continue to pretend to maintain children on a shilling or eighteenpence a week each. The chronic under-feeding, stunted growth, and premature death, to which we are at present condemning many tens of thousands of Outdoor Relief children—children for whom the community has, by enrolling them in the register of paupers, definitely assumed responsibility—is surely the most wasteful and extravagant arrangement that could be devised. We admit that when the responsibility for these children passes into the hands of the Local Health Authority and the Local Education Authority, the reports from the Health Visitors and the Medical Officers, the mere sight of their condition in the school, and the reports as to their home circumstances by the members of the Children's Care Committees, will compel the proposal to the Registrar of Public Assistance, where the mothers are to be trusted, of Home Aliment much more adequate than a shilling a week, the provision of day industrial schools for many thousands more, and the adoption, and removal from their parents, of those found to be living in actually vicious homes. On the other hand, we may anticipate that the enormous capital outlay, and the high charge for maintenance, now incurred by some Boards of Guardians, for every child in their Cottage Homes, owing to their inexperience of the real requirements of efficient school buildings, will not continue under Local Authorities who are perpetually erecting such buildings for children at large, on more economical principles. We may, however, frankly admit that the net result of a transfer of destitute children from the present Poor Law to the Local Education Authorities—in common, we think, with all serious proposals for reform in this department—will be, during the next few years, an increase in the total spent on the children. But as it is exactly these children, brought up on insufficient food or in undesirable homes, who presently recruit the great army of pauperism, we think that it will be agreed that the expenditure is a good investment. Meanwhile, the Registrar of Public Assistance will be at work, enforcing payment from parents whose ill-treatment of their children proceeds not from lack of income, but from self-indulgence in drink, etc., or from mere inhumanity. It may well prove that whilst there will be more spent on the children who are really destitute, the number of claimants for school dinners or spasmodic relief, or of those who shovel their children into costly Poor Law schools, will, under the steady and impartial pressure of the new system of Charge and Recovery, actually be diminished.

* In England and Wales, 178,730; in Scotland, 36,808; and in Ireland, 19,020.

Much the same argument applies to the sick. We accept the responsibility of recommending the adoption of the Public Health principle of searching out disease in its incipient stages, in place of the Poor Law attitude of waiting until the disease has gone so far as, on the one hand, to produce destitution, and, on the other, to render the belated but costly treatment of no avail. This will mean, in the first years, an increased expenditure on domiciliary treatment, and, where really required, on the provision of hospitals. But seeing that no less than half of the present pauperism—that is to say, £9,000,000 a year out of the present Poor Law expenditure of £18,000,000—is directly caused by the diseases of early or adult life, and that most of these are known to be "preventable," we regard this expenditure also as a good investment. Let us assume, for a moment, that the United Kingdom and all its inhabitants formed the property of a great slave-owning company, much as whole districts in Russia used to belong to a great proprietor. With the modern knowledge of preventive medicine, it is clear that it would "pay" the slave-owner, not only to provide for his "hands" or his "souls" good sanitation and a supply of pure water, but also to train them in hygienic habits of life, and to take care that no incipient disease among them, more especially contagious or infectious disease, remained untreated. It is surely the worst of all forms of national waste to allow the ravages of preventable sickness to progress unchecked; and this not merely because it kills off thousands of producers prematurely (burdening us, by the way, with the widow and the orphan), but because sickness levies a toll on the living, and leaves even those who survive crippled, debilitated, and less efficient than they would otherwise have been. There is even, by the taking of timely measures, an eventual decrease in the expenditure required to cope with a disease. To put up an Isolation Hospital is at first costly; but when (as has been repeatedly found to be the case with smallpox) the disease has been stamped out, the hospital stands empty, and is available for other public use. And the treatment need not be gratuitous. As we have seen, there is at present great diversity of practice as to which diseases shall be treated gratuitously, and which shall be charged for. The tendency, under the present system, is to increase the range of gratuitous treatment; and it is significant that even whilst we were enquiring into the matter, the responsibility for the gratuitous treatment of phthisis (including maintenance in hospital when required) has been formally and explicitly assumed by the Local Health Authorities of Scotland, under the authority of Parliament and the Local Government Board. The whole question of the pecuniary basis of the public treatment of disease seems to us to need further consideration, with the object of securing the maximum result from whatever expenditure the nation decides to afford. But when charges are decided on by Parliament they ought to be impartially enforced; and for this no adequate provision at present exists or has been included in any other proposals. We rely for this purpose on the establishment in every district of a Registrar of Public Assistance, unconnected with the medical service and bent on really enforcing whatever charges may be legally imposed on those for whom hospital maintenance is provided. This may well lead to an actual decrease in the area of gratuitous treatment, which, under the present system, is shovelled out, with the very minimum of inquiry, to all who ask for it.

(iv.) *The Right to Relief.*

It is curious to notice that our insistence on treatment rather than relief, and the importance that we attach to enforcing payment from those who are legally liable and of sufficient ability to pay for what they receive, has raised an objection quite the opposite of that with which we have just dealt. It is feared by some that in the supersession of the Destitution Authority by the more specialised organs of Local Government the poor will lose their present statutory right to relief. Our answer is that whilst we recommend the repeal of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, which created the Boards of Guardians, we do not advocate the repeal of the Statute of the 43rd of Elizabeth. We propose that there should be no less legal obligation on the Local Authority, than there is at present, to provide the necessities of life to all those who are without them. Just as the Local Education Authority is under statutory obligation to provide schooling for all children within its district who are without schooling, so we propose that it should assume the statutory obligation (now imposed upon the Board of Guardians) of providing, for those children who are destitute, whatever other things are required. Just as the Local Health Authority is under statutory obligation to make certain sanitary provisions for its district, so we propose that it should assume the statutory obligation (now imposed upon the Board of Guardians) of providing, for those of the sick who are destitute, whatever their necessities require. And similarly for the other sections of the present pauper host. The obligations which the Poor Relief Act of 43 Elizabeth, c. 2, embodied in our Statute law can be simply transferred from the Board of Guardians to the County or County Borough Council.

There remains to be noticed what may be considered the present safeguard of the poor in the liability of the Relieving Officers to criminal prosecution, even for manslaughter, if any person is injured owing to their failure to afford relief when relief is required. This liability has the special characteristic of not being affected by any orders of the Destitution Authority under whom the Relieving Officer has been placed. Moreover, if a destitute person refuses the particular form of relief offered, the Relieving Officer still continues liable in case of any harm occurring, and is compelled therefore to provide relief in some other form. The majority of our colleagues propose to abolish all this criminal liability of the Relieving Officer. We do not think that this is either necessary or desirable. There is, we think, an advantage, in so important a matter as preserving human life, in there being, in each district, an officer who is definitely responsible, whatever other Authorities may be prescribing, for preventing deaths from starvation or neglect. We recommend that the present responsibility of the Relieving Officer should be transferred to the Registrar of Public Assistance and the keeper of the local Receiving House, together with some person in each parish or other convenient area whom the Registrar may appoint for this purpose and for the giving of relief in kind in cases of sudden or urgent necessity. Every such case would be automatically reported to the Registrar, who would place the case in charge of the officers of one or other of the committees concerned, or arrange for removal to the Local Receiving House pending his decision. If the relief was refused, we recommend that the Local Health Authority should be empowered, in any case in which, through inanition or neglect, life might be endangered, or a public nuisance caused, to obtain a magistrate's order (to be granted only under careful safeguards) for the compulsory removal of the person concerned to the appropriate institution. We think that, in cases of urgency, the Registrar of Public Assistance might be given power to make a similar order. In short, what our scheme of reform ensures is that, whilst the Right to Relief is fully maintained, the obligation to accept relief in its most appropriate form is, under penalty of compulsory removal in extreme cases, practically insisted on.

(H) Summary of Proposals.

Deferring our proposals with regard to the whole of the Able-bodied until Part II. of the present Report, we recommend :—

1. That, except the 43 Elizabeth, c. 2, the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 for England and Wales, and the various Acts for the relief of the poor and the corresponding legislation for Scotland and Ireland, so far as they relate exclusively to Poor Relief, and including the Law of Settlement, should be repealed.

2. That the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and (at any rate as far as Poor Law functions are concerned) the Parish Councils in Scotland, together with all combinations of these bodies, should be abolished.

3. That the property and liabilities, powers and duties of these Destitution Authorities should be transferred (subject to the necessary adjustments) to the County and County Borough Councils, strengthened in numbers as may be deemed necessary for their enlarged duties ; with suitable modifications to provide for the special circumstances of Scotland and Ireland, and for the cases of the Metropolitan Boroughs, the Non-County Boroughs over 10,000 in population, and the Urban Districts over 20,000 in population, on the plan that we have sketched out.

4. That the provision for the various classes of the Non-Able-bodied should be wholly separated from that to be made for the Able-bodied, whether these be unemployed workmen, vagrants or able-bodied persons now in receipt of Poor Relief.

5. That the services at present administered by the Destitution Authorities (other than those connected with vagrants or the able-bodied)—that is to say, the provision for :—

(i.) Children of school age ;

(ii.) The sick and the permanently incapacitated, the infants under school age, and the aged needing institutional care ;

(iii.) The mentally defective of all grades and all ages ; and

(iv.) The aged to whom pensions are awarded—

should be assumed, under the directions of the County and County Borough Councils, by :—

(i.) The Education Committee ;

(ii.) The Health Committee ;

(iii.) The Asylums Committee ; and

(iv.) The Pension Committee respectively.

6. That the several committees concerned should be authorised and required, under the directions of their Councils, to provide, under suitable conditions and safeguards to be embodied in Statutes and regulative Orders, for the several classes of persons committed to their charge, whatever treatment they may deem most appropriate to their condition ; being either institutional treatment, in the various specialised schools, hospitals, asylums, etc., under their charge ; or, whenever judged preferable, domiciliary treatment, conjoined with the grant of Home Aliment where this is indispensably required.

7. That the law with regard to liability to pay for relief or treatment received, or to contribute towards the maintenance of dependents and other relations, should be embodied in a definite and consistent code, on the basis, in those services for which a charge should be made, of recovering the cost from all those who are really able to pay, and of exempting those who cannot properly do so.

8. That there should be established in each County and County Borough one or more officers, to be designated Registrars of Public Assistance, to be appointed by the County and County Borough Council, and to be charged with the threefold duty of : —

(i.) Keeping a Public Register of all cases in receipt of public assistance ;

(ii.) Assessing and recovering, according to the law of the land and the evidence as to sufficiency of ability to pay, whatever charges Parliament may decide to make for particular kinds of relief or treatment ; and

(iii.) Sanctioning the grants of Home Aliment proposed by the Committees concerned with the treatment of the case.

9. That the Registrar of Public Assistance should have under his direction (and under the control of the General Purposes Committee of the County or County Borough Council) the necessary staff of Inquiry and Recovery Officers, and a local Receiving House for the strictly temporary accommodation of non-able-bodied persons found in need, and not as yet dealt with by the Committees concerned.

10. That the present national subventions in aid of the Destitution Authorities should be replaced by Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure on the whole of the services to be administered by the Health Committees of the County and County Borough Councils, subject to the administration of these services up to, at any rate, a National Minimum of Efficiency ; the aggregate amount of such Grants-in-Aid for the United Kingdom and their allocation as between England (including Wales), Scotland and Ireland being fixed, and subject to revision only every seven years ; but the distribution of this total among the several County and County Borough Councils being made, according to the plan we have specified, in proportion to their several gross expenditures on these services, and at the same time in such a proportion to the poverty of their districts as will enable the National Minimum of Efficiency to be everywhere attained without anywhere exceeding the Standard Average Rate.

11. That the Local Authorities in England and Wales, in respect of the services administered by each Committee, be placed under the supervision of a single Department or Division of a Department of the National Government, which shall itself administer the Grants-in-Aid of its particular services, issue its own regulative Orders, and have its own technically qualified Inspectors ; the Education Committees in England and Wales being thus responsible, for the efficiency of all their services, to the Board of Education ; the Mentally Defectives (or Asylums) Committees to the proposed Board of Control, in succession to the Lunacy Commissioners ; the Pension Committees to whatever Department is deputed to take charge of the administration of the Old-age Pensions Act of 1908 ; and the Health Committees, with regard to all their enlarged range of functions, to a separately organised and self-contained Public Health Department, whether this is organised as a separate Division of the Local Government Board or made a distinct Department. The determination of appeals from the decisions of the Registrar of Public Assistance, and whatever national supervision may be exercised over the grant of Home Aliment to the Non-Able-Bodied, should, we suggest, be entrusted to another separately organised and self-contained Department or Division of a Department which, if it can be dissociated from the Local Government Board, might, with advantage, be placed, along with the Department or Division dealing with Audit, Loans and Local Finance generally, in close connection with the Treasury.

12. That a temporary Executive Commission be appointed to adjust areas, boundaries, assets and liabilities ; and to allocate buildings and officers among the future Local Authorities.

PART II.

THE DESTITUTION OF THE ABLE-BODIED.

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PART II.

THE DESTITUTION OF THE ABLE-BODIED.

There are to-day, as there were prior to 1834, two separate and distinct Local Authorities providing maintenance for able-bodied destitute persons. Under the Elizabethan Poor Law, down to 1834, the Parish Officers were legally required to find work or maintenance for every Able-bodied person without the necessaries of life, who was residing in their parish. On the other hand, all wayfaring or vagrant persons were dealt with under the Criminal Law by the Justices and their underlings, the Parish Constables; and the maintenance afforded to them was assumed to be accompanied by some measure of punishment—the stocks, the whipping post, or commitment to the House of Correction. To-day there are again two Local Authorities providing maintenance for able-bodied destitute persons, but with a difference. Whereas, in the eighteenth century, the relief afforded by the Destitution Authorities was considered to be too good for the Vagrant, in the twentieth century it is considered too bad for the Unemployed. The Boards of Guardians are required to find maintenance, not only for all destitute able-bodied persons resident in their Unions, but also for every Vagrant claiming their hospitality. Alongside them there is, since 1905, in every important town, a second authority at work, the Distress Committee administering the Unemployed Workmen Act. These Committees were intended to provide only for the *bona fide* Unemployed, that is to say, for men and women who, having been in full work at full wages, find themselves without employment through no fault of their own. But, as a matter of fact, as we shall see, the Distress Committees are providing spasmodic maintenance, not only for the Unemployed in this sense, but also for many of the Under-employed and for some of the Unemployables. What they cannot lawfully do is to give any assistance to Vagrants until these have settled down for a year, or to Sweated Workers, so long as these remain in constant employment. Athwart the operations of both these Authorities come all the voluntary charitable agencies, from the spasmodic "Mayor's Funds" and newspaper funds of times of trade depression up to the permanent Shelters, Labour Homes and Working Colonies of bodies like the Church Army and the Salvation Army.

CHAPTER I.

The Able-Bodied under the Poor Law.

The reader of the Report of 1834 is struck by the narrow limits which the members of that celebrated Royal Commission set to their work. It is not merely that they practically left out of sight all the various classes of non-able-bodied pauperism, about which, as we have seen, they hardly at all concerned themselves. What is more remarkable is that neither in their Report, nor in the bulky volumes of their evidence, do we find any notice of Able-bodied Destitution, as distinguished from Able-bodied Pauperism. There might, in fact, so far as their proceedings were concerned, have been in 1834 no Able-bodied Destitution except such as was being dealt with by the Poor Law. If this had been true, it would have been a remarkable testimony to the efficacy, in one respect, of the old Poor Law. Unfortunately it was not true. We know from contemporary evidence that between 1815 and 1834 * there were whole sections of the population who—to use the modern terminology—were Unemployed or Under-employed, Sweated or Vagrant, existing in a state of chronic destitution, and dragging on some sort of a living on intermittent small earnings of their own, or of other people's, or on the alms of the charitable—handloom-weavers and framework-knitters displaced by machinery; millwrights and shipwrights thrown out by the violent fluctuations in the volume of machine-making and shipbuilding; "frozen out" gardeners and riverside workers rendered idle every winter, and masses of labourers stagnating at the ports or wandering aimlessly up and down the roads in search of work. With all this Able-bodied Destitution, not only spasmodically subsidised by public subscriptions, but also perpetually importuning both the town Overseer and the rural Constable for assistance from the rates, the Royal Commission of 1832–4 chose not to concern itself. We find in its voluminous proceedings no statistics of Unemployment, no statement as to fluctuations of trade, no account of the destitution produced by the new machines, no estimate of the swarms of Vagrants, who were being "passed" by the Justices, at the expense of the rates, from North to South, from East to West, and back again. The Commissioners concentrated their whole attention on one plague spot—the demoralisation of character and waste of wealth produced in the agricultural districts by an hypertrophied Poor Law. Over a large part of the country and in the greatest of all the nation's industries, practically all the labourers were, in the period of healthy manhood, chronically underpaid and under-employed—a state of things which had existed for half a century. To meet this evil the Justices of the Peace had, at the end of the eighteenth century, devised the famous "Allowance System," by which the weekly earnings of every adult labourer were automatically made up, out of the Poor Rate, to a low subsistence level for himself and his family. This device, which, it is interesting to note, was resorted to as an alternative to the enforcement of a legal minimum wage,† gradually dragged

* *See*, for instance: "An Exposition of one Principal Cause of the National Distress, particularly in Manufacturing Districts, 1817"; "Speech of Henry Brougham . . . on the present Distressed State of the Manufacturing and Commercial Interests, 1817"; "An Appeal to the Public on the Subject of the Framework Knitters Fund," by Rev. Robert Hall, 1819; "A Letter to the Carpet Manufacturers of Kidderminster," by Rev. H. Price, 1828; "Report of the Committee appointed at a Public Meeting at the City of London Tavern to Relieve the Manufacturers, 1829"; "Report of the Select Committee on Fluctuations of Employment, 1830"; Report of D. Mackay to the Poor Law Commissioners on the Distress of 1825–37 among Handloom Weavers and other Manufacturers, 1837"; "Report of the Royal Commission on the Handloom Weavers, etc."

† The occasion of the adoption of the allowance system was the "double panic of famine and revolution" ("Dispauperisation," by J. R. Pretyman, 1878, p. 27), due to the rise in the price of food which marked the closing decade of the eighteenth century, and the consequent distress of practically the whole of the rural labourers. This might have been met by a corresponding rise in the labourer's remuneration; but the farmers and landowners stoutly resisted any increase of wages, on the ground that "it would be difficult to reduce them when the cause for it had ceased." (First Report of Poor Law Inquiry Commissioners, Appendix A., Villiers' Report, p. 14.) This desire to stave off a rise of wages is expressly assigned as the motive for the Justices' scales of Speenhamland (1796), and Warwickshire (1797), for those fixed in Sussex and Essex in 1800 and 1810 (*Ibid.*, Majendie's Report, p. 167), and for that in Suffolk, after the Peace of 1815 (*Ibid.*, Henry Stuart's Report, p. 349). In the latter case, as in 1796–7, it appeared to the magistrates as the only practicable alternative to enforcing by law a definite minimum wage. "When that state of affairs arose," writes even one of the Assistant Poor Law Commissioners in 1833, "which drove nearly the whole of the labouring population to seek food and protection from them (the magistrates), being without the power of prescribing the rate of wages, there was no alternative left to them but to save the people from starvation" (*Ibid.*, p. 351). On the other hand, it was feared by many that if the distress of the labourers became too acute, it would

the whole population of the agricultural districts into the meshes of the Poor Law. The farmers, secure of a constant supply of labour, lowered wages. The labourers, secure of subsistence, progressively lowered the quantity and quality of their effort. The degradation of character and the destruction of all healthy relationship between employer and employed, entailed by this fatal mixing of Poor Relief and wages, had disheartened a whole generation of Poor Law administrators. What was more keenly realised by the Parliament of 1832 was that the rates levied for this service were absorbing a large portion of the rental value of the landlords' estates and were beginning to threaten the profits of the capitalists. In short, it was a particularly demoralising kind of Able-bodied Pauperism, and not the existence of Able-bodied Destitution, that led the Ministry of 1832 to appoint a Poor Law Commission.

The Commissioners of 1832–4 made short work of this swollen Poor Law. In agreement with much of the economic opinion of the time they would perhaps have liked to have abolished all forms of gratuitous Public Assistance. This being impracticable, they sought to restrict it to the "relief" of actual "destitution." But what they were most intent on was putting an end to the parasitic condition into which agricultural labour had fallen throughout the South of England. By one and the same device they proposed to cut off from the farmer all labour that he did not wholly pay for, and to deprive the labourer of all income that he did not wholly earn.

It was to attain this double end that they recommended that no relief should be given to able-bodied persons except in a well-regulated Workhouse; by which they meant a place that would be less agreeable than the home of an independent labourer who was working for his livelihood. This deterrent relief, they argued, would, whilst preventing any risk of starvation, induce the labourer to work in order to keep his employment, and would compel the farmer, without any legal fixing of wages, to pay enough for the labourer and his family to live on. Unfortunately for their reputation, the Commissioners did not limit their ingenious prescription to the one form of Able-bodied Pauperism that they had studied. They proposed that the "Workhouse Test" should be applied on all occasions, in all districts, to all able-bodied applicants for public assistance; whether these had been thrown out of work in crowds by fluctuations of trade, or definitely displaced by new machinery and new methods of working it. Finally, for some undisclosed reason, the Commissioners prescribed the same treatment for the Vagrant, a person into whose peculiarities they had certainly not inquired. They recommended that this most sturdy and recalcitrant of all the sub-classes of Able-bodied Paupers should be altogether delivered from the hands of the County Magistrates and the Constables, by whom they had hitherto

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lead to an outbreak of the revolutionary spirit then devastating France. In this dilemma, the Justices turned first to one expedient, and then to another. At the beginning of 1795, a widespread movement took place among philanthropic landlords, in favour of reviving the old practice of fixing wages by law, in proportion to the average price of wheat; and Whitbread introduced a Bill for the purpose. This policy was supported in several counties by resolution of the Justices. (Annals of Agriculture, Vol. XXV., p. 316 (1795), with Arthur Young's dissenting comments. The same proposal was made in 1805 in the "General View of the Agriculture of the County of Hereford," by John Duncan, 1805, p. 155.) The Hampshire Justices made an able and elaborate Report to Quarter Sessions. They point out that the labourer must be supplied with the necessaries of life, defined as everything that is "requisite to support his frame for its longest continuance and its best use." But they hesitate to recommend the fixing by law of a minimum wage. They admonish the farmers to give better wages; and they recommend their brother Justices, where the farmers are obdurate, to order the Overseers to make up the deficiency. (Hampshire Quarter Sessions, 1795.) The decisive action was taken by the Berkshire Justices, in a district in which the distress happened to be exceptionally severe. In May, 1795, the Justices of the County "and other discreet persons" met at Speenhamland, near Newbury, to consider the proposal referred to them at the last Quarter Sessions, to fix agricultural wages by law. They decided unanimously that the labouring poor needed further assistance in their distress, but that it was inexpedient to revive the fixing of wages by law. As in Hampshire, they "earnestly recommend the farmers to raise wages." And they conclude with the decision that was destined to exercise so widespread an influence, in favour of the systematic "rate in aid of wages." The magistrates present resolved: "That they will, in their several divisions make the following calculations and allowances for the relief of all poor and industrious men and their families who, to the satisfaction of the Justices of their parish, shall endeavour as far as they can for their own support and maintenance, that is to say: When the gallon loaf of second flour weighing 8 lbs. 11 ozs. shall cost 1s., then every poor and industrious man shall have for his own support 3s. weekly, either produced by his own or his family's labour, or an allowance from the poor rates, and for the support of his wife and every other of his family 1s. 6d. When the gallon loaf shall cost 1s. 4d. then every poor and industrious man shall have 4s. weekly for his own, and 1s. 10d. for the support of every other of his family. And so on in proportion as the price of bread rises or falls (that is to say), 3d. to the man and 1d. to every other of his family on every 1d. which the loaf rises above 1s.'" (*Reading Mercury*, May 11th, 1795; Eden's "State of the Poor," 1797, Vol. I., pp. 575–7; Nicholls' "History of the English Poor Law," Vol. II., p. 131; "Pauperism and Poor Law," by Robert Pashley, p. 258; Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 18–34, pp. 121–7 of reprint of 1905.)

been provided for, and that they should be thrown simply on the Poor Law, to be offered, like all other able-bodied persons, the open door of a disciplinary Workhouse.

Thus, there was to be, as soon as was practicable, one Local Authority, and one only, applying, to all the various sub-classes of the destitute Able-bodied applying for relief in any part of England, one uniform method, namely, their admission to a residential institution, where they could, as a matter of deterrent discipline rather than with any idea of profit, be set to hard work, under disciplinary conditions and upon plain diet. The wives and children of such able-bodied persons were also to be relieved only in institutions. But the Commissioners had been so much impressed with the evils inhérent in General Mixed Workhouses that they elaborately specified, over and over again, that the Workhouses for the Able-bodied were to be entirely distinct from the buildings in which the infirm aged and the children were accommodated ; that they were to be under separate officers and separate management ; and that they were expressly not to form part of one great establishment containing other classes of paupers.* To the policy thus propounded for dealing with all the sub-classes of the destitute Able-bodied together with their dependents, Parliament impliedly gave its general approval by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.†

The Poor Law Commissioners of 1835–47 promptly embodied the recommendations of the Commission of 1834 in a series of special Orders issued to Unions up and down the country, which culminated in the general Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order of 1844. The new policy achieved one great success. Within a few years, in the rural parishes of Southern England, the resolute offer of the Workhouse brought to an end—so far as Able-bodied men were concerned—the demoralising chronic Poor Law relief of the Underpaid and the Under-employed. Speaking broadly, all the Able-bodied farm labourers who had remained in the villages and were in employment at all were maintained without the aid of the rates, with the result that their wages had somewhat risen and the wage-earning had become somewhat less intermittent. How far this policy had succeeded at the cost of driving surplus labourers into the towns, and thereby increasing the mass of Able-bodied Destitution there, remains uncertain.

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* Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1834, pp. 306–7, of reprint of 1905.

† Under the English Poor Law, there is no clear and consistent definition of this class. Thus, on January 1st, 1908, as the Local Government Board for England and Wales informs us, there were 120,062 " Able-bodied " persons in receipt of Poor Relief. But we find that these so-called " Able-bodied " persons include some members of all the adult sections of the pauper host—men and women of all degrees of intelligence, and all physical states ; the halt, the lame and the blind ; the chronically and the acutely sick ; and even the man without arms or without legs. The only adults of whom none are included are the lunatics, however able in body, and the sturdy vagrants who are set to work in the Casual Ward. This misuse of language and confusion of thought have continued since 1834. From the first tentative Orders of the Poor Law Commissioners down to the latest Report of the Local Government Board, the term " Able-bodied " has always been used in varying and conflicting senses, none of which seem to us appropriate either to a scientific analysis of the facts, or to any practical proposals for reform. Under the Orders regulating Outdoor Relief, for instance, and in the statistics of Outdoor Pauperism, the class of " Able-bodied " includes the head of the family seeking relief, however aged and however sick he may be, provided that he is " normally " capable of earning his living by labour, together with all his dependents under sixteen, of either sex and of any condition. Thus, we have the paradox that a majority of the " Able-bodied " Outdoor Paupers are women nursing babies or sick persons. Under the General Consolidated Order of 1847 and in the statistics of Indoor Pauperism, quite a different set of persons are included in the class of " Able-bodied," namely, according to the views taken by many Workhouse Masters, persons over sixteen, whether feeble-minded or of normal intelligence, sound of body or maimed and crippled, deaf, dumb or blind, *who are on the ordinary diet of the establishment ;* that is to say, all those who have not been declared to be entitled by age or physical weakness or actual sickness to the special luxuries of the non-able-bodied regimen. " There is no rule of law," said the Local Government Board, " nor any regulation of the Board which prescribes the age at which a person is or is not to be deemed able-bodied. The question whether a person is able-bodied or not appears to the Board to be one which should be determined by the physical condition of the individual, not by the circumstances that his years are within or without a stated limit of age." (Local Government Board to York Board of Guardians, March 9th, 1905 ; MS. records, York Board of Guardians). Until recent years, indeed, the term " Able-bodied " included children and babies in arms ; *see*, for instance, the Returns " showing the number of Able-bodied who have received Outdoor Relief," in Ninth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1843, pp. 435–9. Hence the total of " Able-bodied paupers," including as it does fragments of very different classes, is a meaningless figure. Under the Scotch law the case is little better. There is, it is true, no class of " Able-bodied " paupers, for these are not entitled to Poor Relief. But with the able-bodied man, in the plain sense, there are excluded from relief, as being his dependents, his lawful wife, however sick, and his legitimate children, however young and feeble. Such definitions of the term " Able-bodied " have no relation to the class of persons with whom we have, in this part of our Report, to deal. We shall use the term " Able-bodied " (destitute person) in its ordinary sense, that is to say, as denoting an adult person of either sex, of less than the pensionable age, not at the time falling below what is considered as normal in respect of health, in respect of limbs and faculties, and in respect of intelligence, who is without some of the necessaries of life according to the accepted standard of the time.

In London, and in the manufacturing towns and the seaports, where quite a different kind of Able-bodied Destitution existed, the new policy proved less practicable. The Poor Law Commissioners themselves came to recognise that, even where the Local Authorities offered no objection, it was undesirable to apply the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order in places where fluctuations in the volume of employment were violent and periodic and manifestly beyond the control of either employers or wage-earners. An Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order, they observed, would in such places necessarily have to be suspended in times of depression of trade, "and," to quote the words of the Local Government Board's letter of May 12th, 1877, "there is nothing more calculated to weaken the force of the regulations of the Board than to be obliged to abrogate them whenever a period of pressure arises." In the large centres of population, accordingly, the attempt to prohibit Outdoor Relief was avowedly abandoned,* and it is significant that—at the instance of the Central Authority itself—the area and population placed under the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order exclusively have since steadily diminished.†

The alternative device for carrying out the "Principles" of the 1834 Report, of which the Poor Law Commissioners urged the adoption upon the Boards of Guardians of the Metropolis and the manufacturing districts, was that of the Labour Yard, or Outdoor Relief in return for a test of work by the able-bodied man. Either under the Labour Test Order or under the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order, the opening of a Labour Yard, and the refusal of any Outdoor Relief to able-bodied men except through the Labour Yard, was, by the Poor Law Inspectors and by official Circulars, persistently pressed on the Boards of Guardians of London and the great towns for which the Central Authority had abandoned the policy of the Prohibitory Order, as the proper way of treating the Destitute Able-bodied who applied for relief—irrespective of whether they were Unemployed, Under-employed, Sweated or Unemployable. This was to abandon, as impracticable, the confident hopes of the 1834 Commissioners, that Outdoor Relief to the Able-bodied could be made to cease out of the land.‡ The number of men (with their dependents) thus given relief in return for a task of work rose, in times of bad trade, to a great height. Thus in the Lady-day Quarter, 1843, nearly 40,000 healthy able-bodied men, representing a population of 165,000, were being employed in the Poor Law Labour Yards, on account of their want of work or their insufficient earnings when at work—the Unemployed and the Under-employed thus relieved by the Poor Law comprising large numbers of men thrown out of employment in Lancashire and the West Riding by depression of trade.§ A member of the Bradford Board of Guardians in 1842 estimated that "nearly two-thirds of the relief is given to Able-bodied paupers."‖ At the East End of London, the number of men unemployed in 1848 was so great that the Poplar Guardians seriously complained of the strain imposed upon them. The Guardians, viewing the pressure of "applications by able-bodied men for relief, and which the Board truly believes arises from various causes of temporary cessation of work in the docks and large manufactories, are of opinion that it is expedient that such relief should be administered more extensively than is usually considered admissable by the late Poor Law Commissioners or the Poor Law Board to that class of person; the Guardians at

* In the Unions to which the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order was issued the Central Authority had become convinced, to use its own words, that it was *not expedient to prohibit Out-relief to any class of paupers.* (Circular of Poor Law Board, August 25th, 1852.)

† In 1847 the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order was in force alone (*i.e.*, unaccompanied by the Labour Test Order) in no fewer than 391 Unions. In 1871 this number had shrunk to 299. By 1907, though the total number of Unions under Orders had risen to over 600, the number under the Prohibitory Order alone had further shrunk to 276, nearly all being Unions of sparse and stationary, or actually declining, population. (Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, pp. 46, 47, and Appendix pp. 133–145.)

‡ "The main object of the Poor Law Amendment Act," as it was "the first recommendation of the Commissioners of Poor Law Inquiry," was recognised to be the cessation of all Outdoor Relief to the Able-bodied. (Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1836, pp. 6, 7.)

§ Tenth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1844, pp. 467–70.

‖ MS. Minutes, Board of Guardians, Bradford, October 31st, 1842. In 1848 the Bradford Guardians wanted to abandon the test work. "Experience having proved that the test work of the Bradford Union, as at present conducted, occasions a largely increased expense to the ratepayers, unnecessarily harasses the unfortunate operatives who are in a state of destitution from causes over which they have no control, and seriously endangers the peace of the country; therefore, it is expedient that this Board endeavour to emancipate itself from so serious a grievance, and for that purpose it is advisable respectfully to memorialise the Lord-Lieutenant of the Riding, stating to him the serious and dangerous grievance complained of, and beg that he will transmit the same to the Home Secretary." (MS. Minutes, Board of Guardians, Bradford, April 14th, 1848.)

the same time ordering the employment of stone-breaking to the fullest extent to be continued." * In 1847, even in many rural Unions, "the workhouses . . . became full during the winter," and special permission had to be given for Outdoor Relief to the able-bodied. "In Caxton and Arrington, and Newmarket, the necessity for Out-relief recurs every winter. In Hinckley the difficulty was only partial, owing to a dispute between the stocking weavers and masters about wages. In Clifton and Chipping Sodbury the Workhouse was crowded through the want of employment of the hatters"; † and these Unemployed men had to be given Outdoor Relief. Nor were these merely isolated and exceptional cases. From that time down to 1886 the Central Authority found no better suggestion to make to Boards of Guardians with regard to the Able-bodied men thrown out of work by depression of trade or seasonal cessation of employment—failing appropriate Workhouse accommodation—than the grant of Outdoor Relief in return for labour. The "opening of the Labour Yard" became a periodical occurrence at every period of stress.

There was, however, another disappointment to those who hoped that the "Principles of 1834" would get rid, at any rate, of Able-bodied Pauperism. The professional Vagrant was quick to perceive the advantages of dealing with an Authority limited to merely relieving destitution at the crisis of destitution. It was soon found that, as the Guardians of Lambeth and Colchester declared in 1841, the "trampers" made the "Union house a lodging-house," and that, in fact, "the distribution of Workhouses at short distances over the whole country, and the regular enforcement of the right of strangers and wayfarers to relief" had actually encouraged what the Poor Law Commissioners of 1846 euphemistically termed "wandering habits among the poor." ‡ The increase in the number of Vagrants thus making use of the Workhouse was so great that the Central Authority had to retrace its steps, and, after many shifts and changes of policy, strive to insist on the exclusion of Vagrants from the General Mixed Workhouse, and to urge the provision—which practically never was made—of a "separate building devoted exclusively to the reception of this class of poor." § What was eventually established, throughout England and Wales, was the Casual Ward as a part of the Workhouse, usually under the same roof or within the same curtilage, and under the same Master.

Meanwhile, the "offer of the House" was failing as a test in a way that the authors of the Report of 1834 could not have foreseen, and for which they were certainly not responsible. What they recommended was a series of separate institutions for the several classes of paupers, under entirely separate management. What the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835–47 insisted on establishing was the General Mixed Workhouse, against which the Report of 1834 had protested. In due course the General Mixed Workhouse, including, under one roof and one management, the young and the old, the sick and the healthy, the Able-bodied and the non-Able-bodied, proved, by its very promiscuity and uniformity of regimen, actually attractive to certain types of Able-bodied paupers. It may indeed be said that this was an inevitable result of placing all the different classes under one Destitution Authority. To a Board of Guardians burdened with having to provide for the sick, the orphans and the aged (of whom there were always hundreds in chronic pauperism), the very ideal of the 1834 Report as regards the Able-bodied—an institution standing always ready, swept and garnished but normally empty—a form of relief to be always on offer but seldom accepted—seemed a fantastic extravagance. It appeared obviously more reasonable to admit the few Able-bodied paupers of good times to the General Mixed Workhouse as exceptions; with the inevitable result that they found themselves in conditions that were certainly more agreeable, if not more "eligible," to the apathetic loafer than working continuously for long hours at the low wages of the

* MS. Minutes, Board of Guardians, Poplar, November 16th, 1848.

† Official Circular, No. 5, N.S., May, 1847, p. 67.

‡ Twelfth Annual Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1846, p. 19.

§ *Ibid.* It is to be noted that, in 1843, maintenance in the Casual Ward, not being maintenance in a Workhouse, had actually to be entered as Outdoor Relief! (Poor Law Commissioners, December 11th, 1843; in MS. records of Board of Guardians, Newcastle-on-Tyne.) But so strong has been the influence of the "mixed" Authority that the Casual Ward, except in half a dozen quite special cases, never has become a separate institution under its own separate officer. It has remained a mere appendage of the General Mixed Workhouse, under the "mixed" master and matron. It was largely because it has proved impossible under the "mixed" Authority to get the Casual Ward made an institution really separate from the Workhouse that the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy of 1906 was driven to recommend the removal of all provision for vagrants out of the Poor Law, and the withdrawal of this function from the Destitution Authorities.

unskilled labourer. And to him, as to the professional Vagrant, it was an additional attraction that the Poor Law was strictly limited to relieving him at the crisis of his destitution, leaving him free to come and go as he chose, and to live as he pleased, without even the curb of official cognisance and observation of his doings, whenever he was not actually in receipt of relief.

This unexpected outcome of the "Workhouse Test" began to be noticed in 1868. The pressure on the accommodation of the Metropolitan Workhouses, and the mixing together of so many different classes of inmates, made it impossible, as the Inspector, Mr. Corbett, pointed out, "to apply the Workhouse as a test of destitution to single Able-bodied men." * "In urging upon Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis," repeated his successor, Mr. Longley, "as I have lately had occasion to do almost daily, the application of the Workhouse Test, I have not infrequently been met by the startling admission that the Workhouse is attractive to paupers; that there are many persons in the Workhouse furnishes no test of destitution. All arguments in support of the Workhouse Test which assume the existence of a well-regulated Workhouse (to use the language of the Poor Law Commissioners of Inquiry, 1833) must fail at once when addressed to Guardians whose Workhouse offers attractions to the indolent. And I have reason to think that the aversion to the proper and free use of the Workhouse which distinguishes many Metropolitan Boards of Guardians, is in some measure due to the failure of the Workhouses, as at present administered, to satisfy the essential conditions of their establishment." † Mr. Longley definitely ascribed the inconvenient laxity which had come over Workhouse administration, not to any shortcomings of the Boards of Guardians, but to the very nature of the General Mixed Workhouse for all classes, which the Central Authority had substituted for the series of specialised institutions recommended in the Report of 1834. "The presence in a Workhouse," he said, "of the sick, or of any class in whose favour the ordinary discipline must be relaxed and who receive special indulgences, has an almost inevitable tendency to impair the general discipline of the establishment." ‡ "*The Orders*," he expressly added, "*are in some way responsible.*" The General Consolidated Order of 1847, which had, in 1871, already remained for twenty-four years without revision, had been framed with "primary reference . . . to the . . . smaller Mixed Workhouses which are, *at present at least*, a necessity in rural districts; and they fail in many particulars to satisfy the special conditions of Indoor Relief in London." § The very improvement in the Workhouses, which, under the Central Authority's own pressure, was taking place between 1866 and 1875, had, in fact, brought to light the inherent drawback of the General Mixed Workhouse which the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835–47 had imposed on England and Wales; which their influence in 1845 imposed on Ireland; and which the example of England and Ireland has since induced Scotland to imitate.

To remedy this unexpected form of Able-bodied Pauperism, the able Inspectorate of 1869–86 proposed to reverse the calamitous policy insisted on by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1835–47, prescribed as to General Mixed Workhouses by the General Consolidated Order of 1847, and to carry out the proposal of the 1834 Report by establishing separate institutions for the Able-bodied, expressly devised for deterring them from applying for or accepting relief. Hence the Able-bodied, like the children and the sick, were now to be accommodated by themselves. Thus, we find, from 1871 onwards, the idea of the "Test Workhouse," an institution set apart exclusively for the Able-bodied, where they could be subjected (to use Mr. Longley's words) to "such a system of labour, discipline and restraint as shall be sufficient to outweigh," in the estimation of the inmates, "the advantages" which they enjoy. Mr. Longley declared that the main object of the

* Mr. Corbett's Report of January 4th, 1868, in Twentieth Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1867–8, p. 126; repeated in his Report of August 10th, 1871; Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 80.

† Office Minute by Mr. Longley, 1873. Much the same words occur in his Annual Report. The "lax discipline of the Workhouse" in London is described as tending "to deprive it of its function as a test." (Mr. Longley's Report in Third Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1873–4, p. 166.) In his elaborate Report on Indoor Relief in the Metropolis he expressed his emphatic opinion that "the deterrent discipline . . fails at present to be duly enforced in London Workhouses almost without exception. . . . The general tone of their administration is that of the *almshouse* rather than of the *workhouse* system." (Mr. Longley's Report on Indoor Relief in the Metropolis, in Fourth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1874-5, p. 59.)

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867 had been, not exclusively, or even principally, the better accommodation of the sick, but the introduction of *classification by institutions*, with the double object of, on the one hand, an improved treatment of the sick, and, on the other, "the establishment of a stricter and more deterrent discipline in Workhouses." Circumstances, he said, had delayed the accomplishment of the latter purpose, but it was now time for the Central Authority to "urge upon Guardians the establishment in Workhouses of a more distinctly deterrent system of discipline and diet than has hitherto been secured, involving a reconsideration of the conditions of pauper labour and service in Workhouses." * Such "Able-bodied Test Workhouses" were established, at first at Poplar, and then in a few other Unions. In them, as in the Casual Wards, we watch the Destitution Authority presently seeking to depart from the principle of merely relieving destitution, at the crisis of destitution, and asking Parliament to give powers of compulsory detention.

Thus, we find to-day, in the treatment of Able-bodied Pauperism by one Union or another, not the simple and uniform method recommended by the 1834 Report, namely the offer of maintenance in a deterrent Workhouse, with freedom to come and go at their will, but many different forms both of institutional and of domiciliary relief, one or other of which is granted, not according to the character of the case—whether, for instance, the applicant belongs to the class of Unemployed, Under-employed, Sweated or Vagrant—but according to the varying policy of particular Boards of Guardians at particular times. We have the persistence, in the great majority of Unions in England and Wales, and in all the Irish Unions, of admission to a General Mixed Workhouse, as the ordinary plan of dealing with the Able-bodied male applicants; and for Able-bodied women, of the grant of unconditional and inadequate Outdoor Relief to eke out their scanty earnings. On the other hand, we see in use, recommended and even prescribed by the Local Government Board, at least three distinct forms of specialised treatment of the Able-bodied applicant for relief. In some places he gets Outdoor Relief in return for work. Under other circumstances he is offered nothing but maintenance in a severe "Test Workhouse." Elsewhere he finds himself, even if a resident, referred only to the Casual Ward.

(A) The Persistence of Outdoor Relief.

Speaking broadly, it may be said that the seventy-five years' efforts of the Central Authority and its Inspectorate have succeeded, so far as concerns able-bodied men who are themselves in health, and whose dependents are in health, in getting rid of the grant of Outdoor Relief, as an ordinary or systematic method of continuous provision under the Poor Law. This result has, however, been achieved only at the cost, first, of resorting at intervals to the very unsatisfactory Outdoor Labour Test, which we shall presently describe, and, secondly, of leaving certain loopholes in the nominally impenetrable wall of prohibition, through which, in seasons of severe stress, and for exceptional cases at all times, the Guardians can allow individuals to pass. As these loopholes have of late years shown a dangerous tendency to enlargement, it is necessary to consider them in some detail.

(i.) *Sudden or Urgent Necessity.*

We have first to notice that, in every populous Union, there will be, on an average, one or two cases every day—*in some Unions half a dozen cases every day*—in which able-bodied men will be given food by the Relieving Officer on account of "sudden or urgent necessity." These cases, *which must represent at least* 10,000 *different men in the course of a year*, and possibly a much larger number, have more than doubled in number during

* *Ibid.*, p. 47. This had been expressly suggested in 1868 by Mr. Corbett. "I am more than ever convinced," he says, "that one of the great wants of the Metropolis is the establishment of new, or the appropriation of existing Workhouses for the able-bodied classes of *groups* of Unions, in each of which one sex only should be received; a far more complete system of classification maintained than has hitherto been attempted at least in Metropolitan Workhouses; and strict discipline enforced under proper regulations and superintendence." (Mr. Corbett's Report of January 4th, 1868, in Twentieth Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1867–8, p. 126.) Whether or not this was exactly in the mind of the Legislature or of the Central Authority in 1867, it seems true, as Mr. Longley pointed out, that the provisions of the Metropolitan Poor Act were extensive enough to cover, "whether directly or indirectly, not merely an improvement in Workhouse sick wards, but the reception in distinct buildings of separate classes of paupers or . . . classification, not in a Workhouse but by Workhouses." (Mr. Longley's Report on Indoor Relief in the Metropolis, in Fourth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1874–5, p. 42.)

the past decade.* Unfortunately, no statistics are available of the total number so relieved, the duration of the relief, the frequency of individual recurrence, or even its total cost. We cannot regard it as satisfactory that every year there should be, without the prior knowledge of any public authority, as many as 10,000 men arriving at such a crisis of destitution as to be entitled to instant food ; or that they should receive public assistance in this form without, in many if not most of the cases anything more effective being done to render them self-supporting citizens. We see here the characteristic defect of the Destitution Authority, that it has no means of knowing anything of these 10,000 men prior to the crisis of their destitution, when a helping hand would have been more useful than at the crisis itself, and no machinery for keeping them in view after the crisis. Out of the darkness these starving men apply to the Relieving Officer ; he visits their miserable abodes and leaves with them their loaves of bread ; then—unless they choose to attend the next Relief Committee of the Board of Guardians—into the darkness they disappear again, until their next application. If the Board of Guardians chooses not to " offer the house " to such as apply for further relief, or if these persons refuse to accept an order for admission, they may continue in " urgent necessity," when the Relieving Officer has no alternative but to go on supplying just enough food to keep them from starvation. Cases occasionally go on in this way from fortnight to fortnight, until something happens —it may be eviction from the lodging, it may be an attack of sickness which compels entrance to the Poor Law Infirmary, it may be death from lack of other things than the bread that the Relieving Officer doles out. What does not happen is any effective public assistance in securing employment at wages, or in providing such physically or mentally restorative treatment as would fit the men for employment.

(ii.) *Reported Exceptions.*

But there is another loophole through which the Guardians grant Outdoor Relief to able-bodied men, even without the Outdoor Labour Test. Under both the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order and the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order, the Guardians are allowed to grant Outdoor Relief in contravention of the other provisions of the Order, provided that they report the particulars to the Local Government Board, which, in each case, formally sanctions the grant. When carefully employed for selected cases this loophole is found of great use by experienced Poor Law administrators.† It is, in fact, frequently employed by most Boards of Guardians in Urban Unions to tide respectable families over short periods of unemployment, when the Labour Yard is not open.‡ We understand that the grants, when reported, are almost invariably sanctioned, though with adverse comment and warning when this is thought necessary ; and that when the cases from any one Union become numerous, the Guardians are pressed to " open the Labour Yard," and set the men to work. Unfortunately, the Local Government Board does not publish any particulars of the reports which it is thus receiving every fortnight from nearly all the great Urban Unions, nor even a statement of the total number of grants sanctioned each year. All the information that we have been able to obtain on the point is the number of able-bodied men granted Outdoor Relief on one

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* The only information available is the number of able-bodied men so relieved on one day in the year. On January 1st in 1897, it was 131 ; in 1902, 145 ; in 1904, 258 ; in 1905, 371 ; and in 1907, 293. At Bermondsey, Camberwell and Poplar alone, the Relieving Officers succoured in this way, during one half-year, no fewer than 2,000 separate men (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 19788–928, 20319–28, and Appendix VII. (Q.). to Vol. I.). Relief on account of sudden or urgent necessity is given, of course, also to women and children, and to the aged and the sick, but we deal here only with that granted to healthy able-bodied men. In Manchester, the value of this relief in kind, on account of sudden or urgent necessity, has risen, from £78 in 1897, to £256 in 1904, and £483 in 1905. (Report of Superintendent of Relief to the Manchester Board of Guardians for 1903–5, p. 14.)

† A Poor Law Guardian described to us a successful use of this method of provision, as an alternative to the Outdoor Labour Test : " In connection with the unemployed during the great frost of 1895 . . . in the district of St. George the Martyr, the unemployed—after a case-paper had been filled, a visit paid to the home and one reference verified—were divided into four classes. To Class A adequate relief was given in a man's own home without any further test. To Class B work was given on three days in the week at current rates of pay. Class C was provided with oakum-picking in a warehouse hired for the purpose, the work being supervised by officers provided by the Guardians. Class D was offered the Workhouse. The plan worked without a hitch, the frost lasting, if I remember right, for eight weeks. We were particularly struck by the satisfactory results obtained in Class A. The men were most surprised and grateful for what was done, and all returned, so far as we could learn, to their own work when the roads and river were again open." (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 32267, Par. 7.)

‡ In 1895 we notice that the Manchester Board of Guardians was thus granting Outdoor Relief to eighty or ninety cases weekly ; whereupon the Inspector appeared at its meeting and pressed for adoption of the Outdoor Labour Test. (MS. Minutes, Manchester Board of Guardians, January 23rd, 1895.)

day "on account of want of work, or other causes," without its being usually specified in how many cases the men were put on the Outdoor Labour Test. What is disquieting is that these numbers show an increase from 789 on January 1st, 1897, and 581 in 1902, to 1,585 on January 1st, 1904, to no fewer than 7,872 in 1905, and to 2,235 in 1907. And we learn that, of the 7,872 who were being so relieved in one day in 1905, no fewer than 4,632 were not "under a labour test in labour yards."* These men are seldom allowed to have Outdoor Relief for many weeks together, so that we fear it must be inferred that, if the Local Government Board would publish particulars of the cases that it formally sanctions during each year, we should find that, in addition to the ten thousand or so relieved on account of sudden or urgent necessity, at least *ten or twenty thousand more able-bodied men are, in the course of the year, thus temporarily in receipt of Outdoor Relief without any task of work*, and—what we regard as far more serious—without anything effective being done to improve them, either physically or mentally, or to get them into wage-earning employment again.

(iii) *Going out to Look for Work.*

A third loophole, of a somewhat different kind, by which relief is granted without the man residing in the Workhouse, is that afforded by the opportunity which some Boards of Guardians give to selected inmates to go out in order to look for work, whilst leaving wife and children inside the institution. This is against all the precepts of 1834. But the various Boards of Guardians realised a few years ago that to insist on a man when he left the Workhouse necessarily taking with him his wife and children, was virtually to condemn the man to remain in the Workhouse for the rest of his life. "It is impossible," said a Lambeth Guardian, "whatever the man's wishes may be, for a man to go out of the Workhouse with a wife and three or four children, obtain a room, and obtain work in one day; no human being could do it; and the result is that he would keep in the Workhouse, because he would not make the attempt. It is an impossible thing to do." Some Boards of Guardians took thought how they could help such men to regain their independence. "If," continued our informant, "it was a man who seemed able-bodied with a wife and family, we might execute our discretionary power, and say to him, if he had got a fairly good character: 'We will allow you to go out for a fortnight without your wife and children with a view of obtaining work.' We should mark on that paper that he should reappear in a fortnight's time. As a matter of fact, I may say that discretionary power of allowing a man out without his wife and children has worked very efficiently, and in a great many cases they have ultimately taken their discharge. . . . We use our discretion. . . . If a man is not in very good health, possibly he has been in the infirmary first and has then been removed to the Workhouse, we should say the man looks as if he requires a rest, and the Medical Officer gives his view of the man's condition, and whether he requires it. He might say he should have six weeks' or a month's rest. We should mark that on the paper, and in eight weeks' time he would come before us. No case is lost sight of." † But so great is the fear that men will leave their wives and families on the hands of the Guardians that any such humane consideration is contrary to the General Consolidated Order; and it has been strongly objected to by other Guardians. It is in vain that it is pointed out that, in practice, it is just as easy for a man to desert his wife and family when they have all gone out together, as when he has gone out alone. In fact, father and mother together may rid themselves of their children at any time by the simple expedient of sending them back alone to the Workhouse gate (where they have to be taken in), the parents disappearing into the darkness. There is, in all these cases, the same nominal liability to, and (owing to lack of organised pursuit) the same chance of practical immunity from, criminal prosecution and punishment. The humane consideration of the Boards of Guardians in letting the man go off by himself to look for work—sometimes man and wife without the children—has been amply justified by the results. At Lambeth, in forty-four cases during 1904–6, the man, after more or less interval, found his feet, and took his wife and children off the Guardians' hands. Sometimes it took three or four weeks, sometimes as much as nine months before the man could build up a home. In some cases the men failed the first time, and had to return. In one case, even after a successful start had been made, the family had to be re-admitted; and yet on a subsequent attempt the man found his feet and managed to keep his family.

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* Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1904–5, p. lxiii.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 14943, 18607 (Par. 7), 18840, 23945 (Par. 10), 23982–5, 24073, 78744 78991.

(iv.) *Are Women Able-Bodied?*

But though as many as 30,000, 40,000 or even 50,000 healthy and Able-bodied [men may now receive Outdoor Relief, in the course of each year, without any task of work, in one or other of the ways just described, nineteen-twentieths of the Outdoor Relief granted to physically competent persons is given to women. So far as we can discover from the official statistics, there were in England and Wales alone, on January 1st, 1907, 62,240 healthy Able-bodied adult persons (other than the occupants of the Casual Ward) simultaneously in receipt of Outdoor Relief on that day.* Of these only 2,528 were men, and no fewer than 59,712 women.†

In a small number of cases—we doubt whether they come to 5 per cent. of the 59,712—these persons are single women, without children, not aged, and not distinctly ill or crippled, who nevertheless find themselves unable, perhaps from physical or mental debility, to earn the few shillings a week upon which such women will manage to exist. In about 276 of the Unions of England and Wales,‡ selected we know not why, the Local Government Board regards such women as "Able-bodied" persons; and absolutely prohibits their Outdoor Relief. In about 374 other Unions,§ scattered indiscriminately among the rest, the Local Government Board does not regard such women as Able-bodied persons; and their Outdoor Relief, without any conditions, has remained for more than half a century lawful. We do not understand the ground of this distinction,‖ and we think that the Boards of Guardians might reasonably have looked for a more definite declaration of policy with regard to this class. We see no reason why such able-bodied women, potentially competent to engage in industrial occupations, should not have made for them exactly the same provision that is desirable for men of like capacity.

But the case of the Able-bodied single woman or unencumbered widow, unable, though without children, to earn her extremely small maintenance, is rare. The vast majority of the 60,000 Able-bodied women on Outdoor Relief in England and Wales are not free to engage in industrial employment, because they are occupied by the care of young children dependent upon them. To rank these in any sense with the Able-bodied is only to obscure the problem. The Scottish Poor Law, more logical than the English classification, whilst prohibiting any form of relief to the Able-bodied, does not include as Able-bodied any women, however physically and mentally competent, who have young children dependent on them. In practice, the English Boards of Guardians make much the same distinction, granting Outdoor Relief pretty freely to widows, to the destitute wives of absentee husbands, and even to unmarried mothers, provided that such women have young children on their hands. In all these cases, in fact, it is recognised as misleading to proceed on the assumption that the refusal of relief will compel the women to be self-supporting. We have chosen so to organise the industrial world that the wife and children are normally supported by the industrial earnings of the husband and father, with the result that when women engage in industries their wages are habitually fixed at rates calculated to support themselves alone, without a family of children. If, by some mischance, the husband and father is withdrawn from the family group, the wife and mother is, with regard to self-support, under a double impossibility. She cannot, consistently with her legal obligation to rear her children properly, give her time and strength to wage-earning to the extent that modern competitive industry demands; and even if she could do so, she finds the woman's remuneration fixed on the basis of supporting one person, and not several. Hence it becomes practically indispensable, as it is only equitable, that there should be afforded to the mother bereft of the man upon whom she had been encouraged to depend suitable public assistance, not so much for herself, as to enable her to bring up the children whom the community, though the breadwinner is withdrawn, still expects her to rear.

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* Apart from able-bodied heads of families constructively in receipt of relief in respect of some sick dependent.

† Namely, 33,664 widows, 7,354 wives of absentee husbands, or single women, or mothers of illegitimate children, and 18,694 able-bodied wives of husbands who were themselves either able-bodied or non-able-bodied. (Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, 1906–7, pp. cxv., cxvi.)

‡ Those to which the Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Order applies.

§ Those to which the Outdoor Relief Regulation Order applies.

‖ Report on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, p. 126.

Unfortunately, though English Boards of Guardians recognise the necessity of coming to the aid of widows with young children, they do not—largely, we think, because they are Destitution Authorities, relieving all sections indiscriminately—face the problem with any clearness of thought. We have been unable, in Union after Union, to make out whether these dispensers of public assistance regarded themselves as helping the Able-bodied woman, or as providing for the upbringing of the orphan children. The Central Authority in its Orders and Circulars—equally because it has to do with all the different sections—has oscillated from one conception to the other.* The result is that, as we have seen in our chapter on "The Outdoor Relief of To-day," there is the greatest possible diversity of practice. A few Boards restrict to the uttermost the grant of Outdoor Relief to widows with children ; † many refuse it to the widow with only one child, or with only two children, however young these may be ; others grant only the quite inadequate sum of 1s. or 1s. 6d. per week per child, and nothing for the mother. Very few Guardians face the problem of how the widows' children—for whom the Poor Law, by including them on the pauper roll, assumes definite responsibility—can, under these circumstances, be properly reared. As we have seen,‡ in at least 100,000 cases, these children are growing up stunted, under-nourished, and to a large extent neglected, because the mother is so hard driven that she cannot properly attend to them. The irony of the situation appears in the fact that if the mother thereupon dies, the children will probably be "boarded-out" with a foster-parent, at a payment of 4s. to 5s. per week each, or three or four times as much as the Guardians paid for them before, or else taken into the Poor Law School or Cottage Homes at a cost of 12s. to 21s. per week each.

We think that, in this matter, the practice of Scotland rather than that of England and Wales should be followed. Women having the care of children should, so long as such care is required from them, be wholly excluded from the category of the Able-bodied. The governing factor in such cases must be what the State considers best for the children. If the children are under school age, the case will be dealt with by the Local Health Authority. If any of them are of school age, the matter becomes one for the Local Education Authority. If the mother and her home are such as to offer a suitable environment for the children, Home Aliment really sufficient for their maintenance will be recommended by the Committees concerned and sanctioned by the Registrar of Public Assistance. If the mother, though not blameworthy, cannot be trusted to expend so much Aliment for the children's advantage, there is the alternative of sending them to the Day Industrial School, where they will be cared for from dawn till dark, the mother being thus set practically free to work, and dealt with as an unemployed Able-bodied person. Finally, if the mother, owing to her vicious habits or otherwise, does not provide a suitable environment for the children, there is no alternative but to remove them altogether from her care ; when she will be set entirely free to work and to maintain herself as an Able-bodied person. In no case ought women burdened with the care of young children to be either regarded as Able-bodied, and refused adequate assistance for the children's upbringing, or relieved merely in respect of their own needs. Whenever the State decides to provide for the children's upbringing by leaving them in the mother's care, her services must be assumed (and required) to be devoted to them, and not to wage-earning. It is, in all these cases, the children who must be provided for, and (wherever this is not thought positively inexpedient) the mother must, by adequate Home Aliment, be enabled to look after them properly.§

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* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, pp. 19–20, 51–52, 87–88.

† Some Boards of Guardians offer to take one or two children off the mother's hands, or all but one or two ; and then expect her to keep the rest without help. Where this means the children entering the admittedly demoralising General Mixed Workhouse, it is, in our opinion, an absolutely inexcusable policy, and a cruel alternative to which to put any worthy mother. Where (as is usually the case) the children are sent to Cottage Homes or a Poor Law residential school, there is more to be said for it, so far as the children so taken are concerned. But what is to be said for a policy which condemns *the other children* to such a home as can be provided for them by a woman's industrial earnings, whether she has to be absent all day in a factory, or ruins the home-life by the ceaseless toil and grime of the sweated out-worker ?

‡ Part I., Chapter II. of this Report p. 29.

§ It will, of course, be the duty of the Registrar of Public Assistance invariably to pursue husbands and fathers who desert their wives and children, and in all proper cases to exact adequate contribution towards their maintenance, whilst, in others, criminal proceedings should be taken for the punishment of the offenders. But it is senseless to do as is at present sometimes done by Boards of Guardians incapable of pursuing deserting husbands, namely, refuse to the children and their mother whatever provision is deemed best suited to their well-being. Deliberately to punish a deserted wife, and deliberately to injure deserted children, by compelling them to enter the admittedly demoralising General Mixed Workhouse, because we fail to apprehend the scoundrel himself, and because we do not know how to prevent collusion, is, in our opinion, wholly unjustifiable.

(B) The Outdoor Labour Test.

In the Outdoor Labour Test as practised by the Boards of Guardians, and as sanctioned by the Central Authority to-day, the Principle of National Uniformity in the relief of Able-bodied Destitution, on which the Reformers of 1834 laid so much stress, is certainly not observed. In the kind of work offered, and in the amount of relief given, Boards of Guardians differ one from another, as they have constantly differed, between the two extremes of a mere pretence at work, with a good meal, a bed in a common lodging-house and a few halfpence in money on the one hand, and on the other painful penal labour upon relief physiologically insufficient to make good the wear and tear involved.

The Report of 1834 laid down the principle "that all who receive relief from the parish shall work for the parish exclusively, as hard as, and for less wages than, independent labourers work for individual employers." How to fulfil these conditions of "less eligibility," and yet maintain the man and his family in a state of health, has always been the crux of the Outdoor Labour Test. With strict administrators of the old-fashioned type, the work provided has taken three or four forms only, such as oakum picking, wood chopping, corn grinding, and, most usual of all, the breaking of granite or limestone by the hammer for use on the roads. Such work can be performed in a shed within the curtilage of the Workhouse—called the "Labour Yard," or the "Stone Yard"—usually differentiated into stalls in which the men work apart from each other, and can be supervised by the Workhouse Master, or by a "Labour Master" serving under him. Moreover, it lends itself to the exaction of a definite task of work from every man who is certified by the Medical Officer as capable of performing it. Since the Local Government Board's Circular of 1886 there has, however, been a reaction in favour of less repulsive forms of employment, such as digging, quarrying and road-making, and even doing odd jobs of cleaning, painting and decorating inside the various Poor Law Institutions. Thus, the Manchester Board of Guardians in 1886–7, and again during 1895–1906, put men to excavate the land attached to its Workhouse at Crumpsall; the Chorlton Board of Guardians has men on Outdoor Relief working on its farm in all seasons of the year, the number rising in winter to several scores; the Leicester Board of Guardians puts hundreds of men to dig on its farm; the York Board of Guardians has, since 1886, set the able-bodied unemployed to bring into cultivation by spade labour the garden land adjoining the Workhouse; and the Bradford Board of Guardians employs the able-bodied men on Outdoor Relief in levelling and preparing for building the land adjacent to its institutions two miles from the centre of the town.* Some Boards of Guardians have, despite the legally authoritative Orders of the Local Government Board, actually provided, for men rendered destitute by lack of employment, the very "work at wages" which has been so much deprecated. In January, 1908, the Local Government Board discovered that, for twenty-nine years, the Guardians of the Ecclesall Bierlow Union, comprising a part of the Borough of Sheffield, had carried on a regular system of offering to every able-bodied man who applied for relief, not the Workhouse, but paid employment at piecework rates. The work was always hard and badly remunerated, and the amount of work limited, a single man being able to earn only 5s. 9d. in a week, the whole six days' attendance being exacted from him, whilst a man with a family was permitted to earn as much as 15s. 4d. in a week, though all were paid at the same piecework rate. No food was supplied to the men. They went out, like other workmen, at midday, to get their own meals, and at 5 p.m. they were paid their earnings for the day. These earnings were not entered as relief, but as wages to "journeymen woodcutters," or "journeymen stonecutters." The men were not entered as paupers or subject to disfranchisement. This system of "setting the poor to work," witnessed by the inspectors at every visit, went on from 1879 to 1908 without official objection, but was, in the latter year, peremptorily stopped by the Local Government Board.†

Notwithstanding this reaction in favour of excavating or digging, or even gardening, on the part of some Boards of Guardians, or even the provision of employment at wages, the old-fashioned Labour Yard, "Stone Yard," or "Test Yard," with its sheds and stalls,

* Many other Unions have done the same in a small way. "We did not have a Labour Yard in the ordinary sense," deposed a witness from Woolwich. . . . "We had about 30 acres of land at Goldie Leigh. . . . Instead of giving them stones to break, we put them on at garden work. We paid them only the relief scale." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 19128.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 41105–41220; MS. Minutes, Ecclesall Bierlow Board of Guardians, February and March, 1908.

its stone-breaking and oakum-picking, its corn-grinding and wood-chopping, is still the typical form of the Outdoor Labour Test.*

The amount of effort demanded from each individual differs from Union to Union even more widely than the character of the work. Where the work is most repulsive in character and the relief given is smallest, the task exacted is usually the most severe—thereby intensifying the lack of uniformity in the treatment of Able-bodied Destitution. Thus, the Leicester Board of Guardians of to-day, who set the Able-bodied men to work on the land, and give as much as 14s. a week in relief for a family, appear unable to exact any definite task or real effort from these relatively fortunate paupers. The men, we are told by one of the Guardians, do practically what they like; and "in frosty, very wet or snowy weather . . . they sit in the shed around the fire smoking and talking, and further confirming the habits of laziness which many of them have already acquired."† On the other hand, the visitor to the severely managed Sheffield Labour Yard may watch each man at work at stone-breaking, strictly confined in a separate cell, receiving no money whatsoever, but merely his bare meals and a ticket for a common lodging-house, actually performing the specified task of making 10 cwt. of stone pass through a 2-inch mesh. In the neighbouring Unions of Holbeck and Hunslet the task for each man in the Labour Yard is as much as 20 cwt. of stone per day; at Cleobury Mortimer in 1890 it was 16 cwt.; at Dudley in 1904 and at Bradford in 1907 it was 15 cwt.; at King's Norton in 1894 it was 12 cwt., but in 1903 it was only 8 cwt.; at Wolstanton and Burslem in 1886 and 1893, and at Paddington in 1905, it was 10 cwt.; at Lewisham in 1888, at Wandsworth in 1892, and at Salford in 1907, it was 8 cwt.; at Ipswich we found it only 7 cwt., which was the amount at Brentford, 1886–1906, and at Stoke-upon-Trent in 1895; whilst at Hackney in 1895 it was only 5 cwt.‡ The task sanctioned for oakum-picking shows equal variations. Thus at West Bromwich in 1886, and at Stoke-upon-Trent in 1895, it was 2 lbs. per man; at West Bromwich it was in 1887 increased to 3 lbs., which was the amount sanctioned at Bradford since 1882, at Lewisham since 1888, and at Hackney in 1906. On the other hand the task sanctioned at Huddersfield in 1888 was 4 lbs., which was that at Leeds in 1907; whilst at the Wolstanton and Burslem Labour Yard no less than 6 lbs. had to be picked in the day.§ During the winter of 1878–9, when pauperism in the Northern counties suddenly increased by 31 per cent., and Labour Yards were opened in all directions, it was noted that the daily tasks prescribed for the 7,000 men at work (and approved, practically simultaneously, by the Local Government Board) varied from 5 to 20 cwt. of stone-breaking, and from 1 to 4 lbs. of oakum-picking.‖

It must, however, be added that, with the exception of a very few strictly superintended Labour Yards in Lancashire and Yorkshire,¶ the variations between the different tasks exacted have always been more nominal than real. We can find no evidence that the Central Authority or the Board of Guardians ever ascertain whether the task so solemnly prescribed is actually performed. As a matter of fact, the amount of work done is usually trivial. It is in vain that Boards of Guardians insist, as did that of Poplar in 1868, that the task of work should be "at least as arduous as that required of a labourer in ordinary employment."** It is in vain that the regulations specify, as do those of Edmonton Union,

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* There have recently been some signs of a fresh reaction back to the more penal forms of labour. Thus the Chorlton Board of Guardians was anxious, in 1905, to close its farm, and send the men to test work at the Joint Workhouse at Tame Street, Manchester. (MS. Minutes, Manchester and Chorlton Joint Committee, March 10th, 1905.) And the Prestwich Board of Guardians in the same year started stone-breaking. (MS. Minutes, Prestwich Board of Guardians, March 23rd, 1905.) At Manchester, too, we understand that the farm is now regarded as a failure in the way of Outdoor Labour Test.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 47005.

‡ We have found no explanation of the reasons which induce the Local Government Board to sanction—and specific official sanction has to be given in each case—such diverse tasks. At first, we thought the variations in amount of the stone to be broken might have some relation to the character of the stone. To break 20 cwt. of limestone is deemed by the Sheffield Board of Guardians equivalent to breaking 13 cwt. of granite, and by the Bradford Board of Guardians to break 12 cwt. of limestone the equivalent of breaking 6 cwt. of granite. But the variations in the amount of the task (from 5 cwt. to 20 cwt.) do not appear always to bear relation to the character of the stone or the size of the grid. Moreover, as stated above, the task for oakum-picking varies from 2 lbs. per day up to as much as 6 lbs. per day. There are similar variations in that of wood-chopping. If a definite task is prescribed for all able-bodied men, with the sanction of official approval, it surely ought to be determined upon some rational physiological basis, uniform thoughout the country.

§ At Huddersfield in 1888, 9 cwt. of wood had to be sawn; at Cannock in 1893, only 4 cwt.

‖ "Poor Relief during the Depression of Trade in the Winter of 1878–9," by J. Macdonald; in Annual Report of Poor Law Conferences, 1879, p. 131.

¶ For instance, we have been told by an Inspector that Liverpool "cleared" its Labour Yard in 1891, after six years of laxness, by putting on a practical stonemason as labour master, who saw to it that the prescribed task was executed. It soon became possible to close the Labour Yard for lack of applicants. It is, however, to be noted that trade had become very good.

** MS. Minutes, Board of Guardians, Poplar, September 22nd, 1868.

that each man is to break 10 cwt. of granite sufficiently small to pass through a 1½-inch grid or mesh; or to make up and tie 200 bundles of firewood; or to grind 120 lbs. of maize or 8 pecks of wheat or barley.* The curious investigator into Labour Yards to-day, who insists on examining the Labour Master's private memoranda of the amount of work done by each man, invariably finds that nothing like the specified task is accomplished. Unfortunately the actual amount of stone broken, or of the other work done, is seldom officially reported or recorded.† At Poplar in 1895 it was found that only 1,345 tons were broken in 13,428 days' labour; that is to say, not the 10 cwt. expected at Edmonton, but just over 2 cwt. per man per day.‡ The average in the Wandsworth Labour Yard in 1896 had never exceeded from 2 cwt. to 3 cwt. per man per day.§ The only practicable remedy of the Guardians is to prosecute a man for refusing to work; but this extreme step is resorted to only in cases of flagrant disobedience or recalcitrance. Under these circumstances, no amount of supervision can ensure continuous work. "Recently," said the Superintendent of the Leeds Labour Yard, "I have had to attend to the stone carts coming to the Yard, and some of the men . . . are ever ready to take advantage of my temporary absence. I have notice that, when I am called away, nearly every man ceases work until my return, and time after time I have looked from the Test Yard door and seen them gossiping in groups of four or five, some smoking pipes or cigarettes, others sitting on the barrows; one acts as a 'crow' to warn the Yard when I return."‖ The magistrates will not convict a man who docilely continues to raise his hammer whenever the Labour Master's eye is upon him, however slow and ineffective may be the stroke. The result is that the so-called test of work in the Labour Yard invariably fosters a habit of dull, lethargic loafing. It requires "no mental effort, and no sense of responsibility; it is a mechanical process." The men so employed "seem," said the Clerk to a Metropolitan Board of Guardians, "to suffer from overwhelming inertia."¶

Even in the hours of labour required, or perhaps we should say the hours of attendance, which have equally to be sanctioned by the Central Authority, we find a similar variation from Labour Yard to Labour Yard. It must, however, be said that the length of the prescribed working day is so small that the range of possible variations is less than in the case of the amount of task. We find Labour Yards requiring only five hours' attendance for a day's work, whilst a few exact as many as eight hours. The working week is usually only from thirty-six to forty-two hours,** as compared with the sixty, seventy

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* Annual Report of Edmonton Board of Guardians, 1904–5. It may be pointed out that, eight years previously, it had been said that: "It is not now customary for the [Local Government] Board to sanction a task of corn-grinding by quantity; a time-limit should be stated for this particular work." (Local Government Board, January 9th, 1896; in MS. records of Bradford Board of Guardians.)

† The MS. Reports which the Superintendent of the Test Yard at Leeds made to his Board of Guardians in 1905 specified the amount of stone broken by each man at work, and the cost of breaking per ton according to the "pay" (or Outdoor Relief) given to each man. Some men broke as much as 5 cwt. per day; others did little more than 2 cwt. The stone broken by some men worked out at 13s. 6d. per ton; that broken by others came to only 6s. 6d. per ton. The results of the oakum-picking were even more inadequate. The task set was 4 lbs. per day for each man, but eleven men are recorded to have picked only 3¼ lbs. among them all, whilst five men picked 1¾ lbs., the total working out at a few ounces a day for each man. (MS. Reports of Superintendent of Labour Yard to Leeds Board of Guardians, April 8th, 1905, and February 17th, 1907.)

‡ Report of Outdoor Labour Yards Committee to Poplar Board of Guardians, June 5th, 1895. At the Salford Labour Yard in 1908, where the task is 8 cwt., we learn that the average amount done would certainly not exceed 3 cwt. per man per day.

§ Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1896, p. 6.

‖ MS. Report of Superintendent of Labour Yard to Leeds Board of Guardians, April 21st, 1906.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 18918.

**At the Wandsworth and Clapham Union in 1886 the hours at the Labour Yard were from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily. (House of Commons Return, No. 69 of 1886, on Pauperism and Distress, p. 34). In 1888, the Local Government Board Inspector for the Metropolis gave the usual hours as from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Law, 1888, *Q.* 794.) These were the hours of the three Poplar Labour Yards in 1895 (Report of Outdoor Labour Yards Committee to Poplar Board of Guardians, June 5th, 1895). The working day of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily (forty-eight hours per week), fixed by the Bradford Board of Guardians in 1882, is unusually long. In 1907 the working day fixed by the same Board was from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 12.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m to 12 noon only (thirty-three hours per week). The working week in 1904 at Prestwich contained only thirty-one hours, viz., Mondays and Tuesdays, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; three other days 8 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; and Saturdays 8 a.m. to 12 noon. (MS. Minutes, Prestwich Board of Guardians, August 8th, 1904.) The shortest working week in a Labour Yard that we have found is that solemnly fixed at a joint conference of the Manchester, Chorlton and Prestwich Boards in the same year, with the Lord Mayor of Manchester in the chair. The week's "Outdoor Labour Test" for this great urban agglomeration was set at twenty-six hours, viz., Mondays 11 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 12 noon. For this a man with wife and four children received 10s., and, in addition, his own dinner daily. (MS. Minutes, Manchester Board of Guardians. November 8th. 1905.)

or even eighty hours of work per week required of the labourer in such typical occupations as agriculture, transport by road and rail, and iron and steel works.* And with the short hours of attendance goes a low rate of pay. But the scale of Outdoor Relief thus afforded varies as widely as the task or the hours. A single man without children may get as little as sevenpence (half in bread) in return for his day.† Elsewhere, as at Poplar in 1895, he gets for his day four times that amount.‡ For a man and wife the Bedwellty Board of Guardians, in the Labour Yard in which from 300 to 600 men worked during the whole winter of 1892–3, on the shutting down of the Tredegar Steel Works, allowed 1s. per day (half in kind),§ whilst at Poplar in 1870 a childless couple got only 5d. in money and 4 lbs. of bread.‖ The corresponding amount allowed to a man with wife and three or four children varies from nine shillings to more than fourteen.¶ On the other hand, at the Salford Labour Yard in February, 1907, a man could get only 6s. per week for himself and wife, and 1s. for each child—making no more than 10s. per week for a family of six—and that only provided that he worked for the full thirty-eight and a half hours in the week, and actually accomplished the task of breaking 8 cwt. of stone per day, a proportionate deduction being made for any deficiency in the quantity broken. This arrangement comes very near to employment at piecework rates of wages, differing according to the size of the family.**

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* As pointed out in *The Times* in 1888: "In respect of the length of time worked, the outdoor pauper has a distinct advantage over the ordinary workman. In no trade in London does a week's work consist of less than fifty-two and a half hours' work. In no Stoneyard does it imply more than forty-five; in the majority only forty-two; in several it is thirty-six; in one Union last winter it was actually thirty-two. Moreover, carpenters or engineers have to be at work by seven o'clock even in the coldest weather; the Stoneyard never opens its gates till 8 a.m., and 8.30 a.m. or 9 a.m. is a still commoner hour; one Union last winter only commenced operations at 10 a.m.; the theory was excellent, namely that the men would have had time to go round and seek employment before coming in; in practice, however, it was found a considerable convenience by the class of applicants who preferred to be in bed till their wives had got their breakfast ready." (*The Times*, 1888; quoted in Evidence before the House of Lords Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888, *Q.* 5327.)

† This was the scale in force at St. Pancras, in 1888. (Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888, *Q.* 3088.) At Holbeck, since 1880, despite the extreme task of 20 cwt., the single man has got only 8d. per day for five days in the week. (Rules for Relief, Holbeck Union, January 19th, 1880); at Hunslet, since 1891, 9d. per day. (Rules for Relief, Hunslet Union, May 13th, 1891.) The Bedwellty Board of Guardians, which has had several thousands of men at work in its Labour Yards, has always allowed a single man 8d. per day only.

‡ Namely, 1s. 6d. in money and 1s. 3d. in food, for each day of six hours. (Report of Outdoor Labour Yards Committee to Poplar Board of Guardians, June 5th, 1895.) At Edmonton, in 1904–5, it was 1s. in money and 1s. 6d. in food. (Annual Report of Edmonton Board of Guardians, 1904–5.)

§ The same scale was maintained in the summer of 1898, when no fewer that eight separate Labour Yards had to be opened for five months, to relieve the distress caused by the coal strike, and several thousands of men were set to work, at a total cost of £11,765. The scale has been again adhered to in the present Labour Yards, which have now been open continuously for over four years. It is significant that some Boards order "a widower with children to have the same allowance as if he had a wife." (By-laws, Board of Guardians, Richmond, Surrey, July, 1895; also in MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, August 12th, 1870.) Sometimes a dinner is provided for the men at work. The giving of boots (to enable the men to go out and find employment) is a frequent incident. At Preston, in 1858, the men on Outdoor Relief who were at work on the land were granted clogs at one-third the cost price, but not more than one pair every six months. (MS. Minutes, Board of Guardians, Preston, January 12th, 1858.)

‖ MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, August 12th, 1870.

¶ In St. Pancras, in 1888, only 9s. (half in bread). In Holborn, in 1886, such a man got 7s. a week and 36 lbs. of bread, which might be taken at 4s. 6d. (House of Commons Return on Pauperism and Distress, No. 69 of 1886, p. 42.) At Poplar, in 1895, the married man with three children got as much as 1s. 9d. in money and 1s. 9d. in food for a day of six hours. (Report of Outdoor Labour Yards Committee to Poplar Board of Guardians, June 5th, 1895.) Another form of scale is that of Chorlton Union in 1905, which gave 3s. per week for man and wife, with 1s. extra for each dependent child. (Report of Board of Guardians, Chorlton Union, 1905.) At Ipswich, in 1908, as much as 9s. a week was being given to a man with a wife only, whilst the total allowance for a man with wife and five children was as much as 14s. a week. The full amount has to be paid whether or not the work is done. "I am to state that it appears to the Board that in directing a reduction of the amount of relief to be made in cases in which the allotted task of work is not completed, the Guardians are not acting in strict accordance with the principles of the Poor Law. It is the duty of the Guardians to relieve destitution, and the relief given by them should be in proportion to the necessities of the applicant, and should not take the form of wages or payment for work done, the task prescribed being designed solely as a test of destitution. If a pauper, not being physically incapacitated, does not complete his task of work, it is competent to the Guardians to take proceedings against him as an idle and disorderly person." (MS. Minutes, West Ham Board of Guardians, June 9th, 1887. Letter from Local Government Board.) The Master reported that: "Certain men employed in the Labour Yard did not perform the task of work prescribed by the Guardians, and that in some cases no attempt was made to do so," and he was directed in all cases of wilful neglect to take the offenders before the Justices. (MS. Minutes, West Ham Board of Guardians, February 9th, 1888.)

**MS. Minutes, Salford Board of Guardians, February 1st, 1907.

It is a further element of variety that the men are sometimes allowed (and even required) to come regularly to the Labour Yard continuously day by day; whilst elsewhere they are only permitted to work (and to draw the relief) for three, or even for two, days in the week. At Poplar in 1895, where relatively high rates per day were allowed, each ticket was available only for two days, and 1,939 separate men got, on an average, only seven days' work each in the Labour Yards in the whole six weeks that they were open.* At Edmonton in 1904 the plan was adopted of allowing to every man in the Labour Yard the same daily amount of Outdoor Relief, viz., 2s. 6d. (three-fifths in kind), but permitting him to come to work, and to receive the relief, only two, three or four days a week, according to the size of his family and to whether he was over or under sixty years of age.† Presumably the assumption is that, on the days on which the man is excluded from the Labour Yard, he will be able to get casual employment elsewhere.‡ We can find no attempt by the Central Authority to require, as recommended by Mr. Davy and Mr. Crowder, that men receiving Outdoor Relief should be kept continuously at work for a specified period of one week, or several weeks, and should thus be, for that period, entirely removed from the labour market. "In certain well-known cases," says Mr. Crowder, "men have been allowed to come in and out very much as they like, to get a day's work, then the next day come to the Labour Yard, then go out again, and so forth."§

The Labour Yard is exclusively for men.‖ Usually, as at Leeds at present, admission is restricted to married men, and sometimes married men with families, all Outdoor Relief being refused to single men—unless, say the Edmonton Board of Guardians, they are over sixty ¶—and sometimes to married men without children, or even with one child.** On the other hand, in the Sheffield Union no order for the Labour Yard is given to any but single men. Usually the order for the Labour Yard is regarded as a privilege which is refused (as at Manchester) to "men of improvident, drunken or immoral habits," or to "Able-bodied men with families residing in furnished lodgings"; †† or (as at Dudley) to "persons living in common lodging houses," or who have not "resided in the Union for at least six months"; ‡‡ or (as at Edmonton) to those who cannot prove residence for a twelvemonth.§§ The actual character of the men found in a Labour Yard varies considerably, according to the strictness of the regulations and to the state of trade. When the Labour Yard is open in the winter, it is resorted to (as at Leeds) by building trade labourers and others thrown out of employment by seasonal depression of trade.‖‖ There is, however, a concensus of opinion that the men at work in a Labour Yard are, for the most part, of an undeserving class; to a large extent habitual dependents on the Labour Yard, recurring whenever it is open, sometimes (as at West Ham) for as many as ten years in succession; and extending from father to son and even to grandson,¶¶

* Report of Outdoor Labour Yards Committee to Poplar Board of Guardians, June 5th, 1895.

† Thus a man over sixty with a dependent wife was allowed three days a week; a man under sixty with three children was also allowed three days a week; but a man under sixty with only one dependent child could come only two days a week; and so on. (Annual Report of the Board of Guardians, Edmonton, 1904–5.)

‡ In the Barton-upon-Irwell Union, where men in the Labour Yard are allowed 2s. per week "for the applicant and his wife" and 1s. for each child under sixteen, the rules require the relief to be paid daily, and *all earnings of the family to be first deducted* from the scale. (Rules of the Barton-upon-Irwell Union, adopted February 12th, 1890.)

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2443, 17671.

‖ The Orders of the Local Government Board require the task of work only from men; and women are seldom put on Outdoor Labour Test. Some Boards of Guardians, like that of Manchester, will, however, sometimes couple their grant of Outdoor Relief to single or widowed able-bodied women with the requirement of attending at the Workhouse for so many hours' cleaning or washing. In 1870, there were "needle-rooms" for women in one or two London Unions; and the Shoreditch Guardians set some of the able-bodied women on Outdoor Relief to bristle-sorting. (Twenty-third Annual Report of Poor Law Board, 1870–1; Mr. Wodehouse's Report, pp. 33–4.) And in 1888 the Huddersfield Board of Guardians set the women either to work at washing for six and a half hours or to pick 3 lbs. of oakum.

¶ Annual Report of Edmonton Board of Guardians, 1904–5.

** Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 40033–6.

†† Supplemental Regulations relating to the Relief of Able-bodied Men (Manchester), adopted July 14th, 1887.

‡‡ Regulations as to Labour Relief (Dudley) adopted November, 1904.

§§ Annual Report of Edmonton Board of Guardians, 1904–5.

‖‖ Evidence of Mr. Page, Superintendent of Leeds Labour Yard, before the Commission, Appendix No. XCII. to Vol. IV., Par. 1.

¶¶ Of 1,200 men relieved in the Labour Yard at West Ham "during the first three months of 1895, 244 had resorted to the stone-yard for a consecutive number of years, as follows: For ten years, 4; for nine years, 53; for eight years, 21; for seven years, 25; for six years, 15; for five years, 37; for four years, 45; for three years, 27; and for two years, 17. In more than one instance, three generations, father, son, and grandson, were simultaneously receiving relief in that form." (Twenty-fifth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1895–6; Mr. Lockwood's Report, p. 166.) It has even been alleged that men (at Northampton) have given up private employment in order to be taken on at the Labour Yard. (Evidence of Mr. Court, Local Government Board Inspector, before the Commission, *Qs.* 6309–10.)

often of the lowest or semi-criminal class.* "Fifty per cent. of the men admitted" to a Labour Yard, said one Clerk to a Board of Guardians, "are street corner men, who rarely ever work beyond doing odd jobs for a few coppers."

With the rise to power of the New School of Poor Law Orthodoxy between 1869 and 1886, there was a sustained, but apparently unsuccessful, effort on the part of the Inspectorate to check the extension of the Outdoor Labour Test. What seems most to have struck Mr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Longley was not so much that the conditions of the Labour Yards were so diverse, and that their influence was so demoralising, but the fact that the test of work failed, in many cases, to deter Able-bodied applicants from coming for relief. There was much less reluctance for the man to go to work in the Labour Yard than for the whole family to enter the Workhouse. A great many of the Unemployed applicants for relief were, in fact, in no way scared off by a test of work, even when that work was stone-breaking, and the reward only a certain number of pounds of bread, with ninepence or a shilling a day in money. There were, in fact, men who found no better alternative for years at a stretch. It was found that men resorted to the Labour Yard every winter; and even, if it was open throughout the year, worked there continuously, as if the Board of Guardians were a capitalist employer. We are told in 1871 that "some men now in the Labour Yard have been working there for five years, and in some cases have not been absent for an entire week during the whole of that period." † At St. Pancras it has been found that "there were men willing enough to work in the Labour Yard for the merest existence, rather than to take the trouble and responsibility of looking after themselves, and finding a home and the rest of it." ‡ The Superintendent of the Leeds Labour Yard reports that "these men would be on test labour the whole year round if allowed to do so." § What is even more invariable is the recurrence to the Labour Yard at each successive period of Unemployment or Underemployment. "It is," said Mr. Davy in 1888, "an inseparable accident of the system of Labour Yards that it attracts a certain number of men back to them; for my experience is that a certain proportion of mankind would rather have an assured subsistence, though it is a very small one, than have to work in the open market for their living. . . . My experience is that those men will come back to any particular town when Outdoor Relief is given in the form of a Labour Test; and that has a tendency to make the Labour Yard chronic instead of exceptional, and a sort of caste of men out of employment is created. I have seen it frequently. I have known men stay fourteen or fifteen years working for a bare subsistence in a Labour Yard when they ought to have gone away and earned their living." ‖

In spite of this condemnation, the Labour Yard remains the only official remedy under the Poor Law for periods of exceptional distress. ¶ As a matter of fact, a repeal

* "I have seen cases," says the Superintendent of the Labour Yard at Leeds, "where apparently respectable, deserving men, above the ordinary type of labourer, have been granted test, and seldom have they stayed more than one or two days. I remember a case where a man left the yard immediately he saw the class of men he probably would have to work with." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XCII. to Vol. IV., Par. 15.) "The application and report books of the Relieving Officers show that men convicted of assault, stealing, and desertion were granted relief on the Labour Test. There are also entries in these books that men have appeared before the Guardians the worse for drink, and yet have been granted relief on the Labour Test. The Labour Yard offered to too many who were devoid of energy a constant source of employment. In February, 1906, one Relieving Officer had on his books 105 who were working in the Labour Yard; of these, thirty-three had been on the Labour Test for one year, seven for two years, and one for three years." (Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–7, p. 322; Mr. Walsh's Report.)

† First Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1871–2 (Mr. Wodehouse's Report), p. 91; for other cases, see Third Annual Report, 1873–4, p. 176.

‡ Evidence of Mr. Millward, Clerk to St. Pancras Board of Guardians, before the Commission, *Q.* 18749.

§ Evidence of Mr. Page before the Commission, Appendix No. XCII. to Vol. IV., Par. 2.

‖ Evidence of Mr. J. S. Davy, Local Government Board Inspector, before House of Lords Committee on Poor Law, 1888, *Q.* 854.

¶ No list of Unions which maintain Labour Yards, or of the years in which such Yards have been opened, is published; nor are there any official statistics as to the nature of the work, the amount of the task, the hours of attendance, the scale of relief, or the number of applicants. In 1895, a House of Commons Return (No. 321 of 1895), gave the numbers of men relieved on a Labour Test in 1894, and during the first two months of 1895, but in eight counties only. In the 185 Unions of those counties (including the Metropolis, Yorkshire, Warwickshire, Lancashire and Durham), 5,498 men had been so relieved in 1894, and 14,832 in January and February, 1895. An incomplete Return furnished to the Commission shows that, between 1886 and 1907, twelve of the Metropolitan Unions opened Labour Yards for periods of from two to twenty-nine weeks, one every winter, others in a few of the worst years only, and others about every other year, and that several thousands of men are simultaneously thus sent to work in London alone. In the West Ham and Croydon Unions, and in scores

of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 would leave the Labour Yard in all the great centres of population as the only practicable provision for the thousands of men rendered destitute by the winter's frost or by stagnation of trade.* The question is whether the objections to it can be overcome, as Mr. Davy and Mr. Crowder suggest, by strict supervision,† and continuous employment.

To us it seems clearly proved, by more than half a century of experience, that no such system as the Labour Yard—however wisely devised, or however well administered—can possibly be made a satisfactory treatment of Able-bodied Destitution. Any system of Outdoor Relief to able-bodied men against a test of work inevitably lands the administrator in insoluble dilemmas. There is first the initial dilemma that the work must either be really wanted and genuinely productive, in which case its performance in the Labour Yard instead of in the open market at wages seems to be positively creating Unemployment and Pauperism; or else it is useless and unproductive, and thus an expensive and repellent sham. But apart from this fundamental dilemma of all relief works, there is the special difficulty of fixing the task. If no task is specified, or if the nature of the work is such that it cannot accurately be measured otherwise than by time, the nominal day's labour becomes, however diligent the supervision, a mere pretence, demoralising to the character of the men thus taught to loaf and loiter. If the honest man at first finds himself doing more work than the habitual pauper, he rapidly learns to adjust himself to his deteriorating surroundings. If a definite task has to be prescribed, it makes inadmissible most kinds of work, owing to the impossibility of accurately measuring the individual effort, and confines the choice to coarse, mechanical drudgery, not unsuited to the unskilled labourer, but apt to impair the dexterity of the skilled mechanic. When the amount of the task has to be quantitively fixed, it becomes quite impossible to adjust it to fit the varying strength and dexterity of the men. What to the strong man—still more to the habitual attendant at a Labour Yard—is mere child's play,‡ may be cruel torture to the delicate, half-starved clerk or weaver who undertakes it for the first time. Hence the invariable practice, whatever the nominal task, of getting out of each man just whatever proportion of it the vigilance and persuasion of the Labour Master can exact. This inevitably means, in practice, as we have seen, the ignoring of any specific task, and a perpetual struggle between the loafers and the Labour Master, in which the latter, having no power of dismissal, is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, completely worsted.

Another series of dilemmas confronts the administrator with regard to the hours of labour and to continuity of employment. If, in order to make the lot of the pauper in the Labour Yard less eligible than that of the independent labourer, the hours of work in the Labour Yard are fixed at sixty or seventy per week, and the man is required to attend regularly day by day, he has practically no chance of ever securing private employment. If, on the other hand, the Labour Yard is not opened until 9 a.m. or 10 a.m., or the hours of attendance are otherwise shortened, in order to permit the men to look for

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of others up and down the country, a similar method of relief has been adopted, sometimes for many years continuously. The Census taken by the Commission shows that on March 31st, 1906, notwithstanding the competition of a hundred distress committees, there were 3,283 able-bodied men in receipt on that day of Outdoor Relief on account of want of work, or causes other than sickness of themselves, or their families, or "sudden or urgent necessity." The end of March, it may be observed, is exactly the time of year when the winter users of the Labour Yard are usually abandoning it for the odd jobs and casual employments of the spring. The numbers would have been found far greater a few weeks earlier.

* At Edmonton, the Labour Yard was continued winter after winter until the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act got to work, when the Board of Guardians decided that it was no longer required. The number of Outdoor paupers went down, and that of applicants to the Distress Committee went up. (Evidence of Rev. C. J. Sharp before the Commission, *Qs.* 17140–61.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 2443, 17442.

‡ "The ordinary Labour Test, which is stone-breaking and oakum-picking, is, to my mind, a most objectionable form of labour, for this reason, that both stone-breaking and oakum-picking are highly skilled labour, and a man who has been in every gaol and workhouse in the country, who has served a long apprenticeship to the game, can do it quite easily and well, whereas the man whom you do not want to punish cannot break stones, and cannot pick oakum. A really skilled tramp, a real expert at it, breaks stones like a conjuring trick, and knows every dodge; he is up to the dodges of the fiddle and the hot-water pipe, and the finger and nail for picking his oakum, and does it easily; and that is why the ordinary Labour Tests are, to my mind, unfair." (Evidence of Mr. J. S. Davy, Local Government Board Inspector, before the House of Lords Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888, *Q.* 880.) "Stone-breaking is not only very destructive to boots, but after a day's work a novice would have his hands badly blistered." (Report of North District Visiting Committee to Kensington Board of Guardians, March 15th, 1905.)

work, it is impossible to prevent the man who does not want work from idling away the time ; and the short working day of the Labour Yard becomes a distinct attraction. If, in order to make the men seek work, they are only allowed to work in the Labour Yard for two or three days at a time, or if they are permitted to absent themselves for one or two days and then resume attendance, encouragement and facilities are being afforded to the most demoralising form of casual labour and Under-employment, without any prospect of improvement.* But if, as Mr. Crowder advises, any men getting relief in a Labour Yard were required to remain there for several weeks, they would during that period presumably miss many chances of employment, and acquire the habit of working at the Labour Yard, as at a specially demoralising form of " relief works " for the Unemployed.

Nor is it easier to fix the rate of Outdoor Relief, or payment to be given for the work done. It is a fundamental condition of the Outdoor Labour Test that what should be given must be relief, not wages, and must, therefore, be what is required, and no more than is required, for bare subsistence. This necessarily varies, not acording to the work done, but according to the needs of the family group represented by the worker. Thus a strong, energetic and conscientious single man receives less than the weakest, slackest and most dishonourable man who happens to have a wife and children dependent on him. No amount of good conduct or diligence in labour produces any reward. On the other hand, as there is no possibility of dismissal, no amount of idleness or misconduct—short of a positive refusal to work at all, for which a man may be criminally prosecuted—entails any punishment. And the conditions of employment in a strictly regulated Labour Yard are necessarily so unpleasant that a short sojourn in the modern County Goal, with its short hours of work, its warm and comfortable quarters, and food at least as good as that of the pauper, offers no terrors to the habitual inmate of a Labour Yard. Hence, for the worker in the Labour Yard, there is neither hope nor fear. For him, whatever his past character or present conduct, there is, in the strictly administered Labour Yard, nothing but a dead level of repellent work at hardly a bare subsistence.

The administrator of the Labour Yard, so far as the amount of relief, or payment, is concerned, is once more between the horns of a dilemma. If anything resembling the customary rate of pay of the unskilled labourer is allowed for the work done, the certainty of the employment and the inevitable slackness of the work—if not also the shortness of the working day—make the Labour Yard, far from being deterrent, highly advantageous and positively attractive to the whole army of casual labourers, who promptly present themselves in large and rapidly increasing numbers.† If, on the other hand, the scale is fixed distinctly below the ordinary unskilled labourer's earnings, it is physiologically insufficient for the support of the man and his family ; with the result that, whilst the idle rogues who can find other means of subsistence take themselves off, the really destitute man, who is there because he cannot possibly get work or wages elsewhere, finds himself forced to remain under semi-starvation, and, therefore, actual physical and mental deterioration for himself and his family. This indeed is the universal paradox relating to every aspect of the so-called Outdoor Labour Test. Where the conditions are lenient or lax, the work relatively easy and the scale of relief liberal, an analysis of the men at work in the Labour Yard reveals a large percentage of habitual loafers and men of the most irregular habits, who could otherwise maintain themselves if they chose, but whom the somnolent inertia of the Labour Yard attracts in preference. When the conditions are at

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* To the zealous labour master either horn of the dilemma seems disastrous. Thus, the Superintendent of the Leeds Labour Yard in 1905 objected equally to the men who asked permission to leave the yard in search of work, and to those who did not do so. " I am strongly of opinion," he said, " that no more than five out of every twenty men who leave this Yard under the pretence of seeing Mr. So-and-So who, they have heard, is about to start some men, ever go in search of work. It is simply an excuse to get out and away from the work here." Presently he reports upon two men who have settled down to the Test Labour business " and regard it as a permanency. Neither of them have ever asked permission to leave the Yard in search of work, or anything else . . . they seldom miss a day, and for what work they do they might as well stay at home." (MS. Reports, Superintendent of Labour Yard, Leeds, to Leeds Board of Guardians, January 9th, February 20th, and March 6th, 1905.)

† The most striking case is that of St. Olave's Union (now Bermondsey) in the acute distress of 1895, where a Labour Yard was opened in a hurry, and relief given at the rate of 6d. for an hour's work (and 3s. 6d. for a day), half in kind, to practically any man who gave an address within the Union, even at a common lodging-house. The numbers went up in a week to 671, in a month to 2,548, and, notwithstanding more rigorous inquiry, within two months, to no fewer than 3,703 men simultaneously at work breaking stones, at a total cost to the Board of Guardians of £17,000, with nothing to show for it except 2,500 tons of broken stone, which had thus cost over £7 per ton, as compared with 5s. per ton, the usual price. For this case, *see* the Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1894–5, pp. 162–165 (Mr. Lockwood's Report).

their strictest, the work most repellent, prolonged and severe, and the scale of relief at its lowest, these men take themselves off, and the Labour Yard will be resorted to exclusively by men whom physical defects or evil fortune have brought so low that they have really no alternative—men who cannot possibly support themselves and their families by any other means, and who therefore are honestly entitled to humane and certainly not deteriorating relief. Meanwhile, so evil is the reputation of the Labour Yard, with its useless and painful task, with its sullen shirking of work, with its total absence of either hope or fear that, in times of great distress, when honest, self-respecting artisans or operatives and their families are really perishing from continued inanition, we are told that men "would rather starve" than enter the Labour Yard.* In short, whether as regards those whom it includes or those whom it excludes from relief, the Outdoor Labour Test, in the forms in which it is almost universally practised, appears to us, regarded as a deliberate mode of treatment of Able-bodied Destitution, as a hopeless failure.

What is even more serious is that, far from doing anything to prevent or diminish Able-bodied Destitution, the very existence of the Outdoor Labour Test in any town positively facilitates and encourages the worst kind of Under-employment, namely, the unorganised, intermittent casual jobs of the unskilled labourer. The very limitation of the "Order for the Labour Yard" to two days at a time; or the closing of the Labour Yard on the one or two days in the week when casual employment is supposed to be most frequent; † the granting of admission to the Labour Yard only for a week at a time,‡ and encouraging men to go off for work whenever they can—even the opening of a Labour Yard only for a few weeks in the dull season—defeats the object of the Outdoor Labour Test of keeping the paupers, in any real sense, off the labour market, and positively helps to make it possible for employers to avoid maintaining a regular staff, and for men to feel free to throw up their jobs after a day or two. "In one Liverpool Union," it was said in 1888, "if a man finds work at the dock, he works there and gets his wage; if he does not, he goes straight to the Relieving Officer and gets an order for the Stone Yard, and works there." § "I asked," continues the Inspector, "an applicant for relief how he got his living during the summer, to which he replied that he worked for Mr. , naming a farmer in the neighbourhood. I then inquired how he lived during the winter, to which he answered, 'I work for the Guardians here in Gravesend.'" ‖ Of the men in the Leeds Labour Yard, the Superintendent reports, in 1907, that some "do a little haymaking or potato picking during the season, others follow race meetings or act as "crow" for a street book-maker in some low class district, or odd jobs here and there occasionally. They have no desire for regular employment." ¶ "You may take it," said an experienced Inspector in 1907, that "it is not an uncommon thing at all for a man to be in receipt of relief (in a Labour Yard) . . . for a certain period, and then go off relief, be employed, and then be relieved again." ** "If," said Mr. Crowder of the Outdoor Labour Test generally, "you let men come on, as they have been accustomed to do at Labour Yards, for one day, or even half a day, and then not apply the next morning, but get a job outside; and then come back again . . . *that is ruination.*" †† It is, in fact, at last realised that the device which the Poor Law Commissioners and the Poor Law Board had so persistently pressed on Boards of Guardians, and which the Local Government Board still maintains in force—especially when it is worked, as it usually is, in such a way as actually to encourage men to go off under pretext of looking for private employ-

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 50627.

† The Lewisham Labour Yard in 1888 was closed each week on Mondays and Thursdays. At Prestwich the men on Outdoor Relief working on the farm were allowed to absent themselves regularly on Mondays and Tuesdays. (MS. Minutes, Prestwich Board of Guardians, February 11th and 25th, 1904.)

‡ "That all orders to Able-bodied men for relief in the Labour Yard should only be given from week to week." (MS. Minutes, Bradford Board of Guardians, March 5th, 1872.) At the Leeds Union, such orders may not be for more than two weeks. (Rules of Leeds Board of Guardians, 1906–7.)

§ Evidence of Mr. J. S. Davy, Local Government Board Inspector, before House of Lords Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888, *Q.* 901.

‖ *Ibid.*

¶ Evidence of Mr. W. Page, Superintendent of Leeds Labour Yard, before the Commission, Appendix No. XCII. to Vol. IV., Par. 2.

** Evidence of Mr. Lockwood before the Commission, Q. 13325.

†† Evidence of Mr. Crowder before the Commission, Q. 17142.

ment—is, in itself, a bad example of Under-employment and Under-payment, * viciously dove-tailing into and thereby upholding private systems of Under-employment and Under-payment and thus actually tending to foster and increase the Able-bodied Destitution which it purports to relieve.

(c) The General Mixed Workhouse as an Asylum for Able-Bodied Men.

The constantly repeated argument against Outdoor Relief and the failure of the Outdoor Labour Test have induced many Boards of Guardians to fall back simply on the "offer of the House" to Able-bodied male † applicants for relief. It is one of the most disquieting features of the last few years that this "offer of the House" is being increasingly accepted, sometimes sullenly, by respectable men unable to find any alternative, but, more frequently, with cynical alacrity, by a certain type of "work-shy" or "Unemployable," who finds the gamble of picking up a living without persistent toil going against him.‡ We do not need to repeat the emphatic condemnation by Mr. Corbett and Mr. Longley of the use of the General Mixed Workhouse of 1869–75. It is even more justified with regard to the gigantic, and sometimes palatial establishments which are the pride of the Destitution Authorities of to-day, not only in the Metropolis, but also in many a large town. The testimony given to us on this point is conclusive. "Every workhouse . . . visited," reported our Special Investigator, "contained a number of men in every way as well developed physically as the average of the general population." § "The association in large numbers in the Able-bodied blocks becomes," we are told, positively "an attraction," ‖ so that literally hundreds of men are content to take up their residence permanently in the Workhouse. "The fact that there are men in the Gordon Road Workhouse to-day," reported the Master in 1908 to the Camberwell Board of Guardians, "that were here five, ten, fifteen, and I think I may safely say twenty years ago, and have been chargeable more or less ever since, and many are . . . still Able-bodied, is in itself sufficient evidence that there is something lacking in the administration."¶ In short, said the representative of a Metropolitan Board of Guardians, "having got a man into the Workhouse, we have no sufficient test . . . to prevent him stopping there."** It is only since 1891–2 that the statistics of the Local Government Board for England and Wales inform us how many Able-bodied men in health were in the Work-

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* The very "object of the Labour Test," said Mr. Davy in 1888, "is to prevent a man from getting relief and . . . wages from any other source at the same time." (Evidence of Mr. Davy, Local Government Board Inspector, before House of Lords Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888, *Q.* 877.) That is to say, to prevent the "rate in aid of wages." What is not realised is that Poor Relief may subsidise wages without the recipient being, for any particular hour, or for any particular day, in receipt of both relief and wages. Occasionally, we have even the worst incidents of the old "rate in aid of wages." "If," say the Richmond Guardians, "the wife or any member of the family earns anything, relief to be diminished accordingly." (By-laws of Board of Guardians, Richmond (Surrey), July, 189˜.)

† There is everywhere a marked absence in the Workhouse of able-bodied women, other than the wives of male inmates, and the mothers of young children. Such able-bodied and unencumbered women as come in seldom stay long; so that there are often not enough women to do the domestic work of the establishment.

‡ The "offer of the House" to able-bodied men is sometimes supposed to have been facilitated by the Workhouse (Modified Test) Order, which permitted the grant of Outdoor Relief to the wife and family of an able-bodied man, provided that, instead of performing a task of work, he himself entered the Workhouse. This Order was issued to the Whitechapel Union on April 18th, 1887, as a temporary expedient for twelve months. But it was never put into operation. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 13424–6, 13570–4; Report of House of Lords Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1888, *Qs.* 4451–3.) As a matter of fact, the practice has been repeatedly adopted, with the sanction of the Central Authority, without any Order. (*See*, for instance, the cases cited in 1837, 1838 and 1841, Third, Fourth and Seventh Annual Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1837, p. 148, 1838, p. 34, and 1841, pp. 2, 192, 220.) To the Holborn Union the Local Government Board, in 1895, gave permission by letter to use this device notwithstanding that it was in contravention of the Orders legally in force. (First Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, p. 60.) The Order, we were told, was subsequently issued to Islington, Wandsworth, Kensington and Hampstead, but was in no single case put in force there. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 13570.) At last, a real use was found for it in the Poplar Union, to which it was issued on May 23rd, 1905, as a means of legalising the grant of Outdoor Relief to the wives and families of the able-bodied men sent to the Farm Colony at Laindon, which the Local Government Board chose to regard as a workhouse for this purpose. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 13570, 13572, 77137.) It was issued in 1908 to the Unions of Fulham, Kensington, Wandsworth, West Ham and Woolwich, but has been little used. On October 14th, 1908, a new Order was issued to Poplar greatly limiting the use of this device.

§ Report on the Physical Condition of . . . the Able-bodied Male Inmates, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, 1908, p. 13.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 16685–7.

¶ Camberwell Board of Guardians, Master's Report, May, 1908.

** Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 17020.

houses; but the rise in these sixteen years from 5,070 in 1891–2 to 9,164 in 1907–8 * is full of significance. So far as we can make out, *there are, this winter, heaped up in the General Mixed Workhouses of England and Wales, certainly more than* 10,000 *men, classed as healthy and Able-bodied.* In London alone the number must amount to something like 5,000—a phenomenon quite new, and unprecedented, we believe, during at least half a century. The Poor Law Officers' Association pressed this evil on our notice. "If," said their representative, "you get a bulk of able-bodied people into your House, the whole tone of your House ultimately must deteriorate. . . . The effect of Indoor Relief, as it stands to-day, on the able-bodied class, in my estimation, undoubtedly is that it deteriorates. . . . We are not staffed, and we have not the appliances to deal with a large body of Able-bodied, and that is why we have urged so strongly, all the way through this evidence, that the Able-bodied should be removed from us, primarily for their own sakes and also for the sakes of the other inmates."†

The regimen of the General Mixed Workhouse, including as it does, under one roof, and under one Master, the infants, the sick, the infirm and the aged, cannot be made suitable for hundreds of healthy able-bodied men.

> "It is impossible," said Mr. Lockwood, so long Inspector for the Metropolitan District, "to prevent the able-bodied class sharing in the comfort, and, I may say, the luxuries, of the older ones. The Dietary Order provides the old people with a better class of diet, and so on, and the able-bodied should be on a restricted diet; there should be nothing attractive about it, and the conditions of the life in the Workhouse should be distinct for them, and such as to provide an incentive to them to earn their living outside. I say you cannot prevent that class finding the condition of life in a Mixed Workhouse such as, as a matter of fact, they are not entitled to, and which they ought not to share in."‡

The Local Government Board has always attached "much importance to uniformity in the matter of the hours to be observed by inmates of Workhouses, for getting up, meals, work, etc." § Hence, even for the healthy male adults, from ten to eleven hours out of the twenty-four are, according to the terms of the General Consolidated Order, which has remained unrevised since 1847, allowed for sleep, or at least for untrammelled intercourse in the large dormitories.‖ Conversation in the dormitories is nominally forbidden, but, as it has been authoritatively stated, "it is utterly impossible with such a staff as the Master of a Workhouse has, to avoid a large amount of conversation going on. It need not be loud to be very general and very productive of evil; because classification, however you may attempt it, cannot be successfully carried on as long as you have the large dormitory system." ¶ The hours of work, which must have in each case the express approval of the Local Government Board, are usually fixed at no more than forty-seven to fifty per week, which is to be compared with the sixty, seventy or even eighty hours per week frequently exacted from the general labourer, porter, horsekeeper or carman. As a matter of fact, in the Workhouse, "most of the men are finished their day's work by about two o'clock; from two to half-past." ** After this, they can spend their time together as they please, in the yard or in the day-room, with games and gossip.†† They

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* Analysis of Statistics of Pauperism (not yet in volume form). The change in the character of the workhouse inmates—the steady aggregation of really able-bodied men—is, we think, still seldom realised. In 1905, a Local Government Board Inspector obtained a Return from the Unions in his mainly rural district of men under sixty who were "bodily and mentally capable of earning their living." He found, to his surprise, fifty-four such in one Workhouse, more than a score in each of three others, and 216 altogether in all the Unions. (Thirty-fifth Report of the Local Government Board, 1905–6, pp. 479, 480; Mr. Wethered's Report.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 26937.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 13874.

§ Circular, January 29th, 1895, in Twenty-fifth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1895–6, p. 111.

‖ "In the summer, the usual hours are from eight o'clock in the evening until a quarter to six in the morning, and during the winter from eight o'clock in the evening to a quarter to seven in the morning. *The difficulty is to find occupation for the people without sending them to bed.*" (Report of House of Lords Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1888, *Q.* 2466.)

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 2467, 2468. In another great urban Workhouse with hundreds of able-bodied inmates, one of our Committees noted that "according to the punishment book, no punishments were administered by the master or matron, about three cases a month being taken before the magistrates." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 1, p. 3.)

** Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 46934.

†† In one large urban Workhouse, one of our Committees noted that "both smoking and card-playing were going on." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 24 D., p. 65.)

regard the General Mixed Workhouse, as one Master declared, "as a kind of club-house in which they put up with a certain amount of inconvenience, but have very pleasant evenings." * There is even, it appears, the possibility of pleasant excursions.

> "On March 6th, 1906, three able-bodied male inmates were captured by the police whilst netting rabbits in Windsor Park. These men left the Workhouse after the officers had gone to bed, and it was their intention, after disposing of the result of their labours, to return to the Workhouse before the officers were up."†

During the long hours of Sunday there is, of course, no work; and in many Workhouses of the large towns all attempt to compel men to attend the religious service has, from a respect for freedom of conscience, been given up. The majority of the men simply "idle" the day away in gossip. The result, we need hardly say, is deplorable. Of all the spectacles of human demoralisation now existing in these islands, there can scarcely be anything worse than the scene presented by the men's day ward of a large Urban Workhouse during the long hours of leisure on week-days, or the whole of the Sundays. Through the clouds of tobacco smoke that fill the long low room, the visitor gradually becomes aware of the presence of one or two hundred wholly unoccupied males of every age between fifteen and ninety—strong and vicious men; men in all stages of recovery from debauch; weedy youths of weak intellect; old men too dirty or disreputable to be given special privileges, and sometimes, when there are no such privileges, even worthy old men; men subject to fits; occasional monstrosities or dwarfs; the feeble-minded of every kind; the respectable labourer prematurely invalided; the hardened, sodden loafer, and the temporarily unemployed man who has found no better refuge. These agglomerations are sometimes of huge size. In one Workhouse in England and in another in Ireland, we found actually several hundreds of such men, of all ages between fifteen and ninety, herded together day and night, in a series of communicating yards and sheds and common dormitories, all free to associate with each other, and to communicate to each other, in long hours of idleness, all the contents of their minds. *In such places, as we have said, there are aggregated, this winter, certainly more than* 10,000 *healthy able-bodied men.*

It is a special evil that these Able-bodied inmates of the General Mixed Workhouse contribute a large proportion to the demoralising class of "Ins-and-Outs."

> "In one (Workhouse) which I have in mind," observes Mr. Lockwood, "the ordinary admissions and discharges average 450 per week, or 23,400 per annum. Every individual admitted goes through a course entailing the removal, cleansing, and storing of his own clothes, and any small possessions he may have about him. He is then bathed, and a Workhouse suit provided him. Every inmate taking his discharge goes through the same process reversed, with the exception of the bath. In the large Workhouse referred to, there is a leave day every week for men and women alternately. The average weekly number of men allowed out is 360, of women, 280. Not a few of both sexes return in a condition indicating that they have had more to drink than was altogether good for them. The scrutiny, however, is not very inquisitorial; in fact, the passing-in is largely a question of gait and temper. If the individual is not noisy, quarrelsome, or abusive, he is allowed to proceed to his particular ward, and so, in due course, to bed. Bad cases are reported to the Guardians, and, as a punishment, the leave stopped for a time."‡

"At the Bath Workhouse," says another Inspector, "during the past twelve months, out of 286 paupers, 82 have been in and out from ten to seventy-four times. Of these, 24 generally return the worse for drink. Many go out for begging purposes, bringing back with them tea, sugar, tobacco, matches, pipes, etc. The most troublesome in this way, I am informed, are Able-bodied men and immoral women." § "I am unable," said an Inspector of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, "to avoid regarding it as somewhat of a reflection on this Board, and the Guardians of London, that hitherto this troublesome class has been dealt with in this shiftless inadequate manner, and that no well thought-out scheme has been adopted in its place." ‖

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 16686.

† Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–7, p.330; Mr. Herbert's Report.

‡ Thirty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1903–4, Appendix B., p. 153; Mr. Lockwood's Report.

§ Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1898–9, Appendix B., p. 141; Mr. Wethered's Report. The Relieving Officer of the St. Pancras Board of Guardians brought to our notice a dozen cases of men and women "in-and-out" from twenty to as many as fifty-two times within two years. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 19466, Par. 24.)

‖ Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–7, p. 284; Mr. Lockwood's Report

As a remedy for these disastrous effects of the General Mixed Workhouse as an Asylum for the Able-bodied we find the leading members of the Inspectorate of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, from 1871 right down to the present day, continuously advocating, as the "orthodox" Poor Law policy, the elimination of the Able-bodied from the General Mixed Workhouse,* and the establishment, in every populous Union, or for every group of Unions, of (to use Mr. Lockwood's own words to us) a "properly equipped *separate* Workhouse specially designed to deal with the class of persons who otherwise might be found in the Labour Yards," † where such were opened, or in the Able-bodied Wards of the General Mixed Workhouse. This Able-bodied Test Workhouse has, in the course of the last thirty years, been tried in various Unions. No general description of these experiments and no report of their results appear ever to have been made. Nor did it come within the scope of any of the Investigators whom we appointed. Notwithstanding this absence of information, we found the project of an Able-bodied Test Workhouse, as the only really successful method of dealing with the Able-bodied applicant for relief, strongly pressed upon us. One of our members thought it desirable, therefore, to investigate the records of the Poplar, Kensington, Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield Unions, where the project has been tried, and we have, one or other of us, personally visited all the places in which the experiment is, with more or less modification, still being continued.

(D) The Able-Bodied Test Workhouse.

(i.) *Poplar.*

The first experiment of an Able-bodied Test Workhouse was tried in 1871 by the Poplar Board of Guardians, at that time apparently the strictest Poor Law administrators in the Metropolis. At the instance of the Local Government Board Inspectors, and with the cordial approval of the Local Government Board itself, arrangements were made in combination with the Stepney Union under which the sick were placed in a separate Infirmary, the children in a separate Poor Law school, and all the aged and infirm in the Stepney Workhouse at Bromley; leaving the Poplar Workhouse to "be used for the receipt of such poor persons only as are Able-bodied." ‡ Here, at last, was the series of distinct institutions, and the complete segregation of the Able-bodied in a Workhouse by themselves, which had been advocated in the 1834 Report. Presently the arrangement was extended so as to enable other Metropolitan Unions to send their Able-bodied paupers to the Poplar Workhouse,§ which thus became the specialised Able-bodied institution for nearly the whole of London.

Here the regimen was of the sternest. "It was," said Mr. Corbett, the Local Government Board Inspector, "essentially a House of Industry." ‖ "The women," reported a St. Pancras Relieving Officer to his Board, "were all put to work at oakum picking. The task was very severe, and they were all compelled to perform the task of work allotted to each daily, or in default taken before the magistrate the following day. . . . Several had been sent to prison by the Poplar Guardians." ¶ The severity of the task may be seen from the fact that the amount of oakum to be picked in the day was, for men, no less than 10 lbs. of beaten or 5 lbs. of unbeaten, and for women, 6 lbs. of beaten or 3 lbs. of unbeaten; whilst the amount of granite to be broken was, at the Master's discretion, at first, five to seven bushels, and latterly, seven to ten bushels.** Accordingly, Poplar quickly became a word of terror to the Metropolitan pauper. The unfortunate man or woman, whom the Relieving Officer at the other end of London deemed to be Able-bodied, was, in many

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* Thus, for every class, without exception, the infants, the children, the sick, the mentally defective, the infirm, the aged, and now the able-bodied, the General Mixed Workhouse is found to be unfit!

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 13254.

‡ Special Order, Poplar and Stepney Unions, October 19th, 1871; MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, September 15th, and October 20th, 1871; First Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1871–2, p. xxiv.

§ Special Order to Poplar, March 6th, 1872; Second Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1872-3, p. xxvi.

‖ Report of Conference of Guardians, 1872; Second Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1872–3, p. 9.

¶ *Charity Organisation Reporter*, July 15th, 1874, p. 289.

** MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, December 20th, 1872, and June 5th, 1874.

cases, refused even admission to the local Workhouse, and given merely "an Order for Poplar"—to which place of rigour, sometimes miles away, he or she, whatever the hour or the weather, was directed to walk. That this procedure was effective in staving off relief became quickly evident; and the Local Government Board was delighted. "The appropriation of one Workhouse," it reported, "solely to the relief of Able-bodied paupers, where they are placed under strict management and discipline, and set to suitable tasks of work of various kinds, has enabled the Workhouse Test to be systematically applied, not only in the Poplar Union, but in all the Unions which have contracted for the reception of Able-bodied paupers into that Workhouse; and the result appears to have been satisfactory. The Guardians . . . have been enabled, instead of orders for the Labour Yards, to give to the Able-bodied applicants for relief, orders of admission to the Poplar Workhouse; and, notwithstanding the considerable number of Unions which have availed themselves of this privilege, the number . . . who have accepted the relief, or having accepted it, have remained in the Workhouse, has been so small that, although the Workhouse will contain 788 persons, there were in it, at the close of last year, only 166 inmates. Great credit appears to be due to the Guardians of the Poplar Union for the firm and judicious manner in which they have conducted this, the first experiment of the kind; and we shall watch the progress of this endeavour to apply the Workhouse Test to the Able-bodied poor of the Metropolis with great care and interest." * For the next few years we see thousands of "Orders for Poplar" given by the twenty-five Unions in the combination; and from six to thirty persons nightly made the long tramp, presented themselves, and were duly admitted. That even these few, who presumably could think of no other means of subsistence, found Poplar unendurable, is shown by the statistics. Though the total number present at any one time seldom exceeded 200, more than that number were often received and discharged each week.† The total number of admissions during 1877 was 3,745, but the number present at any one time did not exceed 200, so that the average stay of them all was under three weeks; most of them indeed, as the Local Government Board triumphantly remarked, "have almost immediately taken their discharge." ‡

It is, however, to be noted that even the rigours of Poplar did nothing to prevent recurrence of cases, or what is known as "Ins-and-Outs." We have taken the trouble to analyse all the admissions for the years 1877 and 1880, with the result of finding that, in each of these years, no fewer than one-third of the persons admitted had been previously admitted—many cases repeatedly, 145 over five times, and some even thirty or forty times, within a single year.§ It is clear, in fact, that, much as Poplar was disliked, a large proportion of those who came to it could not possibly find any way of living outside, and, when they tried, were quickly driven in again.‖

* Second Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1872–3, p. xxvii.

† MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, January 16th, 1874.

‡ First Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1871–2, p. 24.

§ The men admitted in 1880 gave their occupations as under:—Out of 1,284 separate individuals, there were 886 labourers (70 per cent.), 77 sailors (6 per cent.), 29 painters (2 per cent.), 28 clerks (2 per cent.), 26 tailors (2 per cent.), 24 shoemakers (2 per cent.), and 214 of other occupations. Of the 935 separate women admitted in that year, 241 (25 per cent.) stated themselves to be charwomen, 184 (19 per cent.) domestic servants, 150 (16 per cent.) as needlewomen, 128 (14 per cent.) as laundry-women, 45 (4 per cent.) as factory workers, 157 (17 per cent.) as without an occupation, and 30 (3 per cent.) of miscellaneous trades.

‖ The following tables have been compiled from the MS. admission books:—

Numbers of Inmates Recurrent and Non-Recurrent, Poplar Workhouse, 1877 and 1880.

—	Number Recurrent under 5 times.	5 times and under 10.	10 times and under 15.	15 times and under 20.	20 and over.	Total.	Maximum number* of times case recurred.
1877.							
Recurrents, Male	231	56	24	12	9	332	30
,, Female	211	36	4	2	2	255	40
Non-Recurrents, Male	–	–	–	–	–	654	–
,, Female	–	–	–	–	–	545	–
1880.							
Recurrents, Male	349	117	30	11	29	527	41
,, Female	261	47	20	4	12	344	30
Non-Recurrents, Male	–	–	–	–	–	757	–
,, Female	–	–	–	–	–	591	–

* In 1877 one man was re-admitted 30 times during that year, and one woman 40 times; in 1880 one man was re-admitted 41 times, and one woman 30 times.

The inmates, however, do not appear to have given the Master an easy time. From an analysis of the punishment book for nine years it appears that, every three weeks or so, one or more of the inmates would be charged before the Police Magistrate and sentenced to from seven days' to twelve months' imprisonment, whilst practically every other day some one was punished by solitary confinement in the "Refractory Ward" or by restriction of diet—a fate which few seem altogether to have escaped, as the numbers so treated

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‖ *Continued from previous page.*

DATES OF ADMISSION, BY MONTHS, TO POPLAR WORKHOUSE, FOR THE YEARS 1879 AND 1880.

—	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	Total
1877.													
Recurrents, Male	182	168	193	138	113	92	90	92	68	159	159	212	1,666
,, Female	73	88	84	68	58	54	70	82	62	90	85	66	880
Non-Recurrents, Male	98	66	50	47	37	48	41	32	28	46	81	80	654
,, Female	51	47	39	43	36	30	46	45	33	60	51	64	545
Recurrents & Non-Recurrents,													
Male	280	234	243	185	150	140	131	124	96	205	240	292	2,320
Female	124	135	123	111	94	84	116	127	95	150	136	130	1,425
Grand Total—Both Sexes	404	369	366	296	244	224	247	251	191	355	376	422	3,745
1880.													
Recurrents, Male	205	145	200	259	274	258	254	289	283	299	256	184	2,906
,, Female	124	102	119	138	120	126	157	138	151	167	143	93	1,578
Non-Recurrents, Male	103	68	62	69	35	41	47	58	69	84	61	60	757
,, Female	57	44	57	35	31	40	55	44	57	57	50	64	591
Recurrents & Non-Recurrents,													
Male	308	213	262	328	309	299	301	347	352	383	317	244	3,663
Female	181	146	176	173	151	166	212	182	208	224	193	157	2,169
Grand Total—Both Sexes	489	359	438	501	460	465	513	529	560	607	510	401	5,832

Recurrent=Those whose names occur more than once during the year.
Non-Recurrent=Those whose names occur only once during the year.

AGES OF INMATES AT POPLAR WORKHOUSE FOR THE YEARS 1877 AND 1880.

—	20 and under.	21 to 30.	31 to 40.	41 to 50.	51 to 60.	Over 60.	Total.
1877.							
Recurrents, Male	21	71	63	68	62	47	332
,, Female	28	51	52	54	45	25	255
Non-Recurrents, Male	64	122	126	113	118	111	654
,, Female	63	140	103	100	89	50	—
Recurrents & Non-Recurrents,							
Male	85	193	189	181	180	158	986
Female	91	191	155	154	134	75	800
Grand Total—Both Sexes	176	384	344	335	314	233	1,786
1880.							
Recurrents, Male	55	81	90	105	107	89	527
,, Female	34	65	68	62	62	53	344
Non-Recurrents, Male	77	125	110	146	153	146	757
,, Female	64	167	84	101	78	97	591
Recurrents & Non-Recurrents,							
Male	132	206	200	251	260	235	1,284
Female	98	232	152	163	140	150	935
Grand Total—Both Sexes	230	438	352	414	400	385	2,219

during the year exceed, between 1877 and 1880, the average number of inmates.* These frequent prosecutions of merely destitute, unconvicted persons, for resistance to penal tasks, at length attracted the attention of the Police Magistrate. In 1877 he refused to convict a man who had rebelled against his task of stone-breaking, because, although the Poor Law Medical Officer had certified him to be Able-bodied, the Magistrate, on the advice of the Police Medical Officer, was not satisfied that he was fit for such work.† In the following year the Magistrate discharged a woman who had refused to perform her task of picking oakum, and stated publicly as his reason that "it was not fit work for women." ‡ In 1879 a woman who had three times refused to do her oakum-picking was brought up for punishment, but the Magistrate refused to convict, "and the consequence of her being discharged," notes the Master, "is that it has a very bad effect on the other inmates, as she persuades them not to work either." § In this dilemma the Master apparently falls back on his own arbitrary powers of confining the paupers in the Refractory Ward on bread and water only, for we see that the numbers so punished rose from 44 in 1875, and 105 in 1876, to 244 in 1877, and to an average of nearly 200 per annum for the four years, 1877–1880.‖

Meanwhile, the Poplar Board of Guardians appeals for help to the Local Government Board. "The Master of the Workhouse," it is plaintively remarked, "has a very considerable amount of trouble in getting any work done now by the inmates; and when Mr. Saunders' [the Police Magistrate's] sentiments become known, the Guardians think that the trouble and difficulty will be much increased. If oakum picking is not to form a part of the task work, the Guardians are at a loss to know what substitute to provide for it without interfering with the labour market."¶ But the Local Government Board had no help to give. The Poplar Guardians were informed in reply that the Board fully recognised the difficulty in which the Guardians would be placed if the Magistrates "refrain from assisting the Guardians in their efforts to deal with that particular class for whom the Poplar Workhouse is specially set apart, viz., the Able-bodied Paupers of a large number of Metropolitan Unions who, as a rule, can only be managed by the exercise of strict discipline, and by being kept employed. The Board cannot but suppose that when Mr. Saunders becomes fully acquainted with the obligations imposed upon the Guardians and the necessity and difficulty of finding work for the Able-bodied inmates of the Workhouse, he will be prepared to deal with future cases in such a manner as will enable the Guardians to maintain the requisite discipline in that establishment."**

The difficulties of the Poplar Board of Guardians were increased by the fact that the Metropolitan Unions found the offer of an "Order for Poplar" so efficacious in staving off applications for relief that they often adopted this device for "testing," as they called it, any pauper whom they wished to get rid of. To these "mixed" authorities there

* Analysis of the punishments recorded as inflicted in the Poplar Workhouse, 1873–1881 :—

Year.	Sentenced to Imprisonment.			Confined in Refractory Ward.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
1873	4	9	13	2	?	?
1874	14	10	24	14	16	30
1875	7	17	24	16	28	44
1876	4	6	10	51	54	105
1877	14	15	29	133	111	244
1878	12	3	15	124	38	162
1879	14	4	18	116	39	155
1880	8	1	9	175	39	214
1881	10	2	12	65	62	127
Total - -	87	67	154	694	387	1,081
Average -	9·6	7·3	17	86·7	48·3	135

† MS. Punishment Book, Poplar Board of Guardians, 1877.

‡ *Ibid.*, 1878; Poplar Board of Guardians to Local Government Board, November 4th, 1878.

§ Master's MS. Journal, Poplar Board of Guardians, 1879.

‖ MS. Punishment Book, Poplar Board of Guardians.

¶ Poplar Board of Guardians to Local Government Board, November 4th, 1878.

** Local Government Board to Poplar Board of Guardians, December 19th, 1878.

presented themselves, not the Able-bodied only, but also the Aged and the physically defective. Many of these, if offered nothing but an "Order for Poplar," might get supported by their relations or by charity. Accordingly we see these Orders given to all to whom the Guardians deemed it desirable (to use the phrase of the Hampstead Board) "to apply the test of destitution," * even to men and women of advanced age, some of whom had no alternative but acceptance. Already in 1873 we find the Medical Officer complaining of the numbers who were found to be not able-bodied.† In 1880, out of 1,284 separate men admitted to this so-called Able-bodied Test Workhouse, no fewer than 235 were over sixty years of age; and even of the 810 separate women, seventy-five were over sixty. The practice of sending physically defective persons was so frequent that the Poplar Board of Guardians had to insist, in 1876, upon receiving a definite medical certificate along with each case.‡

These various difficulties and inconveniences failed in any way to shake the confidence of the Local Government Board and its zealous Inspectorate in the Able-bodied Test Workhouse. Down to the last, the Poplar Workhouse had their approval,§ and was upheld as a model. What brought it to an end was—significantly enough—the fact that it was not administered by an authority dealing only with the Able-bodied, but by one having to accommodate all classes of paupers. Gradually the numbers of the sick and infirm to be provided for in Poplar forced the Guardians to the alternative of either building new institutions, or utilising the partly vacant space at the Poplar Workhouse. They naturally chose the latter course. In 1881 the Local Government Board note that it may be necessary, owing to "the need of accommodation of other classes," to let in other than the able-bodied.‖ In February, 1882, the Poplar Guardians insist that, as the wards for the old and infirm are full to overflowing, with every sign of increasing numbers, they should not enter into fresh agreements with other Unions. Upon this, the Local Government Board reluctantly agreed that, having regard to the increased number of indoor poor to be accommodated, the Poplar Workhouse must cease to receive able-bodied paupers from other Unions; ¶ whereupon it reverted once more to being a General Mixed Workhouse of the ordinary type.

(ii) *Kensington.*

The Local Government Board were not daunted by the failure of the Poplar Board of Guardians to persist in the maintenance of an institution exclusively devoted to the Able-bodied. The Metropolitan Inspectors could do nothing better than look for a Board of Guardians willing to take up the task that Poplar had abandoned. It happened that, at the moment, the Kensington Union had vacant, at Mary Place, at a conveniently great distance from its General Mixed Workhouse, a building erected for the accommodation of Vagrants and Men on Outdoor Labour Test, but now disused. The Kensington Guardians proposed to fill it with their aged and infirm. To this the Local Government Board demurred, suggesting as an alternative that "the building might prove a valuable substitute for the Workhouse of Poplar Union, which is no longer available in respect

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* Hampstead Board of Guardians to Poplar Board of Guardians, January 23rd, 1873.

† MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, April 25th, 1873.

‡ "That the Guardians of Unions sending able-bodied paupers to the Poplar Workhouse be requested in future to cause the paupers so sent to be seen by a Medical Officer, and to forward a certificate stating that in the opinion of the Medical Officer they are able-bodied, and capable of performing task work." (MS. Minutes, Poplar Board of Guardians, January 14th, 1876.) In 1881 the Holborn Board of Guardians asks: "If this Board would consent to admit to the Poplar Workhouse without a medical certificate, able-bodied men who had been certified the same day or the day previous by the Medical Officer, and who, for the purpose of evading admission to the Poplar Workhouse, either destroy the Order given them, or present themselves for admission at the Holborn Workhouse late at night, when they were aware that it would be very difficult for a medical certificate to be given." But the Poplar Guardians resolved: "That the Holborn Guardians be informed that this Board regrets that it is unable to assist them in the difficulty mentioned in their letter, but remembering the inconvenience which was experienced before the medical certificate was required with the order of admission, and which occasioned the rigorous adoption of the rule, the Guardians of this Union are unwilling in any way to modify the existing arrangements." (*Ibid.*, July 22nd, 1881.)

§ "Although the Workhouse is certified to accommodate 768 paupers, it is worthy of note that it contained only 225 inmates at the commencement of the present year." (Seventh Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1877–8, p. 32.)

‖ Tenth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1880–1, p. 32.

¶ Local Government Board to Poplar Board of Guardians, February 21st, 1882.

of paupers belonging to other Unions." * Under the influence of the Inspector, the Kensington Board of Guardians agreed to adopt this suggestion, with regard to men only. In making choice, as a successor to the Poplar Board of Guardians, of that of Kensington, the Local Government Board were doubtless influenced by the reputation of the latter for the quality of the members of the Board, and for the integrity and capacity of its officials.

For twenty-two years this model Board of Guardians maintained the Able-bodied Test Workhouse for the Metropolis—a thoroughly well-regulated, clean establishment, where able-bodied men, on very plain fare,† were kept to stone-breaking, corn-grinding and oakum-picking for fifty-five or sixty hours per week. It was, at first, proposed that they should work sixty-six hours per week, the projected task being, during the summer half-year, to break 11 cwt. of granite, or to work at corn-grinding from 6 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., and, during the winter six months, to break 7 cwt. of granite between 7.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m., and pick 1 lb. of unbeaten oakum between 5 and 7 p.m., or work at corn-grinding from 7.30 a.m. to 7 p.m.‡ Thus, when it was too dark for stone-breaking, the men were not to be allowed leisure, but were to be put on to oakum-picking or corn-grinding to make out the full time.§ To this, however, the Local Government Board demurred, observing that the hours of labour prescribed in the General Consolidated Order for 1847 were sufficiently long.‖ In reply the Guardians quite naturally retorted that "the General Consolidated Order of 1847 was framed for Workhouses in which all classes of inmates were concerned, and doubtless prescribed sufficiently long hours for the women, boys and girls, to whom it applied equally with the men. In a Workhouse in which only able-bodied paupers are maintained the Guardians bear in mind that the position of the able-bodied male pauper should not be made more eligible than that of the independent labourer." The Local Government Board then sanctioned sixty hours per week for work.¶ Long hours of penal toil were, however, not the only deterrent applied to the inmates of the Mary Place Able-bodied Workhouse. The only period of leisure, that between the last meal and bedtime, was found to be so mis-spent, "in almost entire idleness," that a committee recommended that the men be sent to bed at 8 p.m., summer and winter.** A more ingenious device was, however, found, namely, that of occupying this only hour of leisure by the "lectures" of a "Mental Instructor," at which attendance was obligatory ;†† whilst any smoking on the premises by any inmate whatsoever was sternly prohibited.‡‡ No inmate was ever allowed to go out, even on Sunday.§§ The diet was as coarse and monotonous as could be devised, and there was

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* Local Government Board to Kensington Board of Guardians, May 26th, 1882 ; MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, June 1st, 1882.

† It is typical of the rigour of the rule that, on the motion of a lady Guardian, no extra fare was allowed them at Christmas. (*Ibid.*, November 30th, 1882.) But twelve years later "the usual Christmas dinner" was allowed. (*Ibid.*, December 12th, 1894.)

‡ MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, November 2nd, 1882. The amounts of 11 and 7 cwt. were reduced to 8 and 5 cwt. respectively, on the substitution of a 1½ for a 2-inch mesh. (*Ibid.*, February 3rd, 1887.) Ten years later, the task was made 9 cwt. with a 1½ inch mesh, all the year round. (*Ibid.*, April 29th, 1897.)

§ "It is your duty," the master was instructed, "to see that every man is employed during the whole of the hours fixed for work ; when, therefore, a man has completed his task of stone-breaking he has no right to idle about, but you may and ought to set him to oakum-picking, to cleaning up the yard, to scrubbing wards, or such other work as you may require to be done." (MS. Instructions, December 16th, 1882.)

‖ Local Government Board to Kensington Board of Guardians, December 13th, 1882.

¶ MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, December 28th, 1882 ; February 8th, 1883. The actual time-table of the daily life prescribed for these men is worth quoting in full. They were to rise in summer at 5.45 a.m. ; to breakfast from 6.30 to 7 a.m. ; to work from 7 a.m. to 12 noon ; to dine from 12 to 1 p.m. ; to work from 1 to 6 p.m., thus making sixty hours' work per week ; to sup from 6 to 7 ; to have lectures from 7 to 8 p.m. ; and to go to bed at 8.30 p.m. In winter, breakfast was half-an-hour later ; the morning work half-an-hour less ; but this was made up by lengthening the afternoon work, and docking the interval for supper. (*Ibid.*, March 23rd, 1893.)

** *Ibid.* October 2nd, 1884.

†† *Ibid.* March 26th and May 21st, 1891 ; December 15th, 1892 ; March 23rd, 1893.

‡‡ *Ibid.* July 22nd, 1886.

§§ This had to be relaxed for Roman Catholics who were allowed out from 8 to 10.30 a.m. on Sunday to attend Mass. (*Ibid.* December 14th, 1882.) As at Poplar, such men did not always return at the proper time, when they were put on bread and water diet, and eventually were refused permission to go out for two Sundays. This led to complaint to the Local Government Board. (*Ibid.* June 11th, 1896.) "Many men of no definite religious creed profess themselves to be Roman Catholics in order to be able to go out on Sunday." It was decided to pay for a Roman Catholic priest to celebrate Mass on the premises. (*Ibid.* November 26th, 1896.)

even an absence of anything beyond the necessary warmth. An application from the forty unhappy inmates in December, 1884, for more food and for more firing in the day-room, coupled with a complaint of the severity of the task of work, was sternly refused.* In short, the Kensington Guardians deliberately set themselves to carry out the recommendations of the 1834 Report; to maintain, that is to say, a distinct institution for the Able-bodied; to have it for men only; and thus to be free to make the conditions really less eligible than those of the lowest class of independent labourers.

There can be no doubt as to the effect of this experiment in practically abolishing Able-bodied Male Pauperism, alike in Kensington itself,† and in the other Unions so far as they chose to avail themselves of their power of issuing orders of admission to the Mary Place Workhouse. "I have recently had a personal conversation," reported the Clerk to the Kensington Board of Guardians in 1884, "with two of the Workhouse Masters, who were emphatically of opinion that the power to send their able-bodied men to a Test Workhouse had been of immense advantage; both were of opinion that not more than 20 per cent. of those to whom orders were given found their way to Mary Place Workhouse; and as those who returned again received an order for that Workhouse, the result was that the Parish got rid of the man. One of these Masters informed me that whereas last year there were over a hundred able-bodied men in his Workhouse, there were at the corresponding time this year only forty; and these were men who for different reasons could not be certified as able-bodied within the requirements laid down for Mary Place Workhouse. The working of the previous year had shown the Able-bodied loafer what he has to expect in Kensington, and that therefore, practically only those able-bodied men now apply to this parish for relief who are absolutely destitute." ‡ In spite of the many thousands of orders of admission that were issued, the numbers of men actually admitted seldom averaged more than five or six per day. Out of the aggregate of between one and three thousand admitted during the year, hardly any stayed more than a few days, so that the total accommodation of ninety was never exceeded; and the usual number of inmates was only a few dozen. "In our experience," writes the Clerk to the Kensington Board of Guardians in 1887, "of the men who are sent off from the other Parishes with orders for Mary Place . . . not 50 per cent. present themselves for admission, and very few remain more than two or three days." §

In this admirably conducted and—within its inherent limitations—entirely successful experiment, the Kensington Guardians were brought face to face with all the dilemmas of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, dilemmas which become all the more significant when we find them perplexing so excellent a Board of Guardians, served by such competent officials. There was, for instance, the usual difficulty, in the absence of any graduation of conditions, of making the men perform the nominal task. In 1889, for instance, "the Master presented a Return from which it appeared that scarcely any of the class of men certified for oakum-picking had performed anything approaching his full task, and he further reported that, in his opinion, there was a combination amongst this class against their work. He submitted the Punishment Book, from which it appeared that a number of men had been punished for neglecting and refusing to perform their work." ‖ It was in vain that he multiplied the punishments, and prosecuted the worst offenders before the Police Magistrate. The sullen inertia of the men who had no hope, and who found the well-warmed cells and easy toil of a short spell of gaol almost a relief, could not be overcome. If this was true of the hours of toil, it was still more apparent in the time to be devoted to mental improvement. As we were informed by the Master, the men during this hour either went to sleep or interrupted in such a way

* *Ibid.* December 11th, 1884. Another complaint as to the diet, in 1891, gained only a recommendation from the Committee to add treacle to the suet pudding once a week; but even this was refused by the full Board. (*Ibid.* February 26th, 1891.) It was eventually allowed on its being explained that it was only a transfer of the treacle from the porridge to the suet pudding. (*Ibid.* March 12th, 1891.)

† "Pauperism in Kensington Past and Present," by Sir W. Chance, in *Charity Organisation Review* May, 1900, pp. 243–258.

‡ MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, November 3rd, 1884.

§ Kensington Board of Guardians to St. George's, Hanover Square Board of Guardians, October 15th, 1887.

‖ MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, January 17th, 1889. The refractory men were confined to solitary cells for twenty-four hours, with nothing but bread and water, and nevertheless required to perform the daily task of work. (*Ibid.*, February 8th, 1883.)

as to cause trouble. Ultimately the experiment of a Mental Instructor had to be abandoned.*

Another difficulty was the impossibility of getting the Relieving Officers of the other Unions to confine their Orders for Mary Place to men who were physically fit for stone-breaking or for corn-grinding. As we have seen at Poplar, it was too tempting to "test" men † of doubtful character by offering them what it was believed they would not accept, to make the other Unions sufficiently careful about the physical condition of the men they sent. Already in 1883 the other Parishes and Unions had to be expressly told to send no men who were ruptured, or who had any hidden ailment which they could plead in defence if they were prosecuted for not performing their task.‡ So difficult was it to prevent such men being sent in order merely to "test their destitution," that the Kensington Guardians, in 1903, had to discharge no fewer than 192 men as wholly unfit for any of the tasks of an Able-bodied Test Workhouse.§ So frequent did this become, and so much did it interfere with the discipline of the establishment, that the Kensington Guardians were driven to appoint a special Medical Officer for the few dozen inmates of the Mary Place Workhouse, whose duty it was to attend daily and thoroughly examine every one of the men admitted, deciding whether each was fit for stone-breaking or for corn-grinding or for neither.‖ After various remonstrances the Kensington Guardians found themselves driven to refuse from other Unions or Parishes all persons who were physically unfit for anything but the lighter work ; ¶ and eventually to refuse all who were not actually fit for stone-breaking.** This attained the end of restricting admission to the sturdy rogues of other Parishes, because, when the other Unions found it impossible to use the offer of an order for Mary Place as a means for "testing" every ordinarily Able-bodied man, they tended to use it chiefly to rid themselves of such of the known habitual paupers as were physically fit. Thus, though the Mary Place Workhouse maintained its deterrent character, it ceased, in practice, to be used by other Unions, except (as the Bermondsey Guardians frankly said) as a "useful method of dealing with refractory and worthless paupers, and such as, preferring to throw themselves on the rates, refuse to earn their own livelihood."†† This is expressly given by Mr. Lockwood as the cause of the failure of the Mary Place Test House. "It failed in its object," he told us, "because . . . in a large number of the cases that the Guardians wished to send there the Medical Officer would not certify the men to be physically fit for the task of work imposed."‡‡

The specialisation of the Mary Place Workhouse as an establishment for the refractory and worthless paupers of nearly the whole Metropolis left the Kensington Guardians between the horns of a dilemma. Either they had to give up using the Mary Place Workhouse as a test of destitution of the respectable able-bodied men of their own Parish, who had committed no other crime than inability to find employment, or they had to subject such of this class as demonstrated their genuine destitution by passing the test to hard penal labour, under extremely rigorous and depressing conditions, in association with the scum of all the other Parishes and Unions. Already in 1882 the Kensington Guardians were prepared to "recognise the fact that among the able-bodied men who seek Poor Law relief, many have become destitute through misfortune, etc., . . . and for such class the Guardians hope shortly to be able to provide work, such as mat-making, carpentering, etc., of a more suitable character than stone-breaking, corn-grinding, or oakum-picking." §§ What was even more objectionable from the standpoint of the

* In spite of all prohibitions and punishments, the men somehow got tobacco and smoked ; and the Vestry had to be asked to prevent its carters giving tobacco. (Kensington Board of Guardians to Kensington Vestry, April 10th, 1890.)

† And even youths. It was found necessary to insist that no one under eighteen should be sent. (MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, September 2nd, 1886.)

‡ Kensington Board of Guardians to other Boards, June 25th, 1883.

§ MS. Records, Mary Place Workhouse, 1903–4.

‖ It should be noted that in 1888 a third class of able-bodied began to be sent to Mary Place, viz., those who, whilst unfit for stone-breaking or corn-grinding, could be certified as fit to pick 4 lbs. of unbeaten oakum per day. (MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, October 11th and November 8th, 1888.)

¶ *Ibid.* July 17th, 1890.

** *Ibid.* November 11th, 1897.

†† Resolution of Bermondsey Board of Guardians, 1905.

‡‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 13239.

§§ MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, December 28th, 1882.

Kensington resident was the concentration in the neighbourhood of the worst types of "Ins and Outs." For the Mary Place Workhouse exhibited once more the characteristic paradox of the Workhouse Test. The worse the conditions were made, the more "recurrent" became the applicants for admission.* The "work-shy," the mentally defective and the sturdy rogues, who tramped to Mary Place from all parts of London bearing the necessary Order of admission, quickly took their discharge, and drifted into the common lodging-houses of the immediate neighbourhood for as long as they could support themselves by mendicity and odd jobs. Becoming again destitute, they applied for relief from Kensington addresses and were sent once more to the Mary Place Workhouse, whilst their settlements were being inquired into; often beginning again the same round of In and Out before the case could be settled. Hence there was a steady pressure on the Guardians from the local residents, who objected to attracting to the Parish the undesirables of the whole Metropolis.

These drawbacks to the success of the Mary Place Workhouse as a device for reducing Able-bodied Pauperism did not, for a couple of decades, suffice to bring the experiment to a close. The end came as it had come to Poplar, from the very nature of the "mixed" authority under which the Able-bodied Workhouse was placed. From the very beginning of the experiment there were members of the Kensington Board of Guardians who failed to understand why that Board should be at the expense of maintaining a separate Workhouse at Mary Place, which was always half empty, for only a few dozen inmates, when there was plenty of room in their own great Marloes Road Workhouse, with all its different classes of paupers. Already in 1883 it was proposed "That having regard to the small number of Able-bodied Paupers who have been received into the Mary Place Workhouse since it has been opened for their reception, and the large expenditure incurred in the maintenance of a competent staff to superintend the management of the same, it is now deemed expedient to abandon Mary Place as an Able-bodied Workhouse." † And though this resolution was defeated, we see similar resolutions brought forward again and again. The unnecessary cost of a separate establishment furnishes constant ground of complaint. In 1890 it was actually decided to abandon the experiment; and it needed all the private influence of the Local Government Board on the Kensington Guardians to get this decision reversed.‡ Later on we see developed another line of attack. As the accommodation

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ACTUAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL CASES ADMITTED INTO THE MARY PLACE WORKHOUSE DURING ONE YEAR—OCTOBER 4TH, 1903, TO OCTOBER 1ST, 1904—THE LAST COMPLETE YEAR WHEN "FOREIGN" PAUPERS WERE MAINTAINED.

Union or Parish.	Number of Individuals.	Number of Inmates on October 3rd, 1903.	Number of Admissions during the year.	Number of Discharges and Transfers.	Number Remaining on October 1st, 1904.
Kensington	278	17	850	830	37
Chelsea	29	1	54	55	–
Camberwell	18	2	111	109	4
Fulham	24	1	38	39	–
Hackney	31	1	97	97	1
Hammersmith	35	1	53	53	1
Islington	198	16	932	937	11
Lambeth	33	2	110	110	2
Mile End Old Town	5	–	8	6	2
Paddington	28	3	47	49	1
St. George (Hanover Square)	33	–	102	101	1
Marylebone	30	2	131	133	–
Bermondsey	11	–	12	9	3
Wandsworth	40	1	67	67	1
Southwark	66	–	86	81	5
Hampstead	3	1	9	10	–
Willesden	2	–	3	3	–
Bloomsbury	8	–	11	10	1
Holborn	3	–	3	3	–
Westminster	3	–	3	3	–
Stepney	14	–	14	10	4
Total	892	48	2,741	2,715	74

† MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, October 4th, 1883. (Lost by eight to three.)

‡ "Your Committee fully recognise that the existence of a separate Workhouse for able-bodied men, at which the strictest discipline is maintained and the severest tests of work are applied, acts as a valuable deterrent, and they believe that the opening of the Workhouse at Mary Place undoubtedly materially decreased the then number of able-bodied men who had accumulated in the Marloes Road Workhouse under the milder *regime* there in force, and has since had the effect of materially keeping down the number of able-bodied male paupers of the parish, while the testimony of the other Metropolitan parishes and unions who make use of

of the Mary Place Workhouse was never fully utilised by the really Able-bodied, it became more and more the custom of the Kensington Board to transfer thither other classes of men, in order to relieve the pressure at the Marloes Road Workhouse. For the Kensington men, at any rate, the tasks at the Mary Place Workhouse became more varied. We hear of selected inmates doing most of the work of building and decorating certain additions to the premises.* Wood-chopping was added to the regular tasks, and men, not certified for stone-breaking but able to do this work, began to be increasingly transferred.† We hear of the "partially Able-bodied men" sent from the Marloes Road Workhouse to that at Mary Place, for whom suitable employment has to be found; we find a large proportion actually sent to the infirmary; we have special mention of the "men over sixty." "In addition to employing this class in the wood shed," reports the Master in 1904, "I have utilised them in place of Able-bodied men in domestic work, painting and whitewashing the Workhouse and Relief Office premises, small repairs to the building, mending boots and clothing, and such like work suitable to their capacity." ‡ On this the Local Government Board drew attention to the long hours of work at Mary Place and withdrew its former approval of them, "now that it is used as a branch Workhouse for Kensington paupers." § The hours of work were then altered to make them no longer than those usual in ordinary General Mixed Workhouses under the General Consolidated Order of 1847. Finally, in March, 1905, seeing that the Mary Place Workhouse had already become merely a branch Workhouse of the Kensington Union, and that all the available accommodation was likely to be required for Kensington Paupers of one class or another, the Guardians decided to bring to an end the experiment begun with such high hopes twenty-two years before, and definitely to refuse "to continue to take in Able-bodied men from other Metropolitan Parishes and Unions." ‖ With the withdrawal of the Able-bodied of other Unions and Parishes, concurrently with the transfer of the semi-Able-bodied and of persons over sixty from the Marloes Road Workhouse, the whole character of the Mary Place Workhouse became gradually transformed. The mixture in a single institution of the Able-bodied and the physically disabled, of men in the prime of life and men of 65, 70 or 75 years of age, led to the invariable relaxation of discipline characteristic of the General Mixed Workhouse. It was, for instance, found impracticable, as the Master informed us, to prevent anybody from smoking in a place where the inmates over 60 were allowed to smoke, and those over 65 were actually supplied with tobacco.¶ It is significant that criticism of the conditions of this Workhouse from 1904 onwards all take the form of objections to its severity. "Day room accommodation," says the Inspector in 1906, "is very badly needed at the Mary Place Workhouse. At present there is only one room (60 feet by 15 feet) available for purposes of dining-room, day-room, and holding divine service. On Sunday in cold weather some ninety men are practically confined to this one room for the whole day; they sit there hour after hour, closely packed on forms before meals, through meals, and after meals. The physical and mental discomfort must be very great. The Guardians are considering the question of providing additional day-room accommodation, but even at the best this must take some time, and, in the meantime, I think the Guardians might well consider whether they should not send there only (1) the young able-bodied, and (2) refractory or less deserving semi-able-bodied, aged or infirm. The more aged and deserving poor should not, if possible, be relieved

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the Workhouse as a test, also shows that it has been of considerable service to them in the same direction. Your Committee, however, think there can be no doubt as to the greater expense involved in the maintenance of a distinct establishment for so small a number of paupers, than for the same number of paupers in the large General Workhouse. There appears to them no reason why the able-bodied should not be kept strictly in a place set apart for them in Marloes Road with the same diet and same hours and tasks of labour as are now in force at Mary Place; and why it should not be equally deterrent, and there are many advantages in having the whole administration under one firm and capable head." (*Ibid.*, June 4th, 1890.) The resolution passed on this Report was, however, rescinded. (*Ibid.*, November 6th, 1890; Local Government Board to Kensington Board of Guardians January 29th, 1891.)

* MS. Minutes, Kensington Board of Guardians, December 4th, 1902.

† *Ibid.* January 6th, 1904.

‡ *Ibid.* June 2nd, 1904.

§ *Ibid.* February 8th, 1904.

‖ *Ibid.* March 23rd, 1904.

¶ *Ibid.*, November 28th, 1907.

under conditions of extreme discomfort which involves their being penned up for many hours in close contact with undesirable and possibly demoralising characters." *

Undismayed by successive failures, the Local Government Board has, even whilst we were considering the question, started another Able-bodied Test Workhouse for the Metropolis, by an Order, dated September 8th, 1908, setting aside the Belmont Road Workhouse, Fulham, for "adult male persons who are not infirm through sickness," from any Union of the Metropolis.

(iii) *Birmingham.*

Meanwhile Midland and Northern Unions were experimenting with other forms of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse. In Birmingham, a stoneyard had been opened in the winters of 1878–9 and 1879–80, to serve as a Labour Test to men on Outdoor Relief. But as we read, the :—

> "Test proved a delusion. There were a few honest industrious men who scrupulously performed their tasks. But in the majority of cases the *quasi* stone-breakers stood round large fires during the greater part of the day, and in the evening received their relief for the mere shadow of labour. . . . The able-bodied poor of the neighbouring districts were attracted to Birmingham, and the ratepayers of the parish soon found themselves supporting large numbers of men who were justly chargeable to neighbouring Unions."†

> "Outdoor Relief men were daily increasing. . . . Many of the latter were mere youths who never really worked, and who earned nothing, even when set to work by the Guardians. . . . These were of a type that required careful and patient dealing, that their apparent insubordination might not break out into something worse."‡

At the suggestion of Mr. Henley, the Local Government Board Inspector, the Birmingham Guardians "borrowed from the Corporation a large disused factory, and fitted it up rapidly as a branch Workhouse, and offered the test to all the single able-bodied men. It was so very successful that they determined next summer to build this test house. They do things rapidly in Birmingham. They built a three-storied building of brick and slate in six weeks, and it was then opened." § Great was the initial success :—

> "During the ten days the Test House had been in operation," we read, "the number discharged from the Workhouse to go to the Test House was 70, of these only 53 went. The number of orders given by Relieving Officers was 32, 28 of these went. Of these 81 who went to the Test House, 8 were sent back to the Workhouse by the Medical Officer, 15 discharged themselves, 3 were sent to prison for refusing to do their tasks, 1 absconded and was afterwards sent to prison." ‖

Mr. Henley reports a Return by the Clerk to the Guardians for three months showing the "number of orders given by relieving officers, 276 ; number of such orders used, 274 ; sent direct from Birmingham Workhouse or West Bromwich Workhouse, 110. Total admitted, 384 ; discharged, 340 ; remaining on February 26th, 1881, 44 ; average length of stay in the test-house, about one week. Strict discipline has been maintained, all refractory paupers being taken before the magistrates and summarily dealt with. The test house has had an immensely deterrent effect upon idle, dissolute, and worthless fellows. Its success is far beyond the most sanguine expectations of the Guardians. During the week ended January 1st, 1881, no persons were set to work in the stoneyard under the provisions of the outdoor labour test order, whereas in the corresponding week of 1880 the number of cases so relieved was 706." ¶ A year later a local newspaper states that :—

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* Local Government Board to Kensington Board of Guardians, March 6th, 1908 ; Minutes, March 22nd, 1906. In several of the Metropolitan Unions, and one or two elsewhere, there is an imperfect segregation of the Able-bodied. There being two or three Workhouses in the Union, one is set aside for adult males not being sick. This, therefore, receives all sections of males from sixteen to ninety, and men of all mental and physical capacities, provided only that they are not actually sick. In these so-called Able-bodied Workhouses, a considerable amount of varied work is done, including corn-grinding, wood-bundling, baking, mat-making, tin-work, picking coir fibre, boot-making, tailoring, brush-making, bag-making, etc. But the tasks are light, the hours short, and many of the inmates practically permanent. (*See* the interesting Report to the Camberwell Board of Guardians by the Master of the Gordon Road Workhouse, May, 1908.) In one of the best administered of these "able-bodied Workhouses," we found, by our own analysis of the books, that, out of 1,912 admissions of men during 1907, no fewer than 1,564 recurred twice or more often *during the same year* ; 320 of them five times or more, and 1 of them twenty-five times. Of 925 admissions of women, no fewer than 766 recurred twice or more often during the same year ; 157 of them five times or more, and 1 of them twenty-six times. Thus, good administration certainly does not stop recurrency.

† *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 1st, 1881. (We quote from Reports of meetings of the Board of Guardians.)

‡ *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, January 30th, 1879.

§ Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief, 1888, *Q.* 352.

‖ *Birmingham Daily Post*, November 27th, 1880.

¶ Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief, 1888, *Q.* 355.

> "The Test House had had the effect of relieving persons who were really destitute, and of preventing persons who had other means of living from coming on the Guardians. It was also a relief to the Workhouse of a class that interfered to a great extent with the due discipline of the workhouse."*

For some years the Guardians remained fully satisfied with this easy system of reducing Able-bodied Pauperism. There continued to be, as we read, "a strong dislike amongst the inmates to going to Floodgate Street, some of them preferring to leave the house. . . . Out of ten inmates sent to Floodgate Street, only one had arrived."† Those who unwarily entered its portals frequently preferred to get sent to prison. In 1886, "a Return recently presented to the Board of Guardians states that forty-one prosecutions took place last year for neglect to perform tasks at the Test House, and that in each case convictions took place." ‡ Sometimes, however, neither the zeal of the Master nor the acquiescence of the men served to induce the magistrates to let them go to prison. The Guardians found themselves driven to resolve that "no prosecutions should be instituted against any inmate of the Test House or Workhouse until the complaint or charge against such inmate shall have been investigated by at least one member of the Revision Committee."§ It was found that there had been prosecutions for non-fulfilment of tasks in which convictions had not been secured.

So far as we can ascertain, the *regimen* at the Birmingham Test House was as severe as—perhaps even more severe than—that at Poplar or Kensington. Instead of any kind of bed, the men had to lie together on a continuous sloping shelf‖ similar to that which used to be provided in the worst of the "Associated Wards" set aside for Vagrants. The task of oakum-picking for prisoners sentenced to hard labour was 3½ lb. for a man, and 2 lb. for a woman; but the unconvicted destitute men and women at the Test House had to do 4 lb. and 3 lb. respectively.¶

The selection of persons to whom to "apply the Test" seems to have been lacking in consistency. "When a single able-bodied man applies for relief," we read, "he is at once given an order for the Test House. . . . In a week or two the case comes up for revision. But in the majority of cases the pauper has taken his or her discharge. . . . If the pauper's conduct and further investigation show that the case is one of genuine poverty . . . after a term of probation in the Test House" he is transferred to the General Mixed Workhouse.** On the other hand, the married man had the privilege of beginning his career as a pauper in the General Mixed Workhouse. We read that "a married man gets an order for himself and family to enter the Workhouse. The same course is pursued with regard to women. Every Tuesday a small committee—the Revision Committee—sits at the Workhouse and reviews the list of inmates. . . . If the pauper prove to be a man or woman of bad character, or a gaol bird, or a confirmed loafer, an order for the Test House is given." †† This association of all the single men (and, therefore, the younger men), even of the best character, with those married men of notoriously bad character, seems to us a peculiar arrangement. It was said that "the majority of them [the inmates of the Test House], by all accounts, are not the sort of people with whom respectable working people, driven to the Workhouse by stress of poverty, old age, or weakness, ought to be compelled to mix." ‡‡ Presently, when a time of stress came, we find it noted that "the Guardians . . . have for some time steadily refused to open their stoneyard to able-bodied men applying for relief, but have dealt with all such cases by giving an order for the Workhouse, with the result of a steady diminution of pauperism." §§

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* *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, March 23rd, 1882. It had been resolved by the Guardians that the "Test should be adapted for accommodation of able-bodied women." (*Birmingham Daily Post*, May 14th, 1881.)

† *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, May 31st, 1880.

‡ *Birmingham Daily Post*, February 1st, 1886.

§ *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, March 18th, 1886.

‖ *Birmingham Daily Post*, November 3rd, 1880.

¶ *Ibid.* December 2nd, 1885.

** *Ibid.* February 1st, 1886.

†† *Ibid.* February 1st, 1886.

‡‡ *Ibid.* February 1st, 1886.

§§ *Ibid.* October 22nd, 1886.

The end of the story was the same at Birmingham as it was at Poplar and Kensington. At the very time that Mr. Henley was explaining to the Select Committee of the House of Lords how Birmingham had solved the problem of Able-bodied Pauperism, the Guardians were beginning to abandon the experiment. Just as at Poplar and Kensington, it proved impossible for a "mixed" Authority, having under its care, not the able-bodied alone, but also the children and the sick, the infirm and the aged—supervised by a Poor Law Division which was itself responsible for all these varied classes—to keep its institutions really separate and distinct. Already in 1885 we notice the letter from the Local Government Board—exactly the same letter that we found at Poplar and Kensington—assenting to the transfer, from the General Mixed Workhouse, which had become overcrowded, to the Test House, which was (as it was intended to be) nearly empty, of some of the men over sixty years of age.* Within a few months—just as at Kensington—we see the *regimen* at the Test House become less severe. In September, 1886, "arrangements were being made to introduce wood-chopping as a Labour Test at the Test House. . . . The intention of the Committee was to put oakum-picking only on those people who came to the Guardians because they would not work outside."† Presently the Guardians made up their minds to build a new Infirmary, which relieved the pressure on the accommodation, and it seemed to be unnecessary to maintain what had (as at Kensington) become only a branch Workhouse.

> "At a meeting of the Workhouse Management Committee," we read in 1889, "the Test House Sub-committee reported that, owing to the very small number of inmates of the Test House, and owing to the fact that many inmates of the Workhouse are being transferred to the Infirmary (recently opened), they were of opinion that the Test House should be closed, and that the paupers there should be sent to the Workhouse."‡

Notwithstanding this experience of 1880–9, in striking accord with that at Poplar and Kensington, we see the Local Government Board in 1906 once more falling back on the suggestion that the Destitution Authority, with all its mixture of paupers of all ages and classes to maintain, should set up a separate institution for the Able-bodied. On December 20th, 1906, the Board thought it right :—

> "To draw the Guardians' attention to the great increase which has taken place during the past few years in the number of adult male indoor poor." It does not "appear that the great increase in the number of male inmates is accounted for by depression in trade, as notwithstanding the improvement in trade which took place during the year 1905, the number of male inmates increased during that year from 1,573 to 1,679. . . . The Board would recommend the Guardians to consider the advisability of providing separate accommodation available for able-bodied men only, in which strict discipline could be maintained, so as to secure results similar to those which were experienced in connection with the separate block provided by the Guardians for that purpose in 1880, and closed shortly afterwards for lack of inmates." . . . It appears that "considerably more than half of the applications for relief are from persons frequenting common lodging-houses and from persons lodging in small tenements, and it is possible that persons are attracted to the parish by the conditions prevailing in the Workhouse."§

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* Local Government Board to Birmingham Board of Guardians, January 27th, 1885. The numbers in the Test House had sometimes sunk as low as nine or ten. In some weeks in the summer there had been more officers than inmates.

† *Birmingham Daily Post*, September 16th, 1886.

‡ *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, March 16th, 1889.

§ Local Government Board to Birmingham Board of Guardians, December 20th, 1906 ; *see* Thirty-sixth Annual Report of Local Government Board, 1906–7, p. 326 (Mr. Herbert's Report). In 1886, Mr. Henley induced the West Derby Union to provide an Able-bodied Test Workhouse, combined with extensive Casual Wards, and the Liverpool Union entered into a contract also to make use of them for the next fifteen years. The most significant comment on the "Belmont Road" Able-bodied Test Workhouse thus hopefully established is that it was given up at the end of the first term of years. The same inherent difficulties that always beset an Authority responsible for all classes of paupers, whenever it attemps to run an institution for the able-bodied alone, became as apparent in Liverpool and West Derby as they had been in Poplar and Kensington. The Liverpool Guardians were always seeking to get rid of the undesirable "In-and-Out," whether he was aged, feeble-minded, or crippled, by giving him an "order for Belmont Road." When the order was accepted, the intrusion of this non-able-bodied element inevitably softened the discipline, so that it was presently discovered that the Able-bodied "corner-boys" who were being "tested" no longer took their discharge with any promptitude. Meanwhile, the West Derby Guardians were finding themselves pressed to accommodate more aged and infirm, more sick and feeble-minded, more mothers with infants and more children than could be conveniently stowed away in their other institutions. When the fifteen years were up both Unions were disinclined to renew the agreement. Hence, when we visited Belmont Road in 1907, we found a General Mixed Workhouse of the ordinary type with 1,500 inhabitants, of all sorts and conditions, whilst, within the curtilage of the workhouse, separated from the other blocks by a wall, were Children's Homes and even a School for Remand Children and the children of vagrants and Ins-and-Outs. In the monstrous Workhouse at Brownlow Hill, the Liverpool Guardians were maintaining a popu'ation of 2,500 souls, the aged and infirm, the sick, and the mothers and infants being distributed in the upper regions, whilst the basement was devoted to the maintenance, without work, and with the very minimum of discipline, of 600 able-bodied men and youths of all ages, of all degrees of good conduct or depravity, and of all grades of physical and mental competence to earn a living, lounging about in promiscuous intercourse in a series of intercommunicating yards and dayrooms.

In April, 1908, such a Test House was again started at Birmingham, exactly as was done eighteen years ago.

(iv.) *Manchester and Chorlton.*

We were glad to be told by the Chief Inspector of the Local Government Board, at the outset of the investigation that we are describing, that we should "find a model House of that description in Manchester," actually in working order, which we were advised to examine.* The Tame Street Workhouse, opened in 1897, and managed by a Joint Committee of the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians, is a small institution, accommodating about 250 men and 50 women.† But it is attached to one of the largest Casual Wards in the United Kingdom—built to accommodate many hundred persons, the whole institution being under one Master and Matron. When we visited the institution we were struck with the absolute silence preserved by the men at meal times and with the military discipline with which they were marched to and from their work. The diet is of the plainest, and there is no tea or tobacco to compensate for what seems to us positive deficiency of nourishment.‡

The procedure is as follows. During the winter months the men are kept at work cleansing the huge Vagrant Wards, owing to the absence of women, but directly the spring comes and the Master, from his knowledge of the labour market, decides that the men could get employment, a process of "testing out" begins. The men are put, one by one, to do stone-pounding, in cubicles in an enclosed building. Unlike the Managers of most Able-bodied Test Workhouses, the Master of that at Tame Street seldom prosecutes; he had not, in fact, taken an inmate to the Police Court for two years. He relies for the maintenance of discipline on the facilities offered by the proximity, under his management, of the Casual Ward. Every inmate is obliged to perform the task that is given to him, in whatever place the Master chooses. If a man is recalcitrant, he is put, day after day, into one of the solitary cells built for the temporary sojourn of the Vagrants. Here he is given a definite taste of stone-breaking, or sometimes he is merely told "to count the bricks." But to this solitary confinement in idleness, which is not counted as punishment at all, and which may be without limit so long as the man is brought back each night to the dormitory, the Master may add, "with or without the direction of the Joint Committee," forty-eight hours' bread and water diet. We are not surprised that this particular form of the "relief of destitution" is found so far effectual in checking "pauperism" that Tame Street Workhouse, even during the winter months, is never full; and that, by June in each year, it stands almost empty, with a score or so of feeble inmates allowed to remain in order to do the cleaning. "I am of opinion," states the Clerk of the Manchester Union, "that the fact of there being a fully-equipped Test House to which Able-bodied men can be sent has resulted in both of these Unions (Chorlton and Manchester) being relieved of the cost of maintaining a number of idle men who would have been content to remain in an ordinary Workhouse, where the strict discipline which is necessary in dealing with this class of paupers cannot be effectively applied."§

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 2365.

† The Women's Department is insignificant, there being only about thirty admissions annually; owing it is said, to the fact that the masters of the Workhouses prefer to keep the able-bodied women to do the work of these institutions. (MS. Minutes, Manchester and Chorlton Joint Committee, May 19th, 1905.)

‡ We append the dietary table :—

CHORLTON AND MANCHESTER JOINT WORKHOUSE.

Test-House Dietary Table, as fixed by the Local Government Board's Order dated 20th March, 1897.

—	Breakfast.			Dinner.						Supper.		
	Bread.	Porridge.	Milk.	Cooked Meat without bone.	Potatoes or other Vegetables.	Bread.	Soup.	Potato Hash.	Bacon.	Bread.	Cheese.	Porridge.
	ozs.	pts.	pts.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	pts.	pts.	ozs.	ozs.	ozs.	pt.
Sunday, Men	6	1½	1/3	–	12	4	—	—	4	7	–	1½
Monday „	6	1½	1/3	4	12	4	—	—	–	7	–	1½
Tuesday „	6	1½	1/3	–	—	6	1½	—	–	5	2	1
Wednesday, Men	6	1½	1/3	–	—	4	—	1½	–	7	–	1½
Thursday „	6	1½	1/3	4	12	4		—	–	7	–	1½
Friday „	6	1½	1/3	–	—	6	1½	—	–	5	2	1
Saturday „	6	1½	1/3	–	—	4		1½	–	7	1	1½

§ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix XLV. to Vol. IV., Par. 3.

It is interesting to notice in the Minutes of the Manchester and Chorlton Joint Committee all the old difficulties arising. Even the regimen of Tame Street does not prevent recurrence, seventeen men being admitted, during 1907, at least five times and two of them nine or ten times. There are repeated complaints from the Medical Officer of the Test Workhouse "that a number of men sent . . . from the Crumpsall Workhouse for the purpose of being put on Test Work were not fit for anything approaching Test Work." * We find the Manchester Guardians asking the Local Government Board *to sanction infirm men being transferred to Tame Street*, "as Crumpsall is overcrowded." † We have even a communication from the Manchester Board of Guardians to the Joint Committee stating "that their Workhouse is very much overcrowded" and anxiously inquiring whether they might not send to Tame Street a limited number of men, who "though not fit for stone-breaking," are nevertheless suitable for some form of Test Work; a request which the Joint Committee refused.‡ But apparently the Joint Committee relented. During 1907, at any rate, out of 480 men admitted in the first months, no fewer than 106 were between fifty-five and sixty-seven, whilst 194 were over fifty, and 340 were over forty. The Medical Officer's Register for 1907 tells an even more pathetic tale. Out of the 749 male inmates actually subjected to the gaol-like discipline of this establishment, *twenty-seven were entered as suffering from phthisis*, 124 from bronchitis and bronchial catarrh, twenty-nine from rheumatism, twenty-three from skin eruption, nineteen from cardiac disease, seventeen from varicose veins, seventeen from rupture, nine from mental debility, and 107 from physical debility (either alone or with some other disease)—only 293 having nothing the matter with them.§ We cannot feel that either the diet or the regimen of the Tame Street Workhouse affords the proper treatment for men suffering from phthisis, to say nothing of the other ailments.

(v.) *Sheffield.*

The Sheffield Union, noted in the north country for its rigid administration, has invented an even more ingenious device for reducing its able-bodied pauperism. Hidden away among the huge blocks which make up its pauper establishment "there is a Test House of thirty beds. . . . If a man is passed by the doctor as Able-bodied he is placed there and has a task each day which he has to complete or be prosecuted. He is worked, fed and sleeps there, and does not enter the House proper in any way." ‖ Here, as we learn, "the Able-bodied and partly Able-bodied are kept fully employed and treated on the lines of the Local Government Board Order that all who are able to work shall not be *allowed to be idle at any time*." The character and amount of the work exacted from these merely destitute persons which we append in a note will, we think, surprise some prison administrators. The task has to be accomplished by 5.30 or "the man is prosecuted," *but if he has finished before* 5.30 *he is given more work to do*. "Since this small Test House has been in force" states the Master, "we have got rid of a lot of them and our numbers stand at from a hundred to a hundred and fifty less this year than last, and last year was lower than 1905." ¶ But the Master has had his discouragements.

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* MS. Minutes, Manchester and Salford Joint Committee, September 9th, 1898, and December 20th, 1901.

† MS. Minutes, Manchester Board of Guardians, December 2nd, 1896.

‡ *Ibid.* February 28th, 1902.

§ MS. Register of Medical Officer, 1907, Tame Street Workhouse.

‖ "Indoor Administration and the Employment of Inmates," by Ernest Burgess (the Master of the Sheffield Workhouse), in Reports of Poor Law Conferences, 1907; Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. II., p. 90.

¶ "Indoor Administration and the Employment of Lunatics," by Ernest Burgess, in Reports of Poor Law Conferences, 1907. "The Guardians of the Poor of the Sheffield Union have prescribed the following tasks of work for able-bodied Male Inmates of the Union Workhouse, viz.:—

1. To grind 120 lbs. corn into meal (minimum task).
1*a*. To grind 180 lbs. corn into meal (maximum task).
2. To break 13 cwt. granite to pass 2 inch grid.
3. To break 20 cwt. limestone to pass 2 inch grid.
4. To pick 4 lbs. unbeaten oakum.
5. To saw eleven sleepers 9 feet by 11 inches into 6-inch lengths.
6. To saw sixteen pit props 7 feet by 10 inches into 6-inch lengths.
7. To saw eighteen pit props 7 feet by 9 inches into 6-inch lengths.
8. To saw twenty pit props 7 feet by 7 inches into 6-inch lengths.
9. To saw twenty-two pit props 7 feet by 6 inches into 6-inch lengths.

Any of these cross-cut tasks to be given to two men.

Any of these tasks to be given at the discretion of the Master of the Workhouse, by Order of the Board of Guardians."

The ordinary Medical Officer of the Workhouse and Infirmary was perpetually refusing to certify men as fit to undergo this regimen, and an outside medical man with a different view of physical fitness had to be found. Moreover, the Governor of the Wakefield Gaol gave the men a better time, so that recalcitrant paupers were apt to be indifferent to threats of prosecution, and some gladly went to short sentences of imprisonment, rather than remain in such a Workhouse. "The marvel is," sums up our Committee, after inspecting one of these Test Departments, "that anybody should face it, and the assumption is that none but men too indolent to look for other work will take it. . . . The question which suggests itself seems to be this: if the problem of 'Ins and Outs' is so universally acknowledged, and if the legality of setting them to such severe task work is indisputable, and if such work is so easily provided as here, why is it not universally adopted?" * It does not, however, succeed in preventing recurrence. There remain some who apparently have a prejudice against prison, or perhaps have not tried it, and yet are unable to earn their livelihood outside of both institutions, so that they turn up time after time. Thus, out of the 623 men who underwent the Test between January, 1907, and January, 1908, there were nine who came in and out at least six times, and three of them, indeed, seventeen or eighteen times, and one of them as many as twenty-two times. These persons, at any rate, must be admitted to have demonstrated the extremity of their destitution. The question then arises whether the "Test Department" of the Sheffield Union, however admirable its severity may be for the punishment of persons convicted of some definite offence, after judicial trial, constitutes a lawful method of relieving destitution under the Statute of 39 Eliz., c. 2. If the present Poor Law is continued, we recommend that the opinion of the Law Officers should be taken on this point.†

(vi) *Compulsory Detention.*

The severity of these different processes for "testing out" Workhouse inmates who, as the Guardians (or, in practice, the Master) may choose to consider, might be able to earn a livelihood outside, has been greatly increased by the intrusion into Poor Law administration of the principle of compulsory detention. To the reformers of 1834 the notion of detaining, in a Poor Law institution, any person who was willing to take his discharge, would have seemed preposterous. The whole case for a deterrent Workhouse was based on the freedom of the pauper to leave it as soon as he realised that its conditions were "less eligible" than life outside. This principle is still authoritatively asserted to be essential to the system of Poor Law relief. In the recent Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy—which included the head of the Poor Law Division and the Senior Medical Officer for Poor Law purposes of the Local Government Board—it is laid down that "the purely voluntary nature of the present system of admission into and discharge from the Workhouse is a cardinal principle of the Poor Law; and to give magistrates the power to order the detention of adult persons in a Workhouse might have an effect on the whole system of relief altogether out of proportion to the advantages which might be derived from it." ‡ But Parliament has already conferred this power of compulsory detention without a magistrate's order. In 1871 the Guardians—in effect the Masters of Workhouses—were empowered to detain any pauper after he had applied for his discharge, for twenty-four, for forty-eight, and, under certain circumstances, for seventy-two hours.§ In 1899 this power of compulsory detention was extended, in the cases of those who had "discharged themselves frequently without sufficient reason," to 168 hours, or a whole week, with no more formality than an entry in the Minutes.‖ The intention of Parliament was clearly to put a stop to the practice of using the General Mixed Workhouse, with its ample food and easy hours of work, as

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* Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 14, p. 27.

† We may here note that the Bolton Union has a somewhat similar "Test Department," and that Huddersfield is taking steps in the same direction (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 40640). Within the Metropolis, the Guardians of the Bethnal Green Union seem to have constructed in their "Reception Ward," where able-bodied men are set to work *in isolation* from other inmates, which makes the men quickly take their discharge, something analogous to the "Test Department" of Sheffield. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 24017–37, 24059–62, and Appendix No. XV. (A) to Vol. II.)

‡ Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, p. 106.

§ 34 & 35 Vict., c. 108, s. 4 (Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act, 1871).

‖ 62 & 63 Vict., c. 37, s. 4 (Poor Law Act, 1899).

a convenient place of temporary resort.* When applied to the "Ins-and-Outs" of the General Mixed Workhouse, this detention for a week at a time may cause little hardship; though the only result in practice is that the experienced pauper gives notice immediately on re-entering, and thus takes his day out regularly once a week, instead of at irregular intervals. But when this power of compulsory detention is used in such a "testing" establishment as that at Tame Street, Manchester, or that at Sheffield, it seems to us that it amounts to a week's imprisonment with hard labour, under conditions actually more severe than those of the gaol. Hence we find, as a matter of fact, the disreputable men gladly accompanying the Master to the police-court, actually preferring the Magistrate's sentence of imprisonment to the arbitrary punishments of the Workhouse. Only those who have some remnant of respectability prefer, under such conditions, to endure the tender mercies of the Poor Law. It is, in fact, part of the terror of Tame Street that the Master does not take the men to the police-court, finding his own *regimen* more effective; thereby dispensing, moreover, with the formality of a trial! We do not think that Parliament can have been aware of this strange combination of a severely deterrent Workhouse with an arbitrary power of compulsory detention without trial.

(vii.) *Summary of Objections to the Maintenance of a Penal Establishment by a Destitution Authority.*

We have felt it necessary to go at some length into the actual experience of these Able-bodied Test Workhouses, because practically no information on the subject will be found in the Commission's proceedings, or has been published by the Local Government Board. And yet the "Able-bodied Workhouse" is, without reference to the actual experience of such institutions, still confidently put forward as the proper method of relieving Able-bodied Destitution. Mr. J. S. Davy, C.B., for instance, the head of the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board, informs us that he "most strongly advocates a Test House," for the Able-bodied applicants for relief in the County of London, and "in all large urban communities." † Mr. Lockwood, the late Inspector for the Metropolis, has persistently urged, as a necessary part of the machinery of the Poor Law, the establishment of "suitably equipped institutions to which you would send the so-called Able-bodied," for continuous work under "disciplinary treatment . . . impossible in a large Mixed Workhouse." ‡ We feel constrained to point out that, if the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 were repealed, and if the Able-bodied were thus again thrust back into the Poor Law, the Able-bodied Test Workhouse would, as a matter of fact, be the only alternative that the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board would have, in time of normal trade, to offer to the methods of relief now provided by the Distress Committees. We gather, moreover, that, under the name of "Industrial Institution," it is upon the Able-bodied Test Workhouse that the majority of our colleagues recommend Parliament to rely, as the principal and the normal method of relieving Able-bodied Destitution by the new Destitution Authority that they propose. Hence, we think it worth while to summarise our objections to the provision of any such institution by a Poor Law Authority responsible alike for the Children, the Sick, the Mentally Defective and the Able-bodied however that Authority may be constituted.

Before stating our objections in detail, however, we must call warning attention to the enormous plausibility given to the Able-bodied Test Workhouse by the fact that, wherever it has been tried, and for as long as its principles have been strictly carried out, it has been strikingly and almost instantly successful in its primary object of ridding

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* "The Guardians," it was urged by a Local Government Board Inspector, "are very much troubled with men who come in and are constantly going in and out. . . . They come in, fifty, sixty, seventy and eighty a day; they will leave the Workhouse after due notice; they will go, many of them, that very day, straight to the Relieving Officer, and will ask for an order of re-admission; many of them will come back on the same night. That gives a vast amount of trouble. They have to be bathed, they have to be inspected by the Medical Officers, they have to be re-clothed, their own clothes have to be taken into store; and I think it is an abuse of the Poor Law altogether. If men of that class knew that they could not get out under a week, I think it would check the practice very much." (Report of House of Lords Select Committee on Poor Law Relief, 1888, *Q.* 661.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 3170–1, 2365–6.

‡ *Ibid. Qs.* 4142, 13238, 13876, and 14142–3. For other advocacy of the same panacea, *see Qs.* 15604–6, 15705–7, 15755–6, 18752, 23945 (Par. 28), 23948–50, 26408 (Par. 29), 26496, 27061 (Par. 60), 43889 (Par. 23–24), 71172 (Par. 15 (*h*)), and Appendices Nos. XXVII. (Par. 15), and LXIV. (Par. 11), to Vol. V.

the Destitution Authority of the able-bodied pauper. For those who can see no further end than this, it will continue to be the one infallible and sufficient solution of the problem of the Able-bodied poor; and its "successes" will be brought up again and again to justify demands for new Test Workhouses, and for legislative measures to prevent their relapse into General Mixed Workhouses. What its advocates do not see is that to rid the Guardians of a nuisance is not to rid society of it. If the Test Workhouse abolished the Able-bodied loafer, there would be a better case for it. But if it merely keeps him out of the Workhouse it may be as mischievous as a plan for emptying our prisons by simultaneously increasing their rigour and opening their doors. Whilst an able-bodied man remains a loafer and a wastrel, it is urgently desirable that he should be in hand and under observation, rather than lost in the crowd. The Destitution Authority must not reduce its expenses by shirking its duties. Such economy is delusive: it may produce a saving on the local rate, but not on the national balance-sheet. The Able-bodied who shun the Test Workhouse are supposed to be face to face with the alternative of either working or starving. As a matter of fact our social organisation is still far too loose to narrow their choice to any such extent. They can beg; they can steal; they can sponge; they can practise or exploit prostitution; they can combine the predatory life with the parasitic by shifts of all sorts; and the taxpayer has to pay for policemen and prisons what he has saved on Workhouses and Relieving Officers, besides supporting the loafer, directly or indirectly, just as much as he did before. A room cannot be cleaned by simply sweeping the dirt under the sofa; and the burden of destitution cannot be lightened by simply sweeping the pauper out of the Workhouse into the street. That process does not reduce his weight by a single ounce; and unless he immediately becomes a productive worker, somebody has to bear it. Driving him from pillar to post is a needless labour and expense if he has to be fed at the private post or the prison post after taking himself away from the Workhouse pillar. As far as it has been possible to follow him up, there is no evidence that he costs less, or does more, out of the Test Workhouse than in it.

And there is the further flaw in the case for the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, that in establishing a worse state of things for its inmates than is provided by the least eligible employment outside, it is not only guilty of deliberate cruelty and degradation, thereby manufacturing and hardening the very class it seeks to exterminate, but it protects and, so to speak, standardizes the worst conditions of commercial employment. It is neither desirable morally nor economical financially to drive men and women to accept "the least eligible" outside employment. It is these very "least eligible" employments that have created, and are still creating, a huge residuum of feeble-bodied people who cannot work and able-bodied people who regard work as the worst of evils. Before condemning a man for being "work-shy," we should enquire what are the conditions of the work he has learnt to be shy of. It may be that in depriving some of the least eligible employments of their workers, even at the cost of maintaining these workers in idleness, the more indulgent or extravagant Destitution Authorities have been unwittingly doing public service in compelling the employers to raise the standard of eligibility somewhat. The truth is that nobody who is acquainted with ordinary industrial employment at its worst in the unregulated trades dare propose, explicitly, that any public institution, even for criminals, should underbid it in disregard of the health, comfort and character of its employees. But such underbidding is the very keystone of the theory on which the Able-bodied Test Workhouse is founded. In rejecting it as impracticable, and indeed as monstrous, we are forced to turn our backs on the whole system which it holds together, and to seek deliverance in another direction.

Let us now take the objections to the Able-bodied Test Workhouse in detail as they arise in practice. The first is that the policy of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse will not, as a matter of fact, be carried out for any length of time by an Authority dealing with all classes of destitute persons. The investigations that we have made into practically every case in which such an establishment has been started prove, we think, conclusively that the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, when it is managed by a Destitution Authority, sooner or later crumbles back into the General Mixed Workhouse. The reason for this is obvious. An Authority charged with the maintenance of all classes of destitute persons finds it difficult enough, in its laudable desire to economise in officials, in sites, and in bricks and mortar, to keep entirely separate and distinct institutions even for children, for sick

persons, for the mentally defective, and for the aged and infirm. In fact, as we have already demonstrated in Part I. of our Report, the Destitution Authorities of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland have, in spite of constant pressure from the Central Authority, failed to provide such separate and distinct institutions for the bulk of the Non-able-bodied classes. What is difficult in the case of the Non-able-bodied is impracticable in the case of the Able-bodied. A Board of Guardians has permanently on its hands a certain number—generally an increasing number—of sick persons, of children, of the aged and infirm. Once an infirmary or a school, an asylum or an almshouse is built and placed under separate management it is highly improbable that it will ever stand empty. But the whole object of an Able-bodied Test Workhouse is to "test out" Able-bodied persons who have settled down to the comforts of the General Mixed establishment. In other words, the ideal Able-bodied Test Workhouse would, in normal times, stand empty. If such an institution were run by an Authority exclusively concerned with the suppression of Able-bodied Pauperism, the emptiness of its establishment would be a standing proof of its efficiency. But when the Authority managing such an institution is under perpetual pressure to provide additional accommodation for other classes, the sight of an empty building with unoccupied officials, at a heavy ground rent, seems, both to the administrator and his constituents, a proof of incompetence. Hence, the success of the establishment as a "test," its very prevention of Able-bodied Pauperism, eventually leads to its disestablishment.

The crumbling back of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse into the General Mixed Workhouse is accelerated by the indefiniteness of the class for whom it is provided. It is easy to pick out from a crowd the children, the aged and infirm persons and even those who are sick. But to discriminate the able-bodied from the semi-able-bodied is a task which can never be perfectly performed and about which there will be perpetual difference of opinion. When an Authority, having to maintain semi-able-bodied persons, has free access to an institution intended to "test out" able-bodied persons, it will, as is, we think, proved by the foregoing analysis of the history of the Able-bodied Test Workhouses, be perpetually attempting to make use of the "test" as—to use the candid words to us of the Clerk of a Metropolitan Union—"an easy and ready method of getting rid of very troublesome cases." * Now, "as every Workhouse Master and every Guardian knows, it is by no means the actual able-bodied man who is most troublesome; it is the man who has just enough amiss with him to prevent the doctor certifying that he is able to do hard work." † At first the Medical Officer of the Test House, assuming he is a conscientious official, will send back to the mixed establishment the dirty or dissolute man, or the refractory and disorderly inmate, who happens to be suffering from incipient phthisis, from chronic rheumatism, or from bad varicose veins, or disabling rupture. But if he is the servant of the very Authority that *wants* these cases "tested out" of their establishments, he will, sooner or later, either relax his standard of able-bodiedness,‡ or he will be replaced by a more accommodating medical official. To put it paradoxically, the only chance of separating the Able-bodied from those who are so deficient in physical health or mental capacity as to be non-able-bodied, is to have three separate and distinct Authorities—an Authority dealing with able-bodied persons, an Authority dealing with physically sick persons, and an Authority dealing with mentally-defective persons. These separate Authorities will each of them quickly discover if an inmate belongs by right to either of the others, and will see that he is transferred to the proper institution. If, on the other hand, all the classes are under one and the same Authority, there is no inducement to eliminate cases from the particular institution into which they have been improperly admitted—it is, in fact, easier to keep them all together under one roof in a "mixed" institution, where the classification avowedly permits of each grade "shading off" by imperceptible degrees into the other grades. Any such "mixed" establishment is inevitably, so far as its regimen is concerned, first influenced in favour of uniformity, and then dominated by the "marginal case." Any effectively specialised treatment, such as would be really appropriate to the Able-bodied, the Mentally-Defective, and the Physically Infirm respectively, becomes impracticable. In

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* *Ibid.* Q. 18752 (Mr. Millward).

† *Ibid.* Q. 13876 (Mr. Lockwood.)

‡ We must here recall the significant fact that, according to the Medical Officer's own register, no fewer than 456 out of the 749 passed for admission to the penal labour, severe regimen and exiguous diet of the Tame Street Test House in 1907, were suffering from definite ailments (*see* Sect. IV. of the present chapter).

short, as the authors of the 1834 Report themselves foresaw,* the very indefiniteness of the line of cleavage between those who are able-bodied and those who are slightly sick or slightly defective, inevitably tends in practice, under a "mixed" Authority, to reinstate and to maintain the lax and unspecialised treatment, unsuited to any class whatsoever, that is characteristic of the General Mixed Workhouse.

These administrative obstacles to the continued maintenance of an Able-bodied Test Workhouse by a Destitution Authority are, however, of no account compared to our radical objection to the maintenance, at any time, of a penal establishment by such an Authority. A Destitution Authority may, or may not, have the machinery for discovering whether a person is destitute. It certainly has no machinery for discovering whether or not a person ought to be subject to penal tasks and penal discipline. It seems to us an extraordinary perversion of the law that a Relief Committee, the Master of a General Mixed Workhouse, or the Superintendent of a Test Department, should presume, without legal training, without hearing evidence in open Court, without any proper defence of the person arraigned, to impose on a destitute person what is admittedly worse than a sentence of hard labour merely *as a way of relieving his destitution.* Equally unsatisfactory is the provision made inside the Able-bodied Test Workhouse for the wise treatment of such persons, even assuming that they are in some way or other worthy of punishment. No one acquainted with the administration of prisons, or reformatories, or foreign Penal Colonies, will under-rate the difficulty of securing for such institutions officers with the requisite characteristics for making discipline curative and reformatory. The whole technique of dealing with adults who are criminal, disorderly, or merely "work-shy," is yet in the making. Boards of Guardians and their officials are not only deficient in this technique; they have not the remotest idea that any such special qualification or training is necessary. Any man or woman, if a disciplinarian, is good enough as Labour Master or Labour Mistress. Any Superintendent who "tests men out" is considered a success. Hence, the note of brutality and arbitrariness which is so noticeable in these institutions. It is not that the Superintendent or Labour Master is by nature brutal or even unkind. But the constant association with disorderly and defective characters, with no kind of training either in the science or art of dealing with them, forces him to rely exclusively on a rigorous and unbending discipline.

The tragedy of the whole business is that many of the inmates of an Able-bodied Test Workhouse are neither criminal, nor even "work-shy." The "won't works" may come in and out of a General Mixed Workhouse, but they discharge themselves at once from the Test House and seldom turn up again. The residuum that is left behind by this process of "testing" consists (as in fact, it should do according to the very idea of the institution) of those whose destitution, and whose lack of any possible alternative, are real, absolute and extreme. This is admitted by Poor Law administrators who are constantly advocating the Able-bodied Test Workhouse as a method of testing, not a man's criminality, nor yet his disinclination to work, but his destitution. To discover destitution is, in fact, the only business of a Destitution Authority. Having discovered that a man is really destitute, what right has the Destitution Authority to punish him?

We come here to the root of the matter. There is a fatal ambiguity about the axiom that the condition of the pauper is to be less eligible than the condition of the lowest class of independent labourers. Are the conditions of existence in the Workhouse to be less eligible than those of a man who is in employment, or less eligible than those of a man who is out of work and cannot get into employment? If they are merely to be less eligible than the condition of the man who is in full work at sufficient wages, they will do very little to check able-bodied pauperism. The great mass of men who, in London and the other great cities of the United Kingdom, come in and out of the Workhouse, according to whether the discipline is lax or stern, are not men who have the alternative of holding any situation at wages. This may be due either to their own fault or to circumstances over which they have no control. But that does not alter the fact. What makes impossible, as a method of dealing with Able-bodied Destitution, the policy of offering an Able-bodied Test Workhouse, with conditions of existence less eligible

* Speaking of the largest and best administered Workhouses, the Report records that, "it is found almost impracticable to subject all the various classes within the same house to an appropriate treatment. *One part of a class of adults often so closely resembles a part of another class as to make any distinction in treatment appear arbitrary and capricious to those who are placed in the inferior class, and to create discontents.*" (Report of Poor Law Commissioners, 1834, p. 306, of reprint.)

than those of the lowest grade of independent labourers, is the existence, in all large urban centres, of a numerous class of men who never do hold situations at wages, but who are chronically "under-employed," as casual labourers, or not employed at all. Owing to the social and economic circumstances that we have chosen to create in our great cities, such of these men as are of a definitely parasitic type make shift on a very low level of existence by sponging on other people's earnings, by stray jobs, by charity, and by what may accurately be described as "pickings." What an Able-bodied Test Workhouse does is to keep these wastrels and "cadgers" off the rates—at the cost of leaving them to roam about at large and indulge in their expensive and demoralising parasitism, a danger to property and the public, and a perpetual trouble to the police. The persons who are actually subjected to the stern regimen of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse are not these men at all, for they never stay and never re-enter; but the broken-down and debilitated weakling, the man absolutely without an alternative, the genuinely destitute man, who is forced in by starvation, finds the conditions unendurable and takes his discharge, only to be again and again driven in by dire necessity. To put it shortly, our examination of these institutions demonstrates that the "Ins-and-Outs" of the General Mixed Workhouse are nearly always disreputable; the Ins-and-Outs of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, who alone are subject to penal discipline, are a depressed and feeble, but on the whole a docile and decent, set of men, who need, if they are to be kept off the rates, not penal tasks and penal discipline on an insufficiently nourishing diet, but a course of strict but restorative physical and mental training, on adequate food, and a patient appeal to their courage and their better instincts.

This consideration brings us to the absurdity of the panacea of placing increased powers of compulsory detention in the hands of the Destitution Authority. We regret to report that the desire to have these powers is almost universal. We have a solemn conference of Metropolitan Guardians resolving, in 1905, "that in view of the fact that the absence of a suitable institution in which refractory and worthless paupers and such as prefer to throw themselves upon the rates and refuse to earn their own livelihood can be dealt with, checks any progress in the work of classification, this Conference is of opinion that it is advisable that the general powers of Guardians who deal with Able-bodied paupers, especially with refractory and disorderly paupers, should be extended, especially in regard to their period of detention." * We were given to understand that the Destitution Authorities would presently "seek and press for additional powers of detention on a graduated basis, to the extent of three, six, or twelve months, or even longer." † But if this power was obtained by a Destitution Authority, what likelihood is there that refractory, disorderly, and work-shy persons would accept its hospitality? If such persons desire maintenance coupled with detention, His Majesty's prisons are open to them without very great exertion on their part. But, as a matter of fact, prisons are not filled by persons who voluntarily resort to them in order to get a livelihood. Those whom they maintain are persons carefully picked out of the general population by an Authority whose special business it is to apprehend refractory and disorderly persons. In a word, it is useless for the Destitution Authority to run a penal establishment for the refractory and "sturdy rogue" unless it also has the power of taking persons up and putting them there. But why, unless we can invent something better than a mere Destitution Authority, should we take this function out of the hands of the Police and Prison Authorities?

(E) The Casual Ward.

The alarming increase in the number of Vagrants seeking relief from the Poor Law Authorities—an increase which has since become ever greater—led, in 1904, to the appointment of a strong Departmental Committee (including the head of the Poor Law Division, and the Senior Medical Officer for Poor Law Purposes of the Local Government Board) to report upon the whole question. Though we received some evidence on the subject,‡ we have felt justified in making use of the valuable information obtained by

* Report of Committee appointed by the Conference of Metropolitan Guardians on Able-bodied Paupers (certain classes of), 1905, p. 1; *see also* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 5778–80, 11557, 14076–82, 26408 (Par. 29), 27061 (Par. 60), 50096 (Par. 13 (XXV.)), and Appendices XV. (A), at. 79 to Vol. I., XXXVII. (Par. 21) and XLV. (Par. 8 (*a*)) to Vol. IV., and LVII. (Par. 16 (c)) to Vol. VII.

† Report of Committee appointed by the Conference of Metropolitan Guardians on Able-bodied Paupers (certain classes of), 1905, p. 2.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 17097 (Pars. 16, 17), 17646–50, 22136 (Pars. 8, 9), 22172–80, 22229–39, 22436–52, 22508–30, 23065, 23986, 26408 (Pars. 48–50), 26787–854, 28796 (Pars. 14. 15), 28949–55, 29012–28, etc.

this Committee,* as if tendered to us, and were thereby enabled to dispense with much investigation of our own.

The Casual Ward in England and Wales is, in all but about a score of Unions, attached to the General Mixed Workhouse. But the closeness of the Ward to the Workhouse, and the character of the accommodation, ranges from an outhouse and yard behind the porter's lodge, typical of the rural Union,† to the entirely separate building, with its own entrance gate, containing row after row, and tier upon tier, of self-contained brick cells for sleeping and working, characteristic of the better administered of the populous urban Unions. "Ever since the year 1871," state the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, "the Local Government Board have put steady pressure upon Boards of Guardians to provide wards on the cellular system, on the ground that cells, while being deterrent to the habitual Vagrant, relieve the *bona fide* wayfarer of the necessity of associating with him. In 434 Unions, Wards under this system have been built, while in 204 Unions there are no separate cells."‡ A desire to separate the administration of the Casual Ward from that of the General Mixed Workhouse has led, in some Metropolitan and one or two provincial Unions, to the erection of a Casual Ward apart from the Workhouse, on its own site, and under its own Superintendent. In Ireland there is no Casual Ward, but there are many "night lodgers," who are generally accommodated in sheds or outhouses attached to the Workhouse, and sometimes in the Workhouse itself. §

To these 638 Casual Wards, placed all over the country at intervals of a few miles, there resort nightly from 7,000 to 17,000 persons, according to the season, the weather, and the badness of trade. These represent an army "on tramp" estimated to vary, according to the same influences, from 30,000 to as many as 80,000 separate individuals, who resort to the Casual Wards from time to time. Four-fifths of them are men, who are sometimes accompanied by women, and occasionally also by young children.‖ The number of single women in the Casual Wards is infinitesimal. In practice, any person, claiming to be destitute, and not recognised as a local resident, can obtain accommodation. Nominally the applicant ought to seek out the Relieving Officer,¶ and get an order for admission. But in London and in some other towns this is disregarded in practice. In the Metropolis "the casual never goes to the Relieving Officer; his case is always regarded as one of sudden and urgent necessity, and he is admitted by the Superintendent. . . . For the ordinary applicant for relief," stated an experienced Poor Law official, "the Relieving Officer is outside the door, but for the 'casual' he is inside the door." **

> "The hours of admission vary to some extent. Generally speaking, a Vagrant is not admitted before 4 p.m. in the winter or 6 p.m. in the summer, nor after 9 p.m., but Vagrants who go to the Workhouse after that time are generally admitted, as, if illness occurred, the Master might be held responsible for his refusal to admit. The regulations contained in the Order of the Local Government Board dated December 18th, 1882, require that on admission the Vagrant shall be searched, and in almost every case this is done, though not always very carefully. If any money is found, it should, in strictness, be paid to the Treasurer of the Union, but as a rule a Vagrant is allowed to keep any small sum he may have on him. Very frequently the tramp brings in broken food; in some cases this is returned to him on his discharge, and in others he is allowed to eat it in the Ward. Pipes, tobacco, and other small articles are returned to the Vagrant on his discharge. . . . In most of the

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* Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vols. I to III. (Cd. 2892). We also made use of the Report and Evidence of the Scottish Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders, Vagrants, etc., 1895, Vols. I., II. (7753); the Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906; and of the Annual Reports of the Prison Commissioners.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 28953–55.

‡ Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., p. 27.

§ Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Ireland, 1907; Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906. Swarms of such Vagrants oscillate up and down Ireland. "The admissions to the Probationary or Vagrant Ward of a particular Workhouse for the night are far more numerous on the eve or on the night of general popular assemblages, whether cattle-fair, market, races, or athletic sports, etc." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 54.)

‖ Of the applicants for admission to the Casual Wards about 9 per cent. are women and 2 per cent. children. (Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, pp. 111, 113.) But there is evidence that this does not represent the actual proportion of women and children "on the road." Sometimes the man alone goes to the Casual Ward, the woman and children finding accommodation in a common lodging-house.

¶ The experiment has repeatedly been tried, as was recommended by the Poor Law Board's Circular of 1866, of practically putting the matter into the hands of the police, by appointing them Assistant Relieving Officers for this purpose, and making applicants for admission to the Casual Ward apply to the Police Station. (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 48349 (Par. 17), 50713, 50716.) This, whilst deterrent to the respectable man, is found to have no effect on the professional tramp, who knows that he has committed no offence against the criminal law. The bias of the police is, in fact, in favour of every houseless person being ensured lodging, and of every hungry person being fed, in order to obviate the petty thefts to which dire necessity leads.

** Report of Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on the Homeless Poor of London, 1891, p. 11, and *Q.* 897.

more recent Wards the sleeping accommodation consists of a hammock or a wire bed with a mattress, together with a sufficient amount of rugs; the cells are, as a rule, warmed with hot water pipes. The regulations provide that there shall be a bell in each cell. In the poorer Unions, where the separate cell system has not been adopted, Vagrants sleep in associated wards, either in hammocks, on straw mattresses or, in some cases, plank beds. The Local Government Board discourage plank beds, and they are now somewhat rare. Whether they are a hardship or not depends upon the sufficiency of the rugs provided, a matter which is very much in the hands of the Superintendent."*

What, however, interests the ordinary inmate far more than any details of accommodation, are the conditions imposed on him during his sojourn with regard to detention, labour and food. In these respects the Departmental Committee found that "diversity of practice in the different Unions is the most striking characteristic of the present system." † The Local Government Board for England and Wales constantly advises the Boards of Guardians to detain the Vagrant for two nights, and to exact from him in the intervening day a severe task of work.‡ If he re-appears at the same Casual Ward for a second time within a month, he should be detained for four nights; but this regulation is, outside the Metropolis, seldom enforced:—

"It is, of course, much easier," as the Departmental Committee remark, "for a Workhouse Master or the Superintendent of a Casual Ward to allow Vagrants to discharge themselves on the morning after admission without labour, than to detain them and insist upon their doing the regulation task of work; and the discretion which is left to the officers with respect to the discharge of certain classes of Vagrants results in a complete variety of practice."§

Even in the Metropolis, which is,

"Under the Order of 1882, considered as one Union, so far as the relief of casual paupers is concerned . . . there is no real uniformity . . . some Guardians do not detain, some give one task, some another, and some practically none at all. . . . Each Board of Guardians has a different opinion upon some point or another. Some Boards of Guardians say the casuals are working-men honestly looking for work, and there is no doubt they are, but they know where they are going to get it. When they leave they know to what Casual Ward they are going, and whether they are going to break stones or pick oakum. The consequence is that the London Vagrants flock to Poplar, Thavies Inn, and the other Wards where detention and work are not enforced, or where only a light task is given."‖

"Where a Union carries out the regulations as to detention and task of work, there is always a reduction in the number of admissions to their Casual Wards, but the evidence before us shows that severity of discipline in one Union may merely cause the Vagrants to frequent other Unions."¶

The food given varies almost as much as does the task exacted, and seems to have no relation to it; in fact, the Unions which exact least work have the most generous dietary.

"On the evening of admission the Vagrant receives his supper, which, under the Order, is to consist of 8 ounces of bread, or 6 ounces of bread and 1 pint of gruel or broth; the same ration is provided for breakfast and supper on the next day, and for breakfast on the morning of his leaving

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* Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., pp. 27, 28.

† *Ibid.*, p. 27.

‡ "Where the regulations are carried out the casual pauper is, as a general rule, detained two nights. On the day after his admission he has to do a task of work which has been sanctioned by the Local Government Board. The tasks are extremely diverse, the most usual being stone-breaking, wood-sawing, wood-chopping, flint-pounding, corn-grinding, pumping and digging, and oakum-picking. The task is supposed to represent nine hours' work. The Local Government Board have made considerable efforts to ensure that the task is fair to the Vagrant, and sufficiently hard to be deterrent, but the evidence seems to show that they have not been successful in attaining this object. The object of the task was in the first instance not only to deter the Vagrant, but to obtain some return from him for the cost of his food and lodging. The cost of the Vagrant's food is so small, probably not exceeding 4d. for each person detained for two nights, that in many cases where the tramp is put to a useful task he more than repays the cost. The inherent difficulty of arranging tasks fairly is that most of the work is necessarily, to some extent, skilled labour. For instance, a task of stone-breaking or oakum-picking which would be impossible for the beginner is mere child's play to the sturdy Vagrant who has served a long apprenticeship in gaols and Workhouses." (*Ibid.*, p. 28.) "Sunday, we may observe, is a blank day in the Casual Wards. The occupants are, of course, given no work to do; and they are often not admitted to the religious service in the adjacent Workhouse, for fear of their introducing some infectious disease. Thus, they have to remain all day idle in their quarters." (*Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 23.)

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 32, 33.

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 30. In the Metropolis there "has been, since 1871, a staff of visiting officers, appointed by the Local Government Board. These officers regularly inspect the Wards and identify the Vagrants who are liable to detention. There were 17,801 identifications in 1904, and 16,060 cases were detained for four nights." In all the rest of England and Wales such detentions number only about 3,000 annually. In London, "some Vagrants are detained many times in the same year. Not all the Vagrants who are identified are detained, for the Superintendent, acting under the direction or influence of the Guardians or on his own discretion, exercises a power of discharge." (*Ibid.*).

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

the Wards. His mid-day meal on the day after admission consists of 8 ounces of bread and 1½ ounces of cheese, or 6 ounces of bread and 1 pint of soup. . . . In 374 Unions, he gets nothing but bread for breakfast and supper, and in 240 gruel or broth is given with bread. For the mid-day meal, 474 Unions give only bread and cheese, while 115 give soup or broth. The regulations, therefore, do not secure uniformity in so simple a matter as feeding the Vagrant, and, in many cases, it appears that Guardians give a dietary not authorised by the regulations. Any improvement in the diet of a particular Ward invariably attracts tramps at once, and the habituals well know where to go for the best meals."*

Our own investigations fully confirm the Report of the Departmental Committee in respect of the extraordinary diversity of treatment thus meted out by the Destitution Authorities to the "houseless poor" and destitute "wayfarers."

(i.) *The Casual's Free Hotel.*

We have visited Casual Wards having well-warmed and well-lit cubicles furnished with comfortable beds, and an ample supply of rugs, to which the "occasional poor" are ushered after a really hot bath; and in which they are supplied with an ample meal of hot broth and bread—accommodation at least as eligible as that afforded by the better type of common lodging-house. These Casual Wards are very naturally appreciated by the professional tramp. To quote the words of a frequent customer, a London "Sandwich man," "I have got a nice hot supper, a nice hot bath, a nice clean bunk to sleep in, and a clean shirt to put on, and when I come in here I know what I bring in, and I know what I am going to take out." † Accordingly, as we are told:—

"At the popular London Wards, the Vagrants begin to assemble quite early in the day, and hang about until the Wards are open. They are then selected by the Superintendent in various ways; sometimes he takes the first comer, sometimes he takes, say, every third man. Owing to complaints by the neighbours, in some cases the Guardians have had to establish a waiting shed outside the Wards."‡ . . . "The Local Government Board publish annually a table, in which is set out the number of refusals to admit on account of want of room at the various Casual Wards in London. In 1904, there were 21,367 refusals altogether, and two-thirds of these were in five Wards. These Wards were Thavies Inn (City of London Union) which is an association Ward; Marylebone, which Mr. Simmons describes as 'a nice easy place, only a little oakum to pick; you pick as much as you like'; Poplar, where there is 'no work at all'; Whitechapel, where there is an association Ward, and the work is only oakum-picking; and Hackney, where at that time the accommodation was obviously insufficient. On the other hand, at Chelsea and St. Pancras, where the detention and task are rigidly enforced, there have been no refusals from want of accommodation for the last seven years. No stronger illustration," sums up the Departmental Committee, "could be provided of the encouragement to tramps which lax administration affords."§

But these official statistics as to the number of refusals are illusory. The Superintendents do not, as a matter of fact, take the trouble to note down exactly how many have applied in vain.

(ii.) *The Casual's Prison.*

There is, however, another side to the picture, which seems to have escaped the observation of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. We have ourselves visited Casual Wards in which the premises, the sleeping accommodation, the food and the amount of work exacted, taken together, constitute a treatment more penal and more brutalising than that of any gaol in England. We do not here refer to the dark and squalid out-houses, with the low plank shelving, shared by all the men in common, as the only bed—the old-fashioned Casual Ward of the little Urban District—which is, under the pressure of the Inspectorate, fast disappearing.‖ What has surprised us is to find rising up in the great midland and northern cities, great and costly cellular prisons, erected with the sanction of the Local Government Board, as the only provision for the destitute wayfarer and houseless poor. Here the cells are dark and cold; the bare stone floor, with one rug, is the only sleeping place. During the day the men are locked in solitary pens and kept for nine hours at stone-pounding, the hardest and most

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* *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 29.

† *Ibid.*, p. 31.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 31.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 30. In London, "the present Casual Ward accommodation appears to be more than sufficient. . . . When there were only twenty-four Wards, the refusals were less than they are now." It is said that no case is known "where a Vagrant who has been refused admission to the Casual Wards has been obliged to sleep out. They either make their way to another Ward, or pay for a lodging." (*Ibid.*, p. 31.)

‖ But even in the country, the Casual Ward is sometimes like a prison. In one Union of the West Country our Committee found that "the Vagrant Wards were a solid block of buildings, totally enclosed and from which there was no possibility of escape. Little daylight could penetrate, and the place was, to all intents, a prison on a small scale. Stone-breaking was provided for the strong, and wood-chopping for the weaker." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 54, p. 108.

monotonous toil that has been devised. The Superintendents of these Casual Wards pride themselves on having always vacant cells. Every man, in return for the shilling's worth of food and establishment charges, is detained for the full period of about thirty-six hours; and if he is rash enough to come twice in a month, he is detained for four days and five nights, which is nearly the equivalent of what the prison authorities construe as a sentence of a week's imprisonment. But the habitual inmate of a Casual Ward prefers a sentence of imprisonment to the severity of the more rigorous Casual Wards. The statistics prove, to use the words of the Departmental Committee, "that certain men deliberately commit offences in order to be sent to prison. To many of these men prison seems to afford a desirable change to the Casual Ward." * Armed thus with the weapon of a Casual Ward more deterrent than a gaol—coupled, we fear, with what has been described to us as "brutality" in the administration †—Boards of Guardians achieve the most amazing reductions in the number of casual paupers—with the result that the local police find themselves confronted with an equally remarkable increase in the number of unwarded Vagrants.

(iii.) *The Unwarded Vagrant.*

The result of the deterrent administration of the Casual Ward is that the Vagrants remain outside. The country then becomes infested with persons "sleeping out," who manage, by begging and other devices, to pick up a living. In response to complaints, the local police become more frequent in their arrests for the usual offences of Vagrancy; the magistrates, if they consent to convict at all, will only impose short sentences of seven and fourteen days' imprisonment; and the prisons—much more comfortable than the deterrent Casual Wards—become filled with Vagrants. Between 1902 and 1905 there was an increase of several thousands in the number of persons committed to prison in the year for these offences:—

> "The Governor of Gloucester Prison reports that of 1,184 prisoners received on conviction during the year, 593, or one-half, were committed for Workhouse offences, sleeping-out, and begging, the sentences being invariably for seven or fourteen days. The Governor says that 'such sentences can have no terrors for confirmed Vagrants.' The Chaplain of Northallerton Prison reports that 'the professional tramp is the most hopeless class of prisoner met with. He looks upon His Majesty's prison as a house of rest and refreshment, and uses it freely for such purposes, deliberately committing offences in order that he may be sent there.' Prison discipline offers no terror for such men. Some other method must be devised for dealing with them, or they will be an increasing quantity."‡

The police and the Prison Commissioners then complain of the action of the Poor Law Authorities in nullifying the intention of the Legislature by leaving the Vagrants unwarded.

A typical example of this ostrich-like attitude of the Destitution Authorities, in dealing with the problem of the "houseless poor," is afforded by the recent controversy between the Manchester Town Council and the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians with regard to "sleeping out." § These Boards of Guardians had set themselves seriously to cope with the problem of "vagrancy" on the lines approved by the Local Government Board. They combined in 1897 to open a gigantic Casual Ward, erected at an expense of £41,000,‖ on the newest deterrent model, to accommodate, at a pinch, up to a thousand inmates. The use of this remarkable prison-like structure brought down the admissions of "casual paupers" from 52,872 in 1896 to 23,684 in 1897; and great were the congratulations of the Local Government Board Inspectors. But what was the consequence? The first reaction was the opening, by a philanthropic agency, of an extensive "Free Shelter," to provide for the crowds of homeless men who were found in the streets. This not only completed the emptying of the Casual Ward, but also depleted the common lodging-houses. Incidentally it also attracted fresh hordes of Vagrants from the neighbouring towns, so that the Shelter became overcrowded, and even the Casual Ward began again to be resorted to. This result led to such an expression of public opinion that the philanthropists closed their Shelter; and the "strict administrators" once more rejoiced at the "suppression of vagrancy." Presently, however, in spite of the ever open door of the Casual Ward, the people of Manchester found literally hundreds of homeless persons "sleeping out" in the brickfields and other

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* Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., p. 31.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 84453–5.

‡ Annual Report of the Commissioners of Prisons, 1904–5, p. 13.

§ For this remarkable episode, *see* the Report to the Manchester Town Council of its Special Committee on Sleeping-out, September 30th, 1903; the Memorandum of the Chief Constable, in Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. III., Appendix No. XXXII.; and the evidence before that Committee, *Qs.* 7758–8007 (in Vol. II.).

‖ No less than £148 per cell. (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q.* 9917.)

sheltered places, causing nuisance and damage to property. In 1902 the police reported "that there was a larger proportion than hitherto of men who, they had reason to believe, were working men out of employment, willing and anxious to work if they could obtain employment." * At first the police arrested the men for the offence of "sleeping out." But the magistrates as often as not dismissed the charge, on the ground "that their position as sleepers out was due to circumstances over which they had no control, and for which they were not responsible." The Chief Constable then inquired of other large towns, and found that the number of "sleepers out" was proportionately far less than in Manchester. The Manchester Town Councillors thereupon set themselves to find what was wrong in their town. They went late one night to the Casual Ward at Tame Street which they found only one-third full. They then sought a conference with the Joint Committee of the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians to discuss the problem. What the Town Councillors and the Chief Constable urged was that, while there were several hundreds of men nightly "sleeping out" in Manchester, the Casual Ward could not be said to be fulfilling its function; and they urged the relaxation of the rules which had made it so deterrent. "We want," they said, "to do away with a serious evil—a great danger to the public health . . . damage to people's property. . . . These men, living and sleeping here under such insanitary conditions, . . . move about . . . carrying contamination round about wherever they go. . . . Such a thing ought not to be." The question as it seemed to these Town Councillors was how to get the vagrants warded, not how to keep them out of the Casual Ward.† The Guardians, on the other hand, held that they had no sort of responsibility for the men who did not apply to them; and that it was positively their duty to try to deter people from applying for a night's lodging. "It is not for us," they said, "to go to the brickfields and invite them to come here. . . . We endeavour here to show them that work must be done. . . . If they go to the brickfields there is nothing to improve them in any way. Here we do endeavour to improve them." To this it was replied that the men simply would not come. The Chief Constable insisted that "the question is how to house these persons? Where should these 300 men go to sleep? What can you do to get the 300 in here, that is really the point?" To this, however, the Guardians were obdurate, and whilst promising to consider again the rules of the Casual Ward, refused to entertain the idea that they had any responsibility for the homeless. We find, however, that after the complaint of the Town Council there was some relaxation of the conditions; houseless men were taken in at any hour of the night; and the number of admissions to the Casual Ward steadily rose from under one hundred per night in 1903 to nearly two hundred per night in 1907—the latter figure being actually greater than the admissions of 1896, which led to the erection of the Tame Street building. Thus, after a ten years' cycle, and the expenditure of nearly £50,000, Manchester has as many casual paupers as before.‡ Meanwhile, as if to show how completely the existing arrangements fail to cope with the problem, the Manchester Justices have again had to complain of the number of men "sleeping out" in the brickcrofts; and have actually urged the Guardians to open another Casual Ward, to serve as a Free Shelter in a more convenient neighbourhood than Tame Street, in order that these Vagrants may be warded.§

What has happened at Manchester is but typical of the history of the last three quarters of a century, in regard to the provision made by the Destitution Authority for the wayfarer and the houseless poor. The student of the records, both of the Central Authority and of the Boards of Guardians, finds a perpetual oscillation of policy. The number of so-called "Vagrants" rises. Presently an official inquiry is held, a new Circular is issued by the Local Government Board, up and down the country Local Authorities make their Casual Wards more deterrent, more repulsive and more brutalising. The number of applicants for admission falls off, and great are the mutual congratulations. A year or two later it is discovered that men are "sleeping out," philanthropists are driven to make other provision, the police complain of the nuisance of the "unwarded Vagrant," the Guardians themselves shrink back in compunction at the more than prison-like severity that they are inflicting; and the conditions of the Casual Ward become less deterrent. Then the number of applicants for admission again rises; and—this being quite erroneously regarded as an increase in "vagrancy"

* Memorandum of Chief Constable of Manchester in Appendix No. XXXII. of Vol. III. of Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. II., *Q.* 7992.

‡ The numbers admitted to the Casual Ward at Tame Street rose, in the winter of 1907–8, to more than 200 a night.

§ MS. Minutes, Manchester City Justices Annual Meeting, January, 1907; *Ibid.*, Joint Committee of Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians, January 11th, 1907.

—the same old remedies are once more re-discovered and the see-saw begins again. Half a dozen times, at least, in the past three quarters of a century, this oscillation is to be traced,* different Unions standing at any one time at different points in the see-saw. Finally, the Departmental Committee of 1904–1906, finding the existing administration, alike in its severity and in its laxness, a complete failure,† felt compelled to recommend the withdrawal of the whole class of Vagrants from the Destitution Authorities—Authorities who, as they sagely remark, are only interested in the Vagrant when he resorts, in a destitute condition, to the Casual Ward—and the transference of the class to the Police Authorities—Authorities interested in "Vagrancy as a Whole," and having in their daily "patrolling of the roads" the means of watching the "general movements of Vagrants" in all the phases of their tramping life.‡.

(iv.) *Who are the "Casuals"?*

The recommendation made by the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy appeals to us, as coinciding with the scheme of "breaking up the Poor Law," and distributing its several services among the committees of the County and County Borough Councils, to which our consideration of the other sections of the pauper army has led us. It would, indeed, give symmetry and completeness to our scheme of Reform to bring in the Watch Committee of the Town Council and the Standing Joint Committee of the County Council as the Authorities for dealing with Able-bodied Destitution, just as the Education Committee will deal with children who are destitute, the Health Committee with the sick, and the Asylums Committee, under its extended reference, with all the Mentally Defective. But further consideration compels us to reject the proposal of the Departmental Committee.

We have, first of all, the fact that a very large proportion of the men who resort to the Casual Ward are not, in the ordinary sense, "tramps" or wayfarers at all, but practically permanent denizens of their particular locality. There is, in this respect, a marked difference between the Casual Wards of such great urban aggregations as the Metropolis, the Manchester district, Birmingham and the "Black Country," and the West Riding, on the one hand, and those of the rural or small town Union on the other. In the Casual Wards of the great urban centres the bulk of the men do not even profess to be on their way to any place whatsoever. They are in no sense "tramps" or wayfarers. They remain, for the most part, in or about their own great aggregation, oscillating from one Casual Ward to another, within or not far distant from their own town; and alternating their patronage of these "King's Mansions" by occasionally "sleeping out," taking advantage of any philanthropic or religious "Shelters" that exist, or resorting to a common lodging-house when they have a few pence to spare for a bed.§ In fact, to use the descriptive phrase of the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834—1847, they are, in these great cities, simply the "houseless poor." ‖

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* Report . . . on the Policy of the Central Authority from 1834 to 1907, pp. 18–19, 48–51, 85–86.

† "It is clear to us that the present system neither repels nor reforms the Vagrant. It is agreed that the essential condition of success is uniformity of administration, but the evidence is overwhelming to the effect that this object is not attained. In most cases the Orders of the Local Government Board are evaded, and in many absolutely disregarded. Mr. Curtis, Clerk to the King's Norton Guardians, says: 'In my judgment the present measures have totally failed to achieve their object. . . . My experience leads me to the conclusion that in a number of Unions the administration of the Casual Poor Acts and Regulations is practically a dead letter.'" (Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., p. 32.)

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

§ With regard to the Metropolis, which includes at least 10 per cent. of the whole aggregate, the evidence is overwhelming. "The London vagrant is in most cases a loafer who simply migrates from one Ward to another. He is in Whitechapel to-night and in St. George's-in-the-East to-morrow night, and he will go across to Kensington the next night, but he does not leave London. If he gets a copper or two in his pocket he may go to the Salvation Army for preference; he may ring the changes; he has a happy-go-lucky sort of life." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 9381.) "They have," says another witness, "their time for excursions, when they go either to the sea-side, or hop-picking or fruit-picking, and so on, but for the greater part of the year, I am inclined to think, they are in London, and they circulate round about the Casual Wards." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 10464.) "If a tramp likes the ward he is there again within the month, perhaps in a fortnight." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 3389.) "I will guarantee to say, if you were to post up a notice in any Casual Ward you like to-day—this is Thursday—that the Casual Wards would be closed on Saturday, there would not be an applicant for admission on that day; it circulates like electricity almost; you may hardly believe it possible." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 3348.) "The way-ticket system, in my judgment, would be of no use at all in London." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 9832.)

‖ In 1901, the Clerk drew the attention of the Joint Committee of the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians to the fact that during the year over 4,000 persons had been admitted into the Casual Wards who were not vagrants. The master was ordered to refer to the Workhouse applicants who had slept the preceding night within the area of the two Unions, but nevertheless to use his discretion, and not refuse urgent cases, old people or women with children, late at night. (MS. Minutes, Joint Committee, October 11th, 1901.) We ascertained that the bulk of the inmates of the Casual Ward to-day are believed to have resided in or

Whatever argument may be derived from the opportunities that the Police Authorities possess, in their constant patrolling of the roads, for keeping the wayfarers under observation clearly does not apply to the inmates of the Casual Wards of the great urban centres who, whatever they are, for the most part are not wayfarers at all. Moreover, it is clear from the evidence that the vast majority of these men are habitual, we may even say professional, "casuals," who live permanently, and almost entirely, on this and other forms of public assistance, or private charity. With regard to as many as 98 per cent. of them in London, it can be said that "year after year they are there, and there they stick. They are casuals, and casuals they will remain till they go into the infirmary and die. . . . They are not working men. If you give them a job for a day or two days perhaps, they might do that, but you must not expect them to work longer; they do not like working longer than a day or two. . . . A lot of them are young fellows. If you could get hold of them when first they come into the casual ward and get them away, something might be done."* As it is, they are "the despair of Poor Law administrators." † But this is not on account of their disorderliness; it is not because they refuse to do the task or conform to the discipline of the establishment. It is not for these men that the aid of the Police and the Magistrate is invoked. Professional Vagrants, whether they are of the stationary or of the mobile type, "give," we learn, "no trouble whatever. Accustomed as they are to the Casual Ward they know the routine and the amount of work that can be demanded from them. . . . They are able to crack the stones allotted, very rarely breaking a hammer-stick." ‡ All they do is to come again!

Very different is the state of things in the Casual Ward of the rural Union or small town. Here practically all the inmates are—whatever may be their characters or their motives—really travellers on the move, wayfarers from place to place. Opinions differ as to what proportion of them are habitual or professional "casuals," living on this form of public assistance and moving merely from one Casual Ward to another. It is, however, clear that, in marked contrast with the inmates of the London Wards, a very large proportion of them—one Workhouse Master said as many as two-thirds—are really labouring men, moving from job to job, or genuinely in search of work. That the majority are not habitual or professional tramps is shown by the careful statistical estimates framed by the Departmental Committee.§ In their opinion the total number of Vagrants throughout Great Britain rises, in the winters of the worst years of trade depression, to as many as seventy or eighty thousand. In years of brisk trade, in summer, the total probably falls to thirty or forty thousand. The Committee put the total number of the permanent tramp class (including those of London and the other great towns) at about twenty to thirty thousand, the bulk of them oscillating in and closely around their several urban centres. Thus, quite apart from the habitual or professional, there are officially estimated to be, at all times, from ten to fifty thousand persons more or less resorting to the Casual Wards, who, whatever their moral or industrial characters, are not permanent tramps. Hence we may infer that, in good times, nearly one-third, and in bad times as many as two-thirds of all the Vagrants on the road are, at any rate, not professionals. And the proportion in the rural Unions lying on the great routes must

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about Manchester for years. So in the "Black Country." At Birmingham, a Guardian declared in 1893 that nearly one-third of the inmates of the Casual Ward belonged to Birmingham itself. (*Birmingham Daily Post*, March 1st, 1899.) This was found on inquiry to be true. (*Ibid.*, November 7th, 1901.) The Central Authority thought it necessary to draw attention to the fact that "the Casual Wards are not for the settled poor of the parish." (Local Government Board to Birmingham Board of Guardians, February 26th, 1902.) The Aston Board of Guardians found the same state of things. "Residents within the Union make use of the Wards." (*Birmingham Daily Post*, November 27th, 1905.) "The very high totals were found to contain a number of men who had legally no business to be there receiving casual relief, being settled poor of that area, and attention was drawn to that point." (Thirty-first Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1901–2, p. 72; Mr. Steven's Report.)

* Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Qs.* 3281, 3347, 3358–9.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 10466. The fallacy of treating the inmates of the Metropolitan Casual Wards as Vagrants or wayfarers, is strongly brought out. "The frequenter of the London Casual Wards seems to be a class by himself. He has a higher standard of comfort than the country Vagrant, and looks down on the man who frequents Shelters. Attracted, perhaps, by the comparative comfort and cleanliness of the Wards, he apparently seldom or never sleeps out, or goes to a Shelter. Once in London he finds it so comfortable that he remains there, except, perhaps, for an occasional expedition into the country for hop-picking. If he is not in a Casual Ward he is in prison, and detention which acts as a strong deterrent in the country appears to be ineffective in London, even where the detention is extended to four nights. The reason for this may be that the Wards are better in London than in the country, and *that the Vagrant in the country generally has some objective*, but in London he simply goes round and round from Ward to Ward. A list was given to us of 950 habitual tramps who practically live in the London Casual Wards." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 32.)

‡ Report of Workhouse Master to the Plympton Board of Guardians, for 1905.

§ Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., p. 22.

be even greater. We have, therefore, been much interested in the careful descriptive records of all his "casuals" during the three years 1905–1907, kept by the Master of one rural Workhouse on the route between Plymouth and London. We append some of the statistics from these records.* The Master is convinced that more than two-thirds of the men had not been there previously; that one-third of them were "navvies," and about 2 per cent. seamen, merely passing from job to job, and using the Casual Ward in their accustomed fashion as a gratuitous wayside inn; that the bulk of the men were mechanics and labourers wandering somewhat aimlessly about in search of work, owing to "depression of trade"; that the painters were, as usual, without employment in the winter, very few indeed of them appearing in the summer; and that, although one-third of the total were admitted more than once within the year, those known to him to be "professional" or "habitual" tramps did not amount to more than 5 per cent.†

Occupations of Casuals in the Ward of a Rural Union.

—	1905.	1906.	1907.
Navvies	552	772	618
General Labourers	404	485	489
Painters	62	56	61
Carpenters	42	6	37
Masons	38	42	48
Grooms	37	40	60
Seamen	34	28	48
Fitters	24	—	20
Shoemakers	23	24	36
Firemen	15	21	31
Tailors	13	16	11
Gardeners	12	12	8
Miners	12	—	—
Bakers	4	13	13
Clerks	11	8	38
Ironmoulders	11	5	16
Blacksmiths	9	—	13
Other occupations	142	57	69
Professional tramps	70	25	66
Total	1,512	1,610	1,673
Of these, there had served in the Army	343	396	462
" " " Navy	54	45	75

Ages of Casuals in 1907.

—	Males.	Females.
Between 16 and 24	72	4
" 24 " 40	725	30
" 40 " 55	461	26
" 55 " 65	427	20
Over 65	188	13

The age distribution in the two previous years is very similar.

Recurrents in 1907.

—	Men.	Women.
Number admitted once during the year	1,409	77
" " twice " "	201	12
" " 3 times " "	30	2
" " 4 " " "	12	1
" " 5 " " "	8	–
" " 6 " " "	6	–
" " 8 " " "	4	–
" " 9 " " "	2	1
" " 12 " " "	1	–
	1,673	93

† It is interesting to notice that the number of grooms nearly doubled within three years, owing (as many of them declared) to their employers having taken to motor-cars. We may cite, in general confirmation, another table of occupations of casuals on a high road :—

"Occupations as stated by themselves :—

(i.) Of men admitted to Hitchin Workhouse Casual Wards during twelve months ended on September 29th, 1906.

(ii.) Of men admitted to Brixworth Workhouse Casual Wards during twelve months ended on March 25th, 1906; and

Whether or not the Police have facilities, in patrolling the roads, for keeping under observation that section of the professional Vagrants who go from town to town, we fail to see the superiority of the Watch Committee and the Chief Constable, over the Board of Guardians and the Labour Master, for the essential business of assisting those men who are really looking for work (who clearly are those whom we ought to keep in view) to find permanent situations.

(v) *The Dilemma of the Casual Ward.*

The administrators of the Casual Ward, whether they be Poor Law or Police Authorities, will, in fact, like the administrators of the Able-bodied Test Workhouses, find themselves perpetually on the horns of a dilemma. If, in their Casual Wards, they offer anything like decent accommodation, even if this is distinctly less eligible than the lodging and supper of the lowest grade of independent labourers *who are in employment*, they will find their Casual Wards, however numerous and gigantic these are made, overcrowded, not merely, or even mainly, by the habitual Vagrants, but by the limitless mass of Unemployed or Under-employed, including the semi-able-bodied. and the Unemployables of all kinds. This mass, always large, contracts in times of prosperity, and swells portentously in bad years, without seeming—to the Superintendent who watches it stream through his Casual Ward—to differ in composition, in spite of the fact that the proportion of habituals varies from 33 to as much as 70 per cent. If, in order to reduce this casual pauperism, the offer of the night's lodging is accompanied by penal conditions, the professional Vagrant stays away, and leaves the penal discipline to harden and brutalise the respectable man in search of work.*

(vi) *The need for more prolonged and more specialised Treatment.*

It does not, we think, need more than the two or three centuries of recorded experiences to prove that no alteration in the way that we treat the Vagrant—so long as we persist in confining our treatment of him to his periods of vagrancy—will cause him to cease out of the land. As the Departmental Committee aptly indicates, the cause of the failure has been that the Authorities have hitherto only been interested in the Vagrant *at those moments in his life when he applies for admission to the Casual Ward.* It is, indeed, the inherent defect of the Destitution Authority that it is absolutely precluded from any cognisance of the men before they become destitute, or after they

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† *Continued from previous page.*

(iii.) Of men and women admitted to Casual Wards at St. Albans, Hatfield, Hertford, Hitchin, Watford and Welwyn during week ended on September 29th, 1906, and at Royston during last three days of that week.

Hitchin (12 months).		Brixworth (12 months).		7 Wards (one week).	
Labourers	3,830	Labourers	222	Labourers	492
Painters	226	Painters	14	Painters	25
Grooms	157	Shoemakers	13	Grooms and Stablemen	24
Bricklayers	144	Grooms	12	Bricklayers	17
Shoemakers	133	Bricklayers	12	Fitters	14
Fitters, riveters and boiler makers	123	Fitters	9	Shoemakers	14
Tailors	108	Carpenters	9	Printers and compositors	14
Carpenters and joiners	106	Tailors	5	Tailors	13
Others	1,815	Others	96	Others	214
Total	6,642	Total	392	Total	827

(Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1906–7, pp. 292–3, Mr. Court's Report.)

* "Even if the Casual Wards cannot be expected to improve morally, physically, or financially, those who resort to them, *the effect should not be to drive such persons further down*, and to make it more difficult for them to find employment afterwards. It is probable that the moral effect of associated Casual Wards is no worse than that of the common lodging-houses, but the effect of a few days of stone-breaking on boots and clothes is certainly disastrous in many cases. For this reason, among others, I consider stone-pounding or oakum-picking a decidedly superior task to stone-breaking, though none of these are ideal occupations." (Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1904–5, Appendix B., p. 185; Mr. E. D. Court's Report.)

cease to be destitute. The Police Authority in charge of the Casual Ward would be in no better case. What is necessary, it seems clear to us, is that, if a man is found wandering and houseless, either about our great cities or on the high road, something more is required in the interests of the community than the mere relief of his momentary necessities, with or without punishment. What is required is to take hold of a larger section * of that man's life, in order to find out the cause and character of his distress, and to bring him under influences which may set him on his feet. In many cases—on the statistics we make bold to say from one-third to two-thirds of the cases, according as we draw the net in years of good trade or years of depression—what is needed is the opportunity of regular employment in a situation of some stability; and it must be the business of some Public Authority to see, in the manner that we shall presently indicate, that this is not lacking to any able-bodied man. This, however, is clearly not work for either the Destitution Authority or the Police Authority. Where the destitute houseless man turns out to be a professional tramp, or an habitual loafer or wastrel, as he apparently is in between one-third and two-thirds of the cases, there must be a proper machinery for his trial for the offence of taking to this state of life, and for his judicial commitment, not to prison in the ordinary sense, but to a Reformatory Colony for a term of compulsory detention. This Reformatory Colony—which would, we presume, serve the whole kingdom—cannot, certainly, be placed under the administration of any of the Destitution Authorities. Nor can we see that the Watch Committees of the Boroughs, or the Standing Joint Committees of the Counties of England and Wales—which have, at present, no institutions to manage more complicated than the "lock-up"—are likely to be any more competent to administer a national Reformatory Colony than the Boards of Guardians. What is clear is that, when we have an Employment Authority, charged with ascertaining exactly what situations are vacant, and a national Reformatory Colony to which can be judicially committed the wastrels and "won't-works," there will be no place for what we now call the Casual Ward. Of all the ways of dealing with the Vagrants or "houseless poor," the stationary or the mobile alike, the genuinely unemployed workmen or the "professionals," the very worst is, whether under brutalising conditions or under demoralising laxness, to relieve them and let them go.

(f) The Able-bodied in the Scottish Poorhouses.

Under the law of Scotland, dating from at least 1579, as definitely interpreted in 1864 by the final Court of Appeal, it is absolutely illegal for the Destitution Authority to give relief in any form to the able-bodied, or even to admit them to the Poorhouse.† This prohibition applies not only to residents, but also to Vagrants, for whom no exception is made. Every applicant for relief, whether locally resident or a wayfarer, has, according to the regulations, to be examined by the Parish Doctor, who certifies "on soul and conscience" whether or not he is able-bodied.‡ Only those men (and those single women unencumbered with children) who are thus certified to be suffering from some ailment are admitted into the Poorhouse. We, therefore, supposed that we should find in Scotland at any rate no able-bodied men being supported under the Poor Law. We quickly perceived, however, that the occupants of the Scottish Poorhouses in the large towns in no way differed in appearance from those of the English General Mixed Workhouses; and it was officially admitted in evidence that this was often the case.§ It is

* "If," says Mr. Lockwood, "it were a condition of his relief that he submit, not to punishment, but to, say, a week's discipline and work, *opportunities for inquiry, help and improvement would be afforded which are obviously impossible under the present system, which is essentially casual in its working and application.*" (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q* 10466.) This does not mean stone-breaking in a prison cell. "To put a man behind a grating and say to him that he has to break so many stones and throw them through that grating is to make him feel that work is a hateful thing." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 5942; Rev. Canon Barnett.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 53068 (Pars. 85–92), 61371 (Par. 22); Isdale *v.* Jack, 1864, 4 M. (H.L.), p. 1; McWilliam *v.* Adams, 1852, 1 Macq. 120; Lindsay *v.* McTear, 1852, 1 Macq. 155; Petrie *v.* Meek, 1859, 21 D. 614; Jack *v.* Thom, 1860, 23 D. 173. With the able-bodied man is included his dependents, however sick or disabled they may be (Mackay *v.* Bailie, 1853, 15 D. 971). And the prohibition is not confined to men. "An able-bodied woman without children is no more entitled to relief than an able-bodied man," even if she is absolutely without food. (Scott *v.* Beattie, 1880, 7 R. 1047.) "I saw a case yesterday, a case of an able-bodied woman that was refused, and I said to the Inspector, 'That means prostitution,' and he said: 'I suppose so.'" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 64312.)

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 56259–60.

§ "In some city poorhouses," said the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, "I have frequently been unable to distinguish the inmates from the able-bodied inmates of an English Workhouse." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 56605, Par. 29.) "The difference in the two countries," said an experienced parish doctor, "probably amounts to nothing. I expect the English pauper, admitted without medical certificate, suffers from exactly the same conditions and affections which qualify the Scottish pauper for admission to the poorhouse." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 65247, Par. 8.) *See also Qs.* 56596, 56597, and 55124, 55125.

officially admitted that it has been found, in practice, necessary to evade the law by one subterfuge or another,* in order, on the one hand, to prevent intolerable hardship to able-bodied men who were absolutely destitute, and to their wives and children, and on the other, to obviate the dangers attendant on leaving hungry men at large without relief. These subterfuges take various forms. The Central Authority itself officially advised the Parish Councils in 1878 that, "in the case of a person really destitute the Inspector [of the Poor] should not carry the letter of the law to an extreme. . . . It is obvious that if a person is really destitute, no long period would elapse before he also became disabled from want of food." † This hint, we are officially told, makes it possible for the certifying medical officer to interpret "disablement" or "health" in the most liberal manner. He may, for instance, take into account not only the applicant's physiological fitness to maintain himself, but also "the mental distress caused by the destitution of his dependents. . . . In actual administration the medical officer, relying on the principle of the Board's deliverance, usually accepts a very slight ailment as sufficient to justify a certificate of disablement" ‡—an ailment, for instance, as one doctor told us, "such as he will get from lying in a stair . . . general pains that you cannot call rheumatism. . . . I might put in 'destitution and debility.'" § We have, in fact, ourselves witnessed such certificates given on the applicant's mere assertion that he had sciatica! If the Parish Doctor certifies a man as able-bodied, the latter may at once summarily appeal to the Sheriff, who may disregard the Parish Doctor's certificate —perhaps on faith of another produced by the applicant—and on the applicant's mere statement give a peremptory order for interim relief. Many Sheriffs give the applicant the "benefit of the doubt." "It would probably be a safe rule of practice," the Central Authority advises, not to refuse relief "if the Inspector is of opinion that the Sheriff on appeal would order it." ||

> "Thus the whole responsibility for passing or rejecting applicants, according to whether or not they are suffering from any complaint or infirmity disabling them from work, rests upon the Medical Officer, who certifies the cases sent to him by the assistant inspector. The Medical Officer sits in an empty room, to which enters in succession a stream of applicants, all of whom have been already passed as being actually destitute, that is to say, without the means of subsistence. It is for the doctor to reject them (from every kind of relief, be it remembered), if, on his soul and conscience, he is able to assert that they are free from any complaint or infirmity that would unfit them to obtain a situation. His examination consists, in practice, of asking questions. If the applicant asserts that he has some complaint (such as sciatica, neuralgia, or rheumatism) that cannot be tested by the stethoscope or similar instrument, the doctor certifies him at once. If he complains of a sore foot the doctor looks at it, and decides whether it is sore enough! It is only the unfortunate novice, who is blunderingly honest enough to protest that he would willingly work if he could get employment, who gets rejected, and turned out into the streets (in a destitute condition, and without even the resource of the Casual Ward). Naturally the Medical Officer, on such a perfunctory examination, cannot take the responsibility of rejection. I watched the process for two hours, and saw many persons whom an English Relieving Officer would have unhesitatingly termed able-bodied passed as eligible for the relief that the assistant inspector had decreed. In fact, in the whole two hours there was only one case rejected. It is part of the irony of the situation that this case, that of a tired elderly man who protested that he could work if only he could get to Glasgow, where he believed he could get employed, seemed to be one of the most worthy that I witnessed. I must add that the kindly Medical Officer did his utmost to persuade him to admit some ailment. As he was too innocent to 'play up' the doctor reluctantly sent him empty away."¶

But apart from the Parish Doctor's unwillingness to take the responsibility of making it impossible to give any kind of Poor Relief to a man who declares that he is destitute, the law has to be even more directly disobeyed in the case of Vagrants. These wander up and down the country, apparently in at least as great numbers as in England; and there are no Casual Wards. The result is that, in order to prevent their sleeping out,

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 53156–8.

† Minute of Board of Supervision of 1878 (Rules of Poorhouses, p. 94); *see* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 53156–8, 56605 (Par. 22), 60632 (Par. 10), and 60658–60, 65278–85.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 56605 (Par. 23), 56459, 56588–90, 56626, 56627.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 65255.

|| Minute of Board of Supervision, 1878. "The fear of the appeal to the Sheriff," we were told, "contributes still to the filling of poorhouses." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 60685.) A widower with young children, and unable to look after them, often gets relief under one pretext or another. (*Qs.* 66432 (Par.8), 66578, 66579.) "To put it plainly, these certificates are a regular method of evading the law." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 57428.)

¶ Visits of Commissioners, Scotland (not yet in volume form).

they are frequently given orders for common lodging-houses,* sometimes even small sums of money—"a shilling or two to pass them on the road"—on the excuse that they have sores, or "bad toes," or that they are suffering (as tired wayfarers often are) from "sore feet," or even from "debility"; or even without any excuse at all.† There is actually special accommodation provided for this most sturdy of all the sections of the pauper host, under the euphemism of "Casual Sick Houses," which date from 1848, and are supposed to be for Vagrants who fall ill on the road,‡ but which are, in fact, often used for accommodating those Vagrants and their dependents whom the Parish Doctor will even certify to have "sore feet," rather than refuse them lodging on a wet night.§ The result is that, so far as we were able to form an estimate, the proportion to population of Able-bodied men actually in receipt of Poor Relief in Scotland—in spite of all the relief afforded by the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, and of the upgrowth in some towns of even a third Relieving Authority in the police ‖—does not fall far short of the number in England. The principal result of the law—apart from the demoralisation which its flagrant evasion must cause, and the hardship inflicted when it is not evaded—is to prevent any suitable treatment being meted out to the Able-bodied when they *are* relieved.

As this result did not appear to be commonly realised or believed in Scotland,¶ we thought it desirable to have the inmates of some typical Scottish Poorhouses accurately compared with those of particular English Workhouses, in order to ascertain what propor-

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 56057, 56116–8, 61186–8, 62676 (Par. 5), 62718–24, 64575–87.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 55557–9, 57178–87, 57308 (Par. 58), 61140, 62681, 63954–8, 65100–6, 66474, 67234–7, 94974–5. So frequent were these gifts of money, that the Local Government Board for Scotland had, in 1893, to issue a stringent rule against it; "but that rule is broken even yet." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 57179.)

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q* 53510 (Par. 71.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 53721, 53722, 55878, 57334–41, 60679–99, 62578, 62719–21, 67237, 67238, 95022. "As one of the Outdoor Medical Officers said to me, if a man comes in cold and wet or says he has had nothing to eat all day, he cannot be certified as able-bodied, he is temporarily disabled. In practice, the able-bodied man, who honestly states there is nothing the matter with him except want of work is likely to be refused relief, whereas if he complains of a pain in the side or back he will probably get it, for the absence of physical signs is no proof that the man is not suffering pain, and the possible consequences of refusing the man relief are so serious that he must be given the benefit of the doubt. These cases are, therefore, diagnosed rheumatism or lumbago, or simply muscular pain, and sent to the Poorhouse on such diagnosis. The applicant for relief naturally soon learns that he is expected to complain of illness before relief will be given him." (Report on the Physical Condition of . . . Able-bodied Male Inmates, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 11.) "I have known, said an experienced witness, "a man with an ulcerated leg travel *for years* with a wife and family from one poorhouse and Casual Sick House to another. He would not wait long enough in any House for his leg to be healed. It was his 'stock-in-trade,' and qualification for parochial relief and idleness." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 55856 (Par. 94).) "According to the law of Scotland," deposed the General Superintendent of the Poor, an able-bodied man who is destitute and starving "is not entitled to relief. . . . If he is footsore or something of that kind, he is sent to the Medical Officer. Very few Medical Officers will take the responsibility on themselves of saying, in cold weather: 'You are able-bodied; you are not entitled to relief.' They find out some ailment, and admit him," either to the poorhouse or to the "Casual Sick House," usually a cottage provided expressly for the admission of such persons by direction of the Local Government Board for Scotland. "Persons are admitted to these places for a night. In other places, in villages or towns, there are common lodging-houses, where they are charged 4d. a night, and they are sent with a ticket"—which is paid for from the poor rate—"to these houses." (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. II., *Q.* 6404.)

‖ In the absence of any avowed provision for homeless able-bodied men in good health, the Police Authority often finds them sleeping places, sometimes in the common lodging-houses, at the expense of the Destitution Authority (Evidence before the Commission. *Qs.* 64575–87, 89012), sometimes by admitting them to the vacant cells at the police station (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 53968–70, 88974–89023, 94821). The Police will even take more extensive action. At Falkirk. in 1904–5, the Chief Constable, being more than usually pestered by such applicants, borrowed an empty building, and fitted it up as a free shelter, which accommodated as many as 169 people in a night. Simple food was provided free, and the women were given beds at common lodging-houses. The cost was raised by voluntary subscriptions, the view being that to relieve the necessities of these homeless men greatly diminished crime. A similar Free Shelter is being provided by the Chief Constable during the present year. (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 88903 (Pars. 10, 11), 88921–7, 88958–62.) It has even been recommended that this action of the Scottsh Police should be definitely legalised. The Scottish Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders (1895) recommended that "the Police Authorities should be empowered to grant temporary relief to the extent of a night's lodging and food to the necessitous, homeless, and travelling poor, where they think it expedient to do so, and that they should also have power to exact, if they think right, a labour equivalent from those that are able to work." (Report of Departmental Committee on Habitual Offenders, etc. (Scotland), 1895, p. xxxvi). *See* Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, Vol. I., p. 35.

¶ In face of all the facts, many of the Scottish witnesses protested against any alteration of the law which is supposed to prohibit relief to the able-bodied; *see*, for instance, in the Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 53068, 53290, 53984, 56418, 58815, 60394, 60632, 61099, 64690, 61269, 61832, 64141, 64921, 65285, 67139.

tion of men were really Able-bodied—"sound, healthy and Able-bodied men capable of doing a full day's ordinary labouring work," being classed as A 1, and others who, whilst not so strong and robust as these, belonged to occupations of a character not requiring much strength and were "capable of doing a full day's work at such occupations," being classed as A 2. The result was remarkable.

"As my investigation proceeded," reports our Investigator, a medical man of considerable Poor Law experience, "I found myself gradually coming to the conclusion that the male population of the ordinary Scottish Poorhouse was very similar to that of the ordinary English Workhouse, and that the members of the "turn-out" class in Scotland were practically identical, physically, mentally, and morally, with the members of the 'Able-bodied' class in England. A careful study of the physical measurements and other details I have collected confirms me in this opinion. The age distribution of the population of the two classes of institution is very similar. In Scotland, 49 per cent. of the inmates of the Poorhouses visited were over sixty. Of the men actually examined, 27·7 per cent. were between seventeen and forty, and 72·3 per cent. between forty and sixty. In England, 45 per cent. of the inmates of the Workhouses visited were over sixty, and of those examined, 23·6 per cent. were between seventeen and forty, and 76·4 per cent. between forty and sixty. In every Scotch Poorhouse I found a certain number of inmates whom I could classify into one of the A classes. These inmates were in every respect similar to those I placed in the same classes in English Workhouses." * In one large Poorhouse at a Scottish port, out of 264 male adults under sixty, 115 were examined; and of these no fewer than forty-four were found to be "A 1," "strong, healthy and Able-bodied men capable of doing a full day's ordinary labouring work"; whilst eleven more were A 2, "capable of doing a full day's work at their ordinary occupations."† In short, both in England and Scotland, "every Workhouse and every Poorhouse visited contained a number of men in every way as well developed physically as the average of the general population." ‡ The final conclusion is that "the population of the ordinary Scottish Poorhouse is in all respects exactly similar to the population of the ordinary English Workhouse. The class known as 'turn-outs' or 'tests' in the Scottish Poorhouses is exactly similar to the Able-bodied class in English Workhouses."§

What appears to us most grave is that, so long as the law prohibits any relief to the Able-bodied, this large and, as we believe, increasing number of healthy Able-bodied men are necessarily accommodated in institutions organised only for the sick and infirm, where no appropriate disciplinary treatment can be enforced.‖ It is the problem of the General Mixed Workhouse of England in an aggravated form. "In Scotland," notes our Special Investigator, "since there are, theoretically, no Able-bodied inmates in the Poorhouse, the work allotted to the inmates is less laborious, the hours of labour are fewer, and refusal to work cannot apparently be punished. I found that in England the hours of work varied from nine hours at Tame Street to nine and three-quarters at Fulham in the summer, the limits in the winter being eight hours and eight and three-quarter hours. *In Scotland, the hours varied from six and-a-half at Kirkcaldy to eight at Barnhill.* Out of the 423 inmates examined in English Workhouses, ninety-six were employed in oakum-picking, corn-grinding, or stone-breaking; in the Scottish Poorhouses, out of the 407 inmates examined, only seven were so employed, the usual test work consisting in bundling 250 to 350 bundles of wood."¶ Sometimes, as we have ourselves witnessed, the "test work" is nothing more severe than picking the grass from between the stones with which the yard is paved.** It is needless to say that, under the circumstances, there is developing, in Scotland, a considerable class of "Ins-and-Outs"†† —indeed, a special variety of "week-enders" who habitually resort to the Poorhouse

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* Report on the Physical Condition of . . . Able-bodied Male Inmates, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 10.

† *Ibid.*, p. 21.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 67171–3, 65465–72.

¶ Report on the Physical Condition of . . . Able-bodied Male Inmates, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p. 9.

** Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 65269–70.

†† "Falkirk Parish," we were told, "is a favourite resort of habitual tramps who wander over the country during the summer and endeavour to spend the winter in a poorhouse. *Of the* 1,350 *applications for relief made in* 1896, *about* 900 *were by persons supposed to belong to that class.*" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 61069, Par. 31.)

to recover from their periodical debauches.* It is significant that of the fifty-four men of A.1 class whom our Special Investigator found in one Poorhouse in 1908, no fewer than twenty-three had been in that Poorhouse more than twice during 1907, and one man had been in and out twenty-three times during the year.† It is accordingly not surprising to learn that "the greater part of the increase of pauperism during the last decade is due to the chargeability of men." ‡

(G) Conclusions.

We have therefore to report:—

1. That instead of the National Uniformity of policy in dealing with the Able-bodied, upon which the Report of 1834 laid so much stress, we find at the present time, among the different Destitution Authorities of England and Wales, five different methods of treatment being simultaneously applied.

2. That two of these methods—that of maintenance in a General Mixed Workhouse, and that of unconditional and inadequate Outdoor Relief—in spite of almost universal condemnation from 1834 down to the present day, a condemnation in which we concur, are still extensively persisted in; with the effect of perpetually increasing the area and the demoralisation of Able-bodied Pauperism.

3. That we have been surprised to discover that the number of Able-bodied men in health who, in England and Wales, in the course of each year, receive temporary Outdoor Relief, *without even any task of work*, is very large—numbering apparently between 30,000 and 40,000; some of this relief being given on account of "sudden or urgent necessity," but most of it being given as exceptions to the Orders and merely reported week by week to the Local Government Board for its approval.

4. That the number of *Able-bodied men in health* now in the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland is large—probably considerably in excess of 10,000—and that there are ominous signs that, in the large towns, the number of sturdy Able-bodied men subjected to these demoralising conditions is steadily increasing.

5. That we have definitely ascertained that—contrary to the common opinion, and even in violation of the law—the huge Poorhouses of the populous towns of Scotland also contain large, and apparently increasing, numbers of Able-bodied men in health, of exactly the same type as the inmates of the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland.

6. That the three specialised Poor Law methods of dealing with the Able-bodied—the Outdoor Labour Test, the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, and the Casual Ward—all, in our opinion, fail to provide treatment appropriate to any section of the Able-bodied, and are inherently incapable of being made to do so. If these institutions are lax (as is usually the case), they become the resort of wastrels and "cadgers," of the "work-shy" and the dissolute, to whom their demoralising slackness and promiscuity is positively an attraction. To plunge a respectable able-bodied man or woman, in the crisis of utter destitution, into the midst of such persons is, at once, a torture and an almost inevitable degradation. If, on the other hand, the Outdoor Labour Test, the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, and the Casual Ward are made strict in their discipline and prison-like in their regimen, they are shunned by the vagabond and worthless class of "the occasional poor," who thereupon contrive, to the great annoyance, cost and danger of the public, to exist outside them. Their penal severity then falls only on such comparatively decent men as have become too debilitated and too incompetent to gain even the barest living outside; and these, though finding the regimen unendurable, are driven in again and again by sheer starvation To subject such men to a brutalising regimen and penal severities is useless and inhuman; and it ought to be (if it is not already) contrary to law.

7. That by its provision of mere subsistence, available just when demanded, the Poor Law treatment of the Able-bodied, by any of the five methods at present in use,

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* *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 67139 (Par. 5), 67154.

† Report on the Physical Condition of . . Able-bodied Male Inmates, by Dr. C. T. Parsons, p 20.

‡ Report on Methods of Administering Poor Relief in . . . Scotland, 1905, p. xxv.

actually facilitates parasitic methods of existence, intermittent and irregular effort, and casual employment. In our opinion, this evil influence of the Destitution Authorities in the Metropolis and all the great ports—to some extent, indeed, in all the towns—is to-day spreading demoralisation and manufacturing pauperism on a large scale.

8. That it appears to us open to grave objection that the Destitution Authorities should have been allowed to exercise powers of compulsory detention and of penal discipline, such as those now enforced in the Able-bodied Test Workhouse and the Casual Ward. For the exercise of such powers, we do not think that either the members of a Board of Guardians or its officers, without legal training, without any prescribed procedure, without appeal and without even a hearing of the person accused, are at all fitted. Nor do we consider that a Destitution Authority, or any staff that it is likely to engage, has the requisite knowledge or the requisite experience to enable it properly to administer penal discipline to those who might, in due form, have been sentenced to submit to it. The very use of compulsory detention and penal discipline by a Destitution Authority tends to defeat itself, as those for whom the rigorous measures were intended will, however destitute, certainly avoid applying for admission. On all these grounds, we must unreservedly condemn the proposal that extended powers of compulsory detention of adult Able-bodied persons should be granted to any Poor Law Authority, however constituted. Any such proposal would, in our opinion, arouse the strongest resentment, and would meet with determined opposition in the House of Commons.

9. That any attempt, by a repeal of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, to force back into the Poor Law those sections of the Able-bodied who are now relieved by the Distress Committees, would be socially disastrous and politically impracticable. On the contrary, it is, in our judgment, of the highest importance to complete without delay the process begun under that Act, and to remove the remaining sections of the Able-bodied, once for all, from any connection with the Local Authorities dealing with the Children, the Sick, the Mentally Defective, and the Aged and Infirm. It is, in our opinion, essential that whatever provision the community may decide to make for Able-bodied persons in distress should be administered by an Authority having to deal with all the Able-bodied and with the Able-bodied alone, and dealing with them, not merely at the crisis of destitution, but in relation to the cause and character of their distress, and the means to be taken for its cure. For all sections of the Able-bodied, the Poor Law, alike in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, is, in our judgment, intellectually bankrupt.

CHAPTER II.

The Able-Bodied and Voluntary Agencies.

At no time has the relief of Able-bodied Destitution been left exclusively to the Poor Law. Into individual charity, whether among the poor themselves, or by those who are richer, we have been unable to inquire. But any consideration of the subject would be seriously incomplete without a brief survey of those organised charitable agencies established for the purpose of relieving the Able-bodied, which are specially characteristic of the past century; and which, as we gather, have latterly increased in specialisation, if not in volume. Throughout the whole of the nineteenth century, every industrial or commercial crisis, involving a temporary contraction of the volume of employment, has witnessed the distribution of large amounts of food and money to the workless poor. In times of prolonged distress, voluntary relief funds have frequently enabled the Local Authorities to put the Unemployed to work at wages on the roads or sewers. Permanent agencies have been established in many large towns for affording, either gratuitously or at nominal rates, temporary lodging and food. To these "Shelters" for the "houseless poor," have been added, during the last two decades, various "Labour Homes" or "Working Colonies" in town or country, where attempts are made to redeem or reform the more dilapidated of the Destitute Able-bodied on the one hand; and, on the other, to select and train for emigration the most promising from among their number.

(a) Emergency Funds.

"The old system," we are told, "was to ask the Mayor to open a fund whenever there was an outcry as to unemployment. He issued an appeal in the Press or by letter, the response to which in the form of donations was of course very uncertain, varying with his personal popularity as well as with the general opinion of the wealthier classes as to the existence of exceptional distress." * Emergency Funds of this sort, varying in amount from a few hundred pounds to nearly a quarter of a million sterling, † are to be found, in the records of the past century, literally by the hundred. The great distributions in London in 1861–2 (at the East End Police Courts), and in 1886 (the notorious Mansion House Fund) are well known. In 1878–80 such Emergency Funds were started in nearly all the large towns. In Sunderland, for instance, "in the early eighties there was great depression, and the grass was growing in practically every shipyard on the river. Men, women and children were literally starving. Private and sporadic efforts proved utterly inadequate to meet the requirements of the situation. At length the Mayor of the day set on foot an organisation to cover the whole borough. So widespread and acute was the excessive poverty that the numbers relieved by this Distress Committee reached on one occasion the huge total of over 17,000 individuals." ‡ At Newcastle-upon-Tyne, we were told, "whenever serious distress has arisen here, say by severe winters, etc., public sympathy has always been evoked. Voluntary distress committees have been formed, money has flown in plentifully, and district or ward sub-committees have administered the necessary relief after investigation into the cases. Even then there has been a considerable amount of malingering, and caution has had to be exercised." § "The general experience was, however, that distress had become very acute before these funds had started and before any organisation could be formed and shaped untold miseries were endured by the sufferers. In the majority of cases these committees and officials were new to the work on each separate occasion and had not the data and experience of previous efforts to guide them. The great part of the work of investigation and distribution had to be carried on at such times as could be spared to the work and could not, from the very nature of the circumstances, be very thorough and complete. The test of willingness to work was not applied, could not, indeed, be applied, and the funds were distributed in money or kind, really as charities. The result of all these circumstances was that a very great amount of imposition was practised by thoroughly unworthy persons, in many instances the same persons over and over again, and the worthy and deserving generally kept themselves in the background and were overlooked." ‖ "It was found,"

* Report . . . on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 88.

† Report of the Committee appointed at a Public Meeting at the "City of London Tavern," May 2nd, 1826, to relieve the Manufacturers, by W. H. Hyett (London, 1829), when £232,000 was raised.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 52708, Par. 1.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 91141, Par. 11.

‖ Report of South Shields Distress Committee, 1907.

for instance, at Coventry, "that there were a good many applications for relief from persons who gave false addresses and who could not be found when inquiry was made, and of those who applied others were not in need of or deserving of help; whilst others in deep need were unwilling to apply, and their almost starving condition was only made known by friends and neighbours." * At Birmingham, "some of the local committees in 1905 adopted the system of giving one week's relief to the unsuitable cases rather than incur the odium of an entire refusal. In five districts, dealing with 2,060 cases, 775 were discontinued at the end of one week. . . The bulk of the one week cases may be taken to have been undesirables." † Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that these Emergency Funds found many thousands of genuine cases in urgent need of relief. "The reports of the investigators," says a Chatham Report, "are pathetic documents, containing as they do tales of fearful want and of heroic efforts to avoid the Workhouse. There is no doubt that the regular help of this fund has already kept many from the fate they so much dread, thus preserving their sense of comparative independence and relieving the ratepayers of a serious burden."‡ Experience indicates, too, that in the absence of any adequate public provision such Emergency Funds will never be wanting in any season of distress. During the past decade various popular newspapers have rushed in, perhaps from somewhat mixed motives; and have raised tens of thousands of pounds for distribution in particular localities with hardly a pretence of investigation.§

The student of the reports of these Emergency Funds, in all parts of England and Wales, in all decades, will be struck by the sameness of the procedure and of the results. Those concerned in the administration of the money exhibit to an almost ludicrous extent in their doles to the Able-bodied the characteristics of unconditionality, inadequacy and indiscriminateness that we have seen to mark the practice of the Poor Law Authorities in the grant of Outdoor Relief to the Non-Able-bodied. They add to this an extraordinary element of capriciousness. It depends upon accident or whim, upon the popularity of a Mayor or the circulation of a newspaper, whether a fund will be raised at all, and of what amount. It depends on what particular set of volunteer workers gets hold of the administration whether there will be any care or no care taken to see that the distribution of doles of money or food does not do more harm than good. Moreover, at the crisis of starvation, when these Emergency Funds usually come in, there cannot practically be much room for investigation or discrimination It is, or at any rate seems to be, a case of giving food upon "urgent necessity," actually to prevent death The question cannot fail to arise: Why is relief in such an elementary form not afforded by the appointed Guardians of the Poor out of the funds designated for this very purpose under the Statute of Elizabeth ?

(B) Voluntary Relief Works.

Some of the more responsible of the administrators of these Emergency Funds were always trying to use them to start or to subsidise Relief Works, either carried on by the Local Authorities out of charitable donations, or by various groups of philanthropists. Thus, at Nottingham, in 1837, arrangements were secretly made with the Town Council to put selected men of the Unemployed class upon sewer construction; the difference in cost being made up from the charitable funds. "If . . . a man with a large family applies for relief, whom Mr. B. [the Relieving Officer] knows to be industrious, who is not of pauper habits, but by the depression of trade is thrown out of employ, and obliged to seek temporary assistance . . . he gives him an order to the foreman of the work in hand, who sets him on by task work."‖ In other cases, direct employment was afforded by philanthropy. We find the "National Philanthropic Association" (founded in 1842), employing, winter by winter, 50 or 100 men in cleaning the streets, "so that able-bodied men may be prevented from burdening the parish rates, and preserved independent of Workhouse alms and degradation. . . . At one time upwards of 100 of these orderlies were employed at a weekly payment of 12s. each, under inspectors."¶ "During the year 1846–47 . . . the Association has employed, at its own cost, 546 street orderlies."**

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* The Mayor's Relief Fund, 1885–6 Nottingham Reports, p. 15.

† "Three Birmingham Relief Funds," by F. Tillyard, in *Economic Journal*, December, 1905.

‡ Report of Chatham, Rochester and Gillingham Unemployed Relief Committee, 1905.

§ The recent newspaper funds were described in Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 20415–21048 78638–702, 85623–99.

‖ Mr. Gulson's Report to Poor Law Commissioners, April 23rd, 1837, p. 8.

¶ "The Charities of London," by Sampson Low, 1850, pp. 149–150.

** Report of Progress in the Employment of the Poor (National Philanthropic Association), 1853. See also *Times*, December 26th, 1845 and June 6th, 1849 and "A Plea for the Very Poor" (London, 1850).

Innumerable examples of Relief Works of this kind are reported in the local newspapers of 1820–1880, at every period of depression. We notice invariably three characteristics. The work is supposed to be restricted to sober and industrious men, not habitual paupers, thrown out of employment through no fault of their own. Married men with families are preferred. The amount earned is practically never more than a bare pittance, the work being paid for at low rates, and only provided for a few hours a day or a few days a week. The plan, in short, is always one of distributing small doles of "Employment Relief" to selected individuals. In 1878, an attempt by Mr. Francis Peek to systematise and develop this plan of endeavouring "to find partially remunerative employment for the Able-bodied," under a central committee for London as a whole,* led to an answer from Sir Charles Trevelyan in which the economic objections to this course were set forth. "Labour," he said, "is an excellent thing. . . . But . . . it must be labour subjected to the true conditions of labour, the full market rate of wages on one side and severe privation on the other. Charity is also an excellent thing, but . . . when . . . labour and charity are mixed up together, great abuse and demoralisation are always engendered. . . . It was so in the Irish famine. It was so in the cotton famine. It was so, to come nearer to the point, in the workrooms for women at the East end of London. . . . This should be left to the Guardians to do who have the law at their backs, and are fortified and guided by detailed instructions from the Local Government Board."† It was, perhaps a growing conviction of the undesirability of this mixture of private charity and the employment of labour that led to Mr. Chamberlain's Circular of 1886, and, from that time forth, to the Relief Works being mainly undertaken, as we shall describe in the next chapter, by the Municipal Authorities themselves.‡

(c) Shelters and Labour Homes.

The large numbers of "houseless poor, in London and other cities, have led, for nearly, a century, to the establishment for them of "Shelters, § either free or at a trifling charge, which afford a night's lodging and the necessary simple food. One such Shelter appears to have been started in London in 1822,‖ and from that date Shelters have always been available for the houseless; at first only in the winter months, but soon all the year round. On the establishment of the Casual Wards, between 1864 and 1866, there were no fewer than seven such Shelters in existence in London. It was then urged and assumed that these philanthropic institutions should restrict themselves to providing for a class above that of the "casuals." They ought, it was said, "no longer to admit all indiscriminately, but [to] endeavour to exclude everyone belonging to the vagrant and professional tramp class; [to] keep them carefully out; and [to] admit only the better class of the houseless poor." ¶In pursuance of this policy, the older philanthropic Shelters gradually shrank up, and ceased to be available for the ordinary man in distress, leaving the field to the Casual Wards; themselves lingering on in a small way as institutions for doing for the relatively few selected cases that they admitted, something more than merely the provision of a night's lodging.

We come now to what may almost be called a parting of the ways in organised philanthropy for the Able-bodied. Down to about 1887 it seems to have been habitually taken for granted that the efforts of the charitable ought properly to be directed to helping and relieving the distressed persons of good character, whose record would bear investigation, who had not drunk or stolen or gambled, and whom misfortune had brought low through

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* *Times*, December 24th, 1878.

† *Ibid.*, December 25th, 1878.

‡ It should, however, be noted that private Relief Works of this kind still continue. The Liverpool Central Relief and Charity Organisation Society, among others, still maintains workshops for the Unemployed, where respectable able-bodied men are enabled "to tide over a period of temporary lack of work." They are employed at wood-chopping, bundling chips and making fire-lighters; and "by making a proper effort, a man may receive from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. daily," on a scale of piece-work rates, with a bonus. (Manual of Instructions . . . of the Liverpool Central Relief and Charity Organisation Society, 1906, pp. 19, 20.)

§ "Charities of London," by Sampson Low, 1850; Report of Conference on Night Refuges, June 8th, 1870 (Charity Organisation Society); Sir C. E. Trevelyan, in *Times*, June 2nd, 1890; "Charity Organisation," by E. L. O'Malley, in "Transactions of National Association for Social Science," 1873, p. 599; "Unemployed London," by A. H. Hill, in *Ibid*, 1875, p. 668; "Labour Homes in connection with the Poor Law," by Noel Buxton (Report of Poor Law Conferences for 1899–1900); Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 36756–63, 37480–2, 37509–85, 42049–141.

‖ One was started in Manchester in 1838. (*Manchester Times*, 15th Feb., 1840).

¶ Report of Conference on Night Refuges, June 8th, 1870 (Charity Organisation Society), Appendix, pp. 20–1.

no fault of their own.* Those who could not stand these tests—classed as the unworthy and undeserving poor—were to be left to the Poor Law. Meanwhile, however, the treatment of the Able-bodied under the Poor Law, what with Able-bodied Test Workhouses, and the penal task and enforced detention of the Casual Wards, whilst in no way calculated to restore men to self-supporting activity, had been becoming more generally strict and rigorous. The result, as we have explained, was that, from 1871 onwards, the Able-bodied resorted less and less to the Poor Law, and the official statisticians pointed with satisfaction to the diminution of Able-bodied Pauperism—until, in 1887, comfortable London was momentarily impressed by the news that hundreds, if not thousands, of persons were always found "sleeping-out" in Trafalgar Square, along the Thames Embankment and in every sheltered corner.† To the fervent Christian there came the impulse to succour not the well-conducted and respectable alone, but even the undeserving, the weak, the outcast, the fallen. For years the Salvation Army had been at work among such men. "But," as General Booth declared, "What is the use of preaching the Gospel to men whose whole attention is concentrated upon a mad, desperate struggle to keep themselves alive? You might as well give a tract to a shipwrecked sailor who is battling with the surf. . . . The first thing to do is to get him at least a footing on firm ground, and to give him room to live. Then you may have a chance. At present you have none."‡ General Booth accordingly opened, in 1887, the first of his "Food and Shelter Depots," where food was sold in cheap farthingworths, and lodging supplied for 4d. a night, both being frequently given gratuitously to the penniless. "We have provided accommodation now," he wrote in 1890, "for several thousand of the most hopelessly broken-down men in London, criminals many of them, mendicants, tramps, those who are among the filth and off-scouring of all things."§

About the same time a similar impulse was taking form in another organisation. "In 1889, St. Mary's Hall, in Crawford Street, formed a centre for Church Army Mission work, and with the approach of winter the problem of the outcast and destitute forced itself on the attention of those in charge. Every evening the captain was distressed by the numbers of shivering, half-starved wretches, who crept into the evangelistic meetings for the sake of warmth and rest. Cold and hungry, they roamed the streets, turning in here for a brief respite from their misery. These nightly scenes acted as the spark to a train of ideas that had been with Mr. Carlile for some time, and he was now fired with the determination to see what could be done for the reclamation of tramps and ex-criminals." ‖ The result was the starting in 1889 of the first of the "Labour Homes" of the Church Army, of which there are now, throughout the country, nearly fifty in existence, deliberately relieving, not the selected cases, of proved good character and unimpeachable record, but all and sundry in distress. "These weak brethren," says a Church Army pamphlet, "come to our Labour Homes by many roads. Some come straight from prison. Some are tramps and loafers, who have never known what it is to do an honest day's work in their lives. Some we take out of Workhouses, or from Casual Wards. Some have been brought low by pure misfortune—many of this class being old soldiers, who have served their country well, but who know no trade. Drink, gambling, and kindred vices gather in their hundreds. Many come through no special wickedness, but from simple lack of power of self-help. These are perhaps the least hopeful of all. It is very difficult to help the well-meaning, shiftless fellow who is destitute of will-power and cannot keep a situation if he gets one. Most of them have sunk very low in the social scale before they come to us. Hungry and in rags they come, with no possession in the world save that last one—hope. They come to the Labour Home dirty, slouching, weak in will and body."¶

We have accordingly, at the present day, in London and most of the large towns, in rivalry with the Poor Law, a whole series of organised philanthropic agencies providing for the destitute Able-bodied. The simplest and most rudimentary is the Free Shelter, with more or less distribution of gratuitous food, and accepting all applicants indiscriminately, which has been revived in various large towns. Two of the best known are those

* This is still the policy of some institutions. "A large proportion of the cases brought to the notice of the Society are persons who, through sickness, want of work, or unavoidable misfortune, are in distress, and whose record is such that it would be undesirable to allow them to receive public relief from the rates." (Forty-third Annual Report of the Liverpool Central Relief and Charity Organisation Society, 1905–6, p. 5.)

† This "sleeping-out" still continues. On the night of February 8th, 1907, the Inspectors of the London County Council found 1,998 men, 402 women, and 4 children homeless in the streets. (Report of Public Health Committee of London County Council for 1907.)

‡ "In Darkest England," by General W. Booth, 1890, p. 45.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

‖ "Wilson Carlile and the Church Army," by Edgar Rowan, 1907, p. 74.

¶ "The Last Hope" (Church Army Pamphlet,

conducted under the Congregational Union at Medland Hall, Stepney; * and by a religious Mission at Wood Street, Manchester, where a night's lodging, of an uninviting kind, is gratuitously provided for necessitous houseless men, without inquiry or the exaction of any work. These institutions, which are much objected to by nearly everyone experienced in charitable work, urge, as their justification, that the houseless poor cannot be left in the streets; and that the administration of the Casual Wards and Workhouses is so deterrent that thousands of persons refuse to resort to them.

A development out of the Free Shelter is the "Elevator" of the Salvation Army, and the "Labour Home" of the Church Army, where men are received and maintained and kept at such productive work as they are capable of, whether paper-sorting or wood-chopping, at which they are able to earn nearly the cost of the small subsistence of a single man. This "Employment Relief" suffers from the drawbacks and difficulties common to all Relief Works. In so far as the work done has any commercial value at all, it results in depriving other workers, employed in the ordinary way, of their means of livelihood. If the destitute men happen to be nominally artisans of skilled trades, they cannot be put to work at them at anything less than the customary Standard Rate, however unsatisfactory may be their work, without incurring the additional reproach of "sweating." On both these points complaints have been made to us. Convincing testimony was given on behalf of the Firewood Trade Association that the adoption of wood-chopping as the task at the Labour Homes of the Church Army, as well as in many Workhouses, had definitely resulted in ruining independent wood-chopping firms, in throwing many men out of employment, and in reducing some actually to pauperism.† The experiment of the Salvation Army, in setting to work at carpentering and cabinet making, such of the inmates of their establishments as have any capacity for such work—at remuneration far below any Trade Union rate—has provoked embittered complaints at the Trade Union Congress. These difficulties and drawbacks of Employment Relief are experienced, as we shall see in the next chapter, equally when the "Relief Works" are conducted by the Municipal Authority.

The third stage is that of the Rural Colony, such as Hadleigh, near Southend, run by the Salvation Army; Lingfield (Surrey), run by the Christian Social Service Union; Hempstead (Essex), run by the Church Army; and the German Industrial Farm Colony at Libury Hall, near Ware; where men taken off the streets, selected from the "Elevators" or "Labour Homes," or sometimes consigned on payment by the Boards of Guardians, are trained to agricultural or other work amid healthy country surroundings; placed under reformatory influences; and assisted to emigrate or to return to self-supporting employment.

(d) The Undermining of a penal Poor Law by Voluntary Agencies.

We are not in a position to give any statistics of the aggregate number of Able-bodied men who are, at any one time, being maintained in one or other of these ways by the organised philanthropic agencies, of which we have cited only the most extensive and the best known. It is clear that the number thus relieved in the course of the year is very large, and sufficient to destroy any satisfaction that might be felt at the success of this or that Poor Law Authority in "deterring," by rigorous administration, the destitute from applying to the Workhouse or the Casual Ward. For it is plain that, whatever may be the harmful influence of a lax system of Poor Relief to the Able-bodied, there is the same harm in a lax system of charitable aid to the same class. "Apart altogether from the sick and the aged," reports the Metropolitan Inspector of the Local Government Board, "there is now a large class in London, to be numbered by thousands . . . [which] consists almost entirely of single men, often in the prime of life, but men to whom nobody could think of giving regular employment. They are devoid of energy and ambition; content to live for each day as it passes with the aid of odd jobs, cheap or free shelters, and cheap or free meals. I believe this class exists in all large towns, but it can, I think, luxuriate nowhere as it does in London, for nowhere else, to the extent prevalent in London, is such a class catered for and encouraged by religious associations and charitable persons, who might almost be supposed to hold it a pious duty to ensure, by creating a constant supply of destitution, that the poor shall be always with us."‡

* "Medland Hall continues to act as the rendezvous of the worthless and Unemployable, the Mecca of degraded and frayed-out humanity, and as an important feeder to the Guardians' establishments. At the commencement of autumn of each year, and throughout the winter months, there is a steady march on London from the provinces of ne'er-do-wells, corner boys, criminals and other ill-organised beings whose stock-in-trade is their rags and dirt. These are ever ready to prey on others, ready to take advantage of any well-meant scheme to relieve the want and misery of the deserving poor, ready at the shortest notice to 'demonstrate,' ready at all times to do anything but work" (Report of the Guardians, Stepney Union, for 1906–7, p. 29).

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 91804–56, 93611–94038; Appendix No. LVIII. (Pars. 28–34) to Vol. IX.

‡ Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1905–6, p. 444 (Mr. Lockwood's Report).

This class, it is believed by Poor Law administrators, is increased and attracted to London and other large towns by these very philanthropic agencies. "London," report the Stepney Guardians, "with its many attractions for the ne'er-do-well, its many ways of helping a man *down* by its thoughtless almsgiving, its 'spasmodic outbreaks of eleemosynary charity' of the soup and blanket order, its dangerous sentimentalism that cannot distinguish the whine of the beggar from the cry of honest poverty, proves irresistible to the born-tireds, who are ever ready to receive something for nothing. The village rough, the provincial blackguard, discredited in his own village or town, turns his face Londonwards. . . . It may be that many of these 'degenerates' set forth honest in their intention to seek work, and have become demoralised and unemployable by repeated failure and disappointment, and by consequent privation."*

The great development, during the past twenty years, of these philanthropic agencies for the Able-bodied, and their deliberate desire to succour the men of even the worst character, nullifies, in fact, every attempt to deal with the problem on the lines of a penal Poor Law. It is of no use, as we have seen, for the Manchester and Chorlton Boards of Guardians to "deter" the houseless poor from relying on the Tame Street Casual Ward, if a religious Mission takes them in without conditions at the Wood Street Free Shelter. Immediately opposite the Stepney Casual Ward and Workhouse, which the Guardians have been trying to administer on "strict" lines, stands Medland Hall, which is nightly open to the destitute. Thus it is that the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy was driven to the despairing recommendation that "the public distribution of free food should be subject to control by the Local Authority of the district. Their consent should be required to the use of any building for the purpose; and it should be open to them to withdraw their consent if at any time this seemed necessary in the interests of the community. . . . Further, we submit that Charitable Shelters do in fact require a more effective control than . . . common lodging-houses. We think . . . that an annual licence should be required from the Sanitary Authority in all cases; and that before a Shelter or similar institution is opened, the Authority should be satisfied that it is necessary and is not likely to cause harm."†

Any such legal or administrative prohibition of the charitable provision of food for the hungry and lodging for the homeless is, in our opinion, neither practicable nor desirable. So long as there exist homeless and starving persons in the streets, there will always be benevolent people to relieve their obvious necessities. This, in fact, is the Nemesis of any system of administration of the public provision for the destitute, which is based on mere deterrence; which does not welcome the entrance of a destitute person as gladly as an Isolation Hospital welcomes a small-pox patient; which does not, in fact, "search out" destitution as the Local Health Authority "searches out" infectious disease. We cannot approve all the methods by which the philanthropic agencies succour the destitute; but we cannot condemn those who employ these methods. So long as the legally appointed system attempts to penalise the destitution of the Able-bodied in such a way that men are found to prefer exposure and semi-starvation outside, it is inevitable—it is indeed desirable in the interests of civilisation—that the starving should be fed and the homeless lodged. It is for the State, not to lay its heavy hand on the efforts of the charitable, misdirected as these may be, but to find a more excellent way.

Moreover, it is unfair to the philanthropic agencies, not to recognise that the community is indebted to them for valuable experiments in the treatment of the Able-bodied, from which, in our opinion, there is much to be learnt by the new Public Authority which will have to deal with the problem. In two directions, in particular, the philanthropic agencies have advanced some distance further than any Poor Law Authority in the development of the requisite *technique*. In studying the administration of such a Rural Colony as Hadleigh, we were impressed with the relative success, upon extremely poor material, of the whole apparatus for developing personal character, for stimulating the will, for re-awakening ambition, for exciting emulation, for securing order and discipline without coercion, and industry without the money wage that the almost worthless labour cannot produce. We cannot help recognising the disinterestedness, the moral refinement and the unsparing personal devotion that have created at Hadleigh a little world in which the inhabitants enjoy a stimulating sense of co-operative production and organised recreation in common; and are able to rise, grade by grade, according to personal merit. What is unfortunately lacking to the complete success of this experiment is, on the one hand, some other Colony to which persons requiring, in the public interest, to be compulsorily detained, could be judicially committed; and, on the other some organisation for placing out, in self-supporting industrial employment those who have been regenerated by their training.

The latter requirement—some definite outlet for those who have proved themselves fit for independent life—has, to some extent, been provided by the elaborate system of

* Report of the Guardians, Stepney Union, for 1905–6, pp. 22–23

† Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, pp. 96, 98.

carefully supervised emigration to Canada, that the Salvation Army and various other philanthropic agencies have developed. In the absence of any assistance from the Government of this country, these philanthropic agencies have successfully organised an extensive system, not only of helping selected cases, but of personally conducting large parties of emigrants across the ocean, securing them situations on arrival, and in many instances continuing a watchful supervision over them for years. As in the administration of Rural Colonies, so in the organisation and supervision of the emigration of those who wish to make a fresh start in a new country, we think that the future Public Authority dealing with the Able-bodied will be able, not only to make use of the existing organisations, but also to learn much of value from the experience of the philanthropic agencies that we have described.

What comes out clearly is that, however successful these Voluntary Agencies have proved, in one form or another, at specific pieces of administration, whether managing institutions or organising emigration, they cannot do the whole work, and it is not desirable that they should "keep the gate." As we shall describe in Chapter IV. of this Part of our Report, the Able-bodied in distress are of the most varied kinds. No Voluntary Agency can provide efficiently for more than the particular speciality to which it devotes itself. But the applicants that throng its doorsteps are of all sorts; and, without some widespread receiving and sorting agency, exterior to itself, it never succeeds in filling its institution with exactly its own special type of cases, and no others. If Voluntary Agencies are to continue to provide for the Able-bodied, there needs to be, accordingly, some organisation of national scope, by which all applicants can be dealt with in the first instance, and then assigned to such voluntary institutions as may be able best to deal with the particular cases. In such a framework of public authority, we think that Voluntary Agencies for the Able-bodied may play as important a part as voluntary hospitals do in connection with the work of the Local Health Authority, or as the Reformatory Schools in connection with the work of the Local Education Authority. And there is a second requirement which only Government can supply. At present, the Voluntary Agencies for the Able-bodied are largely at the mercy of the confirmed wastrel and loafer, who goes in and out, from one to another, taking what he can get from each, and perpetually returning on their hands. There is a consensus of opinion that, for the protection of all varieties of philanthropic activity, there needs to be some kind of Detention Colony to which the most depraved and worthless persons may be judicially committed, and in which they can be compulsorily detained, at any rate for long terms. For these reasons, it was forcibly urged upon us by General Booth that it was essential to any successful dealing with the Able-bodied, that there should be "a Central Authority analogous to the Prison or Lunacy Commissioners." *

(E) Conclusions.

We have, therefore, to report:—

1. That, apart from other considerations, the maintenance of a penal Poor Law for the Able-bodied has, in the large towns, been rendered impossible by the development of extensive Voluntary Agencies which refuse to allow the destitute to starve, or the homeless to remain at night without shelter.

2. That so long as the public organisation for dealing with the Able-bodied in distress is so directed as to result in large numbers of persons remaining in want of the actual necessaries of life, on whatever excuse, it is neither practicable nor desirable to prevent Voluntary Agencies from relieving such persons.

3. That the relief thus given by means of Shelters and the distribution of food—whilst it can hardly be made the subject of blame or reproach, so long as people are starving and homeless—is almost wholly useless for permanently benefiting the persons relieved; and has, moreover, many objectionable characteristics.

4. That whilst some of the Labour Homes and Rural Colonies present good features, and attain a certain measure of success, they are, in the absence of any Detention Colony for the "work-shy," and of any adequate outlet for those who have been regenerated, unable to deal with more than a tiny fraction of the problem.

5. That the co-existence, in the great centres of population, of a penal Poor Law for the Able-bodied, with extensive indiscriminate, unconditional and inadequate relief by Voluntary Agencies, produces so much undeserved suffering, on the one hand, and so much degradation of character and general demoralisation on the other, as to make it urgently necessary for the whole problem of Able-bodied Destitution to be systematically dealt with by the National Government.

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* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LVIII. (Par. 48), to Vol. IX.

CHAPTER III.

The Able-bodied under the Unemployed Workmen Act.

It was Mr. Chamberlain who, first among statesmen, realised the bankruptcy of the Poor Law and the utter inadequacy of Voluntary Agencies, as methods of relieving Able-bodied Destitution. At the beginning of 1885 practically all the trades of Birmingham were in a state of extreme depression. "Hundreds of jewellers, silversmiths and electro-plate workers," we read, "had been out of employment for months, if not years."* The result was the starting of a "Mayor's Fund" for the relief of the Unemployed, with the usual unsatisfactory features; and an attempt by the Town Council to "make work" for as many men as possible. These resources were, however, limited, and the Birmingham Town Council implored the Guardians in June, 1885, at least to confer as to the measures called for by the continued distress. The Guardians were "of opinion that no practical or useful result would be likely to follow," and declined to confer, "as they felt that the ordinary Poor Law is capable of dealing with the matter." The reluctance of the respectable craftsman of Birmingham to condemn himself, his wife and his children to the evil promiscuity of the General Mixed Workhouse, or, if he was unmarried, to subject himself to the penal conditions of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse that we have just described,† was well known to Mr. Chamberlain. To the citizen of Birmingham, with its active political life, the disfranchisement entailed by Poor Relief may also have been specially deterrent.‡ In October, 1885, Mr. Chamberlain himself appealed to the Guardians to reconsider their attitude. He explained in an able letter the objections to the raising of special relief funds. He pointed out that the Mayor had declared that "it was not possible for the Corporation to find work for any considerable number *without displacing workmen already employed.*" He urged upon the Guardians that "none but the appointed Guardians of the Poor" were in a position to discharge the duty of meeting the distress. And he concluded with the pregnant observation that "the law exists for securing the assistance of the community at large in aid of their destitute members; and where the necessity has arisen from no fault of the persons concerned, there ought to be no idea of degradation connected with such assistance. Those compelled to apply have probably paid rates and taxes in past time. This payment is, in part, an insurance against misfortune." But the Birmingham Guardians remained obdurate, refusing even to give Outdoor Relief in return for work in the Labour Yard. Soon after this definite refusal of the Poor Law Authorities to assume any responsibility for the relief of distress from Unemployment Mr. Chamberlain was again in office. In the early months of 1886 it was forced upon his attention, as President of the Local Government Board, that, up and down the country, there continued to be exceptional distress among "large numbers of persons usually in regular employment."§ The fact that this distress had not manifested itself in the statistics of pauperism did not surprise him. In the well-known Circular of 15th March, 1886, the President of the Local Government Board recited as axiomatic that it was "not desirable that the working-classes should be familiarised with Poor Law Relief. . . The spirit of independence which leads so many of the working-classes to make great personal sacrifices rather than incur the stigma of pauperism is one which deserves the greatest sympathy and respect, and which it is the duty and interest of the community to maintain by all the means at its disposal."

In Mr. Chamberlain's view, the "Ins-and-Outs" and the Vagrants should be left to the Poor Law; but for the person normally in regular employment there was, in future,

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* *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, September 30th, 1885. For the whole of this episode, *see* MS. Minutes, Birmingham Board of Guardians, 1885; Minutes of Birmingham Town Council, 1885–6 (especially February 2nd., 1886); "Three Birmingham Relief Funds," by F. Tillyard, in *Economic Journal*, December, 1905; Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, 1907, Appendix R; and especially the Interim Report of Special Committee of the Birmingham Board of Guardians appointed to investigate the whole system of administering . . . Relief, October 21st, 1908.

† *See* Chapter I. of Part II., pp. 345–347.

‡ "The receipt of relief," as Mr. Chamberlain expressly noted, "although accompanied by a task of work, entails the disqualification which by statute attaches to pauperism." (Local Government Board Circular, March 15th, 1886, in Sixteenth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1886–7), p. 3.

§ *Ibid.*, p. v.

to be quite another provision, namely, work at wages under the Town Council. "His hope and belief was," he told the House of Commons, "that the ultimate remedy for exceptional distress of the kind they had to deal with was to be found in the increasing activity of Local Authorities, which he believed had already been very considerably stimulated, and which he hoped to further stimulate."* This municipal work at wages was to be given under two conditions; first, "that the men employed should be engaged on the recommendation of the Guardians as persons whom, owing to previous condition and circumstances, it is undesirable to send to the Workhouse, or to treat as subjects for pauper relief"; and secondly, "that the wages paid should be something less than the wages ordinarily paid for similar work, in order to prevent imposture, and to leave the strongest temptations to those who avail themselves of this opportunity to return as soon as possible to their previous occupations."† Mr. Chamberlain did not remain in office long enough to carry out the incipient policy of classification of the Able-bodied thus formulated; but successive Presidents adhered to his views, and re-issued his Circular, whenever distress from Unemployment became troublesome.‡ Unfortunately, the results of the experiments thus set in motion do not seem to have been ascertained or recorded by the Local Government Board; and we do not gather that any deliberate judgment was arrived at as to the success or otherwise of this momentous departure from the Poor Law of 1834. At any rate, when Mr. Walter Long tackled the question in 1904, there does not seem to have been available for his guidance§ any statistical or descriptive summary of the preceding eighteen years' policy of spasmodically stimulating Local Authorities to provide, for the Unemployed of their districts, municipal work at wages.‖

(A) The Provision of Work at Wages by the Municipal Authorities, 1886-1905.

We have been unable to obtain any accurate statistics of the amount of work annually provided for the Unemployed by the Municipal Authorities in response to the Circulars of the Local Government Board between 1886 and 1905.¶ We gather that for the first decade there was a general disinclination among Municipal Authorities to undertake this provision, and those who did regarded it as merely an occasional expedient for tiding over particularly bad times. But with the recurrent issue of the Circular in 1887, 1891, 1892, 1893 and 1895, and especially after the endorsement of the principle of Municipal

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* *Hansard*, March 12th, 1886, Vol. CCCIII. p. 356. For this proposal Mr. Chamberlain might have quoted an interesting authority. *The Economist* declared, in an article during the commercial depression of 1857, that "it is clear that the Poor Law does not apply, cannot apply, and ought not to apply, any sufficient remedy to the kind of distress now spreading extensively in our large centres of trade and manufacture. The Poor Law is for the relief of a class who are unable to work; not for the relief of men eager for work, and delighting in the sense of independence, but from some occasional cause unable to find the means of work. There would be nothing more fatal to the moral feeling of our working men than to reduce them in large numbers to a sense of pauperism and dependence at every temporary season of commercial distress. . . . This is a case where an economic law should yield to a social law; and all the labour that can be employed, though it be without profit, or even at a prudent loss, ought to be employed, to avert, as far as possible, the terrible strain on one class of the community." (*The Economist*, December 5th, 1857, pp. 1343–4.)

† Local Government Board Circular, March 15th, 1886.

‡ It was re-issued in 1887, 1891, 1892, 1893 and 1895 (First Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, *Q.* 175.)

§ In 1893, the Board of Trade had issued a valuable Report on Methods and Agencies for Dealing with the Unemployed (Cd. 7182), which shows how little information was available as to these works. "During the winter of 1902–3," Mr. Long complained, "when many of the Borough Councils in London were employing crowds of so-called unemployed, there was no record kept of the additional cost to the rates involved in so doing." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78461, Par. 9.)

‖ The provision of work for the unemployed by Municipal Authorities was, of course, not confined to the period 1886–1904. At every previous depression of trade for more than a century, similar action is traced. As long ago as 1766 the Liverpool Town Council constructed the St. James's Walk, partly to relieve the unemployed. In 1848, the Town Trustees of Halifax set the unemployed to work at digging a new reservoir (*Halifax Guardian*, January 8th, 1848). In the distress of 1878–9, many towns (among them being Sheffield, Manchester, Leicester, Barrow, Bury, Bradford, Rotherham and Guisborough) put the unemployed on public works of one kind or another. ("Poor Relief during Depression of Trade," by . Macdonald, in Report of Poor Law Conferences, 1879.) At Nottingham, in 1884–5, when it was said that over 9,000 lace makers were out of work, the Town Council employed 1,200 men on relief works at 12s. per week. (*Labour News*, December, 1884, and January, 1885.)

¶ There will be found in the Appendix to the Report . . . on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed since 1886 (pp. 202–289) by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, and the Board of Trade Report on Agencies and Methods of Dealing with the Unemployed, 1893 (Cd. 7182), all the statistical information that we have been able to discover.

work for the Unemployed by the House of Commons Select Committee of 1896,* many Local Authorities felt compelled to take action, whilst others, responding to the perpetual pleadings and threatenings of deputations of unemployed workmen, availed themselves freely of this opportunity for demonstrating their usefulness to distressed citizens. The new activity took many forms. In times of local trade depression or exceptionally severe weather, the heads of all the Municipal Departments were instructed to engage additional men, and sometimes to choose these from the persons claiming to be unemployed, for cleaning the streets, for removing snow, for repairing the roads, for sewer construction, and, indeed, for every variety of Municipal work. Perhaps the most picturesque example is afforded by the Paddington Borough Council, which, in 1904, gave "instructions to the Borough Surveyor to discontinue for the present the use of the Scarifier attached to the Council's Steam-roller, and to carry out any necessary road-picking work by manual labour,"† expressly in order to employ as many as possible of the Unemployed. In populous and wealthy cities a "Mayor's Fund" would be raised by subscription, and used as a sort of "grant-in-aid" of Municipal works expedited or invented for the purpose of employing the Unemployed. In some other districts, such as West Ham, funds were raised by appeals started by particular newspapers. On the other hand, in other districts, having fewer wealthy residents, but dominated by men of popular sympathies, the Local Authority launched out into costly street improvements, into open spaces, and sometimes even into new buildings, all undertaken to provide work for distressed residents at the cost of the local ratepayers.‡ But whatever the kind or the amount of the work, or the incidence of the cost, we note, between 1886 and 1905, certain developments common to the whole country, which gave to this method of providing for Able-bodied Destitution its peculiar characteristics and its distinctive results.

The first development was the gradual discarding of Mr. Chamberlain's condition that "the wages paid should be something less than the wages ordinarily paid for similar work." Some Local Authorities began by offering a low wage—2d. or 3d. an hour or 2s. or 2s. 6d. a day—but this led to riots and disturbances.§ It was, in fact, hardly practicable to carry out this recommendation. If the Unemployed were merely added to the general staff, any attempt to discriminate against them in the matter of wage produced feelings of disgust and jealousy and led to persistent shirking of the work. If it was attempted to remedy this by paying the men piece-work at such an occupation as stone-breaking, or wheeling barrows of earth, it was quickly found that some of the most respectable, hard-working, and skilled men were unable to earn as much as the habitual tramp or dissolute navvy.‖ Moreover, it was quickly found impracticable to employ the Unemployed at their own trades, the only work that the Local Authorities could offer to a heterogeneous body of applicants being that of unskilled labour. The normal wage for this work was so low that any lower wage would be insufficient for subsistence. But even if there had been no practical objection it would have been politically impracticable to undercut the current rate in the district. The Trade Unions, and indeed the whole opinion of the working-class, would have vehemently objected to any attempt on the part of the Municipal Authority to lower the current rate of wages and the standard of life of the wage-earner, by taking advantage of his necessities as an Unemployed person. Hence it came to be a matter of course that the current rate for unskilled labour should be paid, and that whenever the Local Authority employed men for skilled work the Trade Union rate should be paid. Thus, the Southwark Vestry in 1895 resolved—

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* The Committee reported that they were "unable to see any valid objection to the policy advocated in the Circulars referred to." (Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1896, p. ix.).

† Minutes of Paddington Borough Council, March 14th, 1904. (Report of Works Committee.)

‡ Thus, at Sunderland in 1886–7, the Roker Promenade was constructed (Report of Engineer to Town Council of Sunderland, 1887); at Great Yarmouth, a quay wall was built at a cost of £25,000; at Blackburn, in 1903, a large extension of sewage works was undertaken (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXV. to Vol. VIII., Par. 6); and the Poplar Borough Council executed, in 1903–4, £65,000 worth of repaving the streets (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 80579–613).

§ At Great Yarmouth, in 1886, the Town Council issued a handbill in the following terms: "To the unemployed.—The Corporation are prepared to provide work for those needing it in levelling a portion of the South Denes and other works. Hours of work, 6.30 a.m. to 8.30 a.m.; 9 a.m. to 12 noon; 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. Wages, 2s. per day. Application to be made at my office, Town Hall, between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m.—J. W. Cockrill, Borough Surveyor." (House of Commons Return on Pauperism and Distress, No. 69, 1886, p. 95.)

‖ Thus, in the Minutes of the Paddington Vestry for December 19th, 1893, we read that: "Eight out of every ten of the class of men who apply are naturally unsuitable for this description of work. They worked about seven hours daily, and many of them could earn 10½d. to 1s. during that time, others about 2s. 6d. In two instances, the rate ranged to 4s. 9d. and 5s. 4d., but these were *accomplished* stone-breakers, and had they been allowed could have earned even more than this amount per day."

"That all men provided with temporary employment be paid the wage now paid to the workmen of the Vestry, on the particular work upon which they may be engaged."*

At Bradford, as was given in evidence before us by the Deputy City Surveyor :—

"The men engaged on the work provided for the unemployed, consisted, as a rule, of machine wool-combers, dyers' labourers, and others employed in the textile factories of this district. They were paid the standard rate of wages usually paid to outside labourers, of 6d. per hour, *which was, in many cases, more than they were receiving when they followed their regular employment.* They were treated with kindness and firmness, and if they showed willingness to work they received every encouragement, and very little trouble arose in the management of the men, but they were unable to do the amount of work that the ordinary labourer would have done, and, in my opinion, the works carried out by the Corporation cost more than they would have done had the usual kind of labour been employed."†

This process was accelerated by the fact that, as we gather, the Local Government Board omitted Mr. Chamberlain's condition of lower wages when they reissued the Circular in 1895, and that the principle of current wages seemed to be affirmed by the somewhat ambiguous recommendation of the Select Committee in 1896 :—

"Your Committee can see no sufficient reason why a person employed upon Relief Works should not receive the rate of wages current in the district, if he is able to earn the same."‡

The second condition laid down by Mr. Chamberlain, that Municipal Employment should be given on the recommendation of the Board of Guardians, was gradually discarded by the more progressive Municipalities. "The recommendation was not adopted for obvious reasons," writes a well-informed correspondent in *The Times*, "had it been adopted the men would have been brought into contact with the Poor Law, and this was precisely what the promoters of Vestry employment wished to avoid." § The Borough Surveyor, who had to use the men, naturally preferred to make his own selection according to his opinion of their relative fitness for a particular job he had in hand instead of according to the Relieving Officer's opinion as to their past respectability, the number of their children, and the extremity of their destitution. But the Local Authorities had no machinery to make investigations either into the man's past or into the reality or cause of his unemployment. The easiest way was to open a register and to allow all who claimed to be Unemployed, and who could prove continuous residence in the district for six or twelve months,‖ to enter their names for a share of the municipal work. From this register, men were drawn as required, sometimes in rotation, those who described themselves as married and as having dependent children being often preferred. Thus, at Bradford, the Report states that :—

"The registry was opened on December 14th, 1903, and had to be closed on February 3rd following, as the works in hand were approaching completion, and no further relief works were available. During that period 2,130 names were registered, and 874 men were notified to commence work, none being set to work except married men who had families dependent on them, and who were ratepayers, or had been resident in the city for six months. The men were employed in four-hour shifts, at 6d. per hour, the hours being limited in order to avoid attracting men from other employment."¶

* Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 165. At Great Yarmouth, the rate of pay was raised from 3d. per hour to the current local rate of 4d. per hour. In London, the rates paid in 1892–3 were most various. "At Chelsea, St. Saviour's (Southwark), Bethnal Green and Poplar, 6d. an hour was paid ; at St. George's, Hanover Square, 5d ; at Hampstead, 5d. up to 2s. 8d. per day ; at St. Pancras, 3s. 6d. a day ; at Clerkenwell, 3s. 8d. ; at Vauxhall, Lambeth, Brixton, and Newington, 4s. a day. At Camberwell and Dulwich, Trade Union rates were paid, and the unskilled received 4s. 3d. a day. At Hackney, about fifty carpenters went on strike the first day, and did not resume work till they had obtained 9d. instead of 8d. an hour." ("The State and the Unemployed," *Times*, October 30th, November 1st and 6th, 1893 ; reprinted in *Charity Organisation Review*, December, 1893.)

† Evidence before the Commission, Appendix XC. to Vol. IX., Pars. 6, 7.

‡ Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1896, p. xi.

§ "The State and the Unemployed," *Times*, October 30th, November 1st and 6th, 1893 ; reprinted in *Charity Organisation Review*, December, 1893, p. 441.

‖ The Stepney Borough Council in 1902 limited their work to men who had resided in the Borough for three years. (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 172.)

¶ Report of the Committee on the Unemployed to the Bradford Town Council, October 25th, 1904. In London, the plan was sometimes adopted of sending a postcard to the men who had registered whenever there was any work to offer them. "The experience gained by the postcard system," reports the Borough Surveyor in one case, "leads me to the conclusion that very many of the men who 'registered' did so more as a kind of insurance to secure work should the time come when they required it, and not because they were in actual need at the time of registering. About 30 per cent. of those to whom postcards were sent did not respond, and upon the inquiry officer visiting their homes to find out the reason, it was found that they had work elsewhere, and their names were then removed from the register. The number registered was 1,296 (463 of whom registered last year)." (Annual Report, Vestry of Bethnal Green, 1893–4 ; Surveyor's Report).

The practical result of the adoption by the Municipal Authorities of the current rate of wages, together with the large number of applications brought about by the open register at the office of the Local Authority, was the grant of only a short period of employment to each man. This system of short periods appeared to have a theoretical and a practical justification. It seemed the only method of making Municipal employment less eligible than the employment obtained by a man's own exertions. "The necessary incentive to men employed upon relief works to quit those works," the Select Committee of 1896 had reported, "may best be secured by an arrangement under which the hours of labour on Relief Works would be considerably shorter than the ordinary working hours."* But short hours were inconvenient to dovetail into the ordinary work of the Municipality; it was more practicable to let each man work the full hours for one, two or three days in the week, and it was urged that this would enable him to search for more continuous or more lucrative service on the other days. Thus, the St. Pancras Borough Council in 1903 took on its extra hands "at three days a week, so as to diffuse the benefit as widely as possible, and to enable some of the workers to get employment on the other three days elsewhere, either in permanent, or in more continuous, or in more lucrative service." † The Paddington Borough Council in 1905 authorised its Surveyor "to employ an average of twenty men per week, week on and week off. This method would enable about forty men to be employed, instead of twenty being engaged continuously; and it is hoped that, during the alternate week . . . the men would endeavour to find permanent employment elsewhere." ‡ These reasons for discontinuous employment chimed in with the very natural desire of the Local Authority to relieve as many of the Unemployed as they could from a given expenditure out of the rates. It coincided also with the constant demand by deputations of Unemployed persons that there should be no favouritism on the part of the Foreman, and that they should all share alike. § The usual procedure was, in fact, as we were informed by a witness before the Commission, "unemployed men were allowed to register their names at the various depots of the Borough Council; each man then received two day's work in rotation." ‖ "The conditions of employment," state our Investigators with regard to one Borough, "were laid down on the same lines as in the previous year; the length of time that each man was to be employed was left to the discretion of the Borough Engineer. It was subsequently fixed at two or three days, with the chance of another two days when the whole list of applicants had been exhausted." ¶ At Bethnal Green the Surveyor reports that:—

> "Complaint was made that by giving three days a week to each man employed, those who had registered their names recently would be a long while before obtaining employment, so the time was altered to two days each man, and finally the system of one day was adopted. I have no hesitation in saying that the one day system was the most satisfactory, as by it, whatever casual labour the Vestry had to distribute was equally distributed amongst all who applied."**

The Chelsea Borough Council went so far in 1903 as to direct the Surveyor to engage even the watchmen only for three days per week per man, so that a larger number might be employed, at the same time raising the rate from 3s. 6d. to 4s. per night.†† At Sunderland, three gangs of men, at first engaged for three days a week, were presently reduced to three days a fortnight.‡‡

The twenty years' experience of Municipal Employment gradually revealed to all concerned some disquieting characteristics of this method of providing for able-bodied men in distress through lack of work. The first objection—one which appealed most strongly to the members of the Municipal Authority—was the excessive cost of these additional works even if they were assumed to be necessary or of real utility to the community. This excessive cost was most marked when the system of rotation of employment

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* Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1896, p. xi.

† Report of Department of Works to St. Pancras Borough Council, 1903.

‡ Report of Works Committee to the Paddington Borough Council, November 7th, 1905. The Finance Committee at the same time reported as follows: "We do not believe that 'the hope that during the alternate weeks when the men would be standing off they would endeavour to find permanent employment elsewhere' would ever be realised, but we believe the contrary would be the case, the proposed action being a strong inducement for men to remain in the Borough, and not to seek work elsewhere." But the recommendations of the Works Committee were approved.

§ Thus, it was part of the request of a deputation of the unemployed to the Bethnal Green Vestry in 1894, "to employ more men, to distribute the work equally between all applicants." (Annual Report and Vestry Minutes, Bethnal Green, January 4th, 1894.)

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 82377, Par. 4A.

¶ Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 173.

** Annual Report of Bethnal Green Vestry, 1893–4.

†† Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 141.

‡‡ Report of Borough Engineer to Sunderland Town Council, 1886–7.

was adhered to. "I should say," we were told by the Borough Surveyor of Poplar, that "under the three days' system the labour cost 100 per cent. more than it should have done, whereas I estimate that in work [for the Unemployed] extending over two or three months, the manual labour did not cost above 15 per cent. in excess." * "Large bodies of men were employed . . . in reconstructing roads," we were informed by the Borough Surveyor of Bermondsey, "for a term of three days apiece. The result of this was that the work came out very expensive, owing to the fact that the men were not used to the class of work and, when the third day had arrived, they were stopped to make room for the fresh men, which was just about the time they had become acquainted with the use of the tools." † The works done by the Unemployed for the Poplar Borough Council in 1903–4—3,300 men being given one "three day turn" in the course of the winter, 1,323 of them getting also a second "three day turn," and only 296 more than two turns—cost 52 per cent. more than if done in the ordinary way, the extra expense thus incurred being £1,200, a result reported to be "entirely due to the men being unused to the work, and in many cases physically unfit." ‡ But even where the men were engaged continuously it was the experience of many places that the work undertaken by the Unemployed, "has cost more than double what similar work done under the same conditions and the same supervision cost the year before." § "On the new road at Mousehold," which the Norwich Town Council got executed by the Unemployed, "where the work could be correctly checked, it has been found to cost in some cases as much as six times what it ought." ‖ "The class of work undertaken in 1903," reported the Superintendent of Parks under the Glasgow Town Council, "was what was most readily available, viz., double digging or trenching ground. While this may appear a simple and easy job, it demands a certain amount of skill, which skill was not possessed by 90 per cent. of the men, consequently the work done was costly, so far as ordinary market value goes. In 1904, along with the aforesaid trenching work, squads were employed in the formation of a pond which entailed excavator work, in which the use of the pick was necessary. This work also requires a certain amount of skill, combined with bodily strength, a quality

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 80722.

† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXXVIII. to Vol. IX., Par. 2.

‡ Report of Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on the Relief of Distress due to Want of Employment, 1904, p. 320. "The average loss on employing the men was 15 per cent., but sometimes it was much larger. Thus, on one job, which should have taken ten weeks, after eight weeks little more than a third was done, and the whole of the estimated charge for labour had been expended. 'The employing of unemployed labour of this kind is a very expensive thing.'" (*Ibid.*).

§ Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix R., p. 360. The following detailed statement as to certain works at Glasgow is of interest :—

"Statement Showing Cost of Forming Roads and Railway at Robroyston by Unemployed Labour, with Proportion thereof Payable by Common Good" [*i.e.*, the Funds of the Glasgow Town Council available for any Public Purpose].

Forming Roads.

Cost by Unemployed Labour :—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Wages	373	7	10			
Railway tickets	43	11	9			
Tools and materials	22	13	8			
Blaes (*i.e.*, brick refuse)	16	17	0			
Horses and carts—hire	63	8	4			
				519	18	7
Valuation of road as formed				277	13	0
Leaving balance, payable by common good, of				242	5	7

Forming Railway.

Cost by Unemployed Labour :—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Wages	119	5	5			
Railway tickets	11	12	8			
Tools and materials	6	9	10			
				137	7	11
Cost if made by day's wage men				88	12	3
Leaving balance, payable by common good, of				48	15	8
Total sum payable from common good				291	1	3

(Report by the Superintendent of Cleansing on Relief Work Provided for Unemployed Workmen on Robroyston (Glasgow) Estate, 1904.)

‖ Report of Joint Committee, Norwich Town Council, 1904–5, p. 8.

which too many of the men lacked. Wheeling the material excavated, while not requiring much skill, demands also fair bodily strength, and therefore, owing to the want of physical vigour, many of the men did not do anything like a fair day's work." *

To the practical administrator it became also apparent that, when the practice of expediting work became chronic, it would lead to financial embarrassment. "These were works of necessity and cannot be repeated every winter," reports the Public Works Committee of the Vestry of St. Pancras.† "We would impress upon the Council," urged the Finance Committee of Paddington in deprecating the provision of Relief Works in the month of July, "that we are now in the time of the year when work is most abundant."‡

It was not as if this excess of expenditure all went in wages to the Unemployed. To a large extent it was wasted by an uneconomic use of plant and material, and in the excessive supervision required. "No one having a piece of work 'in hand,'" remarked the General Purposes Committee of the Birmingham Town Council, "would willingly employ workmen who are unaccustomed to the particular work; and here one of the great difficulties of charitable employment arises. The Unemployed, as statistics will show, are usually men of the most varied occupations; and it may fairly be presumed that some of them are not the most thrifty, thoughtful workmen, or men particularly handy at their respective trades. To put a number of ill-assorted workmen of this kind upon any public work would be fatal to its proper execution. In many cases the men would be physically unequal to the task, and in all they would require *an amount of supervision quite incommensurate with any advantage that might be obtained from lower wages.*"§ It is often forgotten that, in all constructional works, a large outlay has to be made for materials and plant. "*For every day's wages paid to the workmen, twice as much has to be expended in the hire of carts and horses.*"‖ In certain works of wood-paving executed by the Islington Borough Council, several years before they were likely to be required in the ordinary way, the total cost was estimated at £11,389, out of which only £2,479 was to be paid in wages for the labour of the Unemployed.¶ "In order to provide employment," as the Finance Committee warned the Paddington Borough Council, "large sums have to be expended on materials, so that of the large expenditure rendered necessary, only a relatively small proportion reaches the men themselves by way of wages. *It would really be cheaper to the ratepayers who have to find the money in any case, if relief were given to the men themselves direct.*" **

And the advantage to the workmen themselves, of using the available funds to set going municipal works, instead of giving it straight to the Unemployed in some other form, became gradually more than doubtful. To the Borough Councillors who were interested in Labour it became increasingly apparent that these doles of work from Municipal Authorities were being, to a large extent, extracted out of the employment and the wages which would otherwise have been afforded to an enlarged permanent staff, or, in some cases, to the usual employees of the Corporation. "The season when want of employment is most felt," observed the General Purposes Committee of the Birmingham Town Council, "is generally the winter; and what is to become of the regular Corporation workmen if numbers of the unemployed are taken on during precisely that season of the year when the least amount of outdoor work can be done?"†† By "additional works in the way of street-paving," reported the Master of the Works to the Glasgow Town Council, "employment could be given to a hundred or so;" but this simply means that "Contractors would dismiss their employees."‡‡ Nor was this objection founded merely on theory. "The effect" of the Municipal Relief Works at Bradford, deposed to us the Deputy City Surveyor, "was to reduce the amount of work which would have been done by the labourers usually employed by the corporation, and as a matter of fact some of the regular cor-

* Memorandum by Superintendent of Parks *re* Unemployed, Glasgow, 1904.

† Vestry of St. Pancras, Report of Highways, Sewers and Public Works Committee, February 22nd.

‡ Council Minutes, Paddington, July 11th, 1905, Report of Finance Committee.

§ Report of General Purposes Committee to Birmingham Town Council, July 25th, 1893.

‖ *Ibid.*

¶ Minutes of the London County Council, November 17th, 1908 (Report of Finance Committee, p. 8.)

** Report of Finance Committee to the Paddington Borough Council, July 11th, 1905.

†† Report of General Purposes Committee to Birmingham Town Council, July 25th, 1893. "To ask the Municipality to provide work," deposed one witness of experience in Municipal Government, "*can be no remedy*—it is hardly a palliative—on the other hand is more likely to accentuate the evil. If special work, is to be *created this* year, the work will not be required *next*, and another danger is, that the provident and regular workman will be ousted by such provision. After mature consideration I have come to the conclusion that Municipal provision of work will intensify the evil, and, in the end, increase the number of the unemployed." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 91141, Par. 14.)

‡‡ Report of Master of the Works to the Special Committee on Relief Employment, Glasgow Town Council, 1904.

poration labourers were walking about the streets of Bradford, out of work, at the time when these works were in progress, as they declined to register their names at the labour bureau." *

Thus, the relief of the Unemployed by means of Municipal Works was proved to be, to no small extent at any rate, merely an arrangement by which some men were deprived of their regular employment, in order that other men might be given, in rotation, a "three day's turn"! The Unemployed thus taken on were certainly no better than those whom they displaced. As was sometimes naively admitted, those to whom this preferential position was given were, almost inevitably, less efficient workmen. "A representation having been made by the Board of Guardians," we read in the Report of the Poplar Board of Works, "that, in the struggle to obtain employment the weakest probably went to the wall, an arrangement was made by which men, to whom letters of recommendation were given by the Relieving Officers, secured priority when Labour was engaged." † "There are many old men and weakly young men, and others not used to hard manual labour," we are told, "who seek employment at such times." ‡ "The greater number of the men recommended were physically unfit, some being exceptionally unfit, and others being weak through want of food. One-fifth to one-third of the men were equal to the Council's regular employees." § The Camberwell Surveyor stated that, in the case of some excavating work, "on account of the want of stamina of the Unemployed" the Vestry's workmen were taken from their scavenging and were put on to harder work, thus making room for the Unemployed.‖ What is more serious is that by this costly system of giving preference to the unfit, work could not fail to fall, to some extent, into the hands of ill-conducted as well as unfit persons. "Among those employed," states the Borough Engineer of West Ham in 1894, "were occasionally some loafers and idlers, rather more 'hard up' than usual."¶ Even when these refused to stand four successive days' work, and were dismissed for misconduct, or for failure to keep time, they had enjoyed the benefit of the day's wages, to the exclusion of others more deserving.**

Nor was the kind of work that was offered by the Municipal Authorities, whether to the skilled mechanic temporarily out of employment, to the clerk who had lost his place, or to the painter or building trades' labourer, such an occupation as improved him either mentally or morally. It was doubtless better for all these men to be at work at anything, even if only for a "three days' turn," rather than deteriorate by idleness. The worst kind of Municipal Employment was found to improve the man who had been a long time out of work. But compared with other occupations, or other training, the unskilled labouring, which alone could be provided for a heterogeneous body of applicants, was non-educational and depressing. "Road-picking," says a Borough Surveyor, "is trying for the unaccustomed . . . blistered hands tell against good averages where the

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* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XC. to Vol. IX., Par. 9. "The work was not created, but was anticipated; that is the work of the next year or so was forestalled, in order that it might be available for the unemployed. Under normal circumstances, men accustomed to navvying would have been employed on the sewering work, but, owing to the distress, that work was given to the unemployed; and, so far, local employment of that description was made less regular for those usually engaged on it." (Report of the Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on the Relief of Distress due to Want of Employment, 1904, p. 27.) "At Preston, the work carried out by unemployed labour was necessary, and would have been done in any case. There was a real injustice to the men who would otherwise have got it. There are some thirty or forty men, who, though not permanent hands, are usually employed in Corporation works. As their jobs ended they were given the option of being taken on as 'unemployed' at the wage of 4½d. (instead of 5d.) an hour. They naturally refused to join the inferior class at less than their rightful pay, and were, therefore, thrown out of work." (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, 1907, p. 118.)

† Report of Board of Works for Poplar District, 1894–5.

‡ Report as to the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 179.

§ The Relief of Distress due to Want of Employment; Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society, November, 1904, p. 30.

‖ Report as to the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 136.—"Men are selected from distress registers because of the size of their families, and not because they are efficient workmen, and by this means the men who from their industrial record are entitled to count on employment may be unfairly displaced. It has, for example, been stated that at the works on the Tooting lake, which were carried out by the unemployed, a number of good navvies who were unemployed, but had not registered, were to be seen standing round the works and seeing less efficient men employed." (*Ibid.*, p. 119.)

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 79408, Par. 20.

** Such defections increased the cost of the work. "There are special difficulties in connection with relief employment caused by the fact that when a gang has been composed of assorted men of various trades, some have turned up for the work and some have not, with the result that the time of tho e who attended could not be effectively utilised." (Report of Joint Committee, Norwich, 1904–5, p. 8.)

men are taken promiscuously."* "There was much talk," we were told by a witness, "of white-washing railway arches, laying out recreation grounds, painting town halls; but it was soon found that such work is subject to very narrow limitations, and the usual work was 'broom and shovel.'" † Even this work gave out, and municipal ingenuity—hampered by the inability to take land in private ownership, or to find room for much "ground work" in a crowded city, and still more, by the heavy cost involved for materials, supervision, etc.—could find no more tasks on which to put the Unemployed. Many Municipal Authorities were accordingly driven to fall back on stone-breaking for road metal. "The only arrangements we have in dealing with the Unemployed," reports a Local Government Board Inspector, "is by sending all able-bodied applicants to the Corporation stoneyard where stone-breaking is provided at 2s. 6d. per ton." ‡ "I have considered the question," reported the Master of Works at Glasgow, "so far as my department is concerned, and do not see that any great amount of employment can be provided through this department, unless it may be in the way of stonebreakng. If the committee should determine to go on with this class of work, it should be, I think, on the footing of payment for work done only, and the basis of payment should be at the rate paid to the regular stonebreakers. The Committee will also keep in view that, *if they go in for an extensive system of stone-breaking, the contractors from whom we purchase metal will pay off a number of their men,* seeing they will not be able to get a market for the sale of metal."§ Notwithstanding the plain warning conveyed in the latter sentence, the Glasgow Town Council "agreed to continue the relief work to a limited number of men at stone-breaking, to be paid by piece-work,"‖ and the same plan was, in despair, adopted by various other Authorities.¶ This monotonous and toilsome work, uneducational and brutalising even to the unskilled labourer, was found to be seriously deteriorating to the unemployed clerk or skilled artisan, and was bitterly resented by them as degrading. But even in the most suitable of occupations, the atmosphere of Municipal Works, *whenever men are taken on because they are Unemployed,* and are not picked out and engaged at wages in the ordinary way because they are the best available men to execute a task that is required for its own sake, was invariably found to be enervating and demoralising. It is not in human nature to put forth one's full strength in work which is different from that to which one has been accustomed, and which is known to have been artificially created more as a means of occupying the men than for its urgency; in an employment, moreover, from which dismissal is practically impossible.** Those who attempted to work at their full strength and their full speed were dissuaded from doing so. "Decent men willing and wishful for work," it was reported, "are even intimidated and prevented from doing their best by those with whom they must work. Several cases came to our knowledge last year where men were threatened for doing more than the 'professional' Unemployed thought was sufficient."††

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* Report as to the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix N., p. 173.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78704, Par. 2.

‡ Thirty-third Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1903–4, p. 228; Mr. Bagenal's Report (as to Sculcoates Union, Hull).

§ Report by the Master of Works to the Special Committee on Relief Employment, Glasgow, 1904.

‖ Report of Executive Sub-Committee on Relief of Unemployed, Glasgow, March 22nd, 1904.

¶ At Southwark, "the Board of Guardians in 1902–3 had been permitted to send men to the Borough Council on the understanding that the Council would provide work for them. This greatly embarrassed the latter body, and it was decided in 1903–4 that the Guardians should send fewer and selected men. Thus, the Council provided work for 233 men between February and May, chiefly in stone-breaking. According to the number of their children the men had one, two or three days' work in the week. The orders given were for two weeks' work at 4s. a day. The orders were renewable, and some men had work practically throughout the winter." (Report of the Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on the Relief of Distress due to Want of Employment, 1904, p. 28.)

** "The men generally will not put their best into the work," deposed one witness. "This is largely due to the knowledge that having been engaged, not because their services were required, but because they were out of work, they are not likely, therefore, to be discharged. (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LII. to Vol. VIII, par. 17 b)).

†† Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 131 (quoting Report of City Engineer of Newcastle, 1895). "In estimating the value of the work done by the unemployed, it cannot be rated much above 50 per cent. of that done by competent workmen. Some—unfortunately the smaller number—were willing and anxious to do their best but the majority, it was very apparent, went with the intention of doing as little as they possibly could, it being found that, directly the foreman's back was turned, they simply idled their time. Others who were willing enough to work were physically incapable, either through weakness or from having been all their life accustomed to indoor employment. A few turned out to be very good, steady workmen, and they have been employed regularly since. Taken all over, however, the average value of unemployed labour is, as I have said, little more than 50 per cent. that of regular workmen, the idleness of the loafers counterbalancing the work done by the more conscientious men." (Report by the Superintendent of Cleansing on Relief Work provided for Unemployed Workmen on Robroyston (Glasgow) Estate, 1904.)

In trying to utilise the labour of the Unemployed the Borough Surveyor, accustomed to deal with ordinary workmen on a purely business footing, finds himself turned into an instructor of the unskilled, and into a superintendent of a reformatory institution. "The fact has been forced on me," states the Newcastle Surveyor, "much against my will, that the providing of work for the Unemployed by the Corporation is a wasteful way of doing it. We have not an organisation that can cope with the 'professional' Relief-Labour man." * "Foremen or gangers," as was expressly pointed out to us by Mr. Walter Long, "whose business it was to superintend the work, while fully capable of getting full value out of able-bodied and capable workmen, had no experience of dealing with men who, through want or physical infirmity, were not able to give a full day's work in return for the wages paid." † And the foremen, conscious that the work had no commercial basis, were found sometimes to be themselves slack, and unwilling to bring their jobs to an end.

All these objections to the relief of the Unemployed by means of Municipal Employment—cumulative in their force—still leave unstated what seems to us the most fundamental of all. In the following chapter on "The Distress from Unemployment as it exists To-day" we shall show that the problem before the country is only in exceptional circumstances and only to a small extent that of providing for the man who has temporarily fallen out of continuous employment at weekly wages, and who has to be tided over the interval between one such regular situation and the next one. Such a man would present, as we shall see, comparatively little difficulty if he stood by himself. What is more formidable is the fact that large sections of the population in most of the big cities are in a chronic state of under-employment, in which they get only a few days' work per week, and in bad times only a few days' work per month.

The provision of employment at irregular intervals and for irregular periods by Municipal Authorities, especially if it is arranged for times of more than usual Under-employment, tends to perpetuate this evil condition and to enlarge its area. This has been observed by one person after another. "The relief work with which they are provided," we are told in the Board of Trade Report of 1893, "is to many of them merely one out of the series of casual jobs by which they are accustomed to live, and when it is over they are in the same position as when it began. They have been supported for a few days, but they have not been set on their feet." ‡ "The worst of these relief works is," says Mr. C. S. Loch, "that after they are over, the family are just where they were; they get the employment for the winter, a few months, and then, unless they have it next winter and the winter after, they remain in the same position; but, on the other hand, one has done this injury, drawn a large number of comparatively young men on to a relief system. Now those men ought not to want to come, we ought to do our best to keep them from coming; but it was quite startling how many of them were quite young men; they did not belong to trade societies; they were labourers living in a happy-go-lucky sort of way, and sometimes they were married and had young children, and sometimes they had not a strong physique." § Summing up the results of fifteen years' more experience, our own Investigators report that "the best that the relief works have accomplished has been to provide another—generally inconsiderable—odd job to honest men who have to live by odd jobs, because of the irregularity of so much of our industry." ‖

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* Report as to the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix R., p. 360. Of a particularly well-organised experiment, it was said that "the men were unfamiliar with the work, and did it very slowly. But they seemed to do their best. There were comparatively few dismissed. The men were of all trades, 'not accustomed to using a pick and shovel and burrowing the earth. It was very hard work for them, and they did it very slowly.' *Employing them rather demoralised the regular men.* 'As a rule, if you have a gang of men, they all take the lead from the slowest men in the gang.' On every job there was one of the regular gangers of the Borough, and a foreman." (Report of the Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on the Relief of Distress due to Want of Employment, 1904, p. 27.)

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78461, par. 4.

‡ Report on the Methods and Agencies for dealing with the Unemployed, 1893, p. 409.

§ Report of House of Lords Committee on Poor Relief, 1888, *Q.* 4174.

‖ Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, 1907, p. 39. Such a plan, moreover encourages the loafer. "Schemes which merely provide a few days' work for a large number of men in successive relays are of all others the most likely to be abused. They offer work in the form which exactly suits those who are unwilling to submit to continuous exertion, while doing very little for those really in distress. The plan of employing men in two shifts—three days a week each—is recommended on the ground that it gives them a chance to look out for work during the rest of the week, but against this very real advantage must be set the encouragement to loafers by an arrangement which falls in with their habits."

And the Board of Trade in 1893 gave the warning that "against the advantages of all schemes for providing work for the Unemployed must be set the grave danger of their tendency to become chronic and to be looked forward to and counted on every winter." * It is needless to add that the anticipated result actually happened. "Before long," we were told by one of our witnesses, "'a day from the Vestry' came to be looked upon as a matter of right and its refusal as an injustice. Crowds gathered round the Vestry every winter waiting for work. . . . At a meeting of the Vestry in 1895 a young man complained that 'he had been up every day for ten weeks, but had not been taken on once,' and he was one of many. . . . A generation has grown up which has learnt to look upon these doles as a right." †

Looking back on the whole twenty years' experience of the provision of Municipal Employment, it is fundamentally to this existence of large sections of the working-class population at all times in a state of chronic Under-employment that must be attributed the failure of Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion of using Local Authorities to tide over periods of exceptional distress. If Able-bodied Destitution were limited to men, whether skilled or unskilled, who had lost definite situations, and might reasonably be expected to get into definite situations again when the emergency had passed away—whether their loss of employment was due to some such catastrophe as the bankruptcy of an employer or a fire, or to some dislocation through war or a commercial crisis—Municipal works would be a feasible way of getting over the difficulty. This course was successfully pursued in Lancashire at the time of the Cotton Famine. A few of the skilled cotton operatives could be employed at the current wages of unskilled men at public works without disinclining them to take up their old occupation as soon as the mills were re-opened. This outdoor work seems, in fact, to have served as a sort of physical training and to have actually benefited the health of many of those who were accustomed to the confinement of a mill. But even here, it was found necessary to supersede the ordinary machinery of the Local Authority by carefully-devised organisation under specialised management by which, at the cost of heavy loans charged upon the local rates, a limited number (never more than 4,000) of the unemployed cotton-spinners—not the labourers—were carefully combined with a large number of ordinary workmen, accustomed to the work of sewering, paving and street improvements, engaged in the ordinary way, and many of them brought from a distance. This Lancashire experiment, which is frequently cited in support of the Municipal Employment of the Unemployed, was, compared with the operations of the Municipal Authorities of the past twenty years, a relatively small affair. Its very success—so far as it can be considered a success—confirms the reason that we have assigned for the failure of Municipal Employment as a means of providing for the crowds that assail the Distress Committees of to-day. It was not the men living on casual employment in the Lancashire towns, it was not the general labourers, it was not even the labourers in the building trades for whom the Municipal Employment was found in 1863–6.§ For the distress into which tens of thousands of these men were thrown, their chronic condition of Under-employment being aggravated as an indirect result of the Cotton Famine, provision was made by huge charitable funds, by soup kitchens and by the Poor Law. It was exactly because the Municipal Works organised by Sir R. Rawlinson were carefully confined, so far as concerned the "Employment of the Unemployed," to the engagement of a limited number of cotton-spinners, for whom it was known that situations in the cotton mills would be available as soon as the importation of cotton was resumed, that this small and

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* Report on the Methods and Agencies for dealing with the Unemployed, 1893, p. 409.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78704 (Par. 2).

‡ For this, the leading case in England of the aiding of Relief Works by the National Government, *see* Annual Reports of the Poor Law Board, 1862–3 to 1865–6 inclusive; Mr. (afterwards Sir) R. Rawlinson's Reports in Parliamentary Papers, 1866, Vol. LXI.; History of the English Poor Law, by T. Mackay, 1899, pp. 398–424; "The Facts of the Cotton Famine," by Dr. John Watts, 1866; "History of the Cotton Famine," by R. A. (afterwards Sir Arthur) Arnold, 1864; "Lancashire's Lesson," by W. T. McCullogh Torrens, 1864; "Public Works in Lancashire for the Relief of Distress," 1863–66, by Sir R. Rawlinson, 1898.

§ This was, indeed, tried, with disastrous results. "The gangs of labourers attempted to be organised in Lancashire before the introduction of the Public Works Act, as at Stockport, at Preston, and at some other places, proved utter failures. However little the men were paid, the work performed represented much less. Idleness soon verged into mischief, and mischief soon became actual riot." (Sir R. Rawlinson's Report, in Parliamentary Papers, 1866, Vol. LXI., No. 375, p. 3.)

costly experiment can be said to have been successful.* *If adequate provision were made in some other way for the casual labourers in chronic Under-employment*, it is conceivable that the Municipal Authorities might successfully find work for the limited number of men whom some industrial dislocation had temporarily deprived of regular situations, and who needed only to be tided over until they got into regular situations again. Even then, the question arises whether, if financial considerations alone were regarded, it would not be found to be cheaper to give the men their wages without allowing them to spoil the material, wastefully use the plant and necessitate the engagement of foremen and overlookers, for the execution of work, possibly not undesirable in itself, but of no real commercial value. In short, we are obliged to conclude, with the committee of the Norwich Town Council, that " the work on the whole has been unsatisfactory, and the payments in some cases are scarcely worth calling payments for work, but merely a mask for charity."†

(B) The Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905.

An appreciation of the gravity of the evil of this unco-ordinated and unregulated " employment relief " by Municipal Authorities—more especially the chronic " employment relief " of the Metropolitan Boroughs—led, in the autumn of 1903, a little group of experienced organisers and administrators of charitable funds to form a Committee and raise a Mansion House Fund in order to organise work on a better system for the destitute Unemployed of four East End Boroughs (Stepney, Poplar, Bethnal Green and Shoreditch).‡ This Committee proceeded on the lines of systematic investigation *into the industrial status* of each applicant, in order to select, not men of good character only, but those who were usually in settled employment in a definite situation and had a clear prospect of returning to it. It also started the colony system of combining employment with training which we shall presently describe. But the main effect of the Mansion House Fund in 1903–4 was " to demonstrate the magnitude of the problem to be solved." § The situation had become one of some gravity. As Mr. Walter Long, then President of the Local Government Board, informed us :—

> " There were crowds besieging the offices of the Relieving Officers and Boards of Guardians in London, in Leeds, in Liverpool, in Manchester, in Birmingham, and all our great cities where the unemployed difficulty arose in an acute form ; the Boards of Guardians could hardly sit in some places without safeguarding their doors, which were besieged by a crowd of people demanding assistance. In the same way when it was found that the relief given by the Guardians brought in its train pauperism and deprivation of all civil rights, they turned their attention to the Municipalities and demanded that great works should be carried out by the Municipalities on which they should be employed."‖

Mr. Long dealt first with London. By his efforts an organisation to work on the lines laid down by the Mansion House Committee was, in the autumn of 1904, extended to every part of London. In each Metropolitan Borough a Joint Committee was formed, composed of representatives of the Borough Council and of the local Board of Guardians, in some cases with experienced charity workers, to undertake the local registration and inquiry. A Central Committee, composed partly of representatives of the Local Joint Committees and of the London County Council, and partly of persons nominated by the Local Government Board, was to administer whatever funds could be obtained, in carefully devised schemes for assistance.¶ This semi-official organisation, called into

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* It is interesting to contrast, with this Lancashire experiment, the sort of problem that confronts the Local Authorities of to-day, in point of : (*a*) magnitude ; (*b*) the kind of men to be provided for ; and (*c*) the urgency of the need for relief. To take only a single parish in London, at Poplar in February, 1895, the offices of the Local Authority were suddenly besieged by crowds of casual dock and riverside labourers, thrown out of work by the frost, whose families were penniless and starving. The Local Authority felt driven to engage the men (at piece-work rates, yielding 4s. for a day's work) to remove the thick snow that covered the streets. Only local residents were employed, but more than 4,000 men in this one parish struggled to get this work, and 3,580 of them were actually employed within a fortnight, on an average for about one day each (wages £715). About 100 had to be put to stone-breaking. (Report of Board of Works for the Poplar District, 1894–5.)

† Report of Joint Committee, Norwich Town Council, 1904–5, p. 8.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 77832 (pars. 26–28), 78372 (par. 3), 78704 (par. 3). Particulars as to some previous experiments in 1893–4 on similar lines, by a Mansion House Committee of that date, will be found in the Third Report of the House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, *Qs.* 11197, *et seq.*

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 77832 (par. 28).

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 78466.

¶ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 78372 (pars. 17–25), 787043 ; Report of Central Executive Committee of the London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5.

existence by the President of the Local Government Board without statutory authority, was definitely established under the name of "Distress Committee" for all the towns of the United Kingdom by the Unemployed Workmen Act, introduced in 1905 by Mr. Gerald Balfour, who had meanwhile succeeded Mr. Long at the Local Government Board.*

The Unemployed Workmen Act embodied the policy of Mr. Chamberlain's Circular of 1886—that respectable men, temporarily unemployed, should not be cast on the Poor Law, but should be assisted by the Municipal Authority of the district in which they were resident. The casual labourers were expressly excluded. "We proposed," said Mr. Gerald Balfour, "to deal with the *elite* of the Unemployed." † "The relief of recurrent distress," he stated in introducing the Bill, "was not contemplated. . . . The Unemployed for whom the Bill was intended were respectable workmen, settled in a locality, hitherto accustomed to regular work, but temporarily out of employment through circumstances beyond their control; capable workmen with hope of return to regular work after tiding over a period of temporary distress." ‡ By authoritative rules laid down by the Local Government Board, no man who had received Poor Relief during the preceding twelve months could be helped nor yet any one who had twice previously been helped by the new authorities. But there were other provisions and wider implications and larger aims embodied in Mr. Gerald Balfour's Act than might have been inferred from the precedents of 1886–1904. The Unemployed Workmen Act set up, for the first time, Public Authorities, able to draw on the rates for their expenses, expressly charged to deal with the social disease of Unemployment. The powers of these Distress Committees, which were to rise up in all large towns throughout the Kingdom, were not limited to the provision, out of voluntary funds, of work at wages for men temporarily out of employment. They were also empowered to pay the cost of the migration of men and their families to different parts of the United Kingdom, or their emigration; to establish Farm Colonies and to start an organised system of registration of employers wanting workers and workers wanting work within their districts. This last function of ascertaining the exact conditions of the Labour Market in every part of the Kingdom was especially insisted on. Whereas the establishment of a Distress Committee was to take place only in those towns in which it was deemed to be necessary, every County and County Borough Council in England and Wales was specifically required, if no Distress Committee was established, to appoint a Special Committee to ascertain, by means of continuous investigation, *and the working of Labour Exchanges*, what exactly were the openings for employment within their respective areas. "The object of the Act," Mr. Walter Long informed us, "was to provide machinery by which those who were able to work could get work by legitimate means." §

(c) The Distress Committees.

The new organisation got rapidly to work. Besides the Metropolis, where the voluntary machinery set up by Mr. Long was converted into the new statutory Authority with which we shall deal separately, nearly a hundred towns in the United Kingdom at once started Distress Committees, and began to register applicants for assistance.‖

In the Provincial Boroughs, with insignificant exceptions, the Distress Committees had no other idea than a continuance of the policy of Municipal employment, which, as we have described, had been spasmodically carried out, here and there, during the preceding twenty years. The "Labour Bureau" or "Labour Register" set up under the

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 77735—30 (Mr. Gerald Balfour); 5 Edw. VII. c. 18.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 77738.

‡ *Hansard*, June 20th, 1905; Regulations (Organisation for Unemployed), October 10th, 1905.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78469. This was left optional for the Scotch and Irish Counties and Boroughs.

‖ See the House of Commons Returns No. 392 of 1907, and No. 173 of 1908, as regards England and Wales. Distress Committees were at once set up, outside London, in seventy-five Boroughs, and fourteen other urban districts; and these registered, within three or four months, 71,107 applicants (representing a population in distress of 250,000), 56 per cent. of the men whose applications were entertained being under forty; 50 per cent. general or casual labourers, and 25 per cent. men in the building trades. In the following year, 57,433 applicants were registered, of practically the same ages and occupations. In Scotland, fourteen boroughs set up Distress Committees, and registered 8,695 applicants in 1905–6, and 8,576 in 1906–7. (Cd. 3431 of 1906 and Cd. 3830 of 1907.) No special Reports have been made for Ireland, but from the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Ireland, it appears that only four Distress Committees were formed, and but little was done. (Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Ireland for 1907–8, p. xii.).

Act has been, in nearly every town outside the Metropolis, practically only a means of registering the applicants for the "Employment Relief" dispensed by the Distress Committee. Only the smallest use has, except in West Ham and two or three other places, been made in these towns of the powers of assisting migration or emigration.* What has happened is that the provision of doles of work by the Municipal Authorities has received a great extension, and has become chronic. The simple device of anticipating works of paving, sewering and road-making, so as to begin them in the winter, before they were required, has been adopted more widely than ever. A certain ingenuity has been shown in inventing special jobs on which to set the Unemployed at work—reclaiming part of Chat Moss,† planting trees in the water-catchment area at Leeds,‡ foreshore reclamation at Bristol, potato-growing at Oldham and Croydon, forming new recreation grounds or cleaning watercourses in many towns. Viewed as a whole, these provincial examples of Municipal Employment under the Distress Committees between 1905 and the present time present exactly the same characteristics as those which were undertaken in response to the successive Circulars of the Local Government Board between 1886 and 1905. We see the same provision of work at the ordinary rates of wages, not afforded continuously to any man, but only for a few days in the week, or a week or two in the course of the winter.§ We see the same swamping of the lists of applicants by men who are at no time more than intermittently employed, whether these are dock or wharf or general labourers, or painters and builders' labourers, and who are glad at any season to present themselves for odd days of work at current rates.‖ We see the same excessive cost of every work in which accurate comparison can be made—an excess due partly to the inevitable inefficiency of the Unemployed men at the work to which they were set, but chiefly to the difficulties inherent in working with heterogeneous gangs of men, few of whom were putting forth a full stroke, and some of whom were bent on doing only "as much as they were paid for." ¶ We see the same considerable expenditure, apart from the wages to the Unemployed, on the necessary materials, plant and supervision, so that it would often have been cheaper, financially, to have given the wages to the men merely as relief. Finally, we see the same inevitable tendency to a shrinkage of the ordinary staffs of the Municipal Departments, and to a throwing-out of employment of the regular

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* In 1906–7, from all the provincial towns of England and Wales, only 268 persons were assisted to migrate, and 437 men (with 1,232 dependents) to emigrate. (House of Commons Return, No. 173 of 1908, p. 8.) Two-thirds of these were sent out by West Ham, Bristol, Birmingham and Leicester. No other Distress Committees have done anything to speak of in this way. In Scotland only four Committees did anything at all. (Cd. 3431 of 1906.)

† "The most that can be said of the experiment is that it provided wages for 252 during a portion of the year. The work was, however, attended by great expense, owing to railway fares, provision of shelters, etc., whilst no remunerative return was secured by the Distress Committee as a set-off against the wages paid." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XCVIII. (A) to Vol. VIII., Par. 2; Report of Manchester Distress Committee, 1906–7.)

‡ Report of Leeds Distress Committee, 1906–7.

§ "It was decided to pay the workmen 4½d. per hour, and to employ them four days in succession, the time being nine hours per day." (Report of Distress Committee, Halifax, 1906.) "Two gangs have work each week, one on the first three days, and one on the last three days." (Report of Dudley Distress Committee, 1907.) At Ipswich, the Town Council refused to appoint a Distress Committee, preferring to let its Paving Committee execute extensive works of excavating and levelling on the Corporation land at piece-work rates, employing each man four days a week. (Minutes of Ipswich Town Council, November 9th, 1905.)

‖ We ourselves found the employment given by the Distress Committee actually made to fit in with casual employment. At Liverpool, as our Committee notes, "the men, some of them, get dock work, and then, on their off days, they are allowed to work for the Distress Committee." (Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 1, B., p. 4.)

¶ "On one occasion thirty men, of whom the majority were young men, were discharged for laziness." (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and the Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix R., p. 363.) At Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1905–6, "some site levelling, for which an item (£200) was on the city estimates, had been tendered for by contractors. The lowest tender was £130, but this was probably too low—a fair price would have been £170. It actually cost by unemployed labour £415 6s. 3d., of which the Corporation refunded £200. The great addition to the cost was due to the substitution, at first, of barrowing for carting, but this was given up after a short experience. The supervision was not strict enough, and the men got away to an unfortunately 'convenient' railway arch. Some road work which was on the estimates had been tendered for at £1,359 19s. 2d., but with unemployed labour cost £1,875 18s. 11d." (*Ibid.*, p. 129.) "Our estimate as to the result is that it cost the Corporation 40 per cent. more than if the work was done under contract." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXVI. to Vol. VIII., Par. 5.) At Croydon, it was reported "that digging upon some cemetery land—described as the easiest work at the time—cost £145 for 10½ acres. The surveyor estimates that similar work done with a plough would have cost about 25s. an acre." (Report on the Effects of the Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and the Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 827.) "We find, for example, that £3,866 was paid for the construction of cricket fields, the normal value being £675; £2,997 for levelling and excavating, instead of £1,440; 16s. 10d. per ton for breaking slag and stone, instead of 11s. 9d." (Report by Town Clerk to the Bath Town Council as to the experience of the Unemployed Workmen Act by forty-five Municipal Corporations, 1907.)

hands of the Municipal Contractors, because the "ground work" on which they would have been employed in the ordinary course had been given to the Distress Committee, to be distributed in doles of "Employment Relief" to those who had put down their names as unemployed.* The Local Authorities, indeed, have been suspected of deliberately throwing the cost of their own projected works on the grant from the Exchequer for the Unemployed. In short, we are, by this experience of the provincial towns, forced to agree with the conclusion of our Investigators. "Municipal Relief Works," they report, "have been in operation for twenty years, and must, we think, be pronounced a complete failure—a failure accentuated by the attempt to organise them by the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905. The evidence we have collected seems conclusive that relief works are economically useless. Either ordinary work is undertaken, in which case it is merely forestalled, and, later, throws out of employment the men who are in the more or less regular employ of the councils, or else it is sham work which we believe to be even more deteriorating than direct relief."†

So far as the mere provision of employment is concerned, we do not think that the three years' experience of the Metropolis under the Unemployed Workmen Act points to any different conclusion from that to which all those who have examined the working of Municipal Employment have been driven.‡ In London the work of inquiring into and sifting out the applicants seems to have been more systematically performed by the Distress Committees than in most provincial towns. Moreover the Central (Unemployed) Body, by which the selected men have been dealt with, set itself from the outset against the policy of sharing out the work in small doles, so that those men who have been employed at all have usually had work continuously for several weeks or even for several months at a time, the short week of forty-three hours at 6d. per hour being substituted for the device of a "three days' turn" which has elsewhere been so common.§ But the Central (Unemployed) Body, with its twenty-nine subordinate Distress Committees, has distinguished itself, not so much by the "Employment Relief" which it has organised,‖ for this has not differed essentially from what has been done elsewhere, and from what had been done spasmodically in London for the preceding twenty years, but for the energy and capacity with which it has developed the other ideas embodied in the Unemployed Workmen Act. It has been the three new functions of the Unemployed Workmen Act, the establishment of Rural Colonies, the organisation of Labour Exchanges, and the removal of workmen to places where their labour was required, which have proved the most valuable fruits of this development of Mr. Chamberlain's policy of withdrawing the Unemployed from the Poor Law.

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* "A few instances have been brought to our notice in which the regular staff of a Borough Council have been actually thrown out of work in the summer because the 'unemployed' have already done certain jobs in the winter. . . . In many places we have found undoubted evidence of work which would naturally have been done by navvies or other workmen in the ordinary way being taken from them by being given to the 'unemployed.' . . . We have found actual evidence in a few places of men being displaced by the employment of the 'unemployed' on relief works. In a Lancashire Borough, certain sewage works were in progress, and the Distress Committee offered to contribute £1,000 in wages if the 'unemployed' were taken on. It was, of course, found that the employment of a very large number of extra men expedited the work to such an extent that it was likely to be finished before the summer, and before the £1,000 was expended. Of the permanent men some twenty-five were accordingly discharged. They were naturally indignant at being displaced by less competent men. and when told they might register as unemployed. and come back for three half-days a week at 5d. an hour (instead of full time at 5½d. an hour) they very properly refused to register as 'distressed' workmen." (Report by Mr. Cyril Jackson and the Rev. J. C. Pringle, on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, pp. 67, 117.)

† *Ibid.*, p. 148.

‡ In 1905–6, there were 39,728 applicants registered by the twenty-nine Metropolitan Distress Committees, representing a population of about 150,000; and in 1906–7, 32,614 applicants, representing a population of about 120,000—56 per cent. of the applicants whose applications were entertained being men under forty, 51 per cent. general or casual labourers, and 22 per cent. belonging to the building trades (House of Commons Returns, No. 392 of 1907, and No.173 of 1908); these proportions being almost identical with those among the applicants to the Distress Committees of other towns.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 77832, 78372, 78704; Preliminary Report upon the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body for London, 1906; Second Report upon the Work of the Central Body, 1907; Report upon the Work and Procedure of the Distress Committees in London, 1907.

‖ In the year 1906–7, "2,510 men were employed for an average period of seven weeks, at a total cost of £19,224" (Second Report upon the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body, 1908, p. 30); the actual value of the resulting improvements being estimated by the Office of Works, the London County Council, and the Camberwell Borough Council, for whom the various works were done, at no more than £3,271.(*Ibid.*, p, 111.) These valuations may, however, have been too rigidly limited.

(D) Rural Colonies.

"The main feature of the scheme of the Mansion House Committee" of 1903–4, a scheme inherited by the Central (Unemployed) Body for London, "was the provision of continuous work for male heads of families, the men being boarded and lodged and employed in Rural Colonies, while an allowance was paid to the families in London, on a scale based on the number of children, and averaging 14s. 6d. a week. The men were allowed to return home on furlough at regular intervals to visit their families and look for work." * This idea of Rural Colonies was, from the first, a leading feature of the work of the Central Executive Committee of the London Unemployed Fund, which Mr. Long had started, and it became, from the outset, the principal development in London under the Unemployed Workmen Act. Under this scheme several hundreds of men were sent each winter, for periods of from four to seventeen weeks, to execute works of land reclamation, digging and excavating and road-making, principally at Osea Island, Letchworth and Fambridge. At the outset, it was intended to limit engagements to men who had been in regular employment, and who hoped to get back to definite situations at weekly wages, to the exclusion of the mere day labourer. The idea of the Rural Colony seems to have been principally to afford an automatic "test," it being assumed that the removal from London, the separation from family and associates, and the monotony of daily work in the country, remote from congenial society, would stave off those who are attracted to Municipal Relief Works merely by the prospect of an easy job at regular if somewhat low remuneration. This, it will be observed, is, in one respect, a "test" of a different order from that of admission to the General Mixed Workhouse. The essential weakness of the "Workhouse Test," is that it deters by means of the very regimen to which the inmates of the institution are subjected; it therefore operates principally on those who have "passed the test," and have been admitted. Its efficacy is dependent on the deterrent regimen being continued. The Rural Colony, on the other hand, deters by means of the dislike which the undesirable man has to leaving the congenial surroundings to which he has grown accustomed; its operation is, therefore, only on those whom it excludes. In so far as the necessity of moving into the country proved to serve as an effective "test," it offered the advantage of allowing the regimen at the Rural Colony to be free from any features of humiliation, degradation or penal conditions. Those who "passed the test" could safely be treated in whatever manner was best for their well-being.

Apart from minor shortcomings, which were remedied by experience, the main objection to these first experiments in Rural Colonies was their unexpected costliness. It had been assumed that these carefully selected men, put to work at useful tasks, would produce, at any rate, some considerable proportion of their maintenance. The result proved quite otherwise. The conduct of the men was, on the whole, good; and the majority of them seem honestly to have worked. But, including the allowances to their families in London, they cost, on an average, about 25s. per week each. The average output per man was not, as it could hardly have been expected to be, equal to that of the ordinary contractor's gang. The expense of supervision and skilled organisation and direction of their labour was necessarily heavy. The kind of work that could be undertaken in the winter months by heterogeneous gangs of unskilled labourers, aggregated in large numbers, and constantly coming and going, was not such as offered any profitable return, even if undertaken under the ordinary conditions. We need not debit the enterprise with the specially unfortunate result of the work at Fambridge where a speculative job in building a seawall, in order to reclaim some land which had been submerged by an inruption of the sea, proved financially disastrous, just as it might easily have done to a contractor.† In this case there was also the profit, which cannot be computed, of protecting other land from possible damage. The typical case is perhaps that of Osea Island, where a public-spirited landowner offered the use of land, buildings, materials and plant on advantageous terms, involving no capital outlay; and himself managed the housing and feeding of the men at an inclusive charge. The operations of seawall repairing, roadmaking and trenching at Osea Island cost £1,770, apart from the provision of buildings, materials and plant, "the value of the work done being estimated at £530" by the independent valuer, and the actual recoupment being only £265, the balance going to the owner of the land according to agreement, in part return for the buildings, materials and plant provided by him. Thus, 134 men, working on an average for nine weeks each, had received for themselves and their families the equivalent of about 25s. a week each, their gross product being only equal to about 8s. 2d. a week each, and this sum being more than

* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78372, Par. 4.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 31683–4, 80744–84, 80807–31, 80857–951. It must, however, be remembered that losses of this sort inevitably occur when a number of jobs are taken; and it might, therefore, properly be included.

absorbed by the cost of materials, plant and buildings and incidental expenses. It would have been almost exactly as cheap to the Central (Unemployed) Body to have paid the 134 men 25s. a week each for doing nothing in London.* The work at Letchworth resulted in somewhat better financial results. Its gross cost was £5,882, and £2,091 was actually received in return. The 422 men had, on an average, slightly over ten weeks' employment; and the gross product was 9s. 8d. per week, from which 2s. 4d. per week must be deducted for the expenses of supervision, plant, etc. The men earned, therefore, 7s. 4d. per week each towards their cost of about 25s. per week.† Other enterprises yielded essentially similar results. We may, perhaps, infer that the employment of a few hundred carefully selected men in Rural Colonies, when work can be found for them, has been proved to cost from 17s. to 25s. each per week, which can only be said to be less than the men and their families would have cost in the General Mixed Workhouse.‡

But the financial results are not, in themselves, decisive. The men and their families had to be maintained somehow; and whilst they cost less in the Rural Colonies than in the General Mixed Workhouse, there is universal testimony that the results were enormously superior. The Colony served, on the whole, as a "Test" of just the right sort. It did not dispense with the need for careful inquiry, and selection of men. But it choked off the drinker, the loafer, the "work-shy," and the semi-criminal "cadger"; whilst the honest and respectable man, though refusing to leave his home whilst he had any alternative, gladly accepted the offer, if he was in real distress, for the sake of the regular subsistence secured to his wife and family. And those men who "passed the Test" were benefited, not, as in the General Mixed Workhouse, deteriorated, by what was done for them. It was true that, mainly owing to the conditions under which it had been done, their work yielded little or nothing of money value. But they gained in health and strength by their stay in the country,§ with adequate food, regular hours and enforced abstinence from stimulants. They gained, too, usually, in character and, in the best instances, perhaps also in *morale* from the regular work, the sense of co-operation in enterprise, and the absence of degrading or humiliating accompaniments.‖ Many of

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*See the figures given in the Report of the Central Executive Committee of the London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5; Preliminary Report upon the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body, 1907, p. 38; Second Report of the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body, 1908, pp. 38–9.

†*Ibid.*, pp. 39, 116.

‡We have already mentioned (Chapter II.) the utilisation, by Boards of Guardians and Unemployment Committees, of the Salvation Army Colony at Hadleigh, which was established as part of General Booth's "Darkest England" Scheme of 1890. Here, the work has been frankly one of reclamation of character, the employment and training being avowedly only means to that end. Particulars of the work done for the Able-bodied Unemployed at the instance of various Authorities will be found in "Hadleigh: the Story of a Great Endeavour"; "Labour Colonies," by Colonel D. C. Lamb; Third Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895; Report of the Mansion House Committee on the Unemployed, 1903–4; Report of Central Executive Committee of London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5; Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906; Annual Report of Holborn Board of Guardians, 1905; Annual Report of Stepney Board of Guardians, 1905–6; Report of Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, on the Effects of Assistance given to the Unemployed; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 16223 (Pars. 55–57), 16583, 78905. Whilst every visitor to Hadleigh is much impressed by the zeal and devotion with which the Colony is managed, and by the skill and ingenuity put into all the details of organisation, the extent of the success of this work of reclamation of personal character is a matter of controversy. In any case, however, the Colony is devised for what we may call moral invalids; and it hardly affects the problem of the Able-bodied Unemployed. It suffers, however, equally with Hollesley Bay and other Rural Colonies, in being without the means of finding situations for the men whom it has restored to mental and physical health, and having no other outlet than emigration.

§ "The men sent to the Colonies benefited considerably morally and physically." (Report of Bermondsey Distress Committee, 1905–6.)

‖ We may trace in the official records the gradual realisation of the fact that it was in the training that they supplied, rather than in the pecuniary value of the product, that the Rural Colonies were justified. "Even in cases of personal weakness or failure," says the Report of 1904–5, "the efforts of the Unemployed organisation may not be wholly useless. In many cases such weakness is mainly the product of environment. A change to country life, the influence of new surroundings, friendly assistance and advice, or the inspiration of a new hope, may be the means of an effectual remedy. Such men, after a period of testing and training, may even prove capable of the efforts, and worthy of the independence, of a new life in a new country. In those cases where the weakness does not produce, except in bad times, actual unemployment, but only prevents, at all times, a life of health, steadiness and independence, the opportunities for personal influence or disciplinary pressure, afforded by the period of continuous assistance—the employment of a man on a resident Colony and the regular weekly payment of an allowance to a wife in her home—may provide the necessary means of effecting a permanent improvement. If there is some exceptional disability, the presence on the local committee of the representatives of charitable effort may furnish an opportunity of bringing some appropriate remedy to bear." (Report of the Central Executive Committee of the London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5.) It is interesting to see the same experience at Birmingham, where the intention had been solely to afford employment. "The only men who were really benefited," deposed the Chairman of the Committee, "were about

them gained, also, even at the necessarily uneducational work to which they were put, something in the way of physical and mental training: * and it was along this last line that the experiment of Rural Colonies was further developed.

The other form taken by the Rural Colony was that of the Farm, or Agricultural Training Establishment. By the public-spirited action of Mr. Joseph Fels, the land and buildings at Hollesley Bay, which had been specially adapted and used as an Agricultural College, were secured for the public and placed at the disposal, first of the Central Committee for the experiments contemplated under Mr. Long's scheme, and then of the Central (Unemployed) Body. On the 1,300 acres of this estate, including not only arable land and pasture, but also extensive gardens, orchards, dairy and poultry farms, much heath for bringing into cultivation, and a brickfield, it was proposed to combine three different purposes, namely:—

(i.) "The provision of special work for periods of exceptional distress": the men being employed at improving the estate and "double-digging" for the planting of fruit trees;

(ii.) "The provision of more continuous work for men who . . . show a marked aptitude for country life," these selected men being trained "for permanent work in the country as gardeners or farm labourers;" and

(iii.) "The establishment of suitable men and families in agricultural or other rural industry," whether in farm or market-garden situations at wages, by the establishment of small holdings, or by emigration, for which special training was to be afforded.†

To the Farm Colony thus established with the approval of the Local Government Board of 1905, the twenty-nine Distress Committees in the Metropolitan Boroughs have been authorised to send, from among the local "Unemployed," selected married men of good character, choosing primarily those who expressed a desire to be trained for agriculture or to emigrate. The wives and families received the weekly allowance that we have already described, the men themselves getting at the Colony only their board and lodging and sixpence a week for pocket money. Every month they were allowed two days' furlough, their railway fares being paid, in order to visit their homes and look for work. They could, of course, leave the Colony at any moment, receiving their railway tickets to London, and the allowance to their families being stopped after the current week. In the course of the four years that this Farm Colony has been in operation, over 3,000 men have been admitted and discharged, the average stay being 11·5 weeks. Of this number about 174 (with 700 dependents) have been emigrated, along with their families; 42 (with 183 dependents) have been assisted to migrate to country situations elsewhere; and 495 have taken their discharge on having obtained work, these "known cases" being only a part of the total who have found work. The remainder of the men, comprising three-fourths of the whole, were either returned to London on the completion of the maximum

forty who were employed for nearly two months at some work in connection with the Sewage Farm. *These men were thoroughly trained and their physical powers well developed by work* and good food which they obtained. Investigations were made as to the condition of these men, several months after they had left the employment of the Distress Committee, and it was found that fifteen had obtained regular employment, which was an extremely satisfactory result of the training they had received" (Evidence before the Commission, App. No. VI. to Vol. VIII., Par. 6).

* "Though Colonies cannot effect social miracles, they may still do useful work of a less pretentious kind. They will be always there, in good years as in bad, to meet hard cases, and to give a breathing time to the unfortunate. . . . Different Colonies will have different aims. Among such aims may be placed the preservation or restoration of physical vigour, the increasing of general efficiency, schooling in good habits, industrial training, preparation for emigration. Up till now most Colonies have been most successful in achieving the first of these. They have been to the working man "out of sorts" what Marienbad or Karlsbad are to those at the other end of the social scale. Probably they would be yet more successful in this direction if simple gymnastics were made an element in their work" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 81760, Par. 24 (e)). On the other hand, it has been said that there was a certain amount of disadvantage in the men being "institutionalised." and having all the details of life arranged for them. "Where the element of training is strong. as at Hollesley Bay," deposed one witness, "this evil . . . may be counteracted" (*Ibid.*, *Q*, 77832, Par. 37). "Until they are made Schools of Industry they are not likely to do their inmates much real good" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 81760, Par. 24 (*e*)). Besides that at Hollesley Bay, Farm Colonies have been established by the Distress Committees of West Ham, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. But we think that Hollesley Bay may be taken as the best representative of the idea of a Training Establishment, the others being more of the nature of Relief Works.

† Report of the Central Executive Committee of the London Unemployed Fund, 1905; Preliminary Report upon the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body, 1907; Second Report (upon the same), 1908; Particulars as to the Hollesley Bay Colony (Central Unemployed Body), 1908; The Unemployed: Hollesley Bay Farm Colony Experiment, by James Gunning, 1907; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 31662–74.

stay allowed, or left prematurely on one ground or another, without anything being known of their having got into situations.

The actual cost of the experiment cannot easily be calculated, because it is impossible to decide by what amount the commercial value of the estate has been increased by the various works that have been executed, the large extensions of the market-garden and fruit orchards that have been made, and the other improvements that have been effected, all of which are of the nature of capital outlay. The actual amount by which the Central (Unemployed) Body, and its predecessor, the Central Executive Committee, are out of pocket down to September 30th, 1908, including the purchase of the estate and cottages (£33,000), and all the improvements, as well as the maintenance of the men and all expenses, has been (less recoupments from sales of produce, etc.) £111,573. Against this, there is to be set the undoubted great improvement of a freehold estate of 1,300 acres. What is more certain is that, including the family allowances, and between 5s. and 6s. per week for food, the men cost, on an average, with railway fares, supervision and incidental expenses, something like 25s. to 30s. a week each.

The Hollesley Bay Farm Colony, started with such wide and varied objects, has become the subject of some controversy. To us, surveying the whole course of the experiment, two factors seem to have militated against its complete success; namely, the mixture of aims with which the undertaking was started, and the peremptory extinction of the project which had afforded the stimulus of hope indispensable to the success of any social experiment. The mixture of aims interfered, from the outset, with the single-mindedness of the organisation. The Colony was devised primarily as a training establishment; but it was made to serve also as a place where hundreds of men could be provided merely with employment, which it was hoped would be productive of profit. To some members of the governing body, the main purpose of the Colony was the training afforded. To others, its chief value seemed the opportunity of finding productive employment for the Unemployed. To others, again, it seemed a stage towards the settlement upon the land of a selected number of men trained for the purpose. The Distress Committees, whilst selecting, on the whole, respectable men of decent conduct, failed to find enough men who wished to be trained for agriculture, or for emigration, and were tempted to fill up all the available places by dispatching the best of the men who, on finding no other alternative open to them, would consent to go. The idea of confining admission to the Rural Colony to men who had held regular situations, and might hope to regain such, was quickly abandoned, largely because the Distress Committees had little or nothing else to offer to the crowd of casual dock or general labourers and building trades' labourers, who made up three-fourths of the applicants. Thus, the bulk of the men sent to the Colony were men who did not want to be trained in agriculture, who resented the idea, and who looked upon their engagement merely as one of employment away from their homes in a remote country place, at the severe task of "double-digging" in cold weather, for wages which they described as "a penny a day." The unfortunate Superintendent of the Colony would find scores of such men arriving—sometimes as many as eighty in a single day—who were sore at what seemed to them unnecessary exile, who had no wish to be taught anything, and for whom, whatever the weather, work had to be found. We think that it is no little testimony to the advantageous circumstances of the Hollesley Bay Estate, to the patience, skill, and administrative capacity of the Superintendent, and to the practical wisdom with which, on the whole, the enterprise has been conducted, that, under all these disadvantages, the cost has been kept down to so low a figure, the men have gained so much advantage, and the discipline of the establishment has been so well maintained.* But from the standpoint of affording productive employment there can be little doubt that the Hollesley Bay experiment has been open to the criticisms that have been made on other forms of Municipal work for the Unemployed. Its sole merits, from this standpoint, are that, unlike Municipal Relief Works it has served as the right sort of Test, and that it has provided those who passed the Test with healthy maintenance and a task of work in the open air of the country, without degrading accompaniments, instead of in a London Workhouse or Labour Yard.

From the standpoint of affording training to those men who wished to engage in agricultural pursuits, in England or the Colonies, the Hollesley Bay Colony must be counted a

* We have personally consulted the Chief Constable of Suffolk on the point; only to be informed that (whilst some apprehension had been felt by the neighbours at the outset), there had been absolutely no police charge against any of the men in the Colony.

success. The varied and practical character of the instruction provided appears to be just what is required for the would-be emigrant or small-holder; and, moreover, the training has, in fact, enabled a certain number of men to obtain permanent situations in this country. But the use of the Colony as a Training Establishment has been hampered in various ways. The men themselves seldom got quite free from the idea that they were there for productive employment, and some of them were, for this reason, indisposed to take the training seriously. The use of the Colony as a place upon which some hundreds of the Unemployed could be "dumped," merely in order to be set to work, necessarily absorbed much of the time and zeal of the administrative staff; and diverted the interest and attention of the minority of men who were there for training. Those who, for one reason or another, were not suitable emigrants, looked to finding situations in the country; but the failure to organise any complete system of Labour Exchanges in every County, to which we shall presently refer, made it almost impossible to discover the existence of suitable vacancies. Finally, there came the blow which destroyed the stimulus of hope under which the Colony had worked, in the decision of the Local Government Board in October, 1906, that the erection of cottages should be stopped, that no part of the 1,300 acres could be set aside for small holdings, and that, in spite of the terms of the Statute, no further expenditure was to be incurred by the Central (Unemployed) Body to assist even the selected men who—to use Mr. Walter Long's own words to us—had "taken advantage of the opportunity offered to them to really learn how to cultivate their land to a profit," and had been specially trained with this object, to get established, as intended, on the land, so that they "might become self-supporting citizens."*

Our impression of the success and failure of the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony has been confirmed by the results of an investigation, made by one of our number in the spring of 1908, into the after-careers of the 1,853 men who had, at that time, passed through the Colony. This inquiry, conducted by personal visitations of the homes in all the twenty-nine Boroughs of London, had the advantage of being undertaken some time after the earlier batches of men had returned home from the Colony; but this lapse of time, whilst it increased the value of the Report with regard to those men who were found, necessarily involved the loss from sight of a large proportion who were dead (10), not actually found (14), or who had removed without trace (740). Out of the 1,089 whose careers were more or less ascertained, 174 had emigrated and were mostly reported to be doing well, and between 40 and 50 had found situations in the country. But the great majority of the men, who were for the most part those sent to the Colony merely for employment, not for training, had had to return to London, and it is the after-careers of these men which are of the greatest significance. From the interesting statistics of the Report made on these cases, certain broad features stand out. In more than 90 per cent. of the cases the men had been physically benefited by the stay at the Colony. Health and strength, impaired by the privation and mental distress that goes with Unemployment, had usually been restored or improved.† In a little over 8 per cent. of the cases, it was declared that no such physical benefit had resulted, these being usually cases in which the man had been sent home through illness, or in which delicate men had been unable to stand the exposure. Nearly all the wives spoke highly of the Hollesley Bay Scheme, and found the weekly allowance sufficient to live upon, owing to its regularity. A great many of them said that they and the children were able to live in comfort; but after the man's return, and a few weeks of irregular work, the home had gone back to its normal destitute condition.‡ Only 9 per cent. of the wives found it impossible to keep their homes decently on the money allowed them. In one family only was there evidence of the absence of the man causing injury to the home, and in this case the wife ran away whilst her husband was at the Colony. In spite of the extreme poverty everywhere, 63·3 per cent. of the homes were reported on as being clean and well kept, 22·4 per cent. were fairly clean, and only 14.3 per cent. were dirty. Of the whole 908 men actually visited, 41·4 per cent. had not made any application to the Distress Committee or the Poor Law since their return from the Colony. Of the remaining 58·6 per cent. 33·5 per cent., had applied to the Distress Committee with no result, 13·7 per cent. had applied to the Distress Committee and had temporary work given to them, whilst 11·4 per cent. had applied to the Poor Law. It is from the industrial standpoint that the after-careers are least satisfactory. Only

* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78461, pars. 5 and 10.

† "Great benefit to their health and physique had been received by such men, as well as agricultural training." (Report of Marylebone Distress Committee, 1906–7.)

‡ The wives of the men, it is reported, were found more enthusiastic about the Colony than the men themselves. In some cases where the husband has been flatly antagonistic to the Colony, the wife, without too obviously contradicting her husband, has made it clear that she thoroughly approved of it.

in about 10 per cent. of the cases had the man succeeded in getting into a regular situation of some permanence, though "fairly regular work" was reported of about 7 per cent. more. What appears to be a considerable proportion of those engaged in the Building Trades had obtained fairly continuous work at the usual busy season in the Spring; but found themselves unemployed again in the winter. In no fewer than 107 cases, out of 908 men actually visited, *skilled artisans and mechanics—carpenters, compositors, bootmakers, tailors, blacksmiths and engineers among them—had sunk to be general labourers.* Of the men who were simply returned to London, and whom the Central (Unemployed) Body had dropped there, to sink or swim, the great majority had, in fact, found themselves in no way permanently re-established, but once more in the same chronic state of "Under-employment," dividing their time between doing a little casual work, and tramping about in a hopeless search for a better job, and quickly becoming, for the most part, in as great need of help as they were a year or two before. In seven cases at least (besides many others among the 740 not traced), the home had been broken up, and the men and their families were in the Workhouse.*

* We give some of the results of this Inquiry.—

OCCUPATIONS OF MEN BEFORE GOING TO HOLLESLEY BAY, 1905–8.

Boroughs.	Casual Labourer.*	Labourer.	Carmen & Stablemen.	Building Trade.	Furniture and Wood.	Metal Work and Machinery.	Engineers.	Sundry Artizans.	Dress and Boots.	Food Preparation.	Printing Trade.	Railway Service.	Road Service.	Police, Army, Navy.	Shop Assistants.	Clerks, Agents.	Total.
Battersea	3	10	2	11	2	4	–	–	–	–	–	1	4	2	1	1	41
Bermondsey	13	18	5	8	–	–	–	4	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	51
Bethnal Green	2	8	2	3	10	2	2	4	8	2	1	–	–	–	–	1	45
Camberwell	2	11	–	5	–	4	–	1	–	1	–	2	2	–	–	1	29
Chelsea	2	11	4	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	1	–	–	23
City	–	–	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
Deptford	3	21	5	1	–	3	3	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	38
Finsbury	5	12	9	5	1	4	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	38
Fulham	2	21	5	6	1	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	1	38
Greenwich	1	12	–	–	–	4	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	19
Hackney	3	20	7	3	2	3	–	–	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	42
Hammersmith	2	17	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	26
Hampstead	–	5	1	6	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	1	–	–	15
Holborn	–	4	1	2	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	11
Islington	1	15	2	3	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	23
Kensington	–	29	–	4	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	35
Lambeth	6	25	6	9	5	2	–	4	–	–	2	–	1	–	–	–	60
Lewisham	–	13	4	3	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	2	2	27
Marylebone	3	7	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	12
Paddington	–	7	4	4	–	1	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	19
Poplar	9	17	9	9	6	2	1	–	1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	57
St. Pancras	2	21	5	10	1	1	–	–	–	3	1	–	2	–	–	–	46
Shoreditch	6	5	1	1	2	2	–	2	3	1	–	1	–	–	1	–	25
Southwark	1	14	3	5	2	2	–	3	1	2	–	1	–	1	2	–	37
Stepney	8	14	8	6	2	6	–	2	1	–	3	–	2	1	1	1	55
Stoke Newington	1	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
Wandsworth	–	12	1	4	2	3	–	1	–	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	26
Westminster	2	9	3	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	16
Woolwich	–	21	2	–	3	18	–	1	1	1	–	1	–	–	–	1	49
TOTAL	77	380	92	113	42	65	8	26	26	17	10	9	15	9	10	9	908

* Casual Labour includes those who have never done anything but "odd jobs."

PERCENTAGES FOR LONDON OF MEN WHO HAVE BEEN AT THE HOLLESLEY BAY FARM COLONY AS TO THE SUBSEQUENT RESULTS.

Sunk from Skilled Trades into Unskilled Labour.	Employment since leaving Colony.				Subsequent Applications.				Opinions of Men.		Condition of Homes.			Benefit to Family.				Opinion of Wives.	
	More or less Regular.	More than half-time.	Less than half-time.	No work.	To Distress Committee; no result.	To Distress Committee; result.	To Poor Law.	No application.	Satisfied.	Dissatisfied.	Clean.	Fair.	Dirty.	Permanent.	Temporary.	No Benefit.	Injurious.	Money Sufficient.	Money Insufficient.
11·7	17	31·3	39	12·7	33·5	13·7	11·4	41·4	93·7	6·3	63·3	22·4	14·3	16·9	74·8	8·3	—	91	9

It is clear that, however superior may have been the stay at Hollesley Bay to residence in the Workhouse, or to work in the Labour Yard, the capital drawback has been that *the great bulk of the men have been allowed to return to the same demoralising morass of chronic Under-employment from which they were taken.* In these cases, no permanent good has been done. But the experiment has not been fully carried out as it was intended. What Mr. Walter Long thought that he had authorised were "experiments in regard to the deserving applicants with a view not only to giving them temporary employment, but also . . . to *securing their permanent re-establishment* so that they might become self-supporting citizens in future."* As a remedy for the distress due to Unemployment, the Rural Colony falls short, because, under the present policy of the Local Government Board, it stands alone. The Central (Unemployed) Body was definitely informed that the Act was "only intended for the provision of temporary relief."† But the Act itself said that the temporary work was to be such as the Local Authority thought "best calculated to put the man in a position to obtain regular work or other means of supporting himself." What is lacking is, as regards the trained and tested men, some appropriate machinery for securing, as was originally contemplated, "their permanent re-establishment."‡

(E) The Labour Exchange.

It would be unfair to Mr. Walter Long and Mr. Gerald Balfour not to record that they recognised the necessity for machinery in order to enable the new Employment Authorities that they were setting up to discover exactly where and how the applicants for relief could be permanently re-established in employment. It was part of the provision made by the Unemployed Workmen Act that there should be, in every County and County Borough, an official organisation for ascertaining the local conditions of employment, and this was to take the form of a universal network of Labour Exchanges covering the whole country, which would, when in full working order, show at once in what parts of the country there was any unsatisfied demand for labour. Where a Distress Committee was set up, the conduct of the Labour Exchange was entrusted to it. Wherever no Distress Committee was set up, there was to be a Special Committee appointed by the County or County Borough Council, and expressly directed to fulfil the same function.§ "The network of Labour Bureaus which the (Unemployed Workmen) Act *was intended to establish all over the country*"‖ was, in fact, as Mr. Gerald Balfour described it to us, an integral part of the general scheme.

Unfortunately, as it seems to us, this part of the scheme of the Unemployed Workmen Act has, outside the Metropolis, been left practically inoperative. In spite of the mandatory terms of the Act in this respect, we cannot find that these Special Committees were ever appointed in England and Wales, or (except in Lanarkshire, Hamilton and Motherwell) anywhere in Scotland or Ireland, or that any Labour Exchanges were, as the Act required, set up for the large proportion of the country not falling within the jurisdiction of any Distress Committee.¶ Thus, as the Act has actually been administered, Labour Exchanges have been established only in places where Unemployment was so great as to warrant the setting up of a Distress Committee; and where, consequently, they were foredoomed to find it impossible to discover situations for those who registered

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 78461, Par. 5.

† MS. Minutes, Working Colonies Committee, Central (Unemployed) Body, October 23rd, 1906.

‡ So long as "there is no apparent outlet for Colonists after their term of employment, the advantages seem to be confined to the physical and moral benefits to the men themselves while at the Colony, and the preserving of their homes. . . . It is a regrettable feature . . . that Colony life under present conditions affords no outlet to permanent settlement on the land. Hence many of the men come back to their former life without hope or prospect." (Report of Woolwich Distress Committee, 1906–7.)

§ Mr. Long had been struck by the fact that "there was no means by which it was possible to ascertain what the conditions of labour were in different parts of the country. In one part, labour might be, comparatively speaking, scarce, whereas in another there might, at the same tmie, be a redundancy; but there was no Central Body able to ascertain these facts, and place them at the disposal of the Unemployed. For these reasons, I thought that there ought to be a Central Body." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 78461, Par. 7.)

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q* 77737.

¶ We have been unable to ascertain that the Local Government Board for England and Wales has ever brought to the notice of the various County and County Borough Councils their failure to comply with the Act in this respect; or has ever inquired from them what reason they had for this failure.

themselves. In those places at which, in the judgment of the Local Government Board, there was no such pressure of the Unemployed, and where, accordingly, there may have been vacant situations to be filled, no Labour Exchanges have been established. Thus it was that it came about that when the Superintendent of the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony sought to discover vacant situations in country districts for the picked men whom he had trained to agricultural work, he found that the Labour Exchanges for the rural districts had not been established, and he had to make shift, just as if the Act had not been passed, with personal solicitation and private correspondence, and with costly advertisements in newspapers circulating in rural districts.

Apart from the failure to set up Labour Exchanges in the places in which no Distress Committees were established, the Act was itself in fault, as we can now see, in ever associating one of these organisations with the other. The fact that the Labour Exchange was established by, or in close connection with, a Distress Committee—as happened nearly everywhere outside the Metropolis*—not only tended to make it regarded merely as an adjunct of the Municipal Relief Works, but also prejudiced† it, from the start, in the minds of competent skilled workmen seeking new situations, and of employers desiring anything better than the crowd of casual labourers and men downtrodden by misfortune or misconduct who make up the bulk of the applicants for Employment Relief. Nor did the Distress Committees make any attempt to create a network. We do not find that the different Labour Exchanges that professed to register the local demand for and supply of labour opened up communications with each other, in order to make known the local position for each other's benefit. To do this effectively needed organisation from a national centre, to which each Labour Exchange might have daily reported—even if it could report only that there were no unsatisfied demands for labour of any kind, and that there were so many men, of such and such occupations, out of work. Even this negative result would have been of use in preventing the aimless wandering in search of employment that now goes on. It might have proved, too, the extent and ubiquity of Unemployment. We cannot but regret that, just as no steps were taken by the Local Government Board to get established the complete network of Labour Exchanges contemplated by the Act of 1905, so no steps have been taken to organise, by means of a Central Exchange, any means of inter-communication among such local Exchanges as are in operation.‡

In the Metropolis, however, the experiment of the Labour Exchange has been tried with some success. The Central (Unemployed) Body took the view, after some discussion, that the Labour Exchanges contemplated by the Act of 1905 § should have no connection with the temporary registers of applicants for Employment Relief that were opened each

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* Glasgow, Edinburgh, Croydon and Coventry seem to be the only exceptions. In these towns, the Labour Exchange has done good work in a limited sphere.

† "The fact that the Distress Committee register has been used for the purpose of an Employment register has been very much against any chance of achieving success in the way of putting employers and workmen in communication with each other. It appears to be quite evident that a Labour Bureau for this purpose must be worked separately from any register for the administration of relief in any form, as it is quite certain that a list of men whose principal qualifications for employment are their poverty, number of children, thrift, and length of residence in the district, will never appeal either to business men in search of competent workmen, or to the large body of self-respecting workmen who resent anything savouring of State Relief." (Report of Bournemouth Distress Committee, 1906–7.)

‡ It is fair to add that the Local Government Board for Scotland did go so far as to send out a special Circular on October 25th, 1906, drawing attention to the value of Labour Exchanges, and urging their establishment, apart from the registers of the Distress Committees.

§ Labour Exchanges had been started, here and there, quite irrespective of local distress from Unemployment. The first in this country appears to have been that established at Egham in Surrey, mainly by the efforts of Mr. Nathaniel Cohen, London County Council, in 1885; followed quickly by one at Ipswich by Mr. Tozer (Report of Royal Commission on Labour, 1894; Report on Agencies and Methods of dealing with the Unemployed, 1893, p. 100). Others were established by the Plymouth, Liverpool and Salford Town Councils by 1894, as well as by the Islington and St. Pancras Vestries. Within the next ten years, the number had grown to more than a score, the Metropolitan Borough Councils being specially authorised to maintain them by an Act of 1902 (the Labour Bureaux (London) Act). A "Central Employment Exchange," in communication with the various local Exchanges was established by the Central Executive Committee of the London Unemployed Fund in April, 1905. In March, 1906, the Central (Unemployed) Body took over all the existing Municipal Exchanges in the Metropolis, except that of the City of Westminster. (Report upon the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body for London, 1906–7; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs*, 81259–69; Report on Labour Bureaux, by H. D. Lowry, 1906; "Unemployment: a Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909).

winter by the Distress Committees; and that what was required, in good times and bad alike, was some permanent machinery for enabling employers and wage-earners to find out each other's whereabouts and each other's requirements more easily and more certainly and more quickly than would otherwise be possible. The Labour Exchanges which had been set on foot in various parts of London were formed into a single organisation, and after some careful experimenting as to what was and what was not practicable, the whole of the Metropolis was gradually covered by a network of public employment agencies, telephonically inter-connected, and reporting to a common centre. These are already being resorted to by employers of labour of every kind, skilled and unskilled, male and female, manual and clerical, the number of situations offered through their agency being at the end of the year 1908, at the rate of 33,000 per annum. They are also being increasingly applied to by wage-earners of every kind, not merely by those who are actually Unemployed, but by those who expect or desire to change their situations. It is interesting to find that the Trade Unions, at first suspicious, if not actually hostile, have become steadily more friendly to the institution, which they find of positive advantage, not only to their members, but also to their organisation. We are informed that, on December 31st, 1908, no fewer than thirty-two Trade Union Branches were already keeping their "vacant books" actually at the Labour Exchange itself. The number of situations of professedly permanent character filled by the Metropolitan Labour Exchanges at the end of 1908 was at the rate of more than 20,000 per annum.

The experience of the Labour Exchange in London indicates both its utility and its limitations. It does not increase the volume of demand for labour. It does not create work at wages where no employer offers it. But in all but the best organised trades it abridges the interval between one situation and another, during which no wages are earned. It greatly reduces the weary aimless tramp of the Unemployed workman all over London, from one firm to another, in the attempt to discover, by actual application to one after another, which of them wants another hand. It enables the workman to ascertain, by calling at one office in his own neighbourhood, what inquiries have been made for his own kind of labour all over London. To the employer it offers, similarly, the choice among the available workmen of the kind he requires. But the Labour Exchange affords a further contribution towards the solution of the problem of Unemployment. Experience proves that, even in London, at a time when thousands are unemployed, there are opportunities for the taking on of more hands which employers forego because they cannot, in the absence of machinery of this kind, discover quickly and without trouble exactly the kind of labour that they require. By enabling these opportunities to be taken, instead of being let slip, the Labour Exchange may, to some slight extent, and with regard to certain specialised kinds of skill, even increase the volume of employment. Finally, experience shows that the Labour Exchange offers the means of "decasualising" labour. Though one employer wants a man for Monday only, there are others who want men for Tuesday only, others for Wednesday only, and so on. In so far as such employers draw their casual labour from a common Exchange, it may cease to be casual so far as the labourers are concerned, one job being "dovetailed" with another so as to give each man practically continuous employment. To the possibility of developing this use of Labour Exchanges we shall recur in a subsequent chapter.

(f) Paying the Cost of Removal.

But the Unemployed Workmen Act did not merely aim at providing machinery for ascertaining what situations were vacant in any part of the United Kingdom, and for discovering where there was a local excess, and where a local deficiency of labour. It also enabled the Local Authorities to make it possible for the necessitous man, and his family, to move to the situation found for him, or to the place where labour was most in demand. This, too, was to be outside the Poor Law. Mr. Walter Long had realised that to permit any Destitution Authority to subsidise the removal of the Unemployed from one locality to another would ruin, in advance, this method of helpfulness.* For the first time for a whole generation the Act of 1905 enabled public funds to be used, apart from the Poor Law, for paying the expenses of the removal of men and their families from places in which they could get no employment, to other places in which there was

* "In regard to emigration, representations were made to me by people representing the Colonies that there was the greatest objection to emigrants being sent out by Boards of Guardians. Even though they might not be actually paupers it was considered by the Colonies that the fact that the Board of Guardians sent them out made it almost inevitable that they should be in some way affected by the taint of pauperism." (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 78461, par. 6).

an ascertained demand for labour. The Central (Unemployed) Body for London set itself diligently to utilise all the opportunities thus afforded.* The other parts of England and Wales were scrutinised to discover situations for which no local candidates were available, and, contrary to the common expectation, such were found. It was discovered that some men in distress had family connections in other places, by means of which they could get along and become self-supporting, if only they could come within their reach. Care was taken that no removal was sanctioned until satisfactory assurances were obtained that definite situations were available, that the employment offered was of a permanent character, and that arrangements had been made for providing suitable homes in the towns or villages to which the families were transferred.† In this way it was found possible to assist the removal of some scores of families, representing about 300 persons; one-half of them from Woolwich to South Wales and Lancashire, where there has been an actual demand for labour; and one-half, being men who have been trained at the Farm Colony, to various situations in the country.

Pending the development of better means of discovering unsatisfied demands for labour in other parts of this country, the chief work of transfer has necessarily taken the form of removal to other parts of the Empire in which there was proved to be a need for more workers. Where men have expressed a desire to emigrate, and have been found, after careful investigation, in every way suitable, they have been assisted to go to Canada, and, in a few cases, to New Zealand. In the first two years of its existence the Central (Unemployed) Body thus enabled no fewer than 8,000 persons thus to remove to new homes, in nearly all cases making arrangements which ensured the men employment immediately on arrival.‡

This policy of enabling selected men among the Unemployed to remove to new localities, whether merely from one county of England to another, or from one part of the Empire to another, is sometimes criticised as affording no real help. If, it is said, the men who wish to shift are strong and competent, the locality or country in which they are living cannot afford to lose their services; whilst if they are weak and incompetent, no other locality or country will wish to receive them, or will be able to provide a living for them. It was suggested, in short, that not only was there no unsatisfied demand for labour anywhere, but that, even if such an opening could be found, the best men would not need to go, and the worst men would not be allowed to come. This seems to have been the view taken by nearly all the provincial Distress Committees.§ But the Central (Unemployed) Body for London found that this summary way of disposing of the possibilities of migration and emigration did not exhaust the question. Investigation and experience proved that, whilst a change of locality was not available as a method of assisting the bulk of unemployed workmen, there were some men for whose distress it was a successful, and even the most appropriate remedy. At all times, and in all places, there are "industrial misfits"—men who have been thrown out of gear with their surroundings, it may be by the local stoppage of their industry, it may be by the loss of heart in themselves—who will never really be able to struggle to their feet in their old locality, but who, could they but get a new start, amid new circumstances, are likely to become permanently successful. To enable these men to change their environment may be, as the experience of the Central (Unemployed) Body for London has abundantly proved, the most really helpful, as well as the most permanently economical way of relieving their distress.

(G) The Inadequacy of the Unemployed Workmen Act.

But although the experience of the Central (Unemployed) Body for London proves the Unemployed Workmen Act to contain germs of very promising developments, the

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* Not much use seems to have been made of this power by Distress Committees outside the Metropolis, though the Bootle Distress Committee describes its payment of removal expenses to two or three families for whom employment had been found in distant towns, as "perhaps, the most useful work" that it had done (Report of Bootle Distress Committee, 1906–7). The West Ham Distress Committee moved a score or two of persons (Report of West Ham Distress Committee, 1906–7). Through private interest, the Brighton Distress Committee got three families settled in a Yorkshire woollen mill (Report of Labour Bureau Sub-Committee, Brighton, 1906–7). In the absence of the network of Labour Exchanges covering the whole country, which they ought to have had at their disposal, most Distress Committees seem to have assumed that no openings existed anywhere.

† Second Report upon the Work of the Central (Unemployed) Body for London, 1908, p. 48.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

§ With the exception of that of West Ham, which, adjoining London, took, for this purpose, the London view.

provisions of the Act have been found, in nearly all great centres of population, quite inadequate to the needs. The Act was avowedly only experimental in character. It definitely established the public responsibility for dealing with Unemployment, and provided machinery for ascertaining the area and depth of the distress, without at the same time affording the Local Authorities any adequate means of coping with the distress that they had probed and tested. We have accordingly found an almost universal dissatisfaction with the Act, which sometimes takes the form, especially among those whose experience has been limited to the provision of Employment Relief, of declaring it to be of no utility whatever.

We may note, to begin with, the failure of practically every Local Authority to do anything at all even for a large proportion of those applicants whom they had found eligible for assistance under the Act and in every way worthy of it. Thus, it has been found that, in round numbers, out of every hundred applicants who have presented themselves, a third have been ineligible under the limiting conditions prescribed by the Local Government Board, and out of those whose claims have been entertained, at least half have had to be sent empty away, whilst those for whom anything could be done at all, have got help only after long delay, and then only in a manner hopelessly inadequate to their proved need.* It is difficult to realise the sickening despair which conscientious members of Distress Committees have felt in listening to the stories of applicant after applicant, whom they knew to be respectable hard-working men in distress through no fault of their own, whose distress it was generally understood that Parliament had directed to be relieved, and for whom it was nevertheless manifest that nothing was likely to be done.† Matters were much aggravated by the exceptionally prolonged depression in the London building trade. It must, we think, be a fundamental principle of any dealing with the subject of Unemployment at all, that the Public Authority charged with this service must be in a position to provide appropriate treatment, *in one way or another*, for every case of proved eligibility that comes before it.

The failure to do anything even for the most worthy applicants has been, to some extent, due to lack of funds. Though the Act set up public bodies to grapple with the distress, and allowed them to take out of the rates all the expenses of their organisation, it permitted no expenditure from the rates upon the very object of the organisation, namely the relief of the distress. In most places the donations of the charitable have proved quite inadequate. The special grants made by Parliament each year have been made so late, and have been clogged with so many conditions that many places have found it impracticable to obtain any advantage from them. "The Act," deposed one of our witnesses, "either went too far by being introduced at all, or not far enough, the former being my own opinion. Speaking generally, it is absolutely ridiculous to think that voluntary funds will be subscribed, when certain sums may be taken out of the rates in connection with the same objects. We have had the proper machinery in motion since the Act was put into force, but have had no funds whatever

* Thus, taking the whole of the Distress Committees in England and Wales, in 1905–6, out of 110,835 applicants, 73,817 were found to be eligible but only 41,321 were provided with any work at all throughout the whole winter. The amount of this Employment Relief was relatively small, averaging less than eight and a half days per man in the course of the three or four months; a large proportion of the whole getting only two or three days. The total amount of wages distributed by this Employment Relief among the 41,321 men throughout the whole winter does not appear to have averaged 30s. per man (House of Commons Return, No. 392 of 1907). In 1906–7, there was some improvement. Out of 90,057 applications, 54,613 were entertained; and 35,092 were provided with some Employment Relief, either by the Distress Committees or by the Municipal Authorities themselves. Though the great majority of these got only a few days' or a few weeks' work during the whole three or four months, the average period of employment of each man went up (House of Commons Return, No. 173 of 1908). In the autumn of 1908, in London, out of 40,000 men registered, the number on any kind of Employment Relief on December 8th, 1908 was only 3,447.

† At Bermondsey, "only about one in nine of the applicants obtained any work through the Committee." (Replies by Distress Committees to Questions . . . on . . . the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, p. 7). "As it is," reported the Bradford Distress Committee, "many weeks or months often elapse before work can be found, and this not only raises hopes in the minds of the Unemployed which cannot be fulfilled, but directly encourages the lazy and shiftless man to be content with having put his name on the register, and so long as he can live upon the earnings of his wife and children not trouble to look further for work. On the other hand, if work is promptly offered by the Committee it relieves the immediate necessities of the worthy applicant and at the same time applies a test to those shufflers who swell the number of the Unemployed" (*Ibid.*, pp. 39–40). At Middlesbrough, we were informed, "it raised hopes among many men that work was going to be provided for them as soon as they liked to apply; and the real powers of the Act are so small as to be little better than useless. In this town we have conscientiously tried our utmost to derive some good out of it for the benefit of *bona fide* working men, but have been able to do very little indeed for them. Gradually the men got tired of waiting and applying for work, and allowed their names to be struck off the list, recognising what was (and is) a fact—that we could do next to nothing for them." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXVI. to Vol. VIII., Par. 5.)

to work with so far as paying for work done, whether necessary and of a good and useful character or simply in the form of relief work. As I have said before, we tried to carry out the Act, but because we could not show a condition of affairs that was nearly impossible, we failed utterly in obtaining any portion of the grant made by Parliament, to the utter disgust of many of our members." *

The conditions of eligibility for assistance under the Act—imposed, it must be remembered, not by the Act itself, but by the Local Government Board—have been proved greatly to limit its utility.† The residential qualification, for instance, has been found to exclude some of the most worthy applicants, and to operate in some cases as a penalty for having really tried to find work in another district across the purely artificial borough boundary. As one Distress Committee points out:—

> "A man is for many years a ratepayer in one district and, to better his position, he removes to another district, and in, say, six months' time, through some cause or other, and very probably through no fault of his own, he loses the position and is out of work; he is not eligible to be registered under the Act in the district where he resides, and he is not eligible for the district which he has left, because in both cases he has not the necessary twelve months' residential qualification."‡

The exclusion from the benefits of the Act of men who had received Poor Relief, and of men who had been assisted under the Act at any time during two successive years, debarred from help many of the most pressing cases.§ Thus, at Southampton, "upwards of 200 deserving men with families have been prohibited from participating in the work at the disposal of the Distress Committee, for the reason that these men have on an average received 3s. or 4s. each in relief at the cost of the poor rate. These small sums have only been obtained by the men when their families have been absolutely in need of food."‖

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* *Ibid.*

† The regulations made by the Local Government Board for Scotland were more liberal than those prescribed for England. There were no exclusions of persons who had had Poor Law relief, a fact which has permitted the assistance of many men who have been temporarily in the Poorhouse. There was no limitation of the period of Employment Relief to sixteen weeks. There was nothing prescribing that the remuneration should be less than the current rate. The Local Authorities were left, in other respects, much more free than in England. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 89049, Par. 14.)

‡ Replies by Distress Committees to Questions . . . on . . . the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, p. 82 (Grimsby). "While it is necessary to stipulate that applicants must have a residential qualification to be eligible for employment locally provided, and to prevent persons from being attracted from outside areas, the present minimum period, viz., twelve calendar months is too long, many persons do not reside in any one district for that period. By reducing the period necessary for qualification to six months, the interests of the resident Unemployed would be safeguarded, and a fuller index of the real extent of Unemployment obtained." (*Ibid.*, p. 86; Sunderland.)

§ The Local Government Board for England and Wales failed to make intelligible to the Distress Committees or the public (just as it had failed to do in its Conferences on the subject with the Local Government Board for Scotland) what was the object or the principle of these exclusions. Though the Act became law on August 11th, 1905, it was not until October 10th, 1905, that the "rules and regulations" for carrying it out were issued. "Among these was a provision that applicants were ineligible who in the twelve months immediately preceding their applications had been in receipt of Poor Relief other than Medical Relief. On December 6th, amending regulations were issued which modified this provision by permitting such cases to be dealt with after special resolution of the Committee. On January 15th, 1906, a further amending regulation modified this still further by enabling applicants to be dealt with who had received Poor Relief during the fifteen months preceding January 2nd, 1906. The result of these rapid changes was, of course, to cause considerable confusion, and practically little notice was taken by Committees as to the receipt of Poor Relief. Several Committees passed all their Poor Relief cases *en bloc* by special resolution. Others passed such resolutions whenever they wished to recommend particular cases. If the original intention of the regulation was to differentiate between cases to whom the Poor Law was no new thing, and those who might be saved from the pauperising contact of the Guardians, the date of Poor Relief was immaterial. Owing to the variations of regulations at different times, the returns on the subjects are probably quite unreliable. The record papers were not always so accurately filled that their dates were given, and the applicants would not always remember or be able to state dates of relief. In some Committees, if a man concealed relief, his paper was not sent to the Relieving Officer. One Committee informed us that they did not differentiate those who had received Poor Relief and those who had received Medical Relief in their Returns, and others, no doubt, followed the same course. Some Committees did not refer cases to the Relieving Officers at all, and consequently there was no check on the statements." (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 76.)

‖ Replies by Distress Committees to Questions . . . on . . . the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, p. 47 (Southampton). The hardship is aggravated by the fact that the Distress Committees are not usually in operation for more than a part of the year. At Liverpool, for instance, "during six months of the year the Distress Committee did not provide work, and it has happened that men have been compelled to seek relief during these months, and by doing so have disqualified themselves for assistance by the Distress Committee." (*Ibid.*, p. 43.)

The regulations led, in fact, to the ludicrous position that, whilst the West Ham Distress Committee were providing for hundreds of men on their own Relief Works, the West Ham Guardians were driven themselves to "provide relief work on their land . . . for . . . men who have registered with the Distress Committee, and are considered suitable cases for assistance, but who are disqualified from receiving same owing to having received either similar assistance within the past two years or Poor Law Relief."* The result was that several hundreds of the Unemployed were employed on vacant land by the Distress Committee and, within a quarter of a mile of them, several hundreds more on other land by the Board of Guardians. It was, therefore, not surprising that Mr. Asquith, in November, 1908, announced that these exclusions would be abandoned.†

There was, in fact, no justification under the Statute, as the Local Government Boards for Scotland and Ireland rightly held, for excluding men who had, in the past, received Poor Relief. The Act was intended for the relief of a limited class of the Unemployed—those who, from no fault of their own, had fallen out of situations of assumed permanency, and were in distress. What this class was does not clearly appear in any of the conditions drafted by the Local Government Board. Conditions aiming at the exclusion of the Unemployable, of the chronically Under-employed, and of the Men of Discontinuous Employment—classes that we shall specifically describe in the following chapter—would have been in accordance with the intentions of the authors of the Statute. But to any such cleavage the fact of having in the past received Poor Relief, perhaps on account of some exceptional emergency, was quite irrelevant.

Finally, we may note that the form and substance of the inquiries into the applicants' conduct and past life prescribed by the Local Government Board, excited resentment, and greatly limited the benefits of the Act. "Some of the questions on the Record Paper are of such an inquisitorial character that the best class of Unemployed workmen, almost without exception, have refused to register, preferring to suffer in silence."‡ It was, in fact, never made clear with what objects, or on what principle, the inquiries were prescribed. The essential fact to be ascertained as a condition of the eligibility of an Able-bodied applicant for treatment by an Employment Authority—treatment, that is to say, *of some kind*—is, in our opinion, the existence of Unemployment. This, of itself, should be sufficient to entitle an applicant to assistance appropriate to his needs. We do not think that further inquiries would have been resented, if it had been made clear that they had been prescribed, not for the object of finding out whom to exclude, but merely for the purpose of considering *in what way* the applicant could most appropriately and helpfully be relieved. It is, in our opinion, only at this point and for this purpose—that is to say, as diagnosis for guidance in treatment—that inquiries as to character, past employment, sobriety and membership of societies are warranted or socially useful.

(H) Conclusions.

We have, therefore, to report:—

1. That as compared with the methods of relieving the Unemployed under the Poor Law, the experience of the policy—inaugurated by Mr. Chamberlain's Circular of 1886, and definitely confirmed by the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905—of withdrawing the Unemployed from the Poor Law, has proved full of valuable suggestion and promise.

2. That the precedent of the Lancashire Cotton Famine suggests that Public Works, carried on under specialised organisation for a limited period, with the object of employing particular classes of persons deprived of definite situations by some accidental or temporary cessation of their regular employment, and practically certain to resume their ordinary occupations, may prove the easiest method of relieving their transient destitution.

3. That twenty years' experience has proved that it is not practicable in ordinary times to disentangle these cases from those of respectable men who are chronically Unemployed or Under-employed; with the result that any work at wages afforded by Local Authorities as a method of providing for the Unemployed tends to become chronic, and instead of being confined to the men thrown out of definite situations by the accidental

* Public notice of the West Ham Board of Guardians, January 31st, 1908. The East Ham Distress Committee, included within the same Union, had reported in the previous November that, out of 745 applicants in distress, no fewer than 245 had been rejected as ineligible (26 for receipt of Poor Relief, and 219 for receipt of assistance from the Distress Committee within each of the two preceding years).

† New regulations were accordingly issued in November, 1908, simply abrogating the two exclusions connected with the previous receipt of Poor Relief and assistance under the Act.

‡ Replies by Distress Committees to Questions . . . on . . . the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, p. 73 (Kettering).

and temporary dislocation of industry, it is, in practice, participated in by those who are chronically Unemployed or Under-employed, to an even greater extent than by those for whom it was intended.

4. That whilst the Unemployed Workmen Act has enabled a certain number of respectable workmen to tide over temporary distress without recourse to the Poor Law, it has demonstrated that, as a method for providing for chronic Unemployment or Under-employment, the provision of work at wages by Local Authorities affords no remedy and tends even to intensify the evil.

5. That the work at wages provided by Local Authorities is, in practice, either diverted from the ordinary employees of the Local Authorities, or else abstracted from what would otherwise have gone to the regular employees of contractors for public works; with the result, in either case, of creating, sooner or later, as much Unemployment as it relieves, and of thus throwing the cost of relieving the distress upon other wage-earners.

6. That work at wages, given to the Unemployed by Local Authorities for a few days or a few weeks at a time, tends, like the opening of a Labour Yard by the Board of Guardians, actually to promote the disastrous Under-employment characteristic of some industries, and positively encourages employers and employed to acquiesce in intermittent employment and casual jobs, instead of regular work at definite weekly wages.

7. That the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, whilst not excluding temporary Relief Works, contemplated and provided also for other experiments in providing for the Unemployed, which have unfortunately not been adequately put into operation by the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively or by the Local Authorities.

8. That one of the most promising of these experiments—the provision of Rural Colonies where the Unemployed could be trained with a view to their permanent re-establishment as self-supporting citizens, whether on the land or otherwise, in England or elsewhere—has been tried at the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony, with a considerable measure of success. Unfortunately, as it seems to us, the Local Government Board for England and Wales now insists on regarding this Farm Colony only as a means of affording temporary *relief* and not as a means of training men for future self-support; and refuses to permit any further expenditure for the purpose of permanently establishing even those men who have been selected and trained.

9. That another valuable provision of the Unemployed Workmen Act was that requiring the establishment, quite apart from the existence of distress from Unemployment, of a complete network of Labour Exchanges, covering the whole of the United Kingdom. Wherever a Distress Committee was not established, the Act expressly required the Council of every County and County Borough to appoint a Special Committee to investigate the conditions of the labour market by means of Labour Exchanges, and to establish or assist such Exchanges within its area. Such a network of Labour Exchanges, covering the whole Kingdom, would have afforded, as the experience of the Metropolitan Exchanges now demonstrates, valuable information both to Unemployed workmen and to Local Authorities dealing with the problem. Unfortunately, this provision of the Act, though, as regards England and Wales, mandatory in its terms, appears to have been ignored by the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and has accordingly, with the exception of London and three places in Scotland, not been put in operation.

10. That in consequence of this failure to establish the complete network of Labour Exchanges contemplated by the Unemployed Workmen Act, Local Authorities have been greatly hampered in their attempts to put into operation the other provisions of the Act. Thus, the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony has remained isolated; and great difficulties have been experienced in discovering suitable situations in other parts of England for the men there trained for agricultural pursuits. Moreover, the provision enabling Local Authorities to pay the expenses of removing men to places where situations had been found for them, has, in the lack of machinery for discovering such situations within the United Kingdom, been almost exclusively used for the purpose of conveying them to Canada.

11. That notwithstanding this failure to put the Unemployed Workmen Act in operation in the way that was intended, and the manifold shortcomings of the Act itself, we are of opinion that (as compared with the alternative of throwing the Unemployed back into the Poor Law) it has proved of considerable value; and that it should certainly be continued in force until a more adequate scheme of dealing with the grave social problem of Unemployment, otherwise than under the Poor Law, has been placed upon the Statute Book.

CHAPTER I

The Distress from Unemployment as it Exists To-day.

We find in the United Kingdom, at all times, a considerable number of families in need of the necessaries of life, owing to the breadwinner being out of work. In the winter of every year, and throughout some years in every decade, the number of such cases doubles and quadruples; and many who were before merely in distress sink gradually into destitution, and in some cases into habitual pauperism. About these facts there is no dispute. There are differences of opinion as to the degree in which the Unemployment and the destitution may be attributable to personal shortcomings, of employers or of employed, or to the manner in which we have chosen to organise the nation's industry. But whatever the causes of the distress, its existence involves, on the one hand, great national waste of productive power, and, on the other, a vast amount of personal suffering and physical and mental degeneration.*

We have found ourselves unable to answer two elementary questions. There are no statistics available which enable us to compute, even within hundreds of thousands, how many persons are at any one time simultaneously in distress from Unemployment; or whether this number is or is not greater, relatively or absolutely, than the corresponding numbers for other countries at the present time, or for our own country at previous times.† But there exists in the "Vacant Books" of Trade Unions, in the registers of the Distress Committees, and in the case-papers of Boards of Guardians, as well as in the experience of hundreds of officials and multifarious philanthropic agencies, a mass of information, from which we have gathered a definite conception of the characteristics of this waxing and waning host—whether one or two hundred thousand, or three or four times that number—of necessitous unemployed men.

The persons in distress from want of employment have been classified in various ways—according to age, to locality, to trades or departments of trades, and even according to such vague characteristics as whether they are skilled or unskilled, of regular or irregular habits, of good character or bad. These systems of classification have their

* Throughout its work the Commission has necessarily left on one side any inquiry into, or discussion of, the possibility of Pauperism or Unemployment being due to, or preventable by, such influences as the taxation (or the absence of taxation) of land values or particular commodities, the system of currency or the customs tariff, individual property in the means of production, or the growth of collective ownership, regulation, and administration. The investigations that we have made into the *manner* in which persons become Unemployed, and the results on these persons of such Unemployment, would necessarily form the starting point for any useful inquiry into more ultimate causes of social and industrial disorganisation.

† We were furnished by the Board of Trade with special Memoranda (printed in Vol. ix. of our evidence, Appendix No. XXI. (A) to (D); *see also Qs.* 98826–99144), containing all the official statistics that exist. The percentages of Trade Unionists unemployed, regularly published by the Board of Trade, relate only to about 600,000 men (out of about 2,000,000 Trade Unionists, and 12,000,000 adult wage-earners)—being those entitled to the ordinary "Out of Work Pay"—and there is reason to assume that this small sample includes an altogether exaggerated proportion of workmen (especially among the shipbuilding and engineering trades) liable to great fluctuations of employment. Among this small sample the percentage unemployed has varied, between 1897 and 1907, from 2·2 (April and November, 1899), to 7·6 (December, 1904). This "Out of Work Pay" was drawn, as was stated in 1895 (Third Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, *Qs.* 4635–44), and as the Board of Trade has further ascertained for us, in certain large Unions, almost entirely by about 20 per cent. of the members in good years, and by about 40 per cent. of the members in bad years ("Unemployment: a Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909). Thus, among this relatively small group of highly organised Trade Unionists, in good years about four men out of five get almost constant employment; in bad years, about three men out of five are in the same state, whilst the minority who are unemployed at all, suffer severely, even to being out of work for many months at a time. The cyclical fluctuations appear to be in themselves less extensive than the seasonal, but they tend to intensify the latter. The years 1871–5, 1882–3, 1889–90, and 1899–1900 had exceptionally little Unemployment; 1879, 1884–7, 1893–4, 1904 and 1908 exceptionally much. There is no sign that the present depression is worse than, or even so bad as, that of some previous years—notably, 1879 and 1841. But all these merely general results, deduced from quite insufficient data, really tell us nothing as to the condition of the mass of the wage-earners. "My own opinion," deposed a representative of the Board of Trade, "is that we cannot get at the real facts until we *count* the Unemployed in some way or another" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 98880).

several advantages, and we have made use of the results that they yield. But, from the standpoint of the Prevention of Unemployment and the Provision for Distress, we have found most practically useful an analysis of the Unemployed according to the nature of the industrial engagements by which they normally gain their livelihood. The persons in distress from Unemployment are found, in practice, to approximate to one or other of the following four types :—

(*a*) Those who have lately been in definite situations of presumed permanency ; for instance, an engine-driver, a cotton-spinner, an agricultural labourer, a carman or a domestic servant.

(*b*) Those who normally, in their own trades, shift from job to job, and from one employer to another, with more or less interval between jobs, but each lasting for weeks, and perhaps for months ; for example, the contractor's navvy, the bricklayer, the plumber, the plasterer and, indeed, all varieties of artisans and labourers of the building trades, etc.

(*c*) Those who normally earn a bare subsistence by casual jobs, lasting only a few hours each, or a day or two ; for instance, the dock and wharf labourers, the market porters, and the " casual hands " forming a fringe round many industries.

(*d*) Those who have been ousted, or have wilfully withdrawn themselves from the ranks of the workers ; for instance, the man broken down by some infirmity or by advancing age, the habitual inmate of philanthropic " shelters " and Casual Wards of the great cities, and the professional Vagrant.

In all these classes we find men of all grades of conduct—we might almost say of all kinds of skill. All the classes swell and contract in numbers, with bad trade and good respectively ; all are affected by seasonal fluctuations. But, regarded from the standpoint of the Prevention of Unemployment and the Provision for Distress, each of the four classes—to be hereafter designated the Men from Permanent Situations, the Men of Discontinuous Employment, the Under-employed and the Unemployable—has its characteristic opportunities and peculiar needs.

(A) CLASS I.—THE MEN FROM PERMANENT SITUATIONS.

It is fortunate that the great majority of the twelve millions of adult wage-earning population are normally in situations of considerable permanency. They enjoy no permanence of tenure and are liable to be dismissed at short notice, but as a matter of fact they find themselves working, practically without intermission throughout the year and often for many years, for one and the same employer. This is the condition of the great majority (though not of all) of agricultural labourers, of railway servants, of miners, of compositors, of textile operatives, and, indeed, of the bulk of the factory workers, as it is of the majority of clerks, of teachers and of domestic servants. But even in the best of times men in the prime of life and of good character and ability lose permanent situations of this sort ; it may be by the bankruptcy of their employer,* by a change in management, by the introduction of a new machine, a new process or even a new organi-

* Too little attention has been paid to the calamity that may thus overtake working-class households through no fault of their own, merely because (as an incident of " the competitive system ") a very large proportion of those who start in business fail to make it pay, give up, or go bankrupt, and discharge their subordinates. Every Distress Committee finds such cases. Judging from particulars of 37,000 applicants as to whom we have collected this information, the proportion of men rendered necessitous from this case alone is about 3 per cent. One Distress Committee reports : " An illustration of the way in which regular workmen become casual may be found in the 104 cases which occur this year, of men who appear to have lost permanent work through their employers going bankrupt or giving up business. In a few instances this had occurred as long ago as 1897, though in most cases the bankruptcy or termination of the business was of more recent date. Over 70 per cent. of the men who lost their work in this way had failed to get back into regular employment ; 63 of these men were still in the prime of life when they applied to the Distress Committee, and another 22 were between forty-five and fifty-four "(Report of Stepney Distress Committee, 1907). Of these 70 men, 2 obtained no other work at all, 38 became " casual workers " in other trades, 25 " casual workers " in their former trade, and 5 emigrated (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 82147, Par. 26). Thus, more than half the men thus displaced sunk to the level of " casual workers."

sation of the industry ; * whilst there is also, taking the United Kingdom as a whole, a perpetual stream of discharges due to occasional misconduct, trade disputes, the arbitrariness of a foreman, and the hundred and one frictions of industrial life. When trade is bad, bankruptcies increase in number,† industries shift uneasily to cheaper districts, orders slacken, particular works are "shut down" or branches closed by concentration of business, personal quarrels and trade disputes become occasions for ridding the shop of surplus hands. This incessant dropping of individuals from permanent situations into the ranks of the Unemployed—characteristic of all times—becomes, in periods of depression, a serious recruitment, amounting, for the Kingdom as a whole, to many thousands in a week ; ‡ with the result that there are hundreds of applicants for each of the rare vacancies that occur. It was these men, who had newly dropped from regular situations of presumed permanency, and who found themselves, through no fault of their own, unable to regain such situations, whom Mr. Chamberlain had in view in 1886 when he issued his momentous Circular. It was for these men, "the *élite* of the Unemployed," § that Mr. Walter Long and Mr. Gerald Balfour designed the Unemployed Workmen Act.

The fate of these men, in bad times and good alike, seems in practice to depend on two circumstances ; whether or not they have some specialised skill for which the demand will recur in such a way and at such a place that they can promptly ascertain the fact of its recurrence, and whether they are fortunate enough to be able to belong to a Trade Union of sufficiently high organisation. In times of good trade, the skilled operative assisted by the Trade Union organisation, which is aware of all vacancies, gets pushed into another situation, even if his previous dismissal had been his own fault. In times of bad trade, the unemployed Trade Unionist gets his regular weekly "Out of Work Pay," from the corporate savings of himself and his fellows : whilst having at his disposal (and even forced on his attention) the earliest information as to when and where the renewed demand for his particular handicraft is manifesting itself. So far as there exists in any occupation a well-organised Trade Union of national scope, giving "Out of Work Pay," we have, in its "Vacant Book" and its Unemployment Benefits, perhaps the most successful agency for dealing with the problem. Even here there are the cases of the man who has remained outside the Trade Union ; of the man who has "fallen out of benefit" or been excluded from the Trade Union ; and of the man who has had to give up his membership (perhaps on becoming a foreman). And there is one contingency against which even the most highly-organised Trade Union cannot insure its members, that is, a permanent, rapidly progressing diminution in the demand for the kind of skill that has been organised. No Trade Union could have provided for the hand-loom weavers displaced by the power-

* Such "permanent changes of industrial conditions," deposed Mr. W. H. Beveridge, "are of several types :—

"(*a*) The decay of a particular industry *e.g.*, sail-making, and now of many industries connected with horses (saddlery, harness-making, etc.).

"(*b*) The removal of an industry from one place to another, *e.g.*, of ship-building from London to the north.

'(*c*) Changes of method or organisation, *e.g.*, the introduction of new machines (boot-making, rope-spinning) or new forms of labour (aerated water).

"The common feature in all types is that for the individuals concerned they involve a permanent displacement from their chosen and familiar occupations, and the necessity of finding their way, perhaps at an advanced unadaptable age, into new occupations" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 77832, Par 10).

† In 1899, a year of good trade, there were in England and Wales, 7,085 bankruptcies and deeds of arrangement with creditors. In 1904, in the trough of the cyclical depression, the number was 8,631, or 22 per cent. more (Twenty-fifth Annual Report by the Board of Trade on Bankruptcies, House of Commons, No. 254 of 1908). If we assume that, on an average, only ten men lose their employment in each case, though the business does not always cease altogether, the statistics imply the loss of situations, through no fault of their own, by 70,000 men in a good year, and 86,000 men in a bad year. And many small concerns fail and cease without formal bankruptcy.

‡ Sometimes even many thousands in particular districts. The closing of the plate-glass works at Jarrow in 1895 threw 1,100 men suddenly out of fairly constant situations (Second Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, p. 130). The operatives at Woolwich Arsenal had been gradually increased from 6,717 in 1884–5 to what seemed a normal level of a little over 15,000 during 1898 and 1899. During the stress of the South African War an abnormal increase was made of 5,000 more operatives, bringing the total in 1901 to 20,501. After the war this extra staff of 5,000 was discharged, the numbers of 1905 being down to the level of 1898–9. Since that date 4,000 more operatives have been discharged, the total numbers having been reduced, not only by 48 per cent. from the highest war total, but *even by 30 per cent. from the previous peace total*, there being now fewer operatives employed at Woolwich Arsenal than at any time since 1887–8 (War Office Return, January 20th, 1908).

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 77738.

loom, for the hand paper-makers displaced by the machine, for the sail-makers and the saddlers whose product is less and less required, for the crowds of workers now being superseded by the use of motor cars.* If the Trade Union in such a plight is powerful, it closes its ranks against new apprentices, superannuates some members, lets others fall out of benefit, and keeps what remains of the demand as a good livelihood, at high rates, for an ever dwindling remnant of skilled men.† If the Trade Union is powerless, the whole membership sinks, like the hand-loom weavers, into the morass of chronic Under-employment, and thus falls out of our First into our Third Class. To this descent into the morass of Under-employment of whole sections of highly skilled and responsible wage-earners we shall recur in a subsequent section of this chapter.

But the vast majority of the unemployed of our First Class—men who have lately been in definite situations of presumed permanency—are not men of any definitely specialised skill which has been organised in a Trade Union. They are isolated individuals of every variety of aptitude and experience, of every degree of deftness and trustworthiness, and of every kind of nondescript occupation, not amounting to any definitely recognised handicraft. They are the very opposite of the "man of odd jobs," for they have often remained in one and the same industrial function for many years. These men, though they have trained themselves to fit the particular situations that they have lost, have no skill that meets a general demand, and indeed often none that bears any distinctive name. For this reason, indeed, it is almost impossible to state from what occupations they come. They are the responsible "handymen" of large firms of every kind, acting as warehousemen, packers, storekeepers, porters, gate-keepers, caretakers, lamp-trimmers, men in charge of this or that small department of work, etc. They may have been employed as general assistants in breweries, large stores, or, indeed, any big concerns. They may, in the alternative, have been the universal assistants of small masters; sometimes rising for a brief period into being small masters themselves.‡ Included in this class, too, are the skilled craftsmen of small and decaying handicrafts in course of supersession by machinery or new processes, such as assistants in rope walks, or coachmakers' wheelwrights. Their numbers, for instance, are at present swollen by grooms, stablemen, carmen, cab-drivers, and other workers about horses. Among them are "men who for years have satisfied the demand [for labour] in one form [and who] may find the form suddenly changed, their niche in industry broken up; their hard-won skill superfluous in a new world; themselves also superfluous unless they will and can learn fresh arts and find the way into unfamiliar occupations. They are displaced by economic forces entirely beyond their control and taking little or no account of personal merits."§ All these men, valuable to the community as their qualities of industry, regularity and aptitude to direct, to co-operate, or to obey ought to make them, find, under present circumstances, the greatest difficulty in regaining the permanent situations for which they are fitted. A man may be of excellent character, full of health and vigour, and eager to get work. But if he has been

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* Thus, at the present time, St. Pancras, "a great centre of the transport industries," is suffering from the present "convulsions of that particular section of industrial life—the appearance, and sometimes the disappearance, of the motor bus, the advent of the electro bus, the development of tubes and electric cars," whereby "drivers of horses, stablemen, and others connected with allied industries, will, no doubt, suffer seriously" (Report of St. Pancras Distress Committee, 1907).

† This policy was successfully pursued by the old hand boot and shoe-makers, and by the hand pape makers ("Industrial Democracy," by S. and B. Webb, 1897, pp. 417–424).

‡ From the case-papers of the Unemployed men sent to the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony we have taken the following specimens of men who belonged at one time to our First Class, having dropped out of permanent situations (and, apparently, through no fault of their own) before sinking into the Third Class; a foreman decorator (7 years in situation); a coachmaker's wheelwright (6 years); a felt hat-maker (17 years); a handy man at the Army and Navy Stores (10 years); a lamp-trimmer in a large concern (10 years); a greengrocer on his own account (6 years); assistant in a railway goods department (7½ years); a pewterer (17 years); a bone boiler (10 years); a horse-keeper and carman (4 years); a collector and traveller (11 years); an engine driver to dust-contractor (16 years); a cartridge-maker in Woolwich Arsenal (17½ years); another operative in Woolwich Arsenal (19½ years); another in Woolwich Arsenal (7 years); a rope-maker (13 years); a machine hand at Battersea Projectile Works (13 years); at a bottle-stopper making works (14 years); a machinist at Maxim's (6 years); a handy man (10 years); a railway porter (7 years); a painter (20 years); an iron-moulder (11 years). We take from a careful private register, kept by the Workhouse Master, the following cases of respectable men who passed through his Casual Ward: a barber in business for himself, who lost custom owing to fever in his house; a hotel porter, who had been in one situation 23 years; a hatter's labourer, 13 years; a groom in private employ, 4½ years; a groom at livery stables, 13 years: a wheelwright, 14 years; a clerk and waiter in a coffee house, 2 years; a lawyer's clerk, 25 years.

§ "Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909, p. 111.

for years in one place—especially if that place has been not a regular handicraft but something of nondescript character, in which he has adapted himself to his employer's needs—he is least of all men in a position, unless by happy accident, to get another situation. At best, he depletes his little savings by answering innumerable advertisements in as many newspapers as he can get access to; keeping his wife and family respectably week after week; and week after week losing heart and self-respect. And whilst it is more difficult for him than it is for men of less permanent employment to find another situation, the evil effects of unemployment, the physical and moral deterioration consequent on enforced idleness, work on him all the more quickly and all the more seriously.* If for some reason he has few friends, or if his savings have already been depleted by family illness or other misfortune, what is vital to him is to be able to discover, without a ruinous loss of time, without the cost of advertising, without even the very real tax of answering advertisements, what situations are open to him anywhere in his town, or anywhere in the Kingdom. In the absence of any social machinery for this purpose such men often lose heart. "The general impression," notes one of our informants, "was one of despair and bitterness, and they considered themselves the sufferers from a great deal of mismanagement, but where the mismanagement was they were unable to say. Several of these men had held good situations for periods varying from seven to twenty-four years each, and had lost those situations through no fault of their own but through the firm giving up, one man being turned out after twenty years' service because the firm changed hands." In short, the faculty of finding work is wholly distinct from the faculty of doing work. Each faculty grows with use, and shrinks with disuse; the man who has always been in one situation has neither the experience nor the aptitude—he may even be lacking in the temperament—requisite to push himself into another situation. His very excellencies stand in his way.† He is, in fact, often as unfitted to find work as the "casual" in any trade is to keep it.

In many respects this First Class of Unemployed, the men from permanent situations, are those to whom it is most important to bring timely help. But, so long as they can be included in this class, they seldom appear among the applicants to Distress Committees‡ and they are practically never found in the Workhouse or the Casual Ward. Such a man, if not provided for by a Trade Union, struggles on as best he can§; clinging to the hope of regaining a permanent situation through friends and old shop-mates, by advertising and answering advertisements, by applying personally here and there at hazard.‖ For

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*This physical and moral deterioration, which few of the Unemployed can escape, is, we are told, "relatively more noticeable in men who have been used to permanent employment than in that class who have always depended upon casual and precarious employment. In the former class Unemployment long continued induces a feeling of pessimism, loss of hope, and finally loss of desire" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 85701, Par. 12).

† "The more continuously a man has been with one employer or in one trade the less able is he to find other openings in unfamiliar fields. There is an art in living casually" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 77832, Par. 21).

‡ "Hardly any applications are received from men of this description" (Report of Chelsea Distress Committee, 1907). At Stepney, "the supply of applicants who had till recently been in regular continuous employment was so scanty that in order to keep their vacancies for relief work filled, the Selection Committee were obliged to have recourse to casual labourers. . . . On the whole, the 'best' men, the men with recent record of regular work, who had maintained hitherto a high standard of independence, did not apply. It was not apparently that this class resented inquiry as inquiry. On the contrary, those of this class who did apply, were often proud to give particulars, which proved them to have work records superior to those of the ordinary applicants. To do away with all inquiry would probably drive away even the few applicants of this class, as there would be no means of distinguishing them from the casual labourer to whose work record they rightly feel theirs to be superior. The reason seems to be something as deep as human nature. Men take a pride in being independent. . . . To the end of time, the stronger and more self-reliant men will avoid having recourse to Poor Law, charity, or relief works. I came across one or two instances of men in this district who would have been received with open arms by the Distress Committees if they had applied, and sent to relief work immediately. I hinted as much to them, but I could not induce them, though to my knowledge they were suffering great hardships, to humble their pride and apply" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 82147, Paras. 20, 22). "To sum up," say our Investigators, "we cannot say how far" the applicants to Distress Committees "represent the Unemployed. Besides the large number of skilled men who would be in receipt of Trade Union benefit there would be many who had saved in other ways out of their comparatively high wages, and who would tide over periods of distress by disposing of furniture or other possessions, rather than by applying to Distress Committees" (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 70).

§ Report of Lewisham Distress Committee, 1905–6.

‖ "The textile worker or the coal miner, if out of work, hangs about his own town with his hands in his pockets, and waits till better times come" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 98875).

him the chance of odd days, or even odd weeks, of "Employment Relief" has little attraction and no advantage. He has no more aptitude for the rough digging, hauling, wheeling, road-making, road-sweeping, or even tree-planting, furnished by the Local Authority, than for the stone-breaking of a Labour Yard. What he needs is to discover some position of responsibility that he can fill, or some opportuntiy to work at his own trade; or in default of this, the chance of fitting himself by training for some other occupation whether in this country or another. None of these are offered to him by a Local Authority whose only notion of dealing with unemployment is to set as large as possible a crowd of heterogeneous men to labouring work for brief spells. The other functions contemplated by the Unemployed Workmen Act, though at present not generally in operation, might be of greater use to him. A well-managed Labour Exchange, frequented by all the employers of the town and in connection with the Labour Exchanges of other towns, might be able to bring him in touch with an employer in search of a man of regular and responsible conduct, or of his special aptitude. Migration to another part of the kingdom might then help him. If he has a taste for country life he is the sort of man who might make a success of a small holding. Or emigration to another part of the British Empire might prove to be the best solution for him personally and especially for his family, though by this method the mother country loses a man of regular habits and persistent industry. Failing all these expedients for regaining their position, we see men of this type sinking lower and lower, so that, before they apply to the Distress Committee for "Employment Relief," or to the Board of Guardians for admission to the Workhouse, they have often fallen into one or other of our following classes. If such a man is physically strong, he gravitates towards the building trades, or "goes labouring" at some job which lasts for a few weeks or months (Class II.). If he is a weakling, or growing infirm through advancing years, he falls into daily odd jobs, and becomes one of the chronically under-employed (Class III.). If he is a man with grave moral imperfections and weaknesses, hitherto kept in curb by regular employment, he rapidly becomes one or other kind of unemployable (Class IV.). Thus, although those who register themselves with the Distress Committees or for Poor Relief belong, at the time of application, almost entirely to one or other of the last three classes, such a classification, in, we fear, thousands of cases, veils the tragedy of a descent from the First Class*—the tragedy of the physical and moral degradation, through lack of timely and appropriate help, of a man who once honourably filled a permanent situation†.

(B) CLASS II.—THE MEN OF DISCONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT.

The next largest class of wage-earners is that of the Men of Discontinuous Employment; men who do not in any case remain permanently in one situation, but whose normal

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* "The great bulk of them . . . are casual workmen, *though very many in the past have been permanently employed.* . . . After a certain age it is easier for the displaced workman to perform casual services than to initiate himself into the ways of a new employer and a new process" (Report of Stepney Distress Committee, 1907). Of the applicants who worked casually at docks or wharves, *one third were found to have had, at some time in their lives, regular situations at weekly wages* (*Ibid.*). "The effects of long-continued Unemployment," deposed a provincial witness, "are in many cases most demoralising, as the men lose heart looking for work day after day without securing it, drift into want and poverty, pawn their goods, apply for Poor Law relief, get desperate and ultimately become to a great extent physically unfit for hard work, and drop into the ranks of the submerged tenth" (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXVII. (Par. 6) to Vol. VIII).

† It is only another aspect of this tragedy that it is the men who have left the permanent situation afforded by the Army, and who, after more or less interval, have abandoned hope of getting any new employment of permanent character, who furnish the largest contingent, not, perhaps, of the professional Vagrants, but of the floating population of the Casual Wards. What they aim at is to get permanent situations "of trust," as it is called, as caretakers, bailiffs, gate-keepers, grooms, valets, chauffeurs, porters, clerks, etc., or as members of the Corps of Commissionaires. But only a minority of them secure such places (Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1896, *Qs.* 1037–8; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 81669–81755). The others mostly sink gradually to the "casual" class (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 79573). Out of 1,512 men who passed through the Casual Ward of a rural Workhouse in the West of England in 1905, no fewer than 333 convinced the Master that they had served in the Army (mostly producing their discharges). Of these, 136 were "public works men," and 107 labourers; these two sections constituting more than two-thirds of all the ex-soldiers. There were 10 painters, 7 grooms, 6 shoemakers, and 4 each of carpenters, moulders and gardeners; the others being divided among dozens of the most varied occupations. By way of contrast we may note that out of the whole 1,512 men, in spite of the proximity of a great port, only 74 claimed to have been seamen; and of these 8 were "public works men," and 13 labourers, most of the others being merely sailors on their way to other ports. Similarly, in the Church Army Homes, "many of the men helped are ex-soldiers. In 1907, out of 1,856 admitted to London Homes, 302 were ex-soldiers, 16·3 per cent.; and 22 per cent. of the men who passed through the provincial Homes had been in military service. It is very rarely that any seamen apply for help" (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 93611, Par. 6).

condition, even at the best of times, is that of working at a succession of jobs, passing from one job to another, from one employer to another, each engagement usually lasting, in practice, perhaps a few weeks or months. The problem presented by this large class is not, as with our First Class, the complete and long-continued Unemployment of a relatively small proportion of the total number; but the perpetual "leakage" between jobs, and the periodic occurrence, in the lives of nearly all the men, of periods of distress, and even of destitution, during the intervals between jobs.

(i.) *The Operatives of the Building Trade.*

The most numerous section of this class of Men of Discontinuous Employment is that of the artisans and labourers of the building trades,* whom we find in great numbers on the registers of the Distress Committees. Of these men, who may be estimated to number, throughout the United Kingdom, something like a million, a certain proportion normally hold, especially in rural districts and small towns, situations of some permanency, and really belong to our Class I. A very small proportion of those employed by the large firms in the great towns are in like case. But the vast majority of them—as towns increase in size, apparently a steadily increasing proportion—habitually pass from job to job, working a few days or weeks for one employer, and then, when his particular building is finished, getting taken on at another job, usually by another employer. In times of good trade, among the best men, in the most skilled branches of the industry, employment throughout the greater part of the year may be practically without intermission, and even the time lost through the winter's slackness may be small. At the best of times this is not the case with the bulk of the labourers, or with the less skilled or less steady men, who have, each winter, spells of unemployment.† In times of depression the best of men may find the intervals between jobs, especially in the winter, extending into weeks and even into months at a time.‡ The labourers, like the less steady or less assiduous among the skilled men, will then often get only a few odd days' work in a month, or a few odd weeks throughout a whole year. The building trades operatives, unlike the navvies, do not seem to move much from town to town, though the young men among the bricklayers and stonemasons will still use the "travelling benefit" afforded by their Trade Union to look for work in other towns. But the spreading out of London, Glasgow, Manchester and other large urban aggregations has made the men of the building trades very mobile within these towns—tramping all over the urban aggregation, applying for jobs at one building after another, and readily shifting house from one side of the district to the other—often ten miles across—in order to be near their work.

It is not generally realised that hardly any man among this vast population of building trades operatives, amounting to one-ninth of the whole nation, escapes, at some time of his life, a period of severe distress, from which he and his family seriously suffer. When the trial comes, it is inevitable that a proportion of those exposed to it should succumb—one or other member of the family may die in consequence of prolonged lack of the full necessaries of life; there are widows and orphans prematurely robbed of the breadwinner of the family; and, more frequently, there is a demoralisation of character, and a descent in the social scale—it may be from the carpentering to casual labouring, it may be from steady work to life as a professional Vagrant or other variety of the Unemployable. That this excessive discontinuity of employment, and the distress which it occasions, is not

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* These include bricklayers, masons (hard, soft or pavior), carpenters, joiners, plumbers, painters, decorators, glaziers, plasterers, paperhangers, whitewashers, slaters and tilers, gas and hot-water fitters, locksmiths, bellhangers, scaffolders, bricklayers' labourers, masons' labourers, carpenters' labourers, plumbers' labourers or "mates," painters' labourers, plasterers' labourers, handymen, and general builders' labourers.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 82377, Par. 2.

‡ Statistics indicate that among carpenters and joiners who are unemployed at all, nine-tenths obtain a job within four months, but that 2 or 3 per cent., even in this relatively well-organised trade, may be continuously out of work for six months or more. Such a state of things can hardly have a good effect on character. "The mechanic," it has been said, "can scarcely make both ends meet the whole year, so he gradually drifts into a listless state. That is the evil of a lot of it. He can hardly be blamed for not hurrying to get himself out of work, knowing full well that the sooner he gets his job done, the sooner he will be walking about. I do not believe that natural laziness is the cause of it. It is simply due to the hopeless state that the [building] trade has got into, I do not know for what reason." (Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, *Q.* 134). The same witness declared that the men who could rely on continuous employment worked better, were better men all round, and were induced to show greater zeal (*Ibid Qs.* 277–280) than the men who were dismissed after each job.

due to any lack of vigour or activity in the operatives seeking work is, we think, clearly demonstrated. "There is always such a plentiful supply" of men eager for work, deposed the general foreman of a large building firm, "that the trouble is having to refuse applicants who attend early morning and throughout the day, waylaying the foreman at every turn. . . . They will follow a builder's cart should it have material until they find out where the job is, and also report same to Trade Unions, so that on going to an entirely vacant site to commence operations you will often find it surrounded by men of all trades."*

The result on the men of these conditions of employment is often disastrous. "The enforced idleness on completion of a job naturally throws the men upon their own resources, which is, in nine cases out of ten, the nearest public-house. The frequent change from strenuous hard work to absolute indolence to men of this character naturally tends to gradual moral and physical degeneration, and ultimately the individuals become unfit for work even when opportunity offers."†

(ii.) *The Public Works Men.*

Even more typical of the class of Men of Discontinuous Employment is the navvy, or, as he usually describes himself, the "public works man."‡ He has never been, and never expects to be, continuously in the employment of one contractor for more than a few weeks, or perhaps a few months, though here and there a man may keep at a job continuously for a year or more. How extensive is this class of navvies is not recorded; but we have it in evidence that it is estimated to number, in the United Kingdom, no less than 170,000 men.§ "They move about," reports the Local Government Board, "from one public work to another, a distinct class or tribe, separated by habit and circumstances from the rest of the community, and in some respects often outside the action of ordinary sanitary laws."‖

The conditions under which these men habitually work can hardly be deemed favourable to the development of thrift, sobriety or general regularity of life.¶ "There appears to be," says the Local Government Board Report, "no legal obligation on contractors to provide accommodation for their workmen. When important works are in progress, likely to last over a considerable time, and especially if these are at a considerable distance from centres of population, the contractors generally, in their own interests and in order to secure workmen, provide accommodation, and this is often excellent (*e.g.*, the Tidworth Settlement on Salisbury Plain); but I am informed that smaller contractors, who have tendered at 'cutting prices,' are apt to save in the 'hutting,' and to provide inadequate accommodation or none."** What these conditions were for several hundreds of men, as recently as 1907, at a place close to London, is vividly set forth :—

> "Messrs. Price & Reeves have pushed on the work (Brooklands Motor Track, Weybridge) rapidly; the number of men employed by them since the beginning of the contract has progressively increased, and has been approximately as follows :—
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | January (1907) | 300 to 400 |
> | February | 600 ,, 700 |
> | March | 1,000 ,, 1,100 |
> | April | 1,500 ,, 1,600 |

* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 134.

† Evidence before the Commission, Macaulay (not yet in volume form).

‡ For information as to the navvy, *see* Report of House of Commons Committee on the Condition of Labourers Employed in the Construction of . . . Public Works, 1846; Dr. S. Monckton Copeland's Report to the Local Government Board on . . . Diphtheria and Small-pox in Langport Rural District, 1906; Dr. Reginald Farrer's Report . . . on the Accommodation of Navvies (Cd. 3694), 1907.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 83576–7.

‖ Dr. Reginald Farrer's Report . . . on the Accommodation of Navvies, 190[illegible]

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 80022–9.

** Dr. Reginald Farrer's Report . . . on the Accommodation of Navvies, 1907, p. 6. "One of the suggestions," deposed the Master of the Workhouse in a rural Union, "is whether this Committee, in their recommendations, could not recommend that in future, where large works are to be started, the authorities who are responsible for those works, either the Council, or whoever they may be, or the contractors, should not be required to provide accommodation for their workmen that flock to the place; because it is well-known that in several places where large works have been started, even the men who honestly go to work will go to the Casual Wards the first few nights in order to get the night's lodging for nothing, or because they cannot get it elsewhere." (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q* 3136.)

"As the track is now approaching completion, the number of men employed will rapidly diminish during the month of May, and it is estimated that the work will be completed by the end of June. Night and day shifts are at work, each shift working for ten hours, the night shift working with Wells' flare lamps. The men are paid not less than 5½d. an hour, but those on piece-work make 6d. to 7d. an hour. Thus the wages in fine weather vary from about 27s. to 30s. a week, but time is apt to be broken by rain, and the average wage may be taken at about 24s. a week. At the time of my visit, April 23rd to 25th, at least 1,600 men were employed daily on the work. In addition to those in regular employment there were a variable and uncertain number of irregular workers who work about two days at a time, draw a "sub.," and then hang about the public-houses till the money is consumed. There were also casual unemployed labourers and tramps who had come into the neighbourhood on the chance of a job, or to sponge on the regular navvies. In all, it may be assumed that a floating population of not fewer than 2,000 men has been added to the normal population during the month of April. . . .

"Having been round the works by night as well as by day, and conversed with scores of the men, I can confidently state that many—probably 300 or more—of the men regularly employed on the works at the date of my visit were without any proper lodging. Men working on the night shift resort after work to the public-houses where they buy beer to wash down their breakfast, after which they commonly lie down in the open, and sleep for several hours. If the weather be cold or wet, they are prone to half stupefy themselves with beer before lying down to rest under these conditions. On the occasion of my visit I found a large group of navvies having their breakfast outside the 'Hand and Spear Hotel,' and several scores of them were sleeping among the gorse and heather of Weybridge Common. Of these, some were doubtless 'camp followers,' or Unemployed, but the majority were genuine navvies, as was evident from their dress, their hands, and the condition of their boots, as well as from their own statements. On the night of April 24th, I patrolled the neighbourhood of Byfleet and the track, accompanied by two constables. I may mention that the police had recently, and particularly the night before my visit, been active in evicting navvies sleeping out in cowsheds, etc., and that, therefore, fewer were to be found than would otherwise have been the case; many, doubtless, having gone further afield to find shelter. We visited several public-houses, which we found so full as barely to afford standing room. The navvies in these houses complained bitterly of the failure of the contractors to find accommodation. After the public-houses were closed we found:—Six men sleeping in straw-yards, in or under the stacks; seventeen men sleeping in a disused cowshed, 24 feet by 12 feet by 7 feet at the eaves. This shed was inside the track. The men were sleeping on the bare ground, without straw or hay for bedding. The available air space was certainly less than 200 cubic feet per head. More than a score of men were lying or sitting round a brazier near a coffee-stall, having no other prospect of shelter for the night. About thirty were sleeping in a dell near the railway line in groups round fires, which they had kindled between the trunks of felled trees. A casual search revealed three men sleeping among the gorse and heather of Weybridge Common. I cannot doubt but that careful search would have led to the finding of many more. As was the case in the day-time, the great majority of these homeless men were genuine navvies, regularly working for the contractor. Prior to April 10th, some rough shelters of fir boughs and corrugated iron had been erected by the men themselves on two sides inside the track, nicknamed respectively 'Firwood Avenue' and the 'Hotel Cecil.' On that date a letter from Mr. Bilney, a local magistrate, appeared in the local *County Times*, drawing public attention to the inadequate and insanitary nature of these shelters. Mr. Davenport, the contractors' manager, forthwith caused these shelters to be burnt down, and seems to claim merit for his action in this respect, despite the fact that prior to my visit he took no action whatever to provide shelter for those evicted, whose condition was thus worse than before. The Inspector of Nuisances of the Chertsey Urban District informs me that on April 17th, and again on the 24th, he found four navvies sleeping in a hen-coop. The fact cannot be too strongly emphasised that the navvies employed on this work, other than those having lodgings in the neighbourhood, or returning directly after work by train to their lodgings in London or elsewhere, had no place provided by the contractors to which they could resort."*

Another feature of the brutalising conditions under which the navvy works, making thrift and regularity of life almost impossible, is the practice of subbing. "A large proportion of navvies, after doing two or three days' work, draw a 'sub.' for the work done and rest for a few days till the amount drawn has been expended (usually in drink). Thus it not seldom happens that a contractor must have 100 men on his books in order to secure that fifty shall be always at work, and the housing difficulty is intensified. 'Subbing' is necessary at the commencement of work, as many of the navvies will probably have tramped long distances to the work, and arrive penniless, but the evil might be minimised if the contractors refused to 'sub' after the first fortnight, and in any case refused to 'sub' the full amount earned." †

This section of Class II. is of special interest to reformers of the Poor Law because it is almost the only part of the working class population, apart from the seamen on tramp from port to port, which habitually makes use, without scruple and without any sense

* Dr. Reginald Farrar's Report . . . on the Accommodation of Navvies, 1907, pp. 2–4 Dr. Farrar estimates roughly that the number finding lodgings in the neighbourhood is probably not less than 600, and that about 500 others travel to and from their work by train (*Ibid.* p. 3).

† *Ibid.*, p. 6.

of degradation, of the Casual Wards lying on the great lines of communication from town to town. "When walking from place to place, and very often finding it impossible to get work," we were told by Mr. John Ward, M.P., of the Navvies' Union, "one is obliged to seek the Casual Ward occasionally. . . . The great difficulty, then, with the workman is that he loses two or three days. No matter how regular his habits may have been, if he finds himself in difficulties and obliged to seek the Casual Ward while looking for work, he has to perform a task which makes it impossible for him to get on to the public works or works of any description that day to look for employment; and that is a great inconvenience."* We find, indeed, that in 1905, at a little rural Workhouse on the high road between Plymouth and London, more than one-third of the total number of persons admitted to the Casual Ward were navvies passing from the newly completed Birmingham Waterworks at Rhayader and the Avonmouth Docks, on their way to the Keyham Dockyard Extension Works and the St. German's Railway. We append notes relating to some of these men from the interesting reports of the Master of the Workhouse to his Board of Guardians.

> "*G. D.*, aged 28 years; a labourer. Last employed at Rhayader, in Wales, on the Birmingham Waterworks. Out of work about three weeks. Previous to that worked on the Swansea Waterworks, at Craig, Brecknockshire. He was there several months. Admits that when he is in work he drinks rather heavily, and that if it were not for this weakness, he would probably get permanent work. He is a well-spoken and finely developed young man.
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> "*W. B.*, 61 years; a labourer. Public works man. Last worked on Salisbury Plain. There about eight months. Left two months ago. Shortening hands. This man is an annual visitor. He calls about once in every twelve months. Is a good worker. Served 16 years 128 days in the Royal Engineers. Invalided out in 1885. Had a pension of 1s. a day for twelve months, and 8d. a day for a further period of four years.
>
> "*G. N.*, 28; a labourer. Last worked at Saltash. Left there last Saturday. He is a public works man. From conversation, it appears that at this time of the year the amount earned is very small. By the time deductions are made for train fare to work, loss of time, etc., there is little left after paying for lodgings, and this little is, no doubt, got rid of in drink.
>
> "*W. H.*, 45 years; a labourer. Last worked at Langport. Worked there twelve months, and left on February 4th, on account of difficulty in procuring lodgings. In the first part of the time he was on a section where lodgings were procurable. Public works man. Has been here several times.
>
> "*C. R.*, 29; a labourer. Last employed on the Honeybourne Railway, near Cheltenham. Left there three weeks ago. Was employed driving horse and cart for nine months. Asked why he left he said he 'got the sack for being drunk.' Was here once before. Is suffering from an attack of sciatica. He volunteered the statement: 'Us chaps' (meaning public works men) 'drink heavy, and if out of a job have got to go on tramp. Forget being in these places' (Casual Wards) 'when we get into another job.'"

"There is a lot of truth in the foregoing," remarks the Master of the Casual Ward. "A large number of the men who have recently passed through the Wards are without doubt hard-working men, but as soon as they get their money a lot of it (in fact all the surplus after paying for lodgings) goes for drink. The result is they are always living from hand to mouth, and consequently when they get discharged from their works—either through their own fault or the 'shortening of hands' or any other cause—they have no money and are compelled to go on tramp until they are fortunate enough to get other employment."†

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 83576.

† There is abundant evidence that it is mainly this section of the wage-earning class, and those who have fallen into Class IV., who prey upon this section, who frequent the Casual Wards (outside the Metropolis). "We bring in a tremendous number of good-class navvies for these public works," stated the Chief Constable of Lanarkshire, "and they are followed by a regular horde of tramps who live on them. They are an absolute curse to the whole country. They come in and take away the character of these good-class labourers. People come and say: 'We want extra policemen. We have navvies, and they are playing the mischief with the whole countryside.' I say that the navvy is a poor, harmless person who gets drunk every Saturday like other people. It is these people who follow him who are the nuisance." (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q.* 6937). "There is a certain amount of that (*i.e.*, vagrants following public works in order to cadge on the navvies)," stated the Chief Constable of Ayrshire, "but of the men who do the work, it is exceptional for a man to stay on for any length of time." (*Ibid.*, 1906, *Q.* 6807.) "The largest number," stated the Chief Constable of Northumberland, "is the incorrigible 'work-shy,' and they are mostly able-bodied; and then, secondly, there is a very large number of travelling labourers, navvies, masons, bricklayers, tailors, carpenters, who work for two or three days, and then drink every farthing they have got. They spend a week or perhaps a fortnight on the roads before they get another job; there is a very large proportion of these.' (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 7587). Sir John Dorington attributed the increase of vagrancy in Gloucestershire to "the increasing destitution of the country, and, no doubt, partly the great works going on in Gloucestershire. Great works, I think, bring the vagrants in, partly in search of work, and partly in search of the very good begging ground which a large collection of navvies supplies.'" (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 4280.)

It is apparently into the grade of navvies that the physically strong men of the First Class—especially those from the Army—tend to pass, if they are unsuccessful in regaining a permanent situation, and are unencumbered by wife and children.*

The existence of so large a class of men not only in discontinuous employment under demoralising surroundings, but also perpetually shifting from place to place, without their wives and children, and without any systematic arrangement for their travelling or their accommodation, appears to us a great social evil. For the lack of any proper provision for the accommodation of these "public works men," as described in the Local Government Board Report from which we have quoted, is not exceptional, but habitual.† We need only mention the danger to the Public Health. "Not only are these men," reports Dr. Farrer, "owing to their migratory habits, apt to carry infection from place to place, and in particular from one common lodging-house to another, but they are, as a class, specially averse to vaccination or re-vaccination, partly, no doubt, owing to the interference with work which the operation entails." ‡ As soon as each job is completed the men are paid off, and are left stranded without employment; some to drift about the locality to which they have been attracted, to intensify the local competition for casual labouring work, and presently to swell the register of the Distress Committee.§ Such "stranding" of public works men, on the completion of jobs, is a frequent cause of local distress.‖ Others of the contractors' men drift away by all the great roads, using the Casual Wards and common lodging-houses on the way, attracted hither and thither by mere vague rumours that great engineering works are about to begin in this place or that.

(iii.) *Existing Agencies dealing with the Men of Discontinuous Employment.*

For practically the whole class of Men of Discontinuous Employment, whether building trades operatives or navvies, or men in those parts of other industries ¶ in which employment is habitually discontinuous from employer to employer as well as from job to job —numbering at least 1,250,000 wage-earners, and possibly twice as many—the existing agencies for preventing or providing for distress from Unemployment are hopelessly inadequate, if not incurably inappropriate. The first method by which the more regularly employed and the better paid section of the Men of Discontinuous Employment have sought to fortify themselves against Unemployment is by Trade Union Insurance. But although a large proportion of the skilled artisans among them, and many thousands even of the labourers, are members of Trade Unions, hardly any of these societies, in these industries of discontinuous employment, find it possible to give regular Out-of-Work Pay. The amount of Unemployment in the winter, in the periods of depression, and in the frequent intervals between jobs, is relatively so large as to put such a benefit out of the reach of

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* Nearly a quarter (136 out of 552) of the navvies who used the Casual Ward already referred to in the year 1905 had served in the Army. We understand that public works contractors will often consent to employ discharged prisoners, and that many of the "situations" found for such men by the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies are of this kind.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 80022–9.

‡ Report of Dr. R. Farrer to Local Government Board on the Accommodation of Navvies, 1907, p. 7.

§ Among the Unemployed at Leicester in 1895 were the "navvies attracted to the town by new railway works." (Second Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, p. 128.) This was again complained of in 1907, on the completion of the Leicester Tramways Works. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 86772).

‖ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 83600–1, 83614. The Reports of the Distress Committees of Leyton, Dudley, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Halifax, and many others, specify that hundreds of applicants were in distress owing to "completion of job." "The completion of Sir John Jackson's contract for the extension works at Keyham Dockyard in the early part of the year threw a considerable number of men out of employment." (Report of Plymouth Distress Committee, 1907.)

¶ "The shipyard employés," we were informed, "may, on the whole, be regarded as a little better positioned. In the first place they are better organised and have had better training. Then there is some show of continuity with their work, but still, owing to the exposed nature of this work, spells of wet or windy weather throw all out of gear. And, again, many men work in squads or batches, and at times a squad is temporarily stopped until some other squad's work has far enough advanced to allow the others to get on again. This is such a constant trouble that it can be regarded both as a chronic and a periodic complaint." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XI. (par. 3) to Vol. VIII., p. 509.)

even the strongest Unions.* To this rule there are but half a dozen exceptions. The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, an old and highly organised Trade Union, established in 1860, and now numbering 64,268 members, † pays Unemployment Benefit on much the same lines as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, with the result that comparatively few carpenters apply to Distress Committees.‡ But even this exceptional society, with nearly half a century of careful management behind it, finds this benefit an increasingly heavy burden, the payments for the whole of the past four years averaging nearly 25s. a year per member, involving a weekly contribution of nearly 6d. per week for Insurance against Unemployment alone, irrespective of sickness, superannuation, burial and strike pay. The result is that a certain proportion of men in each year exhaust the period of twenty-four weeks' benefit before they get into work again; a large number find it impossible to keep up their contributions,§ and accordingly in one of their intervals of Unemployment fall "out of benefit," whilst many others are prevented from joining. The result is that the membership of this Union has, since 1903, steadily declined, and is now falling at an alarming rate. During the year 1908 it lost nearly 100 members every week.‖ There are now in the United Kingdom at least four times as many carpenters outside the Union as within it. In fact, experience has proved, not once or twice, but repeatedly, that, in these trades where discontinuous employment is the rule, and where the employment is sporadic, and ever shifting in locality, no system of Insurance is either financially or administratively practicable. The time lost in the intervals between jobs, in the recurrent seasonal slackness, and in the years of depression, is so considerable that an abnormally heavy premium has to be paid in the weeks when the men are at work. Such a premium would have to be specially heavy in the case of the labourers, who are the least well paid section, and who make up half of the whole.¶

There is, however, a further difficulty in the way of insurance against Unemployment which seems to us, *without some better organisation of the building and constructional trades*, to militate seriously against any attempt to provide Out of Work Pay for the Men of Discontinuous Employment. Even if the men could afford, and could be induced to spare a premium sufficiently high to provide for their inevitable and recurrent periods of Unemployment, it is impossible, as things are, to make sure that the member drawing Out of Work Pay is actually doing his utmost to get employed, or even that he is made aware of the opportunities of re-employment. To the engineer or the boiler-maker every factory or

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* The typical provision made by the Trade Unions in the building trades for their Unemployed members (notably among the bricklayers and stonemasons) is that of Travelling Benefit or Tramping Pay. This, the archaic form of Unemployment Benefit, takes the form of an allowance of a shilling or so per day, payable only if the member has just come into the town that day, and usually not payable for more than one day in any one town, nor more than once in any town during six months. The towns at which the Union has branches and pays this benefit are usually ten or twenty miles apart, so that to obtain it the member must travel (*i.e.*, walk) practically all day. From the standpoint of provision against Unemployment, we can hardly count this Travelling Benefit (though the Board of Trade does so in its financial statistics, and incidentally includes also the payment of railway fares to take up jobs which is superseding it) It does nothing to keep the wives and children; and, far from directing Unemployed members where they are needed, it promotes an aimless wandering up and down the Kingdom of a demoralising kind. It is being discontinued by one Society after another, and is being used, even where it remains in force, by a diminishing proportion of the members.

† Report of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, December 1908.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXV. (par. 10) to Vol. VIII.

§ In addition to the regular contribution of 1s. a week, extra levies have been made during 1908, amounting to no less than 46s. for the fifty-two weeks. Thus, the average weekly payment throughout the year has been 1s. 10¼d.

‖ Forty-eighth Annual Report of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, 1908. We append particulars of cases reported to the head office, in which members of this Union, who have paid heavy contributions for many years, are now in distress through being unable to get employment before the expiration of the maximum period during which they can draw Out-of-Work Pay:—"*W. T.*, age 55; nineteen years' membership. Out of work nine months; believed to be 'actually starving'; his wife seems to be dying. She wants to go to the Workhouse, but he will not allow her to go; a very sorrowful case." "*J. V.*, age 48; eighteen years' membership. Out of work twenty-six weeks during 1908; has been dogged by misfortune this year; he was compelled to break up his home, and is now staying in a single room with his children; he is a steady, respectable man, and feels his position acutely."

¶ "It would be difficult for them to earn enough in the summer to carry them through the winter. . . . There are very few subsidiary occupations available for builders' employés, as they are trained for that alone. . . . There are a few employed in the gas works, but the majority walk about looking for work, and are supported by their various Unions, the gifts of fellow-workmen, or starve. I might say that the builders' labourer is a very generous chap. If he has sixpence he will give threepence away to his mate who is out of work." (Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, *Qs.* 134, 229.)

shipyard is known, and the number of men required by every employer in the country can be ascertained by an efficient Trade Union office. But no trade organisation, however efficient, can discover as a matter of practice, in which town or at which outskirts of a town building operations are beginning to develop, or where exactly a contractor has been set to make a motor track, to reclaim a marsh, to build a sea wall, or begin or extend a line of railway. One of the hardships of this class is that they are bound, as things are, to go in search of work on mere rumour, and that this rumour may reach and affect the movements of dozens or hundreds of thousands of men all over the country quite independently of how many may be actually required at one particular work. The Contractors, we were told, take only "the skeleton of their staff, that is, the whole of the time-keepers, the head walking foreman, and the gangers underneath. These are generally fairly regular men, although they may stand off occasionally for a month or so. The rest of the men have to go to the work haphazard as best they can."* "Occasionally, advertisements appear in the papers," we were told by Mr. John Ward, M.P., who has had personal experience of the trade, "that a certain number of men are required on certain works, and I have known cases where there was not a man who could get a job. More than once I have seen that, and then, of course, they are hopelessly stranded, and it does create great difficulty in the neighbourhood."† No trade organisation can discover whether its Unemployed members have actually applied for such work as there is or why it is that out of the crowd of applicants for work the contractor's foreman picks one man and rejects another; and why, when he is reducing his staff, he discharges some men weeks earlier than others. On these scattered works all over the country no Trade Union could even discover whether a man had been dismissed or had simply thrown up the job of his own accord.‡ Thus, in the present anarchic condition of the building and constructional trades, Out of Work Benefit may easily prove a weapon of double-edge. Where intervals of Unemployment are normal in the industrial life of every member of the trade, and where their duration is under no effective supervision and control, the power to draw Out of Work Pay may, by its subtle play upon motive, tend insidiously to slacken the effort to get another job as quickly as possible and to keep the job until it is completed, and thus actually lengthen the average interval between jobs and therefore the amount of Unemployment.

On the other hand, whilst Trade Union insurance against Unemployment is, to this class, practically impossible, the "Employment Relief" offered by Distress Committees and Municipal Authorities is fatally attractive. The job of a few days or a few weeks on the Municipal Relief Works—repellent, and not really useful to the men of Class I.—just suits the less skilled, the less well-paid, the less regular, the less steady of the workers of Class II., and even the good men brought low by prolonged Unemployment. To the builders' labourers and navvies who make up the bulk of the men in distress from Unemployment belonging to this class, the construction of roads, the excavation of land, the planting of trees, the improvement of open spaces, the laying of drains, or the building of embankments—which is the work to which Local Authorities inevitably turn—is exactly the kind of occupation that they prefer. When they are put to such work alongside the heterogeneous crowd of under-employed and unemployable men, the very minimum of effort enables them to pass muster and even to gain the approval of the harassed superintendent. Even the Rural Colony, though it takes them away from their haunts, has familiar features to the man who is perpetually working on contractors' jobs in remote parts of the country. Though the wages earned on Relief Works do not equal the ordinary earnings when working full time for a contractor, the men quickly discover the advantage of being paid without deductions in all weathers and without lost time.§ They appreciate the short hours and the low level of effort.

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 83612.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 83715.

‡ "Would the navvy," asked the Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, "come under the description of a working man in search of work; he goes off to wherever he hears there is a job, and stays there probably as long as the job lasts?" "No," replied the Chief Constable of Northumberland, "not as a rule as long as the job lasts; probably only a week; at those waterworks in Northumberland during the last three or four or five years, hundreds of men stay only a week or less, and then get their wages and go." (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q.* 7590.)

§ "Then, too, it must be kept in view that the men were paid during wet weather when it was impossible to undertake any work, and there was, unfortunately, a very heavy loss on this account during the months of February, March and April. Taking the aggregate number of men working, 24,038 complete days were lost through inclement weather—in other words, the Committee paid £2,640 in wages to the men for days and portions of days during which no work was done." (Report of Glasgow Distress Committee, 1908, p. 9.)

Hence the builders' labourers and the navvies who happen to be in an interval between two jobs gleefully welcome the efforts of the Distress Committees to persuade Local Authorities to start public works for the Unemployed. If these works would not otherwise have been done, it means the clear gain of another job; if they are merely anticipated, at any rate it is a job in hand which is secure, as against the mere chance of a job at the normal time, which would very likely go to men following the successful contractor, men probably more vigorous, more steady, or at least more favoured by the foreman. What is unfortunate from the standpoint of the community is that when the Relief works stop the builders' labourer or navvy finds himself exactly where he was when they began, but with the difference that more men have been attracted into this particular calling. While he has been working on the job of the Local Authority some other man has been called up or down from other sections of wage-earners to take his place on the job which may have been started meanwhile by the Contractor for whom he is accustomed to work. And from among the heterogeneous crowd taken on by the Local Authority other men who have previously worked at other trades will have grown accustomed to and perhaps fitted for the work of the navvy or the labourer. If it is thought necessary that public works should be executed in periods of trade depression, in order to create employment for the building and constructional trades, it would clearly be more advantageous to the men of those trades, and to the community as a whole, that such works should be undertaken, not by Distress Committees, nor as Relief Works for the benefit of the men on particular local registers of persons in distress, but in the ordinary way, by the Departments usually ordering such works, and that they should be manned exclusively by the best of the men habitually employed in these trades, whom the foreman is able to engage in the manner to which they are accustomed.

Finally, whilst both Trade Union Insurance and Employment Relief are unavailable or inappropriate remedies for the Distress of the Men of Discontinuous Employment, we see that, from the very nature of the case, it is futile to attempt to grapple with the evil by seeking to get the men individually into work, or to move them to other parts of the country, or even to other parts of the Empire. What has to be remedied is not the Unemployment of the 5 or 10 per cent. who happen to be on our hands at a particular time, but the fact that *all* the men are periodically unemployed, and that practically the whole number are subject occasionally to intervals between jobs so long as to produce distress even to the thrifty household. It is, in fact, not the woes of individual men, but the excessive discontinuity of the employment of the whole class, aggravated beyond all need by the absence of organisation and information, for which we have here to find a remedy.

(c) CLASS III.—THE UNDER-EMPLOYED.

In our First Class we had to deal with individuals who happened to be undergoing the experience—in their lives occasional only, and even rare—of being out of work. In our Second Class, we found the whole body normally and habitually out of work in the intervals between jobs; such intervals occurring every few weeks or months, involving a chronic "leakage" in loss of time and wages, and being, in the course of the lifetime of nearly every man, occasionally so prolonged as to create acute distress. Now that we come to our Third Class we have to face the problem of a whole population of manual workers who are, year in and year out, week by week, continuously in a state of partial destitution of the necessaries of life owing to their chronic failure to get a full week's work. This is not Unemployment in the ordinary sense, but something which (as we shall see), is, in its social effects, even worse. It is not a case of the man being alternately fully at work and fully at leisure. His whole life is absorbed, either in work, or in looking or waiting for work; but he does not get his time paid for. It represents "at bottom not so much want of employment as a wrong distribution of employment, a spreading say, of 3,000 days' work in a week over 1,000 men at three days each instead of over 500 men at six days each."*

* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 77832, par. 8.

(i.) *The Casual Labourer.*

The evil of Under-employment is shown in its most common form in the great class of Casual Labourers.* These men hold no situations. They are engaged, day by day, and often hour by hour, for brief and discontinuous jobs; sometimes mainly by one employer for successive jobs, but more usually by a shifting series of different employers, often in different occupations. The bulk of the work is, in fact, unskilled labouring; and it is so unspecialised that men habitually work in succession for employers carrying on different industries.

The Casual Labourer assumes, here and there, slightly specialised characteristics. We need not describe the hackneyed figure of the "Docker."† so well-known as the man who struggles in East London at the dock-gates for the privilege of being taken on at sixpence an hour, for a few hours' job at unloading goods from the ship's hold, and wheeling or carrying them into the warehouses that line the dock quays. We find practically the same type, under slightly varying conditions, at every large port,‡ notably at Liverpool, Bristol and Hull, and to the list we must now add Manchester, where, starting afresh, the evil might have been avoided.§ The Casual Labourers of the wharves and landing places by whom the bulk of the port and riverside work of all kinds is everywhere performed belong to essentially the same class. Here, too, must come the large class of porters, labourers and "odd job men" who pick up a living at the various markets for cattle, meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, hay and straw, etc., in London, and all market towns, great or small. Some other towns, like Middlesborough, have a considerable population of Casual Labourers and "spare hands," who hang about the wharves and furnaces on the chance of occasional jobs.|| "This," we are told, "is especially the case in the large iron and steel works, where often an influx of work means the setting on of

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* "The casual labour system means giving out work in jobs, instead of providing regular employment. This invariably results in so many scrambling for the jobs that there is not sufficient work to go round. No man thinks he is likely to be the unlucky person who gets nothing to do, and there is always the chance of him finding something the next day to keep him going. Many people with a tendency to slackness like work of this kind; many drift into increasing slackness; and the irregularity of the provision of the work is thereby encouraged." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 84791, par. 24). "It (the term 'casual labour') applies shortly to those who are engaged from hour to hour or day to day, and for whom it is a matter of chance whether employment will be forthcoming on the morrow." (Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, p. 2.)

† Much has been written on the London "Docker," and his work. *See* the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, 1894 (Cd. 7421); Third Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895; Report on Dock Labour and Poor Law Relief, by the Hon. G. Walsh; Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism in London, by Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, 1907, pp. 46–50; Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, 1907, Appendix W., pp. 398–417.

‡ He is not always an undifferentiated general labourer; he may be more or less specialised, and bear a special name, such as stevedore, grain-porter, grain-bearer, coal-porter, coal-trimmer, trucker, trimmer and lander, busheller, bag-holder, weigher or meterer, timber-porter, etc.

§ "In Manchester the problem attracts less attention than in the other cities, but at the same time the opinion must be expressed that it is in Manchester that there is least excuse for the casual system. Owner and employer are one. It is admitted that at least half the staff could be regularly employed. The docks are of recent formation, and it may well be that the Manchester Docks form an instance of a place where a better system might have been and even now might be started with comparative ease. It may also be the case that the evils which are not so noticeable there at present, because the docks have not long been in existence, will arise in the future unless they are now prevented." (Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 34.)

|| "Middlesborough's staple industry being the making of pig-iron and steel-smelting, the dealing with huge quantities of iron-ore and large shipments of crude metal, a peculiar feature is stamped upon the employment of the district, that is to say, there is a constant unsteadiness in the volume of unorganised, casual, rough-and-tumble kind of labour needed. A great many hands are employed, more especially in the shipping and stocking portion of this business, by the hour or by the ton, or even by the lot or job work. In some cases the job may run out less than a day's work. In many cases this partial employment goes on the whole year round, which is bad enough at any time, but in spells of rough weather, or slackness, or lull in shipments, or for any other cause, then the trouble becomes acute and the suffering terrible. Most of the men thus employed are quite untrained and ill-adapted to do any other class of work, even if that chance arose" (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XI. (par. 2) to Vol. VIII. "In the iron and steel works there is also a great deal of intermittent labour amongst the unskilled workers. For example, I will give you merely one instance: When a boat loaded with iron-ore arrives at the iron works wharf, a gang of labourers is engaged until the boat is discharged, and if there does not happen to be another boat following, the gang is paid off. This is another instance of the prevalence in this district of what are called catch jobs." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XIV. (par. 6) to Vol. VIII.)

men who must be dismissed as soon as the pressing order is completed."* In the great centres of commerce, there is a whole class of Casual Warehousemen. "There is," says Mr. Rathbone, "another class of semi-skilled labour in Liverpool which is even more casual in its nature than that of the *bona fide* dock labourer. I refer to the warehouse porter and other similar employments. In the case of a warehouse it is utterly impossible as a rule for the warehouseman himself to tell from day to day how many men he may require the following morning. He may have a heavy stock of any particular class of goods in his warehouse, the owner of which may sell it, say late in the afternoon, the order is passed through and the carrier applies for delivery first thing in the morning. The warehouseman thus requires a considerable number of men; but for days on end, even although he has a heavy stock in his warehouse, he may not require more than one or two hands besides himself to attend to sampling orders, and such small matters of that kind."† Every railway company has, for the goods traffic of its principal stations, its set of extra men, who get taken on for a few hours, or for a day or two, whenever there is pressure of business. But apart from the docks owned or worked by railway companies, where the labour is as casual as at other docks, the Companies vary in the extent to which they rely on casual labour. At the Marylebone terminus of the Great Central, the men on the permanent staff (average weekly totals for 1906–7) numbered 155, the regularly employed men not on the staff, 42, and the casuals no fewer than 117; and these latter got, on an average, only 28 hours' work per week. More than 37 per cent. of the whole work was done by these casuals. On the other hand, the King's Cross Goods Depot of the Great Northern had less than 3 per cent. of casuals. In July, 1906, "about 200 extra porters, etc., were taken on at Euston, in addition to 200 extra men taken on for the rest of the Euston section, which extends to Stafford. The majority of these extra men are only wanted for the very heavy pressure between July 20th and August 12th, but from June 1st the staff is gradually increased, and after August 12th is diminished to about September 15th, when it becomes normal."‡

The "casualness" of the employment of the Casual Labourer is aggravated by the competition for jobs by men belonging to other trades, who happen to be unemployed and in distress. A skilled mechanic does not do "labouring" unless he is hard pushed. But turning over a batch of record papers of unemployed carpenters we note men who are reduced to "working at the shipping" (*i.e.*, dock labour); to "labouring at 17s. per week"; to being "employed as a labourer at 18s. per week"; to "the work of a general labourer at one of the timber yards rather than go on Unemployed Benefit"; to "working as a labourer"; to "discharging timber ships, which is only labouring"; to "navvying for the Corporation," etc. The lower sections of the building trades, notably the painters, the scaffolders, the builders' labourers and the navvies, who may be said to be normally in employment, though in very discontinuous employment, habitually work as casual labourers, when they cannot get work in their trades of building and construction, and when they are sufficiently in distress to be willing to change their habits. Indeed, the boundary between Class II. and Class III. is at this point obscure. In all periods of depression a considerable proportion of the section of builders' labourers find themselves employed in their own trade for such short spells—often only for a few hours at a time—and so rarely obtaining forty or fifty hours' work in a week, that their condition really amounts to one, not of Discontinuous Employment, but of chronic Under-employment.§

The want of employment of the Casual Labourer is, according to many witnesses, at present being aggravated by a declining demand for mere muscular effort. "It is," we are informed, "now increasingly true that machinery is displacing the purely unskilled labourer, and causing a demand for men of more general ability and reliable character, and affording them more regular employment. The 'Scotchman' and the 'grab' in the building trade, the mechanical stoker in gas-works, the steam crane, the grain elevator, etc., at the docks, and the motor 'bus or trolley, are materially diminishing the demand for unskilled labour in London."‖

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* *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXXVIII. (par. 5) to Vol. VIII.

† *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXIII. (par. 9) to Vol. VIII.; also *Q.* 35537.

‡ Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, 1907, Appendix W., pp. 418–419.

§ "The building labourers are casual labourers just at present," deposed an experienced witness. (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 79880.)

‖ Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, p. 6.

(ii.) *The Fringe of Casuals about Skilled Trade.*

But the class of Under-employed includes not merely the whole of the men in such occupations as dock and wharf labour and market porters, and a waxing and waning share of the lower grades of the building operatives, but also a very extensive fringe of men more or less attached to particular industries, and working at them only by way of brief and casual jobs. "'To go in' for one half-a-day, one day, two, three, four, or five days out of the five and a half is common to bootmaking, coopering, galvanising, tank-making, oil pressing, sugar boiling, piano-making, as it is to dock labouring, stevedoring, crane lifting, building."* Some trades, like that of the London bakers, regularly employ more men on one or two days of the week than on others. In London "a large body of men is always required for the Friday night baking," when "the work . . . in preparation for Saturday and Sunday is, we are told, exceedingly heavy. The usual hours of working are fifteen or sixteen instead of the ten of other nights, and *twice as many* men are required." These Friday night men, many hundreds in number, pick up odd jobs the rest of the week. "At the factory gates every night during the week, a number of men are always hanging about ready to be taken on in an emergency, or to fill the place of any man who, according to a very common custom, has 'taken a night of.'"† In busy marketing neighbourhoods, a whole class of butchers' assistants are engaged only for Fridays and Saturdays. Analogous arrangements exist in many other trades. Moreover, in every trade there are men whom the employer takes on only when he has a sudden and temporary press of business.‡ They may be the "glut men" of the Customs Department or the Christmas hands of the Post Office. Every tramway undertaking, municipal or commercial, has its reserve of extra drivers, conductors, yard-men, washers, etc., who get a day's work now and then when they are wanted. At Liverpool, and indeed in all large towns, there is a whole class of casual carmen, who are taken on for the job as required.§

(iii.) *The Under-Employment of Declining Trades.*

These ascending grades of lifelong "casuals" are not the only sections of wage-earners who suffer the distress due to Under-employment. There are the trades in which, whether owing to a persistent falling off of the demand, or to some change of process, Under-employment has become chronic and almost universal. What is elsewhere the lot only of the fringe of casual hands, becomes in these trades the misfortune of practically all the workers employed. Though few may be wholly Out of Work, hardly any get a full week's employment; and the whole trade may thus pass (as did the Framework Knitters and the Hand Loom Silk and Woollen Weavers) into a condition in which—throughout the whole year—each man gets only a few days' earnings a week. This is, apparently, in our present industrial anarchy a constant phenomenon. The particular trades that are suffering vary from decade to decade, but there seems no time at which the evil cannot be traced in some locality or another. At present, as we gather, the boot and shoemaking trade is, to a great extent, in this condition, owing to the rapidly changing processes, involved in the successive introduction of machine after machine. Even where men are not altogether displaced they are finding, in some centres, their work

* Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 121.

† Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism in London, by Mr. Steel Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 30.

§ Such a fringe of irregularly employed spare hands exists, for instance, in the hosiery trade, among copper and chemical workers, in glass-bottle works, with chain-makers, in seed-crushing mills, and at gas-works. (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, pp. 23–24; *see also* Final Report of Royal Commission on Labour, 1894, Part II., pp. 92, 243, 292, 299, 419, etc.)

¶ At Liverpool, where the "carmen, carters, etc., form a large group in the Census (11,171) . . . a great proportion are the well-paid drivers in the regular employment of the 'Teamsters,' or large firms who do the ship and warehouse cartage of goods. These are a steady, respectable set of men, as, indeed, they are required to be, so much valuable property being entrusted to them, including the magnificent horses for which Liverpool is famed. The Secretary of the Cartowners' Association estimates the number of regular men at about 7,000. Besides these, there is a large number of casual carters who are taken on by the day. These are needed to fill the places of the regular men who are off work through sickness or other cause, or as extra hands in time of pressure. There are several 'stands' in the city, recognised by the police and the employers, where the casual carters wait to be hired. The men are skilled, otherwise they would not be trusted to drive and load." (Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. Steel Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 12.)

becoming so intermittent as to amount to chronic Under-employment.* Much the same state of Under-employment appears to exist to-day in some centres of the hosiery trade, also owing to the shifting of the industry.† A similar state of chronic Under-employment has long prevailed in some of the branches of the leather trade in Bermondsey owing to the shifting of the fell-mongering and tanning.‡ It is even a question whether certain sections of so extensive and so widespread an industry as the building trade may not be falling into a chronic state of Under-employment, owing to changes in processes. It may be that the Carpenters and Joiners have become too numerous for the work to be done, now that concrete floors and steel joists have come in; that the bricklayers and stonemasons are in process of supersession by the workers in "reinforced concrete," and steel-frame erections; whilst the plasterers are, in face of a double change of fashion as well as of processes, finding their work dwindling to a vanishing point.§ There are actual signs that, in London at any rate, the prolonged Unemployment of the carpenters and bricklayers is out of all proportion to the shrinking of building operations. Statistics as to the number of building operations reported to the District Surveyors in the Administrative County of London, and as to their aggregate rateable value (which furnish some imperfect index to their extent), as shown in the accompanying diagram, indicate that the reduction in the amount of building between 1899 and 1905 was inappreciable, and that of 1906–7 not great. On the other hand the percentage of Unemployment among London carpenters has risen steadily from 1899 out of all correspondence with the amount of building. Moreover, there is some evidence that it is worse among these skilled craftsmen than among the labourers.‖

(iv.) *The Social Evil of Under-Employment.*

All these sections and subdivisions (and indeed, many more, for no one has yet completely explored the whole field) come, from our present standpoint, within one and the same class of Under-employed. Of its numerical extent there are no available statistics. It is, in the main, a town phenomenon, and one characteristic principally of towns of large size, though it is not wholly absent anywhere. Confining ourselves to adult men, we cannot estimate the number in the United Kingdom who are, to-day, thus holding no situations, continuous or discontinuous, but are existing on casual jobs of brief duration, and who habitually do not get a full week's work, at less than between one and two millions.

The existence of this large class of Under-employed men, living on casual jobs, and habitually unable to obtain anything like a full week's work, is universally recognised to be a grave social evil. Their average earnings for the year are so low that even with careful management they are unable to procure for themselves and their families the necessaries of healthy life. They are the occupants of the over-crowded one and two-roomed homes

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* "Particulars of the Boot Industry," report out Investigators, "were given us by a practical bootmaker who is on the Executive of the Boot and Shoe Operatives' Union, and who was until recently Chairman of the Board of Guardians. As his information embodies that obtained from other sources we may, with advantage, quote his remarks: 'In the boot and shoe trade men are hit hard in Bristol, especially in Kingswood. There is absolutely no doubt that machinery has displaced one-third of the men, and the use of machinery is increasing. Machines now turn out twenty-five dozen a day, a man turns out the same in a week; the demand for boots cannot so far increase as to give employment for displaced men in the trade. Numbers have emigrated from Bristol, and others pick up work here and there. *A boot hand is no fool, and manages to get repairs to do and odd jobs from various firms, so that he keeps off the rates; but he earns from 8s. to 12s. a week only, and that casually.* There are numbers of such men between forty and fifty years of age in the boot trade. Their daughters go to the chocolate and tailoring factories, and so a wage is made up, none earning a living wage separately.'" (Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. Steel Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 51).

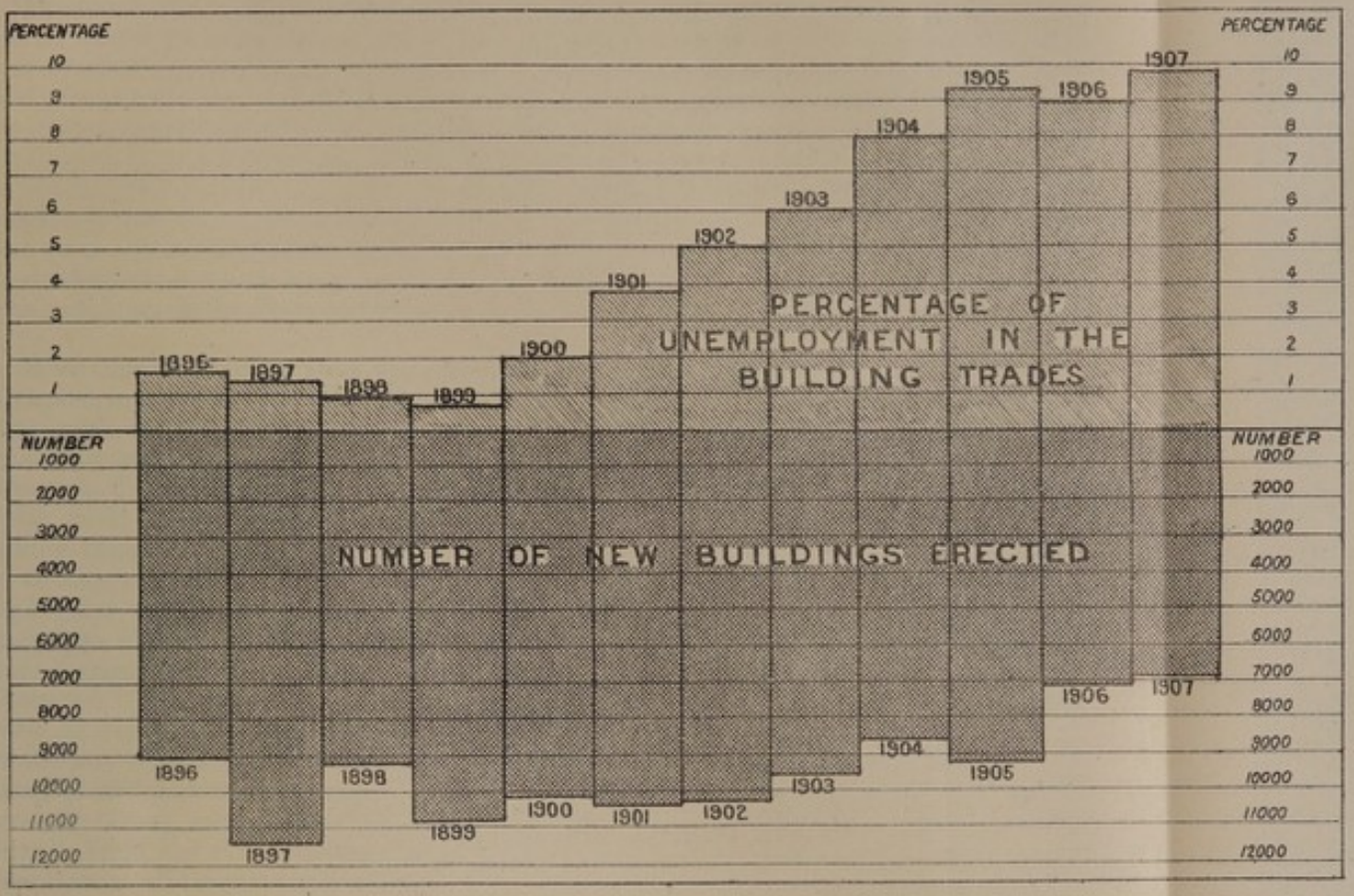
† Evidence before the Commission, Q. 86726, par. 4.

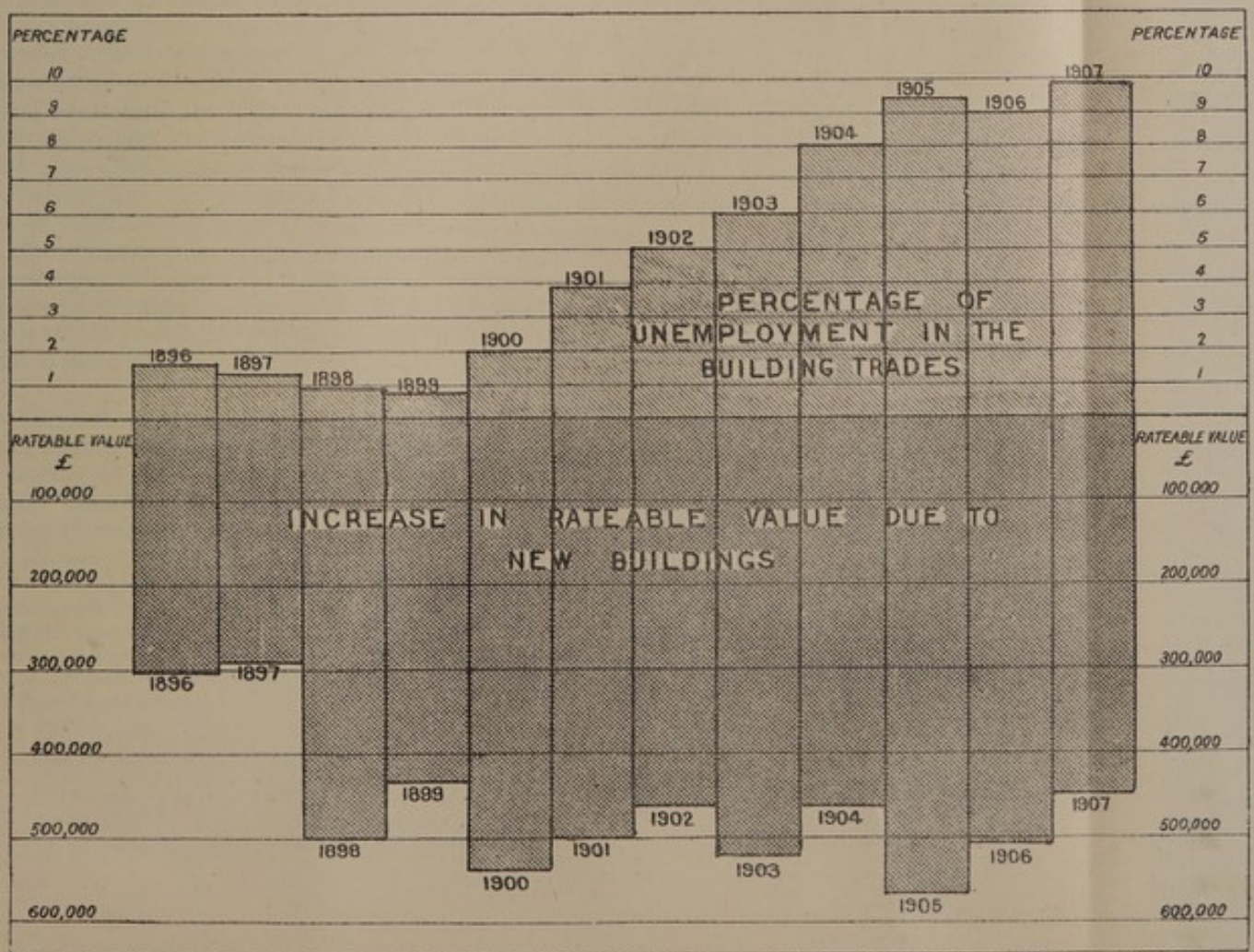
‡ Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism in London, by Mr. Steel Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 26.

§ "New building methods have also affected employment in Liverpool. Ironwork is now used to a much larger extent than formerly in construction, even to the displacing of brickwork for the outside in some cases. Roofs and floors are constructed of iron; scarcely any of the ironwork is prepared in the district, therefore the new methods do not appear to benefit the men in Liverpool." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXVIII. (par. 12) to Vol. VIII.)

‖ "What would be the proportion of mechanics, carpenters, and bricklayers, practically permanently employed? Is it higher than that of the labourers?——No, it is considerably less in my case." (Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, *Q.* 157.) "Your experience is that the skilled men are becoming abundant and falling out of work," the foreman of a large building firm was asked, to which he replied: "Yes." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 182.)

DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RELATION BETWEEN THE AMOUNT OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE BUILDING TRADES IN LONDON (MAINLY THE CARPENTERS' TRADE UNIONS) AND THE NUMBER AND RATEABLE VALUE OF NEW BUILDINGS AS REPORTED BY THE DISTRICT SURVEYORS AND IN THE VALUATION LISTS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF LONDON FOR THE TWELVE YEARS 1896–1907.





of London and Glasgow, Newcastle and Plymouth. They fill the cellar dwellings which are the shame of Liverpool. Their families contribute the great majority of the 49,000 children who were being fed at school in London in the winter of 1907–8, and of the much larger number who are being similarly fed in a hundred towns in the winter of 1908–9. Among them privation and exposure, and the insanitary conditions of their dwellings, lead to an excessive prevalence of diseases of all kinds. It is, to an extent quite disproportionate to their actual numbers, they who fill the hospitals and infirmaries, and keep the city's death-rate at a high figure. It is in their households, particularly, that the infantile death-rate is excessive; that the children have rickets; and that an altogether premature invalidity is the rule. It is recognised, in short, that it is among the class of the under-employed casual labourers—constituting, perhaps, only a tenth of the whole town—that four-fifths of the problems of the Medical Officer of Health arise.*

More important even than the adverse effects of casual employment upon physical health, are, in our view, its demoralising effects upon character. The perpetual discontinuity of the work, with its intervening spells of idle loafing, is in itself deteriorating. "The irregularity and uncertainty of the weekly work and income," deposed one witness, "act in the most demoralising way. It weakens the desire, and finally the ability to undertake regular work. The loafing habits that it entails undoubtedly lead to more gambling and drinking than need otherwise go on."† "It is a sort of feast and famine with them," said another witness. "The effects are that the men get into a loafing habit and will not have regular work, and eventually do not like any work at all."‡ The fact that the work is done for a shifting succession of different employers makes zeal, fidelity, and even honest effort of practically no account. In the majority of cases, nothing in the nature of a "character" is required before employment can be gained. The intermittent stream of jobs, on which livelihood depends, comes along, plentifully or scantily as the case may be, without any regard to individual merit; success in "catching the foreman's eye," and getting picked out of the struggling crowd, may come, indeed, more frequently to the physically strong man of dissolute habits and brutal instincts, than to the more refined nature. Amid the evil influences of such a life, no personal character is likely to be able to maintain itself against temptation. Accordingly, wherever we have casual employment, we find drunkenness and every irregularity of life more than usually prevalent. Nor is the evil influence of casual employment confined to the man. It seems almost inevitable that the home should also become demoralised. Among these casual labourers, we were informed, "the uncertainty of the amount that will be earned in any week, and the impossibility experienced by the wife and family of ascertaining what has been actually earned contribute, we have no doubt, much more largely than can be estimated, to the shiftlessness and the general misery."§ In fact, not even the most careful housekeeping could stand up against the irregularity of the income day by day available. In one ascertained case, "for instance, 8s. 4d. was earned in one week in the following way: Monday, a whole day's work, 5s.; Tuesday, one hour, 8d.; Thursday, four hours, 2s. 8d. When the money comes in such small uncertain amounts, it would be difficult for the most thrifty housekeeper to expend it to the best advantage. . . . In these households . . . a heavy responsibility rests on the wife. It is a serious thing to find this responsibility held so frequently in such light esteem, while the habit of drinking among the women undoubtedly leads to more neglect and suffering for the children than anything else.'‖

Gravest of all, in our opinion, is the effect that this demoralising irregularity of life is having upon the hundreds of thousands of children who are being brought up in the homes of the Under-employed. The elaborate investigation made by the London County Council into the circumstances of the families whose children need to be fed at school brings to light, not only that it is very largely the offspring of Under-employed

* "During my experience of the working classes," deposed the Works Superintendent of the Central (Unemployed) Body, "I have found that quite one-third of unskilled labour is out of work four months, taking the year round." (*Ibid.*, Q. 79863, Par. 2.) "The earnings of the casual labourer are so small and precarious," deposed a Liverpool Relieving Officer, "that he is unable to pay a subscription to a club or tontine, or make any provision for emergencies, and has, therefore, no alternative at a time of stress but to seek Poor Law assistance." (*Ibid.*, Q. 35452, Par. 5.)

† *Ibid.*, Q. 83251, par. 43.

‡ *Ibid.*, Q. 52169, Pars. 19, 20.

§ Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland, and Miss R. E. Squire, p. 16.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, Q. 83251, Par. 59.

casual labourers who are thus growing up stunted, under-nourished, and inadequately clothed; but also that, in the vast majority of the cases, the children lack, not food and clothes alone, but even a low minimum of home care. It is these children who, in the main, fill the Industrial and Reformatory Schools. It is these children who furnish the 10 per cent. of "regular irregulars" that are the despair of the Public Elementary School. Needless to say, it is these children who, in the main, when they grow up, recruit the ranks of unskilled and largely of casual labour. As one well-informed witness deposed before us, the irregularity and uncertainty of the life "has a deplorable effect on the children of the casual labourer, who are quick to follow the parental example, and decline to take up regular work or learn a trade when they leave school."*

(v.) *The Swamping of the Distress Committees by the Under-employed.*

All these features of the grave social evil that this class of the Under-employed constitutes to-day are widely recognised and well known. They acquired for us a special significance when it was pressed upon our attention that it was this same class of chronically Under-employed casual labourers that, as a matter of fact, furnished year by year the bulk of the applicants to the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act. "The great bulk of applicants to Distress Committees," deposed a member of the Central (Unemployed) Body, "are men normally in or on the verge of distress, men earning perhaps fair daily wages, *but getting on an average only two or three days' work in a week or two or three weeks in a month.*"† An examination of the registers of these Committees, in all the hundred towns of England, Scotland and Ireland in which they exist, reveals, with remarkable uniformity, that about one-half of all the distressed applicants are men whose only means of livelihood is casual labour. "We have nearly everywhere received the same general impression," report our Special Investigators, "namely, that the bulk of the applicants to Distress Committees are men of the labouring class, *who have for years been accustomed to casual work.* A large proportion are chronic cases who are always in and out of employment"—that is to say, belong to our Class III.—"and by no means the class of regular workers who have lost jobs in which they have been long employed owing to exceptional depression of trade"—our Class I. We have to conclude, in short, that at least half the task of the Distress Committees has been to relieve, not the Unemployed of our Class I., for whom the Unemployed Workmen Act was designed; nor yet the Unemployed of our Class II., who need only to be tided over an unusually prolonged interval between two engagements of some duration; but to supply the clamant wants of the Unemployed of our Class III.—men whose chronic condition is one of partial destitution tempered by odd jobs.

(vi.) *Under-employment the Main Cause of Pauperism.*

What brings the problem presented by this class of the Under-employed even more vividly home to us is that we have discovered, on quite irrefragable testimony, that it is from the same class that is directly drawn at least two-thirds of all the pauperism,‡ other than that of old-age, sickness, widowhood and orphanage; and probably, if we include indirect results, at least as large a proportion also of these parts of pauperism.§ We were, at the outset of our enquiries, struck by the fact that there was evidently going on a *constant manufacture of paupers.* It became apparent, from a consideration of the entering stream of persons relieved for the first time, that, even if we could to-day kill or deport, or otherwise remove every existing pauper between the ages of sixteen and sixty, we should, if we made no other change, within ten or twelve years find as great a number on our hands as at present. In view of this grave fact, it seemed to us of less importance to consider what was being done to the existing paupers, *than to discover what it was that was creating them.* We accordingly appointed three sets of Special Investigators, one to enquire into the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism; another

* *Ibid.*, Q. 83251, Par. 43.

† *Ibid.*, Q. 77832, Par. 8.

‡ This is sometimes explicitly confirmed by Poor Law officials. "The opinion of one Clerk to Guardians was that '75 per cent. of the paupers are casual labourers, chiefly dock labourers.'" (Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss R. E. Squire, p. 24.)

§ "The effect of the irregular wage and thriftless habits culminates when sickness occurs, and pauperism is often the result." (*Ibid.*, p. 25.)

to enquire into the effects of Outdoor Relief upon Wages and a third to enquire into the Effects of Employment and Assistance of the Unemployed. In addition we were led, as we have already mentioned, to the appointment of other Investigators to enquire into the condition of the Children whom the Guardians were maintaining on Outdoor Relief and in institutions respectively. The outcome of these investigations was all the more impressive in that it was not what we anticipated. We do not exaggerate when we say that all these enquirers—numbering, with their assistants, more than a dozen, starting on different lines of investigation, and pursuing their researches independently all over the Kingdom—came, without concert, to the same conclusion, namely, that of all the causes or conditions predisposing to pauperism the most potent, the most certain and the most extensive in its operation was this method of employment in odd jobs.* Contrary to the expectations of some of our number and of some of themselves, our Investigators did not find that low wages could be described, generally speaking, as a cause of pauperism. They were unable to satisfy themselves that insanitary conditions of living or excessive hours of labour could be shown to be, on any large scale, a cause of pauperism. They could find practically no ground for believing that Outdoor Relief, by adversely affecting wages, was itself a cause of pauperism. It could not even be shown that an extravagant expenditure on drink, or a high degree of occasional drunkenness—habits of which the evil consequences can scarcely be exaggerated, and which are ruinous to individuals in all grades—were at all invariably accompanied or followed by pauperism. All these conditions, injurious though they are in other respects, were not found, *if combined with reasonable regularity of employment*, to lead in any marked degree to the creation of pauperism. Thus, the regularly employed railway porters, lowly paid as they are, contribute only infinitesimally to pauperism. Even the agricultural labourers in receipt, perhaps, of the lowest money wages of any section of the wage-earners, do not nowadays, so far as they belong to the section in regular employment, contribute largely to the pauperism of adult able-bodied life. Again, though the average consumption of alcoholic drink among the miners, the boilermakers, the iron and steel workers, and many other trades appears to be enormous, these trades do not contribute largely to pauperism. On the other hand, where high earnings and short hours and healthy conditions are combined with the method of casual employment—as is the case with some sections of wharf and riverside labourers, and of the men who labour in connection with furnaces and gas works—there we find demoralisation of character, irregularity of life and a constant recruiting of the pauper army. "It is from the casual labour class," sums up the Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, "that those who fall upon the Poor Law, Relief Works or Charitable Funds are mostly drawn."†

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* "Among the most effective pauperising agencies must be placed casual labour and its concomitant women's work. It has been said that we may have as many paupers as we care to pay for. It is about as true that *we may pauperise as many as we care to casualise.*" (Final Report on the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 55.) "Whereas it was said in 1834 that, because of the Allowance System whole branches of manufacture followed, "not the course of coal mines or of streams but of pauperism," we may say to-day that *pauperisation follows the course of casual labour.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 55.) "The most urgent need is the decasualisation of men's labour." (*Ibid.*, p. 57.) For similar testimony as to casual labour being the chief cause of pauperism, *see also* the Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, pp. 38, 44, 50, 63. "To each of the Relieving Officers in all four unions (Liverpool), we addressed questions as to the applications he received from employees in the chief trades, and in all cases the reply was similar, that of men in definite trades they heard very little ; *the casual labourer was* the chief applicant. Thus in West Derby and Birkenhead, in two relief districts where trades and docks were found, the Relieving Officer said : 'The applicants are casual labourers chiefly—only occasionally of any other occupation. We may get a few mechanics, joiners, and engineers. Plasterers come to us in the winter.' And, again, 'We get a few building trade labourers, especially in winter, but not many.'" (*Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.) "Of sixty able-bodied men interviewed in workhouses (Liverpool) most called themselves 'dock-labourers,' but their history showed that they had drifted to this from other employments of a casual nature." (*Ibid*, p. 18.) "To the predominance of casual labour among the causes of pauperism in these cities (London, Liverpool, Manchester, and Bristol), the Relieving Officers testify, as the following statements show : '*Paupers are drawn in our Unions from the casual class.*' 'The admissions to the Workhouses are chiefly of casual labourers who make no provision.' . . . 'Applicants for relief are all casual and scarcely do anything.' . . .'Paupers are chiefly broken down casual labourers and hawkers from slums and common lodging-houses.' Such corroborative opinions as to casual labour might be multiplied indefinitely." (*Ibid.*, p. 22.) "It is . . . in the effect on the man of average character that the answer must be found as to the pauperising character of the dock work, not on the steadiest men, nor yet the wastrels that may be found under any conditions. Viewed from this standpoint, *the system in Liverpool* appears to create pauperism. . . . Above all considerations of *accident and exposure, it is the casual system of employment which appears chiefly responsible for the large amount of pauperism.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 25.) Of Bristol, they say: "It is the casual nature of the work. Skilled tradesmen, however low the degree of skill, seldom come." (*Ibid.*, p. 28.)

† Report of the Special Committee of the Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, p. 23.

(vii.) *The Cause of the Constant Existence of an Under-employed Class.*

Hence we were led to study the phenomenon of Under-employment with some care. We found, as has been demonstrated by the series of admirable researches carried on by Mr. W. H. Beveridge,* that this chronic over-supply of casual labour in relation to the local demand was produced and continued, irrespective of any excess of population or depression of trade, *by the method by which the employers engaged their casual workers.* This method inevitably creates and perpetuates what have been called "stagnant pools" of labour, in which there is nearly always some reserve of labour left, however great may be the employer's demand. We may illustrate this by a glaring example. The Liverpool employers of dock labourers † take on the men they require, at irregular and uncertain hours, at eighteen different "stands" situated at a considerable distance from each other. Around each "stand" there tends to collect a particular crowd of labourers, who usually work for the shipowners using that "stand," and who get more or less known to their foremen. The chance of employment induces at least as many men to attach themselves to each "stand" as are called for at that "stand" on its busy days. Indeed, it would not suit the employer not to find as many men there as he ever requires. When the call comes, and a certain number of men are taken on, the others do not like to go off to other "stands," partly because these are probably just as well supplied with men, and partly because they might, by their absence, miss a chance of being employed at their own "stand," with the result of weakening their hold on the foreman's acquaintance, and, perhaps, also (as he likes to be sure of there being a large enough crowd for any emergency) on his favour. Now, as the busiest days at particular "stands" do not come simultaneously, and have individually no necessary coincidence with the busiest days for the port as a whole, the result of the creation of the eighteen "stagnant pools" is that the total number of men collected in them (though perhaps not more than enough in each case to satisfy the maximum demand of the "stand") is plainly far greater than the maximum demand of the port as a whole on its very busiest day—it is estimated at half as much again. Thus it is that there are estimated to be something like 15,000 dock and quayside labourers in Liverpool, all of them chronically under-employed, to do work which never, on the busiest day of the port, needs more than 10,000.‡ Much the same conditions prevailed at the London Docks twenty years ago, in spite of the fact that the labourers were everywhere engaged by a single employer (the Dock Company). Men were taken on at each gate at irregular hours, and according to the demand at that particular part of the docks. Largely at the instance of Mr. Charles Booth, the Dock Company was induced to do the greater part of its work by a staff of labourers equal to the minimum requirements of the docks as a whole at the slackest time, to whom regular employment was given; and a further staff of preference men, who were taken on in the numbers required for the regular busy seasons; leaving only the margin of work to be distributed to the fringe of casual labourers. The result is that the work of the London and India Docks Company (which forms, however, only a small proportion of the dock and wharf labour of London) is now spread over a much smaller number of individual men than was formerly the case, and these are much more fully employed. Attempts to adopt a similar plan at Liverpool have so far failed, partly because of the difficulty of combining the large number of shipowners, who there employ the labourers, and partly because of the opposi-

* Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 77831–78370; now fully set forth in "Unemployment: a Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909.

† For accounts of the dock labour at Liverpool, *see* Report on the Unemployed Problem in Liverpool, by Mr. Charles Rouse (Liverpool Labour Conference, 1893); Full Report to the City Council of the Commission of Inquiry into the Subject of the Unemployed (Liverpool, 1894); The Poor of Liverpool, by Mr. William Grisewood (Liverpool Central Relief and Charity Organisation Society, 1897); *Liverpool Courier*, June 5th, 6th and 7th, 1906; Report of Dock Labour Conference, 1906; "Report of an Inquiry into the Conditions of Labour at the Liverpool Docks," by E. F. Rathbone and G. H. Wood; Report upon the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, 1907, Appendix R., pp. 339–343; Final Report upon the Relation of Sanitary and Industrial Conditions to Pauperism by Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, pp. 22–26, 31–35; Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 35483–35510, 35521–35536, 36248–36261, 37105 (Par. 5), 83251–83476, 84125–84499, and Appendices Nos. LIX. and LXIII. to Vol. VIII.

‡ Similar conditions have been created at Manchester since it became a port. It was pointed out to us that "Casual labour in this district can best be appreciated by a visit to the Salford Docks of the Manchester Ship Canal Company, at the Main Gate, Trafford Road, Salford, about 7.30 a.m, 1.30 p.m., or 6.30 p.m. At these hours workmen are taken on. Here may be found almost every day a struggling mass of able-bodied men fighting each other to obtain one of the metal cheques from a foreman of the Company, that would entitle them to a few hours' work at 6d. per hour. It is very often the case that there are ten times as many men as there are jobs vacant." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 83911, Par. 5.)

tion of the labourers themselves, because each of them fears to be squeezed out by any reform that regularises the labour of the fortunate half, and thus left without even his present gambling chance of a job.

Even in London, however, matters have been little mended. The demoralising struggle for work still goes on. There are indications that the London and India Dock Company and the Millwall Dock Company have, together, about 7,000 men in attendance; the Surrey Commercial Dock Company, 2,000; the shipowners employing their own labourers, 5,000; and the various wharves, 10,000, making on the roughest of estimates, something like 24,000 in all. Yet the maximum number of men employed by all these employers, taken together, on any one day in 1906 was only 14,482. It appears as if this number of men, properly distributed, would suffice to meet the demands of the busiest day. There might, accordingly, be a surplus of 9,000 wholly dispensed with, apart from any improvement in organisation of the work. The mean number employed during the year, taking averages for each month, was only 11,935; so that it might conceivably be possible, by improved organisation of the work, to dispense with anything up to 2,500 more. It is significant to notice that it is not the fluctuations of work from day to day, *in the port as a whole*, that cause the bulk of the irregularity of employment. This only varies from about 11,000 to 15,000; and might, therefore, apart from any improvement in the organisation of the business, cause 4,000 to be occasionally idle. What causes nearly 10,000 men to be constantly in attendance in excess of the maximum requirements of the port as a whole, and causes nearly all the 24,000 to be chronically under-employed, is merely the lack of organisation of the hiring of labourers and of the necessary reserve.*

We have described the case of the London and Liverpool Dock labourer in detail, because the connection between the method of engagement and the chronic state of Under-employment is there close, obvious and undoubted. But the dock labourer presents only one example of what is common to the whole range of the one to two millions of men who are chronically Under-employed. In almost every great industry we find the employer or his foreman—partly from a sense of the convenience of being able at any moment to get all the labour he requires for an urgent demand, but mainly, as we prefer to believe, without actually realising what he is doing—tending to attract outside his wharf, or at his factory gates,† or on the list of persons to whom he gives out work, or to whom he sends a postcard when he has a job, a group of workers who look principally to him for employment, on whom he relies as extra hands to meet the emergencies of his busiest days, and who, therefore (whether through their fears of missing a chance of work from him, or because he likes to be sure of a sufficient reserve), do not easily seek work elsewhere. In fact, as we have been told: "Employers sometimes object to men whom they employ habitually (not regularly) working for a rival employer, even on off days."‡ Nevertheless, as we have it in evidence, "Employers with a fluctuating demand for labour do not as a rule keep a regular staff, even up to the minimum number required on their slackest day. A wharfinger requiring daily from 100 to 200 men will perhaps have only 50 regular men, and will use the other 50 places that might have been permanent in order to keep together a reserve for emergencies. Sometimes this takes shape in a very definite plan of giving out work in rotation."§ Each wharfinger, each contractor, each manufacturer, each giver-out of work to be done at home, each builder's foreman,‖ tends thus to accumulate his own reserve of labour, his own "stagnant pool," from which he draws to satisfy the maximum demands of his business.¶ But as the busiest days of the different employers

* The sum of the maxima employed by the 115 wharves of London on their several busiest days in November, 1906, was 8,035; yet the maximum number ever employed by these wharves, as a whole, on any one day in that month was only 6,615; and the average number employed throughout the month was only 5,536. (Board of Trade Memorandum on Statistics of Seasonal Industries and Industries carried on by Casual Labour, Appendix No. XXI. (D.) to Vol. IX.)

† We have had many instances described to us of "the tendency for every separate employer giving out work to collect men looking for work outside the gate of the works." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 78129.)

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 77832, Par. 9 (*b*).

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 77832, Par. 9 (*a*).

‖ In 1895, it was given in evidence that "almost every foreman would have a nucleus, on any big job, of men that he knows, and very likely would have their names and addresses, and would write to them if the men did not follow him up on their own account." (Third Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, *Q.* 10913.)

¶ This is, of course, no new practice. It is interesting to note that it was reported as long ago as 1806 that "the opulent clothiers make it a rule to have one-third more men than they can employ, and thus these have to stand still part of their time." (Report of House of Commons Committee on the Woollen Trade, 1806.)

even in the same trade do not exactly coincide in time—as the busiest seasons of different trades occur at different parts of the year—the aggregate of these individual reserves of casual labour is far in excess of what is actually required by the industry of the country as a whole, *even on the busiest day of the year.* Hence the chronic Under-employment, varied by brief spells of work under pressure, of all the casual workers. Thus, as Mr. Beveridge rightly says, " the main force keeping together this under-employed reserve of labour is *the casual demand of a multiplicity of individual employers. Each employer has his own group of hangers-on at his gate, instead of all employers sharing a common reserve drawn from one centre.*"*

The evil effects of this method of engaging labour, which leads to each employer having a Stagnant Pool of his own, may be aggravated in various ways. Sometimes out of a mistaken philanthropy, or it may be out of a deliberate desire " to keep as many men about them as possible, in order to keep up an unlimited supply upon which to draw,"* the employer or his foreman takes means to " spread the work," or " share the jobs."‡ But there are graver abuses. The system gives a valuable patronage to the foreman, which sometimes leads to the exaction of bribes§ and is often, we are informed, the real obstacle to its reform. " The master porter, foreman, or other who has to get work done is much helped if he is always conferring a favour upon the man he employs, and a very marked favour upon those whom he employs frequently or constantly. This we believe to be the real objection to the schemes for diminishing the irregularity of employment in the docks and warehouses of Liverpool by an association among the employers of this kind of labour, so ably and powerfully urged by the leading men of that city for many years. The men responsible for getting the work done are afraid to give the men security of tenure, for fear lest it should weaken their power over them."‖ In fact, as we were informed, " the whole foreman system—however convenient from a business point of view—undoubtedly has the effect of keeping groups of men waiting about individual foremen and thus, as a whole, increasing the leakage of time between jobs and the total volume of labour in an occupation. The system increases enormously the uncertainty of employment. Men in the building trades, and even under local authorities, may be thrown out after years of fairly constant work by the death or removal of a particular foreman. The system undoubtedly lends itself to much abuse of patronage, and encourages convivial drinking as a means of ' keeping in ' with the foremen."¶

But it is not only the selfishness of the employer or the corrupt interests of a foreman that perpetuates the evil of each employer having his own reserve, or his own Stagnant Pool of Under-employed labour. Sometimes it is the employer who objects to, and the men who insist on, the system by which the men work only a few days per week. Sir Hugh Bell, for instance, has repeatedly explained how seriously the great firm of Bell Brothers and Company, Limited, loses by the men's irregularity of attendance.** More frequently both employers and employed prefer the demoralising system. Many of the

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 77832, Par. 9.

† Report to the City Council of the Commission of Inquiry into the Unemployed in Liverpool, 1894, *Qs.* 540–8.

‡ At Liverpool, it was alleged that " they have a method of calling out the (names of the) . . . men who have worked one day. If they have not enough . . . then they call out the men who have worked two." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 542.)

§ " I know cases of dock and tram work where the foreman had half-a-crown a week from each man, and if they did not pay half-a-crown to him, they got the sack." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 80063.)

‖ Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 31. At the Manchester Docks, the foreman objects to any system of " decasualising " the labour. " The objection of the foremen to the engagement of men on more permanent footing " was thought to be " more imaginary than real. But the fact remains that they did object. They came from Liverpool, and had been accustomed to a casual system, and did not want another. They could not be allowed to appoint permanent men, *and they liked having the patronage of giving the employment.* The additional advantage also existed in the present system that the traffic superintendent could hold the foremen responsible for the way in which work was executed. It was also admitted both that the men have more or less to follow particular foremen, and also that, though it was difficult to sift the tales of the alleged bribery of foremen, . . . yet it was possible there might be reason for them." (Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 28.)

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 77832, Par. 9 (c).

** *See*, for instance, *North Eastern Gazette*, May 1st, 1908.

casual workers, reports one of our committees, like the gambling nature of Under-employment. They earn high hourly rates, "and can break their employment for a day or two whenever they like without its permanent loss. The shipowners have a plentiful supply of good labour for permanent employ, and a great reservoir of inferior labour for exceptional or sudden wants. Neither side, therefore, wishes to disturb a practice which in some respects suits them, and thus a system is allowed to continue, which is wasteful of labour, demoralising to those not constantly in employ, terribly hard on the wives and children, and the main source of pauperism and its attendant evils in a vast population of nearly 750,000."* Finally, the men get into such a state that, even when they earn only low rates per hour, and are actually in distress, they are unable to remain continuously at work. "There is little doubt," report our Investigators, "that a number of men object to regular and continuous work. There has been much evidence of men leaving the relief work after a few days nominally for other jobs, but, as was shown, when they were revisited at a later date, really because they were tired of it." †

(viii.) *Existing Agencies dealing with the Under-employed.*

We do not think it necessary, in the light of the preceding pages, to dwell at any length upon the utter inappropriateness and inadequacy of the existing agencies for dealing with the distress of the Under-employed. If the provision of Out of Work Pay by Trade Union Insurance is impossible for the Men of Discontinuous Employment, it is obviously still more out of the reach of the Under-employed. In no way can it be ascertained at present whether the casual labourer who professes to be starving has really sought the thousand and one odd jobs for unskilled labour which are offered each morning, and every hour of the day, in any great city. In no way, at present, can it be proved, on any particular day, what is the surplus of men seeking jobs, over and above the aggregate of jobs that are being offered, somewhere or other in the 300 square miles of commercial and industrial London, or the 50 to 100 square miles of the business and manufacturing aggregations at Liverpool and Manchester, among the thickly clustered towns of the Black Country and the Clyde estuary, in the West Riding and along Tyneside. Yet without some check of this kind, no system of Unemployment Insurance, by whomsoever organised, and no provision of Out of Work Pay, by whomsoever provided, could possibly be maintained. The same difficulty of ascertaining and identifying the real surplus hampers equally the Distress Committees and the Municipal Authorities in providing Employment Relief,‡ and discourages both private alms-giving and the grant of Outdoor Relief. All these expedients for meeting the distress and destitution to which the Under-employed are reduced—inevitable as it may be to resort to them in emergencies, when nothing better can be done—have the drawback of positively aggravating the evil. Individuals are temporarily relieved at the expense of perpetuating, and even increasing, the vicious Under-employment system itself. The same is true of the mistaken philanthropist's device of "sharing work," or giving each man work for half a day or half a week only, or taking the work in rotation. This, which has long

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* Reports of Visits by Commissioners, No. 1 F., p. 8., Liverpool.—"Mr. X. took four porters at random, and asked them questions, *e.g.*, how long they had been at the docks, wages, conditions, and especially, whether they would accept a fixed wage for six days' work a week. The answer to this last, in three cases out of the four, was that they preferred to remain as they were, *i.e.*, they would not give up the freedom of taking a day off when they wished, and lying in bed longer when they wished. This was stated quite frankly, even in the case of the best of them—a man of about 35, perfectly steady, with a family, and a home of his own, rented at 5s. (not a flat), a man, indeed, of whom my guide had a high opinion. One, a 'regular Liverpool Docker,' of the hooligan class, with no home ties but a sister and brother, said he gave 14s. a week as a fixed sum for the house-keeping, and kept the rest, whatever it was. This man, a young fellow, evidently thought the idea of giving up his present life for a six days' week only a good joke." (*Ibid.*, No. 1 C., p. 5.)

† Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 60.

‡ "In the part of London I know," said Mr. T. Mackay, "you have got an intermittently employed population. Every man in St. George's-in-the-East is unemployed, so to speak; that is, he has no regular employer. They are all employed by the hour, or the day; and if you meet a man off his job, he is practically unemployed. If you open Relief Works there is nothing to prevent that man walking in any day he is unemployed, or if he does not like the job he is on." (Third Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, 1895, *Q.* 5368.)

been a device of the Under-employed themselves,* as well as of their employers, really enlarges the circle of those condemned to chronic Under-employment. For the essential evil of the whole system of engaging labour for casual jobs, and of each employer tending to accentuate his own reserve or his own Stagnant Pool of labour, is the retention, in a particular district, of a much larger number of men, expecting such jobs, than are required for the performance of the whole of the jobs on the busiest day. What is required is some improvement in organisation which stops the waste of unemployed time, and more accurately adjusts the supply of labour to the demand. Whether we give doles of Municipal Employment, doles of Outdoor Relief, or doles of alms—whether we spread the work or share out the jobs among all who clamour for them—we do nothing to effect any such adjustment. This or that individual is temporarily fed who would otherwise starve.† But the system, which necessarily involves a constant surplus of labourers and their chronic Under-employment, is not changed; and by the silent enlargement of the Stagnant Pools that goes on if the men are maintained, the evil has been even increased.‡

(D) Are Women Unemployed?

We have so far left unmentioned the case of women, who are to be found, of course, in each of our classes, and whose sufferings from industrial disorganisation are certainly no less than those of men. We have found it impossible to obtain any statistics as to the number of women in distress from Unemployment. Women constitute only a small fraction of the applicants to Distress Committees; perhaps because these Committees have so far been able to afford them little help. Able-bodied women without husbands or young children are nowadays scarcely to be found in the Workhouses. Just at the time when the number of Able-bodied Men in the Workhouse is seriously increasing, the number of Able-bodied unencumbered Women—at one time considerable—has fallen away to next to nothing. This is all the more significant in view of the fact that the number of Able-bodied Women, unencumbered with husbands or children, who are in receipt of Outdoor Relief is very small.

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* "The Unions connected with waterside labour do not pay out-of-work benefit, and the only way in which, as a rule, they attempt to mitigate the effect of want of employment is by various methods of equalising work in slack times. One of the commonest of these measures is the penalisation of overtime by insisting on extra rates of pay after certain hours. . . . Another plan adopted by some classes of waterside labourers is that of rotation of gangs, so that all may share in the work. Thus the dock labourers working for a certain firm of shipowners at the Albert Docks are divided into five gangs, of which the one which has the first position on the list for one fortnight occupies the second place for the next fortnight, then the third place, and so forth. Again, the riverside corn-porters working regularly at the Surrey Docks are divided into twenty-eight gangs, among whom a certain rotation is observed. No casual labour is taken on until all these gangs are employed . . . Schemes, however, on a large scale for equalising work, such as ordinary dock labour, among an indefinite and elastic number of low-skilled labourers are, as a rule, found impracticable as a means of dealing with want of employment." (Board of Trade Report on Agencies and Methods for dealing with the Unemployed, 1893, pp. 89–90.)

† The individuals thus assisted are not permanently benefited. At every opening of the books of the Distress Committee the same cases recur. We append some typical statistics:—

Summary of Cases Registered in the Years 1905–6 and 1906–7, and also registered in Previous Years:—

Of 1,165 men registered in 1906–7:—
- 327 men registered in 1906–7 and 1905–6 only.
- 27 " " " 1906–7 and 1904–5 only.
- 133 " " " 1906–7, 1905–6 and 1904–5.
- 12 " " " 1906–7, 1905–6 and 1903–4.
- 81 " " " 1906–7, 1905–6, 1904–5 and 1903–4.
- 12 " " " 1906–7, 1904–5 and 1903–4.

Of 2,040 men registered in 1905–6:—
- 564 men registered in 1904–5 and 1905–6.
- 88 " " " 1903–4 and 1905–6.
- 206 " " " 1905–6, 1904–5 and 1903–4.

Of the 281 men for whom work was provided in the winter of 1905–6, 177 applied in 1906–7, showing a percentage of 63.

Of the 2,040 men who applied during the winter of 1905–6, 553 applied again in 1906–7, showing a percentage of 27·1.

(Report of Camberwell Distress Committee, 1906–7.)

‡ "When centres of casual labour have thus been formed, it is clear that all artificial schemes for supplementing casual earnings by the offer of further opportunities for casual earning—for example, by a regular system of Borough Council Relief Work, or by wood-chopping yards—only tend to aggravate the evils when once they have become permanent." (Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, p. 7.)

So far as women suffer distress from Unemployment, they are distributed among our three classes in quite different proportions from the men. In Class I., Women from Permanent Situations, we find beyond individual cases here and there, practically none. The greatest occupation of this kind for women is domestic service ; and in this there seems to be a chronic state of unsatisfied demand—a demand accompanied, however, by the requirement of residence in the employer's family, which seriously narrows the sources of supply. The large number of women now employed in all great cities in offices, warehouses, shops and restaurants—as distinguished from those employed in the actual processes of manufacture—usually hold regular situations at weekly wages. These, so far as we can discover, are—so great and growing is the demand—seldom in distress from Unemployment ; though occasionally losing time from "leakages" between situations. Of Class II., Women of Discontinuous Employment, although individuals exist here or there, there is no whole trade comparable with the building trade operatives or the navvies ; unless we may include here those female hotel servants who habitually take "season" engagements. Practically the whole of the women in distress from Unemployment belong to our Class III., the Under-employed, their case being usually aggravated by seasonal rather than by cyclical fluctuations of trade.

From Unemployment of this kind—seasonal slackness, resulting in prolonged Under-employment, women suffer to an even greater extent than men. We were supplied by the Women's Industrial Council with much useful information on this point :—

> "We have a good many replies from unions in the textile trade in Lancashire, etc., where the record usually is, that for the past two or three years almost every available woman and girl has been able to find work in the mills, as they are so busy. The Hyde and Hadfield Weavers' Association, however, reports 150 female members unemployed now, out of a total of 5,000, and the numbers unemployed during the past year average from 100 to 200. These women are cotton weavers, winders and warpers, and some have been out for three months, some more, owing to the introduction of Northrop looms and other labour-saving machinery. The Bury Cardblowing and Ringroom Operatives' Association has sixteen cardroom operatives out of work now, out of 600 female members, and has had sixty-eight during the past year. The Todmorden and District Weavers' and Winders' Association has 100 unemployed out of about 1,000 female members, and has had 150 during the past year as the result of a strike. The Hyde and District Card-Blowing Room Operatives' and Ring Spinners' Association has about eight unemployed now out of 1,400, and has had about forty during the year. . . . The Cigar Makers' Union reports about seventy-four unemployed now out of a membership of 894 females. A correspondent in the cigar trade in the Midlands reports that the trade has suffered very much in Birmingham, Coventry and Leicester, especially as cigars have, for some reason (probably cheapness) been replaced by the vogue of cigarette smoking. The two trades are quite separate, the cigar makers being highly skilled workers who are usually apprenticed for five years, during which they get very low wages, and some of these girls have turned their hands to dressmaking or working at the Dunlop rubber mills, etc. Many of them were married women. The secretary of the Clothiers' Operatives of Leeds reports that the clothing trade is very different to most other trades, as the females are generally on piece-work, and, no matter how slack work is, they are not discharged. Therefore the number of unemployed is no guide as to the state of the labour market. A Preston correspondent tells us that dressmakers and milliners suffer from seasonal slackness, expecting, indeed, two or three months' loss of work in a year, and that some of these went into the mills in the less arduous departments when they were finding their own trade slack, and that some of them are remaining there so as not to risk out-of-work periods again. Upholsterers report a slack period in November, January, and February ; whilst the shirt and collar makers in Taunton say that : 'there is a slack period of four or five months in the summer.' Clerks and shop-assistants both give account of a good many out of work. The Aberdeen Shop Assistants' Branch paid unemployed benefit to two women out of forty-four during the past year ; one, a milliner for one week, and the other, a saleswoman in a fruit-shop, for twelve weeks. Another, a London branch, reports two out of work now, and nine during the past year, for periods varying from three to twelve weeks, out of a total of fifty-two female members." *

In London valuable testimony was given by philanthropic workers among girls and women.

"Miss Cheetham, Canning Town Settlement, puts down roughly three facts :—

> "(i.) That all the working girls in our clubs give evidence of short time during the late winter. The girls I questioned last week belonged to (*a*) jam ; (*b*) paper ; (*c*) match ; (*d*) mat ; (*e*) pickle ; (*f*) baking-powder (factories) ; (*g*) shirt-making. Every one of these girls had been on short time for part or the whole of the winter in some departments of their work, at any rate, with the result that those girls who, when working full time, can earn about 12s. a week, have for many months now averaged not more than 9s. weekly.

* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 82467, Pars. 4, 5.

"(ii.) Those women, widows, etc., who earn their living by taking in shirt-making and tailoring to do at their own homes, all complain of slackness of work, so that they could not get the work, much less earn a livelihood by it. Have seen much distress amongst these shirt-makers this winter, and we have had no work-room open to help them!

"(iii.) There is very little charing or washing to be had in a district likeCanning Town, few being able to afford to pay wages. Even the laundries have been slack and have had to discharge hands."

"The club which makes the most special point of interesting itself in the industrial welfare as well as moral welfare of its members, the Jewish Working Girls' Club, Dean Street, Soho, reports that it has 375 members, 341 of whom work for wages; that about twenty are unemployed now, and that during the past year about 200 have been unemployed for periods of from one week to three months. The unemployment occurred in the dressmaking, Millinery, tailoring, and corset-making trades, and was due to seasonal slackness. There is an employment bureau connected with the club, and employment was found for 152 girls last year, some of them being cases of unemployment. Many girls learn secondary trades in the club, and they try to make a little out of this work. . .

"A Mission at Seven Dials has about 200 women and girls connected with it, a large number being employed at Crosse & Blackwell's. Work here is seasonal and the girls are often out. They fill in their time in various ways, a large proportion going to cardboard-box making under other women who have piece-work. Others go to seed-sorting at Carter's and other large seed merchants. A club in the City Road returns thirty-five workers, of whom four are now out of work, fifteen have been out for periods of two or three weeks during the past year, their work being that of upholsterers, sweet fillers, paper-folders, hawkers, and in Lipton's."

From Euston Road Miss Bunting reports that:—

"Many of the girls were on three-quarter or even half-time for weeks and weeks during the winter. The tailoresses, of course; the liquorice girls at various intervals; Maple's carpet-weavers for nearly six months had slack work; between Christmas and Easter the rest of them had three days a week at home constantly. Shoolbred's carpet-sewers were so slack before Christmas that four girls left. One got work elsewhere, one went to service." *

The difficulties created by the "seasonal" fluctuations in the volume of the employment in nearly all the manufacturing industries in which women are engaged, are increased by the extremely low rates of remuneration for women's work of this kind.

It is sometimes assumed or suggested that, in trades in which there is much seasonal slackness, the earnings during the months of brisk trade will always be higher than in trades offering continuous employment; and high enough to enable the workers to be supported in the slack time out of the savings which they ought to make. Unfortunately this economic assumption is even less true as regards women's work than it is with regard to men's. We have been painfully impressed by the evidence afforded to us that many hundreds of thousands of adult able-bodied women, giving their whole time to their work, can, even in times of full employment, earn only the barest maintenance. Even in workshops and factories there are many thousands of women, in London and other towns, whose full week's earnings do not exceed 6s. or 8s.; whilst 10s. a week is a good wage. Among the outworkers the condition of things is even worse. Though a small proportion of them may earn a fair wage, there are many who get only a starvation pittance. To give only one instance a Relieving Officer of Birmingham informed our Investigators that:—

"Button and hook and eye carding is done at home by some who apply for relief. It is the last resort of those who have come down and who delay coming for relief until they are in the deepest destitution. They get starvation wages. About 6d. a day is the most they can get. A woman would have to work very hard to earn 3s. 6d. per week if confined to her own labour." †

Our Investigators expressly report that:—

"The wages paid for home work in wholesale tailoring and corset making of the cheaper class—which is the chief part of the Bristol trade—are so exceedingly low that no amount of industry on the part of the worker could provide an adequate support for a single woman." ‡

The example of women disposes, we think, of the suggestion which has been quite seriously made to us, that *Unemployment might be prevented if only the workers would*

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* Evidence before the Commission, Q. 82467, Pars. 9411.

† Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss R. E. Squire, 1907, p. 98.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

accept lower wages! The docility of women, and their lack of organisation, has led them to take this course; but although women's wages are as low as anyone could conceive possible, this does not prevent their having to stand idle, probably to an even greater extent than men, at each recurring slack season.

These facts must not, however, be allowed to obscure what seems to us the most important feature of the women's case. Only a small minority of the women in distress from lack of work are unencumbered independent wage-earners, both supporting themselves entirely from their own earnings and having no one but themselves to support. Among this class, though there may be occasional Unemployment, and certainly recurrent Under-employment, there is—so long as they retain their health—very little distress. The vast majority of the cases of suffering and distress among women are those of mothers of families, who have either no husbands, or whose husbands are, for one reason or another, not at work, or are not earning enough to maintain them and the children. It is upon these unfortunate mothers, who are driven to engage in industrial work, without technical training, encumbered by home ties and responsibilities, and desperately anxious to make up the family livelihood, that the main burden of the suffering of Unemployment falls.

It would, however, be misleading to ascribe the distress of these mothers to the conditions—bad as they are—under which women work, or to the Unemployment from which they suffer. They are unwilling recruits in an industrial army which has no real need for them, and for which their circumstances unfit them. "Undoubtedly," reports our Investigator, "in the great majority of cases the cause of [the women] taking in work is that the husband's work is casual, or ill paid, or that he is in some trade, such as a carman's, where he is liable to work short time."* The present Archbishop of York (lately Bishop of Stepney) gave us the following testimony:—

> "I might mention that I made a long tour of visits to women engaged in what are called these sweated industries in a certain district of London; I visited them all, and went as carefully as I could into their conditions. I remember in one day five or six cases where the unemployment of the man—and in most of these cases they were dock labourers—had forced the young wife, in spite of her having children, some of them children whom she ought to have been nursing, to undertake this sort of labour."†

We were given the following instance by the Women's Industrial Council. One club leader writes:—

> "I cannot give you any exact statistics of unemployed in our club, as owing to the large number of married women who only work when their husbands are ill or under special circumstances, it is difficult to know when they actually want work and cannot get it, or when they think it best not to work, but to stay at home."‡

It is, therefore, clear that a large part of the evils of Under-employment among women are, in these cases at any rate, "effect not cause. They generally originate in the fact that women, unskilled and unable, even not desiring, to work regularly, compete in low-grade occupations at the time when their casually employed husbands and fathers are out of work. . . . Casual employment is one of the most potent causes of sweating in the ordinary sense. When the head of the family cannot get enough work, his wife and children are driven out to take what they can get at once. The tendency of low-grade women's industries—jam making, sack and tarpaulin work, matchbox making and the like—to get established in districts where casual labour for men is rife has often been noticed. The effect, of course, is to increase the immobility of the labourer; even if his earnings dwindle away to almost nothing he is kept from effectively seeking work elsewhere by the occupation of his family."§ The distress of the women, and, more important still, the neglect of the children, has obviously to be remedied, not by dealing with the conditions of employment of the mother, but by dealing with the Unemployment or Under-employment of the husband and father.

We may regard in an analogous way the tens of thousands of unfortunate widows left with young children to maintain. These can never, so long as their children need their care, become regular and efficient recruits of the industrial army. It is in vain

* Final Report on the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment, by Mr. Thomas Jones, p. 22.

† Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 79641.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 82467, Par. 13.

§ "Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909, pp. 108–9.

that the Central (Unemployed) Body, and one or two Distress Committees, have sought to meet their need by the opening of workrooms, where the women are employed in making garments. It is no gain, in dealing with the problem as a whole, to set these mothers to work at the most "sweated" of trades, in which there is a chronic oversupply of labour. In so far as they produce in the over-stocked market commodities of commercial value, they are but taking the work out of other women's hands. This has been pointed out by those most closely responsible for the administration of the workrooms. Far more sensible is the practice of most Unions of allowing freely Outdoor Relief (unhappily as we have seen, seldom adequate in amount) to the widowed mothers of young children. In our view, such mothers should not be aided or encouraged to engage in industrial work at all. As we have already said in Part I. of this Report, we have chosen so to organise our industry that it is to the man that is paid the income necessary for the support of the family, on the assumption that the work of the woman is to care for the home and the children. The result is that mothers of young children, if they seek industrial employment, do so under the double disadvantage that the woman's wage is fixed to maintain herself alone, and that even this can be earned only by giving up to work the time that is needed for the care of the children. When the breadwinner is withdrawn by death or desertion, or is, from illness or Unemployment unable to earn the family maintenance, the bargain which the community virtually made with the woman on her marriage—that the maintenance of the home should come through the man—is broken. It seems to us clear that, if only for the sake of the interest which the community has in the children, there should be adequate provision made from public funds for the maintenance of the home, conditional on the mother's abstaining from industrial work, and devoting herself to the care of the children.

(E) CLASS IV.—THE UNEMPLOYABLE.

The Unemployable are the "Can't Works" and the "Won't Works." To this type there approximate a heterogeneous crowd of persons without any recognised means of subsistence, who either do not seek work, or who seek it in vain, being, owing to physical or mental shortcomings, in such a condition that they are not taken on by any employer or, if taken on, are incapable of working, or are unwilling to work, or to retain any situation, for more than a few hours.* In this crowd there are to be found men who have fallen from every social grade, every profession and every section of the wage-earners; along with others who have, so to speak, been born and bred in the class, and have known no other experience. Among them we find many of feeble intellect and infirm will, but also some of moral refinement and exceptional talent. Others, again, are strong and competent, but of incurably parasitic or criminal disposition.‡ To the observer of this flotsam and jetsam of our industrial life, it recalls the wreckage with which a foundered liner strews the ocean shore; material once of the most hetereogeneous and sharply differentiated kinds, bright and clean and in active use, but now so battered and sodden as to appear,in bulk, almost homogeneous in its worthlessness—nevertheless yielding, if sorted out and properly treated, much that can still be made serviceable; sometimes matter that will become dangerous unless put in a proper place; and occasionally, lost to the world, a gem of real value.‡

* "My experience," deposed a clergyman of experience among the Unemployed of Yorkshire, "leads me to the conclusion that one of the chief difficulties to be met lies in the physical unfitness of a large proportion of candidates for charity or relief to compete with their stronger fellows. They are soon exhausted, even when put to such light labour as cutting firewood, and they are quite incapable of earning a wage upon which they can live. They cannot keep a job for long, and often take to begging, and finally become chargeable to the rates in the Workhouse or the taxpayers in the ranks of habitual criminals." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 42048, Par. 2.) "A great many of the men who register their names [at the Bolton Distress Committee], are physically unfit to do a day's labour, and a number are those who never follow any regular employment, but do an odd job occasionally." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 36693, Par. 25.)

† "Those who, from one cause or another, are unable or unwilling to do a fair day's work of average quality or quantity owe their position to many causes, and come from all ranks of society. Among the chief causes may be enumerated ill-health, intemperance, restlessness (*often produced by irregularity of work* . . .), hereditary incapacity, improvidence, overwhelming misfortune, orphanage, bad home-training." (Report to City Council of Commission of Inquiry into the Subject of the Unemployed in Liverpool, 1894, Par. 21., p. xv.) Voluntary agencies give similar accounts. Officers of the Salvation Army have laid stress on the "large proportion made up of these unhappy people who *from prolonged misfortune* have almost reached the stage of despair. . . . There is also a fair sprinkling of skilled workmen of all trades, and broken down clerks and professional men in this class, but as a rule some moral disability *or advancing age* has been a contributory cause of their present condition." (*Manchester Evening News*, December 13th, 1905.) The Secretary of the Church Army deposed that: "About 17 per cent. of Labour Home inmates in 1907 were dismissed, or absconded. Dismissals are almost invariably caused through drink. . . . Amongst the married men given day work there are few dismissals, but many do not come after the first day, lacking industry and perseverance. *Men of troublesome or vindictive character* are rare. Lack of initiative; objection to steady employment; and excessive drinking seem to be the chief faults in the men who seek assistance from the society.' (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 93611, Pars. 8, 10).

‡ *See*, for instance, the "Autobiography of a Super-Tramp," by W. H. Davies, 1908.

These men are to be found, in greater or smaller numbers, wherever subsistence is to be had without work, or with only slight and intermittent work. Perhaps the largest section of them is that which habitually resorts to the Casual Wards of England and Wales, the "Casual Sick Houses" of Scotland and the sheds and outhouses set aside for the "night lodgers" of the Irish Poor Law. Quite apart from the navvy and the genuine seeker after work, who are found in these refuges in all but the times of brisk trade, there are estimated to be, always on the move, an army of between 20,000 and 30,000 professional tramps, to whom this mode of existence is habitual.* Next to these must be reckoned the "Houseless Poor" of London, Manchester, Liverpool, the Black Country and other large centres of population; heterogeneous crowds of men who (though often confused with the Vagrants) seldom leave their own particular urban aggregations. These men oscillate between the Casual Wards and Free Shelters of their neighbourhoods, with occasional nights in the Common Lodging Houses; and between all these and the General Mixed Workhouse, where they form a great part of the troublesome class of "Ins and Outs." Latterly, as we have mentioned, they have been accumulating in increasing numbers in the Workhouses of London and Liverpool, and in the larger Poorhouses of Scotland. We cannot estimate their aggregate number at much less than that of the Professional Tramps.

Among the Unemployable we must class, too, the extensive, though quite uncounted host of men who have settled down, with more or less infrequent odd jobs, to live in reality on the earnings of their wives, their children, or the women with whom they consort. What is socially most grave is not the existence of here and there parasitic individuals of this sort, but the degradation—owing to the combination of states of chronic Underemployment for the man with the habitual absorption in wage-earning occupation of mother and child—of whole batches of men, in particular industries or particular localities, into unemployable parasites.

Finally, we have, scattered all over the country, the prematurely invalidated of every kind and grade—the cripple, the man with defective eyesight or hearing, or with rupture or varicose veins, the able-bodied but aged man, the somewhat feeble-minded man, the sane epileptic whose fits are troublesome,† the chronic inebriate—in short, all sorts of men who have infirmities not grave enough to allow or to compel their admission to the hospital or Workhouse, but whom an employer will not hire at wages. There is some reason to fear that this section of the Unemployable is a steadily increasing one, partly because of the adverse physical influences of the town slums‡, and partly because employers are coming more and more to exact a high standard of physical fitness.

All these different sections of the Unemployable exist at the edge of destitution, into which they are individually perpetually falling. We see them accordingly now and then getting relief, as we have described, on account of "Sudden or Urgent Necessity"; getting admitted for a day or two at laxly administered Labour Yards; or being discharged from the Relief Works of even the most long-suffering Distress Committee.‡ But although

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* Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, par. 74, p. 22.

† "Epileptics," deposed a doctor, "cannot obtain employment. They start work—have a fit—and are discharged on the spot. I saw one man on three occasions at three different works in this district. He had had a fit on each occasion and was discharged on the spot each time." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 43126, Par. 10.)

‡ The Managing Director of a great brewery company informed us that 16 per cent. of all their applicants for employment were rejected on medical grounds; and that, "generally speaking, it is the impression of the Board that few town-bred men satisfy the requirements of the company as regards physique." (Evidence before the Commission, Latouche, not yet in volume form.)

‡ The percentage of such dismissals varies enormously. In 1887–8, out of 394 men who were given relief work by the Mansion House Committee, no fewer than "134 were dismissed for misconduct or incapacity." (Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 41.) On the other hand, in 1906–7, under the Stepney Distress Committee, "out of 1,461 applicants sixty-four were rejected for defective character, fifty-three dismissed for grave faults, eleven found unsatisfactory by previous Committees, and ninety-five who could show no verifiable record of Employment." (Report of Stepney Distress Committee, 1907.) It must be remembered that the man who will really do no work at all is rare; and that all the "work shy" come into this class. "They will work for two or three days, and then go off," deposed one of the chief officials of the Salvation Army. "But I have no recollection of having met a man who said deliberately that he would not work. It is my experience all over the country that they will start; they will take a pick and shovel, though they may throw it into the ditch within an hour." (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q.* 6129).

the whole class of the Unemployable are perpetually passing in and out of the Poor Law in and out of the Employment Relief of the Distress Committee, and in and out of the operations of Voluntary Charity, it may safely be said that the greater part of their maintenance, *which we cannot put at less than a couple of millions sterling annually*, is, in one way or another, a burden on the lowest paid and most irregularly employed sections of the wage-earning class.

This whole class exists, year in and year out, irrespective of the state of trade. Even in the busiest times—even when employers are really in need of men—the Unemployable are not employed. What is even graver is that we are, year by year, creating new Unemployables. The class is, indeed, no mere inheritance from an evil past. Its members are not, on the whole, long-lived. If we were suddenly relieved of the whole of the present incubus, without any change in the conditions, we should, within ten or twelve years, have just as many Unemployables on our hands as ever. It behoves us, therefore, to examine whence it is that they are being continually recruited.

(i.) *The Daily Manufacture of the Unemployable.*

The Unemployables come, it is clear, from all sources. We may disregard, in this consideration, the rare figure of the ruined baronet or clergyman, university graduate or younger son, who, through drink, drugs, or gambling, sinks to the legion of the lost. We may disregard, too, the really professional criminals, who are—perhaps equally rarely—occasionally in distress from want of employment. Confining our attention to those Unemployables who represent the wastage from the manual working, wage-earning class, we must distinguish those who, in the prime of life, drop into the Unemployable class, from those who graduate to it from adolescence or gravitate to it from the premature appearance of old age.

We may, in the first place, here and there watch the descent of men from our Class I. Losing their permanent situations, they seek in vain for another. After trying expedient after expedient, some of them—perhaps because unanchored to a home, perhaps because of too restless a disposition to starve in one place—take "to the road," and gradually adopt the life of the Professional Tramp. The process has been sketched by one who has spent many years as a well-conducted but habitual Vagrant. "This man soon begins to see that the life of a man out of work is not so terrible after all. He gets enough to eat, and is free to go his way and he has no responsibilities. A fine healthy appetite compensates for the low quality of his food; for he will now relish plain bread and cheese as he never relished the beefsteak and onions of his former days. Day after day he passes before strange eyes, and, therefore, has no need to study appearances. He loses all fret, and settles himself to a wandering life. He cannot fail to see how happy are the real beggars he meets on the road and in lodging-houses—and he soon becomes indifferent to work."*

More frequently, however, the descent is from Class II., the Men of Discontinuous Employment. To these men, the relatively high earnings whilst at work, the brutalising conditions of their labour and the incessant recurrence of days, and perhaps weeks of idleness, afford an almost irresistible temptation to drink. The haphazard way of taking on men without references, and discharging at a moment's notice those who prove themselves unfit, both facilitates and encourages bouts of drunkenness. The man of irregular habits does not fail to get employment; what happens is that his employment is even more discontinuous than that of the men to be depended on. "It is at the beginning of a job, as a rule," we are told, that men are sacked for drunkenness or incompetence. "As a job goes on, you generally find the right men and keep them on."† "A good many are discharged for losing time, inefficiency and drunkenness," deposed another witness. "I am very sorry to say that the drunkenness business is a big item in the building trade. They are generally no good for a day or two after Bank Holiday, and very little good on each Monday. We have to keep our

* "How it feels to be out of work," by W. H. Davies (*English Review*, December, 1908); author of "Autobiography of a Super-Tramp."

† Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, *Q.* 399.

eyes a little closed on the Monday and to try to make them do more on the Tuesday." * But it is not always through drunkenness that these Men of Discontinuous Employment drop into the Unemployable class. "You would be surprised," said a Manager of a building firm, "at the number of men that we have to discharge after two or three days. Some of them do not want the work. . . . In Princes Street we had a job outside the Bank of England with excavators. We are continually discharging men. They will not do the work. They say it is too hard." In reply to the question whether this was through inefficiency or laziness, the witness replied: "Laziness, I should say. A good many of the wives of the workmen are ironers and washers. They work at the wash-tub and earn a good wage." † But the man may find himself continually turned off for mere incapacity, due to physical or mental shortcomings. "If," said a builder, "I employ a man who cannot do his work and he fails in an hour or two, because, perhaps, he has not been fed for weeks as he ought to have been, I have to dismiss him. I do not know the cause of the failure, and I do not ask the cause. I cannot go to him and say: 'My man, have you not had anything to eat for a week?' or something of that sort. I simply say: 'Come to the office and get your money.'" ‡ It is, in fact, difficult to discover, in any hasty survey, whether the inability to work arises from physical weakness or mental. "It is not the unwillingness to work," explained an experienced Manager of a philanthropic Labour Yard, "so much as the lack of power to persist in work. So many men seem to be able to work spasmodically; I find increasing difficulty on that point in getting men work, and they do not seem to be able at all to continue long in work." § Such men, if not taken hold of in time, and cured, do not remain at this stage. They "quickly become degenerate in their habits, commence to drink and gamble, become loafers and spongers and criminals and paupers, living upon women, or upon the community as best they can." ‖

The navvies, or "public works men," are, owing to their wandering life, and usual lack of a home, even more apt than the building operatives to drop into the Unemployable class. There has grown up a whole host of men who get only a day's work now and then, but who are habitually parasitic upon those who are employed. "It is an established fact," stated the Chairman of the Gloucestershire Vagrancy Committee, "that wherever the navvies are at work, there vagrants abound. I suppose the ostensible idea of people being there is that they are attracted by the work. I believe they cadge upon the navvy. The navvy is a generous sort of fellow, he gets large pay and they turn up when he is paid, and they get a 1s. and so forth from him. And on the road they have always got the plausible excuse that they are going down to Bristol seeking for work. I daresay you know similar cases have occurred elsewhere. For instance, while the Manchester Ship Canal was being constructed the number of tramps was so great there that I believe they had to hire warehouses to accommodate them."¶ We have had described to us in evidence, by the same witness, on the one hand the constant increase in Scotland of the Professional Tramp and the perpetual recruitment of this class from the Men of Discontinuous Employment, and, on the other, the growth of this latter class, owing to the discontinuance of the engagements for definite terms that once characterised that country. The "daily pay" system, under which men are actually paid off at the end of each day, to be employed or not on the morrow as it may suit the convenience of the employer, or the caprice of the men, is said to be spreading in all directions.** "We are at our wits' end to know how to deal with the tramps," said the Chief Constable of Kirkcaldy.†† The tramp nuisance "is very much on the increase in Scotland." Sixty per cent. of them "are habitual 'ne'er-do-wells,' 25 per cent. casual labourers, and 15 per cent. other seekers for work." ‡‡

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 134.
† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 1664–6.
‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 143.
§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 37470.
‖ *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXVIII. (par. 9) to Vol. VIII.
¶ Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, *Q.* 1571. "There is this to be said about 1903," deposed the Chairman of the Wiltshire Vagrancy Committee, "that there were large works going on, and whenever that is the case an immense number of navvies are travelling, and there is always a certain percentage of men following after those navvies that are not navvies at all; they follow them and cadge on the navvies." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 1896.) For evidence that the presence of navvies in a district attracts vagrants, who come to cadge on the navvies, *see ibid.*, *Qs.* 1571–3, 1664, 1767–70, 1806, 1807, 1896, 1962, 1963, 2135, 2448, 4280–3, 5543, 5544, 6670, 6806, 6807, 6936–41, 7634.
** Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 94786–99.
†† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 94777.
‡‡ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 94783–9.

But the most prolific of all the sources of the Unemployable is, without doubt, our Class III., the Under-employed. Here the causes of the worker's fall are to be sought far less in his personal weaknesses or shortcomings, though these all co-operate, than in the system of Under-employment to which he is condemned. "It is not," testifies an experienced Charity Organisation Society secretary, "that the casual man has a larger dose of original sin than his fellows; it is that he is exactly what any other class in the community would become . . . were they submitted for any length of time to the same system of employment. . . . That so large a proportion are weak in character should not surprise, when the conditions of their employment are remembered. The men flit from odd job to odd job; their 'characters' are not 'taken up'; when no records are kept, strenuous efforts to maintain a high moral standard do not necessarily secure a man a preference, and complete failure to maintain the ordinary standard of his class creates no prejudice against him in the eyes of a fresh employer. *The world of work to the typical casual man is governed by chance, for the good are not more successful in securing work than the evil. No class in the community could withstand the demoralising influence of such a view of life and such a system.*"*

(ii.) *The Wife and Mother as Breadwinner.*

To this class there comes with special force the temptation afforded by women's work. The household of the Casual Labourer, subject to chronic Under-employment, cannot possibly be maintained at all without making use of the wife's earning power. At Liverpool, for instance, "there is a good deal" of supplementing the wages by the women of the family, "*owing to the fact that so many dock labourers are very irregularly employed.* In many cases they depend to a very large extent upon the earnings of their wives and daughters, but those earnings are scanty and irregular."† In London, we are told, "the man's unemployment is almost without exception the cause of the woman's work."‡ "Eighty per cent. of the married women with young families engaged in outwork in Poplar are the wives of casual unskilled labourers, most of them connected with the docks. . . . Where many men are casually employed, there many married women will be found casually employed also. This is notoriously the case in districts like Bermondsey and Poplar, where there are many men in comparatively low-skilled, low-paid and irregular occupations. When the husband's work is slack or when he is ill, or when he is drinking, the wife goes out to do a little charing or a little fruit-picking, or a little of the hundred and one things a woman may do in London."§ Here the tragedy of the descent begins. "In the case of striving couples," we are told, "the extra shillings earned by the wife may help to sustain the standard of comfort in slack times and to raise it a little in good times. *But the husband may be anything but striving. He may be, and not infrequently is, in this class, a 'labourer' of one sort or another, whose demoralisation has been begun or continued by irregular employment and will now be completed by his wife's willingness to work.* The weaker husband, sometimes out of work, leans more and more on the stronger wife, sometimes in work, and by-and-by the husband is 'unemployed' and the wife doubly employed. . . . What is certain is that the irregularity of men's labour has a determining influence on the quality and amount of women's work and has far-reaching and injurious effects on family life."‖ "When," as the result of the scantiness of the man's earnings,

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* *Ibid.*, *Q.* 82147, par. 1, *note.* We append the following summary of "effects," as supplied by one of our witnesses:—

"(1) Deterioration both moral and physical of the man.

(2) The wives being sent out to work.

(3) The children made to work both in and out of school hours, and on leaving school being placed as errand boys, etc., instead of being put to a trade.

(4) Loss of articles pledged through inability to redeem them and partial loss of home, which is rarely recovered or replaced when once lost.

(5) Withdrawals of savings from provident clubs, loss of membership of friendly societies and trade societies." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 82377, par. 3.)

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 83326.

‡ City of Westminster Health Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1907–8. "But although immediate needs are there met, the woman's low and irregular earnings at the unskilled trade for which alone she is fitted, are a poor substitute for the man's wages, and the neglect of domestic duties further aggravates the poverty in the home." (*Ibid.*)

§ Final Report on the Effect of Outdoor Relief on Wages and the Conditions of Employment, by Mr. Thomas Jones, pp. 9, 10, 23.

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

" the wife has ' set to ' and is earning, there is too often a tendency to slacken in the pursuit of work. The great influence of women's earnings in encouraging slackness among their husbands has been remarked upon in many quarters."* We watch this progressive creation of Unemployables, by Under-employed men becoming parasitic on their wives, among the cases that come before every Distress Committee. " Women's work and girls' work," report our other Investigators, " ruin the man's responsibility until it becomes almost *nil*. Many men before the Distress Committee did not know what the rent was or what was owing. One did not even know the names of his children. The reason is that the wives will sometimes do anything to keep the home together while the husbands loaf."† This is seen in a bad form in West London, where " the laundry industry offers inducements to the women to become bread-winners of the family ; the consequent loss to the home life is seen in the neglect from which the children suffer, and in the wild independence of the older girls."‡ It is seen in an aggravated form at Leicester, and, perhaps, at its worst at Dundee. In the boot and shoe factories in the former town, successive changes in the processes of manufacture have thrown the men out of employment " because their places are taken by women and young persons, and this drives a number of married women to seek work in the factories, since they have to try and earn wages instead of their husbands."§ At Dundee, our Investigator found " plenty of female employment *to keep loafers there* who could not otherwise exist, and decent men there who had far better have gone elsewhere."‖

(iii.) *The Misuse of Boy Labour.*

It is, however, a moot point whether a larger number of the Unemployable become so in the prime of life, as we have just described, by degradation from one of the three other classes, or graduate into Unemployableness from adolescence. There is no subject as to which we have received so much and such conclusive evidence as upon the extent to which thousands of boys, from lack of any sort of training for industrial occupations, grow up, almost inevitably, so as to become chronically Unemployed, or Under-employed, and presently to recruit the ranks of the Unemployable. In Glasgow nearly 20 per cent. of the labourers in distress are under twenty-five ; and one-half of them are under thirty-five. The registers of Distress Committees all over the country not only reveal the startling fact that something like 15 per cent. of the men in distress are under twenty-five ;¶ and that nearly one-third of the whole are under thirty ; but also that an alarmingly large proportion of these young men are already " chronic cases "—in fact, are Unemployable. " Most of us," formally reports the York Distress Committee, " are inclined to regard the existence of a large class of irregular and casual workmen and the presence of a number of Unemployables " as a necessary condition of " modern life. Our registers, however, show one avenue by which men come into these classes, and suggest how it might be closed. There are youths under twenty-one classified as ' irregular ' and as ' been regular.' The ' irregular ' ones must always infallibly spend their whole lives as irregular workers. Many of them are the sons of the poorest class of workmen, but a few are youths whose parents have done their best for them, but who have not stuck to work. Those who have ' been regular ' have generally started life as errand boys or in some position where a boy can earn good money, but which does not offer the means of learning any trade that will serve him through life."** " A large proportion of working lads," reports the Birkenhead Distress Committee, " grow up without any definite industrial training. They take any employment that offers, the work itself is of a casual description, the growing lad moves from one job to another, and each change of situation is accompanied

* Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, p. 60.

† Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism in London, by Mr. Steel-Maitland and Miss Squire, p. 44.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 82467, Par. 5 (*b*).

‖ Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance given to the " Unemployed ". . . in Scotland, by Rev. J. C. Pringle, Appendix, p. 106. *See also Ibid.*, p. 27.

¶ Report of Glasgow Distress Committee, 1908, Appendix VII., p. 20 : " There is an alarmingly large number of young men among the applicants to the Distress Committee." (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 96610, Par. 4 (iii.).)

** Report of York Distress Committee, 1907.

by a spell of idleness while work is being looked for. The lad reaches manhood without acquiring a trade or establishing himself in any situation of a permanent character, and he swells the ranks ot the unskilled labourer. *His frequent spells of idleness affect his fitness for employment, and in periods of depression he quickly becomes unemployable.*"* We were so impressed with the gravity of the problem thus revealed that we appointed a Special Investigator to deal with this subject alone. His Report, unfortunately, more than confirms the evidence supplied to us.†

It has been demonstrated beyond dispute that one of the features of the manner in which we have chosen to let the nation's industry be organised is that " an increasing number of boys are employed in occupations which are either uneducative (in the sense of producing no increase of efficiency or of intelligence), or unpromising (in the sense of leading to no permanent occupation during adult life); secondly, that there is a constant tendency for certain industrial functions to be transferred from men to boys, especially when changes in the processes of manufacture or in the organisation of industry are taking place rapidly. The resulting difficulty is the double one of the over-employment of boys and the under-employment of men."‡ This is, we are informed, partly because work has been sub-divided and arranged, with the increasing aid of machinery, so as to be " of a character which can be done by boys, and therefore boys, being cheaper than adult labourers, are employed to do it. This particular class of boys—loom-boys, doffers or shifters—is to be found in greater numbers in Dundee than in Glasgow. . . . The demand for men's labour would have to be three times as great to provide work for all these lads . . . and a number whose parents have sent them to mill or factory as children are turned adrift at the age of seventeen or eighteen. A few of them become skilled workmen in other trades. . . . Some boys become labourers in other trades, others enter the Army . . . a number leave the town to seek work elsewhere, while others live from hand to mouth as casual labourers, or join the ranks of the permanently unemployed."§ Then there are the rivet-boys in shipyards and boiler shops, the "oil cans" in the nut and bolt departments, the " boy minders " of " automatic " machines, the " drawers off " of saw mills and the " layers on " of printing works and scores of other varieties of boys whose occupation presently comes to an end. The employment of boys in uneducational occupations from which they are dismissed at manhood is, however, specially extensive in the great commercial centres. In London, as there is reason to believe, no fewer than 40 per cent. of boys leaving the elementary schools become errand boys, van boys, etc.; 14 per cent. become shop boys, and 8 per cent. office boys and junior clerks, whilst something like 18 per cent. enter the building, metal, woodwork and clothing and printing trades. In towns like Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol and Newcastle the proportion of van boys, errand boys etc., appears equally large. It seems that, instead of the years of youth leading naturally to a rise in competence and earning power in the same industry, if not even under the same employer, a large majority of boys have nowadays, between eighteen and twenty-five, " to seek new occupations for which they have little or no aptitude. They begin all over again, and may or may not be able to fit themselves for their new position. The main question is whether their previous years have benefited or deteriorated them; whether in fact they have been improved or *worn out and wasted* from the standpoint of their own industrial fitness as producers and wage earners."‖

Unfortunately, as all the evidence shows, a large, and as we fear an increasing proportion of the occupations to which boys are put are of the kind that does not fit them for any skilled occupation, or indeed for a regular trade of any sort. In the words of a frank employer, they are not taught; they are made to work continuously at their own little temporary tasks. Of those who enter clerkships or the skilled trades a considerable proportion do well. Of those who enter low-skilled trades, a number fall into casual labour of one sort or another, and are at best among the Under-employed. Of the heavy contingent who

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* Report of Birkenhead Distress Committee, 1907.

† Report . . . on the Subject of Boy Labour, by Mr. Cyril Jackson, 1908.

‡ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 96921, pars. 1, 2.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 96610, par. 11. For a similar account of the fate of boys formerly employed in " laying on " and "taking off " paper in London printing houses, *see* Toynbee Record, " Report on Boy Labour." These printers' boys were stated to enter the Army and eventually to take to the docks; a large number of printers' labourers were found in the Whitechapel Casual Ward in the course of an investigation made into the previous employment of the men there. (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 96610, *note to* par. 11.)

‖ Report on the Subject of Boy Labour, by Mr. Cyril Jackson, 1908, p. 7.

become van boys and errand boys, the Army absorbs a large number, the mercantile marine gains a few; some get into low skilled trades; * but many—we fear a majority—have no other outlook than casual labouring and chronic Under-employment, from which it is inevitable that a certain proportion should become Unemployable.† Nor is this using up of boys, without providing them with any industrial training, a new observation. In 1888, as in 1908, it was noticed that there were quite a large number of young men between twenty and thirty habitually "out of work," and rapidly deteriorating, who have had no "training for work.' ‡ "We took the trouble, on the relief committee," deposed one of our number in 1895, "to investigate some of the cases of these lads who asked for work, and in each case it appeared that they had left . . . one of those industries" in which there had grown up a system of doing the work mainly by boy labour, discharging them as soon as they asked men's wages. "I have lived there about ten years, and, from my own knowledge, I have seen these boys growing up into real corner lads.§ You meet them at each corner at this time of the year; they get through life by carrying betting news, and in various other ways; in the winter they have got to get help either by going into the workhouse or into stone-yards, if such are open. What I want to point out is that it is not these boys' faults, but it is really the condition under which they come into the world and grow up, and the industrial life by which they are surrounded."||

We regard this perpetual recruitment of the Unemployable by tens of thousands of boys who, through neglect to provide them with suitable industrial training, may almost be said to graduate into Unemployment as a matter of course, as perhaps the gravest of all the grave facts which this Commission has laid bare. We cannot believe that the nation can long persist in ignoring the fact that the Unemployed, and particularly the Under-employed and the Unemployable, are thus being daily created under our eyes out of bright young lives, capable of better things, for whose training we make no provision. It is unfortunately only too clear that the mass of Unemployment "is continually being recruited by a stream of young men from industries which rely upon unskilled boy labour, and turn it adrift at manhood without any general or special industrial qualification, and that it will never be diminished till this stream is arrested."¶ In our Proposals for Reform we shall accordingly make specific recommendations on this point.

(iv.) *The Alleged Exclusion of the Elderly.*

But besides the youths who, so to speak, graduate into the Unemployable class, there are the men who gravitate into it with advancing years, or with infirmity. We have had it brought to our notice that men who are, or who appear to be, too old for the incessant "drive" and rapid processes of modern competitive industry are being dismissed at an earlier age than was formerly customary; and that such men, whether fifty or even forty years of age, find it increasingly difficult to obtain fresh situations. To quote one of the many statements made to us, it was said that "one very alarming feature of very recent years is the ever-increasing number of elderly men that seem to be cast aside as useless. This is, undoubtedly, a natural outcome of these limited liabilitycompany days, when every workman is simply a unit in a dividend-earning machine, and all personal relations have ceased to exist between employer and employed. The Compensation Act, too, has probably a great deal to do with it."** It must, however, be remembered that the complaint of an increasing tendency to replace elderly men by the young is one that is always being made.†† In particular, it is to be traced as a constant refrain at every decade of the past century. In 1839, for instance, it was officially reported, as a partial

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* *Ibid.*, p. 10.

† "One schoolmaster in a very poor South London school says fully 50 per cent. of his boys go into occupations which lead to Unemployment." (*Ibid.*, p. 11.)

‡ Major C. C. Fitzroy in *Charity Organisation Review*, June, 1888, p. 273.

§ This type has been thus described: "The well-known corner-boy and loafer, who in normal times live off their parents, some even to the extent of asking money from their mothers for cigarettes before leaving the house in the morning; who are never home to a meal, but turn up to go to bed." (The Unemployed in Glasgow, 1904–5, by James R. Motion, p. 3.)

|| Third Report of House of Commons Committee on Distress from Want of Employment, *Q.* 10408 (Mr. Lansbury).

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 96610, Par. 2 (*b*).

** *Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXII. (Par. 5) to Vol. VIII.

†† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 88115–22.

explanation of the Unemployment among the Handloom Weavers, that "a great majority, including those who are past fifty years of age, or who from any cause do not possess the requisite skill, quickness of sight and strength have great difficulty in getting employment to enable them to live."* In 1848 we read, in terms that sound familiar, that "Workmen . . . . are discharged as soon as grey hair appears, or a pair of spectacles is attempted to be used; many of the workmen straining their sight to the uttermost before they give in to be turned adrift through wearing them."† "Old carpenters," it was said in 1850, "are generally despised by master builders; the failure of sight and wearing of spectacles is almost a death blow to many a good old tradesman. And in many cases a master will not give an elderly man employment at any price; the consequence is that many have been compelled to go to the parish for relief or into the Workhouse. Employers instruct their foremen to deny a job to men above a certain age." And further "it is one of the chief evils of the carpenters' trade that as soon as a man turns forty masters won't keep him on."‡ What was said in 1839 and 1848–50, was being said in 1894—still prior to the Workmen's Compensation Act. "Throughout the entire field of industry the shortness of employment is most largely represented in the progressive Under-employment of the middle-aged. In many departments of labour, for example, among miners, sailors, mule-spinners, in metal and machine making, it is practically impossible for a man to have any security of work over the age of forty-five or fifty." § We suspect, indeed, that the same thing has been alleged ever since the master-craftsman, himself producing and selling his own product, was replaced by the capitalist hirer of labour.

At the same time, we felt that, as the impression of an increase in this tendency to premature superannuation was so universal, and as it was very commonly alleged to have been aggravated by the Workmen's Compensation Act, the hypothesis demanded consideration. We, therefore, sought for some evidence that elderly men, or men who appeared to be elderly, were actually being excluded from employment at an earlier age than had previously been customary. It appeared that, of all the many witnesses who repeated to us the current popular opinion, not one could produce any sort of statistical evidence in its support.‖ If men are being dismissed at an earlier age, it would result in the average age of all the men in the employment of particular firms, or of all the men in employment at particular trades, steadily falling. In no case have we been able to find that this was the fact. On the contrary, Trade Union statistics indicate that the age at which members have to draw their superannuation allowance (on ceasing to be able to get employment) has, with the improved health of the nation, steadily risen. Thus, in the great Union of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the average age of all the members who, year by year, begin to draw their Superannuation Benefit, on finding themselves unable to continue in wage-earning employment, *steadily rises*. In 1885 it was sixty-one and a half years; in 1906 it was sixty-three and a half; in 1907 (possibly through increased strictness) it even rose to sixty-four and three-quarters. The fact is confirmed by the records of other Unions. Thus, in the Friendly Society of Ironfounders, the average age at superannuation in 1883–5 was sixty-one and three-quarter years; in 1906–7 it was sixty-two and three-quarters.¶ A similar rise is to be seen in the records of the United Society of Boilermakers.

Nor have we been able to ascertain that the Workmen's Compensation Act has supplied a new motive for the replacement of elderly men by those who are young. The liability for compensation is so generally covered by insurance that the employers have no pecuniary interest in the matter beyond the amount they pay in premiums. It was suggested to us that the Insurance Companies were stipulating in their policies against the employment of elderly men, or penalising it by heavier premiums. We accordingly took

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* Reports of the Commissioners on Handloom Weavers, Vol. XXIII., 1840, p. 417. (Report of A. Austin, Frome, January, 1839.)

† *Nottingham Journal*, January 21st, 1848.

‡ *Morning Chronicle*, July 18th, 1850.

§ "The Meaning and Measure of Unemployment," by John A. Hobson, *Contemporary Review*, March, 1894, p. 422.

‖ Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 34393–403, 39600, 39601, 77503–5, 88115–22.

¶ "Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909; Annual Report of Amalgamated Society of Engineers, 1908.

steps to ascertain whether this was the case. We were definitely informed by the Chairman of the Associated Accident Insurance Companies transacting workmen's compensation business that "in the case of general industries no restriction or stipulation is made in the contract of insurance with regard to . . . old men or men past middle life."* It was admitted to us by employers that the Insurance Companies did not inquire the ages of the men thus insured, and that there was no attempt to differentiate against the elderly men.† As a matter of fact the Insurance Companies are under no temptation to do so, because—as was pointed out to us by workmen who knew the facts ‡—contrary to current popular theories, it is not found that the elderly men are more liable to accidents than the young men. The evidence is, in fact, in the opposite direction. At the South Metropolitan Gasworks, for instance, where the late Sir George Livesey kept careful note of all the accidents between 1897 and 1905, it was found that, out of 2114 accidents in these eight years, no fewer than one third had happened to the men between twenty and thirty years of age; and that, in proportion to the numbers employed, this was the most hazardous age. More than 5 per cent. of the men of that age had accidents in the year, whilst the percentage of men between fifty and sixty who had accidents was only two thirds as great.§ "It therefore seems quite clear," concluded Sir George Livesey, "in all the operations of gas manufacture, which are many and various, with much machinery, that advancing age does not make men more liable to accidents. They are, on the contrary, considerably less liable as they grow older. I may here say that the Company never discharges any man because he is growing old."‖ The same testimony is given by Sir John Brunner with regard to chemical works. During the years 1893 to 1907, Brunner, Mond and Co., Limited, found that the men between eighteen and twenty-five had the largest percentage of accidents (8·5); those between twenty-five and thirty, the next largest (6·8); whilst the men between forty-one and forty-five and forty-five and fifty had less than half those percentages (2·8 and 3·7). "The figures," says Sir John Brunner, "are absolutely decisive, the scale of the inquiry both as regards the number of men and the number of years being abundantly sufficient. They show that the proportion of accidents becomes less and less with remarkable regularity, as the men advance in years, and, therefore, that no employer is justified in his own interest, in refusing to take elderly men into his service, or in dismissing them from his service in the belief that they are more liable to accidents than their younger brethren. . . . One feature in this statement deserves emphasis. The reduction in comparative liability to accident is in exact relation to the increase of steadiness due to increase of age; it begins at the very beginning, not at the age at which men may be excused from dangerous work on account of lessened activity."¶ And though the elderly man may not so easily recover from an accident as a young man, and may be longer in the doctors' hands,** the remarkable statistical proof that has been adduced has confirmed the Accident Insurance Companies in their practice of ignoring age in their estimation of risks.

We then turned to the statistics relating to the persons known to be unemployed, expecting to find that the applicants to the Distress Committees were elderly men, men with premature grey hairs, men wearing spectacles, men bowed down with the infirmities that come with advancing years. To our surprise, we found that the very reverse was the case. Of all the qualified applicants to Distress Committees in England and Wales

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* Evidence before the Commission, Mr. S. Stanley Brown (not yet in volume form). To this there is one exception and one only. In farm work, where the proportion of elderly men among the labourers is exceptionally large, and where it is not even suggested that there is any exclusion of them, the Insurance Companies do inquire the ages of the men employed, with a view, if the proportion of men *over sixty* be unusually large, of charging an additional premium.

† *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 87097–102.

‡ "The old man, instead of being more liable to accident, is, on the whole, less liable to accident than the young man . . . because he is more careful. . . . The larger proportion of those who get hurt is of young men, and not of old men." (*Ibid.*, *Qs.* 82807–9.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 83244–83250; Return showing the Accidents at various ages among the workmen in the employ of the South Metropolitan Gas Company, Appendix No. XCVI. to Vol. VIII.

‖ *Ibid.*

¶ "Age and Accident," by Sir John Brunner; in *Times*, May 9th, 1908. Similar testimony with regard to the accidents to all the men in the employment of the Sheffield United Gas Light Company (where between twenty and thirty proved much the most hazardous age) was given in *Times*, May 22nd, 1906.

** Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 43173–6, 82808, 87110–2.

in 1907–8 only 2·7 per cent. were over sixty; and only 14·2 per cent. were between fifty and sixty; whilst no fewer than 22·8 per cent. were under thirty. "Thus nearly 80 per cent. of the applicants were between the ages of twenty and fifty years, the group of persons aged thirty to forty being actually the largest."* This general result is confirmed in all the localities.

"The two most startling facts which have impressed me," writes the Chairman of the Bristol Distress Committee, "are, first the very large proportion of general labourers to be found upon our books, and secondly, the large number of applicants who are in the prime of their working life, namely, between the ages of twenty and fifty. . . . Of a total of 2,900 applications registered in the year ending March, 1906, ninety-one only were under the age of twenty, whilst 807 were between twenty and thirty, 787 between thirty and forty, 573 between forty and fifty, and 443 between fifty and sixty, whilst over sixty years of age we had only 200. We have thus 2,166 out of a total of 2,900 applications made by men in the prime of their working life. . . . The figures for the year ending1907 work out very much in the same proportion."† We imagined that the men who found themselves "too old at forty" might be in the Workhouses. But, though there is an alarming increase of able-bodied men in the Workhouses of London and various other centres, these too are found on examination to be mainly men in the prime of life; and certainly not men who could, with any credibility, ascribe their failure to get situations merely to the infirmities of age. "I have been curious," wrote a Local Government Board Inspector in 1903," to ascertain what effect the Employers' Liability Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act have had upon elderly workmen. So far I have not found many men driven to the Workhouse as the result of these Acts. I have conversed with employers of labour on the subject, and they tell me that machinery is now so much used that an elderly man is as good as a younger man, and if capable, he has the advantage of experience in dealing with machinery."‡

Thus, whilst there is no evidence that the average age of the persons at work is declining, or that elderly men are found in increasing numbers among the Unemployed, there is also no reason why the Workmen's Compensation Act should have supplied a new motive to employers to differentiate against elderly men. Some explanation is required of the widespread impression to the contrary. We think it may be that—as it was put to us by an eminent statistician—"employers have got in rather a flurry when they found these new claims upon them, and have possibly discharged a few men, but very possibly by this time they are re-engaging them."§ What has generally happened is, however, that when employers have wanted to get rid of elderly men—*as they have done at all times*—they have used the Workmen's Compensation Act as an excuse. Equally often, when elderly men have been dismissed for some irregularity of conduct, or find the same difficulties as other men in regaining employment, they are prone to account for it by a cause so impersonal as the Workmen's Compensation Act. Every aged pauper man now gives the same explanation of his presence in the Workhouse.‖ "There is," deposed the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, "always a proportion of loafers amongst the Unemployed who do not want work, and they are always willing to avail themselves of any excuse that offers to explain their being out of work."¶

(v.) *Raising the Standard of Efficiency.*

Much the same scepticism may be felt with regard to the alleged increased exclusion from employment of the one-eyed man, the one-armed man, the slightly crippled or the ruptured man. At all times employers have preferred to take on a sound man rather

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* Return as to Proceedings of Distress Committees, for 1907–8 (House of Commons, No. 173 of 1908).

† Replies of Distress Committees, p. 79, Bristol.

‡ Thirty-second Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1902–3, p. 109.

§ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 88117. The "flurry" is shown in the following evidence on behalf of a large steel works. "As regards old age, the custom at these works up to the present is that men who have served the firm for any length of time, when they become aged, are found light work. In a short time, however, these conditions will be altered, as, in view of the 'Compensation Act, 1906,' coming into force in July next, our directors are considering the question of pensions for the old men employed at Clarence, so that they will be prevented coming to the works. It is positively unsafe for such men to go about the works, more particularly as the firm is responsible, in case anything happens to them in the form of an accident, to pay weekly compensation, or if the accident should prove fatal, and they have dependents, three years' wages." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XLIII. (Par. 3) to Vol. VIII).

‖ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 50693; Relieving Officers' Return *re* Compensation Acts, Appendix No. VII. (A) to Vol. V.

¶ Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 82804.

than an unsound man. Here, however, we think that the evidence points to an increasing tendency among employers—whether this is due to the Workmen's Compensation Act or to a general tightening up of conditions under stress of competition—to scrutinise very carefully the men whom they take into their service, in order that, in return for the Standard Rates of Wages that they have to pay, they may get the most efficient workmen. Various large firms now make it a rule to have all workmen medically examined before engagement, and the practice is now spreading to the mercantile marine. Though this began before 1897, it is now ascribed to the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act of that year; and the giving of a preference to sound and healthy men may well have been promoted by such legislation. "In my opinion," said a North Country witness, "the Workmen's Compensation Act has made employers more particular as to the class of men employed. Defective vision or hearing has to some extent placed men on the labour market who would otherwise have been employed."* "Last year," it was given in evidence, "Messrs. Vickers, Maxim tried the experiment of examining all the new 'starts.' In twelve weeks I examined 286 men and rejected fifteen. The rejected included men with one eye, those with bad ruptures, bad ulcerated legs or scars indicating old ulcers, also men physically unfit. Owing to the opposition of the trade unions, this rule was suspended, but the firm may reintroduce it. Vickers, Maxim carry this rule out at their works at Erith, and have done so for six years."† But perhaps the clearest case is that of the workman subject to epileptic fits. Insurance Companies are said to refuse to insure such men, and employers to employ them.‡ We were informed that "as a matter of fact prior to the 1897 Compensation Act Messrs. Vickers had quite a large number of epileptics working, and they had contracted-out; under the old Employers Liability Act of 1894 they could contract out of that Act, but when the 1897 Act came into force these men were all discharged."§

The difficulty which the aged and the partially incapacitated find in obtaining employment, owing to the employers' preference for the more efficient workmen, is, however, viewed from the standpoint of the community, not a cause of Unemployment. So long as there are young and healthy workmen unemployed, it cannot be expected—it cannot even be desired—that the less efficient should fill the places to the exclusion of the more efficient. In so far as aged men, and partially incapacitated men, are found among those in distress from Unemployment—and this is to some slight extent the case—the problem is one of how best to maintain them in their old age and partial invalidity—not how to get them again into industrial employment for which other men, also compulsorily idle, are more fitted.

(vi.) *Existing Agencies Dealing with the Unemployable.*

The Unemployable, it will now be clear, constitute, not so much a class, as a heterogeneous multitude of individuals, requiring endless diversity of treatment. Yet the administrators of the present Poor Law persist in treating them merely as "the Able-bodied"; in one Union apparently regarding them all as "work shy" loafers or incorrigible rogues; in another treating them as if they were all excluded from employment on account of their age or infirmity, through no fault of their own. Thus, one Board of Guardians will offer to all alike the same General Mixed Workhouse or laxly administered Casual Ward. The next Board of Guardians will insist on "testing" all able-bodied

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* *Ibid.*, Appendix No. LXXVI. (Par. 4), to Vol. VIII.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 43126, Par. 9. "To protect ourselves from the responsibility of taking such men into our employ, about twelve months ago it was made a condition that all new men seeking employment should undergo a medical examination. Whilst this rule was in force it tended to raise the standard of physical fitness of the new men engaged, and prevented men from applying for work who knew they were physically unfit. During the ten weeks the examination was enforced, 286 men were examined, of whom fourteen were rejected as physically unfit. Of those rejected:—

Six were suffering from inguinal hernia.
Three from bad varicose veins.
One from large varicocele.
One from varicose eczema of left leg.
One from old scars on left leg, of low vitality.
Two from results of injury to eye, causing sight to be seriously affected."

Ibid., *Q.* 87722, Par. 7.

‡ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 87473.

§ *Ibid.*, *Q.* 43197.

applicants by a task of stone-pounding on insufficient diet and under penal conditions, in the so-called "Able-bodied Test Workhouse," or the cellular Casual Ward. Under these circumstances, it goes without saying that the Unemployable man of the "won't work" type accepts the hospitality of the laxly administered institution, and refuses that of the disciplinary one; preferring, to the latter, "the life of the road" or the hand-to-mouth existence of the loafer of the great cities, varied with brief sojourns in gaol. The worthy Unemployable, who is really unable to get taken on by any employer, finds the promiscuity of the General Mixed Workhouse and the penal discipline of the Able-bodied Test Workhouse equally deterrent, and resorts there only in the direst need, preferring to suffer slow starvation in his slum, or to struggle along on the scanty earnings of wife and child. Many of the intermediate types constitute the great army of "In-and-Outs" of the Workhouse of either kind. Of preventive or curative treatment under the Poor Law there is, with regard to the Unemployable, at present practically no question.

Much the same may be said of the operations of the Distress Committees when "Employment Relief" is offered; the "won't works" sheer off, and the "can't works" linger on, to lower the standard of effort and increase the cost of the work. Neither section can be found places by the Labour Exchange or moved to another country. For the Unemployable, in short, the Unemployed Workmen Act is as futile as is the Poor Law.

The least unsuccessful of the agencies at present at work are, with regard to all sections of the Unemployable, the Working Colonies administered by certain religious or philanthropic organisations For the slightly feeble-minded and the sane epileptic there is provision at Lingfield, established in 1896 by the Christian Social Service Union. For the man of irregular conduct and doubtful past there is the training given at Hadleigh since 1890 by the Salvation Army. What is lacking, even to the most successful training Colony of this type, is, on the one hand, an assured outlet for those whom it has redeemed or trained, and, on the other, various grades of Colonies to which might be committed those who prove to be incorrigible and recalcitrant to training, or who are permanently unfitted for association with the outside world. The latter requirement points to establishments with powers of detention. The former demands some better organisation of the Labour Market so that the cured or reclaimed Unemployable may not have to be thrown once more into the morass of chronic Under-employment.

(f) Character and Unemployment.

It may be thought that we have, in the preceding survey of the types of the Unemployed, given insufficient attention to drunkenness and other forms of personal misconduct as responsible for the failure of men to retain their situations, or to get again into employment. We have deliberately subordinated the question of personal character, because in our view, although of vital importance to the method of treatment to be adopted with regard to the individuals in distress, it does not seem to us to be of significance with regard to the existence or the amount of Unemployment. "The casual labourer engaged on Monday is dismissed on Tuesday, not because he refuses to work longer, but because the work for which he was engaged is at an end. The percentage of Unemployed carpenters rises from two in August to six in December, not because 4 per cent. of the men have become unfit or unwilling to work, but because winter is a bad time for building. When two handicraftsmen are replaced by one man at a machine, the change is not in them but in economic conditions."* It is no doubt true that the efficiency of labour is one of the factors of productivity; and the greater the national product the larger the number of persons whom it will sustain. But, speaking broadly, employers take on the labour that they have occasion for, and no more; and the aggregate amount of their wages bill from week to week does not depend on the habits of the workmen. When trade is brisk, even the drunken men, the turbulent men, the negligent men, and the men of every kind of personal immorality, so long as they possess the requisite physical vigour, are pretty fully employed. The residuum of Unemployables, to be found, even at such times, in distress from want of employment, are not the men of bad character or conduct, but those who have, by long-continued Unemployment, become incapable of regular labour. When trade slackens, some of the men who have found work have to be discharged; presently others must share the same experience; and in the trough of the depression the staff has to be cut down to the lowest possible point. Doubtless, the least efficient wage-earners are the first to go, drinkers among the rest; although it is remarkable how great a degree of occasional drunkenness and personal misbehaviour an employer or a foreman puts up

* "Unemployment: a Problem of industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909, p. 132.

with from an expert or docile workman. Doubtless, too, the drunken and improvident workman, when thrown out of work, comes much more quickly into distress than his sober and saving brother. But the fluctuations in the volume of employment, and, therefore, the aggregate number of the Unemployed in the nation are in no way related to the existence of drunkenness or misconduct among the workmen; and the fluctuations certainly would not be any the less (though the consequent distress would be) if all the men were teetotallers and as thrifty as could be desired.*

Nor do we find that the Unemployed, as a whole, can be described as either drunken or vicious. Those in our Class I. have, in thousands of cases, lost their apparently permanent situations through absolutely no fault of their own; and, as we have already described, they are often impeded in the attempt to regain situations by the very characteristics which their long and continuous service has developed in them. Those belonging to our Class II. are, by the very conditions of their calling, exposed at all times, and whatever their characters, to such extreme discontinuity of employment that not even the most virtuous operative can escape periods of enforced idleness; and there are unhappily far too many cases, in bad times, of the Unemployment being so prolonged—extending to many months, and even to a year at a time—that even the most thrifty households of carpenters and engineers exhaust their Trade Union benefits, and are brought to severe distress. And when we come to Class III., the Under-employed, there is, as we have seen, no ground whatever for assuming that the men's descent into this class was due to drink or misconduct. Once in it, indeed (and this is the worst of the tragedy), character is apt to go; and it is certainly no qualification for success. There is even reason to fear that, in the demoralising scramble for casual jobs, it is the lower, the more brutal, even the more dissolute natures that prevail. Among the Unemployable, too, there are, as we have seen, not a few who are pathetic in their respectability. Thus, in their case also, it seems idle to ascribe their distress to personal misconduct.†

At the same time we do not wish to ignore the fact that, *taking the workmen as a whole and ignoring many individual cases to the contrary*, the men out of work at any one time are apt to include the less efficient, the less energetic, the less strong, the less young, the less regular, the less temperate or the less docile of their class; 5 or 10 or 20 per cent. had to go, and these particular men were chosen for discharge rather than other men, for one or other of these reasons, some of which relate to personal conduct whilst others do not. Especially is this true of many of the Unemployed of Class II., whose Unemployment is specially prolonged; to many of those of Class III.; and to the bulk if not all of those of Class IV. Thus it is that it can be said "that, on the whole, the character of this class is comparatively weak, *i.e.*, weak in intelligence, training, physique, or *morale*, or all four. The men themselves say they are out of work through slackness of trade, and this is true in the sense that when a trade is extraordinarily brisk almost anyone can pick up some

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* It must, in short, be taken to be conclusively proved that "Unemployment is not due merely to personal or isolated causes, *e.g.*, to unfitness or unwillingness to be employed or to the failure of particular employers. It does indicate specific mal-adjustments between the demand for and the supply of labour at certain times or places. It is in part at least an industrial or economic problem. . . . The records of applicants for assistance first accumulated in considerable numbers by the Committee of the Mansion House Fund, 1903–4, and later in the administration of the London Unemployed Fund, 1904–5, and of the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, show that many men *individually certified by their employers to have been willing and competent workmen in the near past* were unable for long periods in the years 1904–6 to obtain employment." (Evidence before the Commission, Q. 77832. Par. 4.)

† In many ways the most unattractive of the Unemployable are the men who have become worthless parasites on their wives' labour. This degradation is often assumed to be accounted for by an inherent tendency to loafing in the man, and to self-sacrificing industry in the woman. But even here the local conditions of employment come in as a potent cause. In Lancashire, many thousands of wives work for wages, and earn sufficient to maintain the home; but the idle parasite of a husband is not a typical figure in the textile towns. Because, we suggest, there are opportunities of regular employment for men, the men have not been deteriorated by their wives' labour. Things are different in Dundee, not because the Dundee men were more disposed to become parasitic on their wives than the men of Lancashire, but because they have been subjected to a whole generation of Under-employment, and to a positive deficiency in the opportunities for men's employment at all. Thus, the real cause of the deterioration of so many of the men of Dundee is the vicious system of employment to which they have been subjected.

work. Employers' written and verbal characters show why one is chosen to be dismissed in time of slackness rather than another."*

When all is said, however, the extent to which the Unemployed are men of good character or bad—important as it is to themselves, and to the method of treatment to be adopted with regard to them—appears to us, from the standpoint of prevention of the evil, wholly irrelevant. Whether the men are good or bad, drunken or sober, immoral or virtuous, it is a terrible misfortune to the community, as well as to themselves, that they should be Unemployed. In Unemployment their working power is lost to the nation; their wives and children are half-starved; the men themselves are steadily and almost inevitably deteriorated in body and mind. It is worth notice that not one of the many witnesses who appeared before us suggested that there was any advantage, social or individual, to be credited to Unemployment. Whether the man is good or bad, no one has pretended that a period of Unemployment tended to strengthen his will, to fortify his character, to brace his nerves, or to increase his thrift. The effect, by common consent, is the reverse.† Indeed, if the Unemployed are all as faulty and as feeble as they are sometimes pictured—and in so far as they do include among them great numbers of the faulty and the feeble—the evil seems to us all the worse. The capable and perfectly virtuous man may possibly be able to go through a period of prolonged Unemployment without physical or mental deterioration. He tightens his belt; reduces his needs to the barest minimum; is fertile in contrivances for protecting his little household from the worst consequences, and in picking up odds and ends of income; and when the nation once more needs his services he is ready at call, little or none the worse for having been thrown aside for a time. Such perfection is, however, rare in any class of men, and it is, we fear, especially rare among the builders' labourers of our Class II., or among the whole of our Class III. (the Under-employed), whilst it is, of course, absent from Class IV. (the Unemployable). Among all these merely average men, a prolonged spell of Unemployment is apt to mean the ruin, mental and physical, of the man and his family. "The

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* (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 82147, Par. 1.) This witness "had analysed 108 unselected applications to the Stepney Distress Committee. Of these 108, ninety-eight men give as the reason of their discharge 'slackness.' The written employers' characters confirm this in sixty-eight cases (though three of these state that the applicant has no chance of re-employment). In thirty cases the reasons for discharge are given as follows:—

'Partly slack'	1
Unsatisfactory	5
Dishonesty	1
Bad time-keeper	3
To better himself	1
Ill-health	1
Most unreliable and only irregular earnings for rough work	1
Gambling	1
Want of attention to his work	1
Left of own accord (no chance of re-employment)	2
Dishonesty suspected	1
Private reason	2
Irregularity in attendance	2
Not stated by employer	8
Total	30

"Thus, in about a third of the ninety-eight cases, we get from the employers an indication of the personal weaknesses leading to selection for discharge in time of slackness.

"In some other instances, where the employé gave as cause of discharge:—
'Illness'; the employer gave: 'unsatisfactory last six months.'
'Death in family'; the employer gave: 'absent without leave.'
Not stated (in three cases); the employer gave: 'unsatisfactory.'
'Being a union man'; the employer gave: 'neglecting horses.'
'Special'; the employer gave: 'pilfering.'
'Reduction in wages'; the employer gave: 'careless.'" (*Ibid.*)

† There is evidence that drinking habits are actually fostered by Unemployment. "It seems rather funny," deposed a builder's foreman, "but I think that the more men are out of work the more drunkenness there is. A fellow who is out of work goes and meets Tom, Dick, or Harry at dinner-time coming from work, and instead of his being given a pennyworth of bread and cheese, or something of that sort, he is given a half-pint of beer, and the man who gives it to him has one with him" (Report of Special Committee of Charity Organisation Society on Unskilled Labour, 1908, *Q.* 211). "In many cases it encourages idle habits," says another witness, "and in others where a man sees his earnings all consumed he is disposed to cease to be thrifty." (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXV. (Per. 4), to Vol. VIII.)

effect of Unemployment upon the individual workman is to make him in course of time Unemployable."*

> "The men and their families," deposed Captain Hamilton, the Secretary of the Church Army, "physically deteriorate owing to lack of proper food and clothing. . . . Unemployment causes deterioration in the skilled worker, in habits and ability. . . men known as good workmen develop a distaste for steady work after a long spell of Unemployment. Church Army officers . . . report that about half of those who apply for temporary work appear to have lost all ambition or hope of permanent employment, and have grown quite contented to depend upon casual work for short periods, and they attribute this to the gradual deterioration of the men from Unemployment. . . . However industrious and deserving the unskilled worker may be, a period of Unemployment with the consequent lack of nourishing food and the worries attendant upon such a condition of life, soon reduces the physical efficiency of the men; this, with the increasing shabbiness of his clothing makes it more and more difficult for him to obtain employment, and eventually he swells the ranks of the chronically inefficient and very casual worker, and, if married, his wife and children have to work to maintain him."†

In short, it is just because the bulk of the Unemployed are, like other men, full of faults and shortcomings, that it is of such vital importance to the community to put an end to the incalculable waste, misery and deterioration that Unemployment at present causes.‡

(G) The need for a National Authority for all sections of the Unemployed.

We find an overwhelming consensus of opinion among our witnesses that the task of dealing with the Distress from Want of Employment is one altogether beyond the capacity of the Local Authorities; and that, from the very nature of the case, the duty can be successfully undertaken only by a National Department.§ Thus, the Town Clerk of Bath, in an able summary of the results of a conference of representatives of more than fifty Distress Committees in December, 1907, states as his conclusion "that the permanent solution of the Unemployed problem must be found *nationally and not locally*, and must be considered in conjunction with proposals for providing for those incapable of work, dealing with those who can but will not work, and promoting schemes for increasing the supply of labour for those who honestly desire to work, such as Farm Colonies, Afforestation, Reclamation of Foreshores, Extension of Inland Navigation, etc.; and even curtailment of the hours of labour."‖

To this conclusion of the need for a National Authority, the foregoing analysis of the different classes of the Unemployed, as it seems to us, inevitably points. In considering what is needed for each of these types, the disabilities of even the wisest Local Authority become apparent. For the men of Class I., who have newly fallen out of permanent situations, what is wanted is some effective agency for discovering whatever vacancies for them may exist anywhere in the Kingdom, and the means of promptly migrating them

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* Report of Edinburgh Distress Committee, 1906–7; *see also* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 97154, Par. 10.

† *Ibid.*, *Q.* 93611, Pars. 16, 18.

‡ "The effect of Unemployment on the idle workman is disastrous to his personal character. In the case of men subject to casual labour—brief periods of employment alternating with equal or longer periods of idleness—the effect upon the man is to render him totally unfitted for sustained industry. Where the idleness is prolonged, the character of the workman so far deteriorates that laziness becomes fixed and even the restraint of casual employment becomes intolerable. The physical efficiency of the workman must necessarily suffer from that moment when the man's resources are no longer adequate to supply his daily needs. . . . I consider Unemployment to be the most fruitful cause of moral failure on the part of the working class" (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXIV. (Pars. 7, 8) to Vol. VIII.). "There is not anything that demoralises a man so much as want of employment, and the longer it lasts and the oftener it occurs, the greater is the effect and the worse it is to throw off. I have known many men, who have been good, honest workmen, gradually reduced to the level of 'loafers' simply through long and frequent periods of Unemployment." (*Ibid.*, Appendix No. XXII. (Par. 7,) to Vol. VIII.)

§ *Ibid.*, *Qs.* 78372 (viii.), 79408 (Par. 44), 79664–7, 79863 (Par. 11), 80092, 80109, 80733 (Par. 27), 81466 (Pars. 21, 22), 81550–3, 81760 (Par. 19 (*b*)), 81787–90, 82467 (Par. 37 (i.)), 82527, 82882, 82959, 83005–6, 83042–60, 83504 (Pars. 8 (*a*) and 9 (*a*)), 83555–9, 83770 (Par. 21), 83858 (Par. 15 (3)), 84315–8, 84405, 84406, 85949–74, 86085 (Par. 10), 86126, 86127, 86466 (Par. 2 (*c*)), 86664–6, 86726 (Pars. 26, 27, 33), 86785–6, 88364, 88448 (Par. 7), 88508–14, and Appendices I. (19), XX. (11), XXVII. (9), XXXI. (5), LII. (23), LIV. (15), LVIII. (9–11), LXIII. (12), LXXII. (8), LXXIII. (10) to Vol. VIII.

‖ Report to Town Council, Bath, January 15th, 1908.

and their families to take up these appointments. But, as we have seen, the Local Authorities have found it impossible to bring their little local Labour Exchanges into effective mutual co-operation. Each town has naturally wanted to keep all its vacancies for its own Unemployed. Moreover, it is an invidious thing for one Local Authority to transport its necessitous families into the district of another; and but little in the way of migration has proved practicable. We can hardly expect a Local Authority to provide, at its own expense, the training which may be required to enable its Unemployed to fit themselves to go off and engage in a new industry which may be expanding in some other part of the Kingdom. Still more difficult is it for a County Borough to bring itself to acquire land outside its own area, in order to give such men of this class, for whom small holdings might be the most suitable provision, the chance of becoming self-supporting ratepayers in another county. The disadvantages of local action are even more obvious with regard to the Unemployed of Class II., the Men of Discontinuous Employment. These must necessarily wander over the borough boundary to building operations in the suburbs; or from Northumberland to Cornwall in pursuit of great public works in progress. No organisation of information as to the jobs within the area of any one Local Authority can ever be of much use to this class. It is even a hardship to a Local Authority to find stranded within its area the men who have been attracted from all parts of the Kingdom to some large undertaking, sometimes on the mere rumour that men were required, or men who have been left high and dry on the completion of the work. If, to tide over years of depression in the building trade, it is deemed desirable to set going great works of Afforestation or Land Reclamation, these are obviously beyond the scope of any Local Authority, and would be required for the men of all parts of the Kingdom. Neither the organisation of the employment of "public works men," nor the provision to be made for such of them as are in distress, can be fairly regarded as a local problem. The men of our Class III., the Under-employed, are, it is true, usually found stagnating in a particular locality and may be said to "belong to it." But what is needed in such districts as West Ham and Poplar is not an active Local Authority relieving the distress due to this chronic over-supply of labour, but some outside power to draw off the surplus, convert it into good material, and place it where it is wanted, either in this country or somewhere else in the Empire. Municipal Relief Works, and everything else that a Local Authority can devise for this type of Unemployment, merely perpetuate the evil. But the class which is most intractable to treatment by a Local Authority is that of the Unemployable. This class is, we may hope, a relatively small one, but it is, as we have seen, extraordinarily heterogeneous. What is at once apparent is that any appropriate treatment of these men involves, not one device or one institution, but a considerable variety of devices and institutions, each dealing with its peculiar section. Yet to start Farm Colonies for the work-shy, Farm Colonies for the prematurely aged, Farm Colonies for the sane epileptics, Farm Colonies for the men of inferior physique or defective will—not to mention semi-penal establishments for the incorrigible rogues—is beyond the capacity of any Local Authority, even that of the Metropolis. Moreover, the most troublesome section of the Unemployable are the Professional Vagrants. Here we have what is obviously a National question. It is useless to hope that this section will be diminished so long as Local Authorities are chiefly concerned—as experience shows that they always will be, so long as it is a matter of local administration—to get the Vagrants over the boundary into the next district, in order to avoid the trouble and cost of maintaining them.

It is, we think, also clear that the action to be taken must be such as to deal, not with this or that section only of the Unemployed, but with all of them. The different classes that we distinguish are not marked off from each other by sharp lines; and the individuals pass downwards from class to class with appalling ease. "The distinction between the Unemployed and the Unemployable," says Sir John Gorst, "which is very real from an economic point of view, is unstable and transient in the individual. Nothing degenerates from lack of use faster than the capacity to work."* "No one," adds General Booth, "will ever make even a visible dint in the morass of squalor who does not deal with the improvident, the lazy, the vicious, and the criminal."† For the Government to provide means of rescue or provision for this or that section, and not for the other sections, is practically certain to lead to the provision being swamped—as has been the experience of the Unemployed Workmen Act—by those for whom it was not intended, but for whom no alternative provision is made. To deal nationally with one section whilst leaving the rest to be provided for by the Local Authorities is open to the same

* "The Unemployed—a National Question," by Percy Alden, M.P. (preface by Sir John Gorst), 1905.

† "In Darkest England," by W. Booth, 1890, p. 36.

objection. No small part of the trouble in the past has arisen from the fact that rival Authorities have been simultaneously dealing with parts of the problem in different ways. It has been left to the Poor Law Authorities to provide for the man at the crisis of destitution; whilst the Distress Committees and the Municipalities have been trying to prevent the destitution of the Unemployed by giving him work at the ratepayers' expense. The Local Police Authority is often scolding the Poor Law Authority for compelling, by its penal conditions, the houseless poor or Vagrants to "sleep out." The Prison Commissioners complain that the Local Police Authority crowds the prisons with the "sleepers-out," whom the regulations of the Board of Guardians have thus made into criminals. In return, the Board of Guardians complains that the prisons are made so comfortable that men prefer them to the Casual Ward, and even to the Labour Yard. Meanwhile, Voluntary Agencies try to make up for any shortcomings in public provision by Free Shelters and Soup Kitchens. And when the Local Education Authority and the Local Health Authority find themselves feeding the children of Unemployed men, or medically treating their dependents, there is no Authority to whom they can turn in order to get enforced on the man the responsibility of earning sufficient to keep his family. Amid all this conflicting and overlapping activity, the mass of suffering and the continuous degradation due to want of employment remain, in spite of all the expenditure, practically undiminished.

(H) Conclusions.

We have, therefore, to report:—

1. That distress from want of employment, though periodically aggravated by depression of trade, is a constant feature of industry and commerce as at present administered; and that the mass of men, women and children suffering from the privation due to this Unemployment in the United Kingdom amounts, at the best of times, to hundreds of thousands, whilst in years of trade depression they must exceed a million in number.

2. That this misery has no redeeming feature. It does not, like the temporary hardships of work or adventure, produce in those capable of responding to the stimulus, greater strength, energy, endurance, fortitude or initiative. On the contrary, the enforced idleness and prolonged privation characteristic of Unemployment have, on both the strong man and the weak, on the man of character and conduct and on the dissolute, a gravely deteriorating effect on body and mind, on muscle and will. The magnitude of the loss thus caused to the nation, first in the millions of days of enforced idleness of productive labourers, and secondly in the degradation and deterioration of character and physique—whether or not it is increasing—can scarcely be exaggerated.

3. That men in distress from want of employment approximate to one or other of four distinct types, requiring, as we have described, distinct treatment; namely, the Men from Permanent Situations, the Men of Discontinuous Employment, the Under-employed and the Unemployable.

4. That what is needed for the Men from Permanent Situations is some prompt and gratuitous machinery for discovering what openings exist, anywhere in the United Kingdom, for their particular kind of service; or for ascertaining with certainty that no such openings exist; with suitable provision, where individual saving does not suffice, for the maintenance of themselves and their households whilst awaiting re-employment. Both the machinery and the provision are at present afforded, in some industries, by Trade Union "Vacant Books" and Trade Union Insurance. This, however, does not meet the need of the large numbers of men in occupations for which no Trade Union exists, or in which no machinery for reporting vacancies and no insurance against Unemployment have been organised. Nor does it meet the cases, unhappily always occurring in one industry or another, of men whose occupation is being taken from them by the adoption of new processes or new machinery, without any effective opportunity being afforded to them of training themselves to new means of livelihood.

5. That for the Men of Discontinuous Employment the same prompt and gratuitous machinery for discovering what openings exist, anywhere in the United Kingdom, is required, not only for individuals exceptionally Unemployed, but for the entire class,

at all times; in order to prevent the constant "leakage" of time between job and job, and to obviate the demoralising aimless search for work, whether over any one great urban aggregation, or by means of wandering from town to town. The same machinery becomes imperative, in times of bad trade, in order to ascertain with certainty that no opportunity of employment exists. Without some such machinery, experience shows that Insurance against Unemployment breaks down, owing to the excessive amount of "time lost" between jobs, and the impossibility of securing that every claimant has done his best to get work.

5. That of all the forms of Unemployment, that which we have termed Under-employment, extending, as it does, to many hundreds of thousands of workers, and to their whole lives, is by far the worst in its evil effects; and that it is this system of chronic Under-employment which is above all other causes responsible for the perpetual manufacture of paupers that is going on; and which makes the task of the Distress Committees in dealing with the Unemployed of other types—such as the Men from Permanent Situations, or the Men of Discontinuous Employment—hopelessly impracticable.

6. That we have been unable to escape from the conclusion that, owing to various causes, there has accumulated, in all the ports, and indeed in all the large towns of the United Kingdom, an actual surplus of workmen, there being more than are required to do the work in these towns even in times of brisk trade; this surplus showing itself in the existence of the Stagnant Pools of Labour that we have described, and in the chronic Under-employment of tens of thousands of men at all seasons and in all years.

7. That we have been struck by the fact that this chronic Under-employment of men is coincident with the employment in factories and workshops, or on work taken out to be done at home, of a large number of mothers of young children who are thereby deprived of maternal care; with an ever-growing demand for boy-labour of an uneducational kind; and actually with a positive increase in the number of "half-timers" (children in factories below the age exempting them from attendance at school). Thus we have, in increasing numbers (though whether or not in increasing proportion is not clear), men degenerating through enforced Unemployment or chronic Under-employment into parasitic Unemployables; and the burden of industrial work cast on pregnant women, nursing mothers and immature youths.

8. That the task of dealing with Unemployment is altogether beyond the capacity of Authorities having jurisdiction over particular areas; and can be undertaken successfully only by a Department of the National Government.

9. That the experience of the Poor Law in dealing with destitute able-bodied men and their dependents; of the Distress Committees in providing for labourers out of employment; of the Police in attempting to suppress Vagrancy and "sleeping out"; of the Prison Commissioners in having to accommodate in gaol large numbers of men undergoing short sentences for offences of this nature; of the Education and Public Health Authorities in feeding and medically treating the necessitous dependents of able-bodied men; and of the Voluntary Agencies dealing with the "houseless poor" of great cities, all alike prove that every attempt to deal only with this or that section of the Able-bodied and Unemployed class is liable to be rendered nugatory by the neglect to deal simultaneously with the other sections of men in distress, or claiming to be in distress, from want of employment. That accordingly, in our judgment, no successful dealing with the problem is possible unless provision is simultaneously made in ways suited to their several needs and deserts for all the various sections of the Unemployed by one and the same Authority.

CHAPTER V.

Proposals for Reform.

We have now to state the Proposals for Reform to which our consideration of the problem presented by the Distress from Unemployment and the Destitution of the Able-bodied has led us. We put forward these proposals, far-reaching in character as some of them are, with a deep sense of responsibility. We have done our best to investigate the actual facts and conditions of the problem, and to weigh carefully all the considerations that have to be taken into account in grappling with it. We have tested our proposals, so far as this is possible, by individually and privately consulting, with regard to each of them, the men of practical experience, both official and commercial, whom we thought best qualified to judge as to what could, and what could not, be successfully put into operation. We must however point out that, with regard to this Part of our Report, the conditions do not permit the presentation of the same sort of detailed and finished Scheme of Reform as that with which we were able to conclude Part I. In respect of all the classes of the Non-Able-bodied, what we had to recommend lay rather in the domain of administrative policy and organisation, than in the *technique* of the several services. When we were considering the appropriate treatment of Children, the Sick or the Insane, we could take for granted the existence of an elaborate body of knowledge, worked out by specialised Local Authorities, as to how to run a school, a main drainage system, an isolation hospital or an asylum. All that we had to do was to show cause and devise means for transferring from an antiquated system of Destitution Authorities such of the members of these classes as had fallen into the hands of those Authorities; and for the assumption of the necessary responsibilities by the several specialised Local Authorities already dealing with similar services. But in the prevention and treatment of Able-bodied Destitution and Distress from Unemployment, we are, at the beginning of the twentieth century, in a position somewhat similar to that in which the prevention and treatment of sickness stood at the opening of the nineteenth century. We have still to work out by actual practice the appropriate *technique*.

For this reason among others, we wish to make it clear that the adoption of the Scheme of Reform, with which we have concluded Part I. of this Report, is in no way dependent upon an adoption of our present Proposals for Reform with regard to Distress from Want of Employment. We are, for instance, compelled to propose that the Local Authorities, to whom would be entrusted the whole administration of the Children, the Sick, the Mentally Defective, and the Aged, should have nothing to do with the provision for the Unemployed.* In our view the task of dealing with the Able-bodied person in destitution or distress transcends, by its very nature, the capacity of even the best Local Authorities, and must, if success is to be attained, be undertaken in its entirety by the National Government, on new principles, and with the help of new administrative machinery. If, however, organisation on a national basis is deemed inadvisable, or premature, the addition, to our Scheme of Reform, of a Committee for the Unemployed, dealing with all Able-bodied persons in distress, would even give to that Scheme administrative symmetry and logical completeness. In that case, there would need only to be a distinct committee of the County or County Borough Council, dealing with all sections of the Able-bodied and with the Able-bodied exclusively. In this committee (which might be called the Committee for the Unemployed) the existing Distress Committee would be merged. It would have at its disposal all or any of the devices of the Poor Law and the Unemployed Workmen Act; the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, the Outdoor Labour Test, the Casual Ward, the Municipal Relief Works and the Farm Colony, the Labour Exchange and Emigration. To have one Local Authority, and one only, dealing with Able-bodied men, whether Paupers, Vagrants or Unemployed, would be, in itself, a vast improvement on the present conflict and confusion caused by the existence of two rival Local Authorities simultaneously relieving the same class of men. To have this Statutory Committee for

* It is interesting to see that the need for making a sharp distinction between the Able-bodied and all the other classes, and for entrusting their treatment to quite separate Authorities, has impressed itself upon the contemporary Commission considering Poor Relief and Unemployment in the Transvaal State; though, in that new country, the Authorities suggested are not the same as in the United Kingdom. "Assistance to the Able-bodied," states the Report, "and Relief to the Disabled should, as far as possible, be kept distinct. The former is the concern of Public Authorities; the latter is the proper object of private enterprise." (Report of the Transvaal Indigency Commission, 1906–8, p. 182.)

the Unemployed, entirely distinct from the Statutory Committees for Children, for the Sick, for the Mentally Defective and for the Aged—administering its own separate institutions, by its own staff of officials, and working out its own specialised *technique*—would be an enormous advance on any general Destitution Authority, with its inevitable "mixed" policy, its "mixed" officials, and its "mixed" institutions, always crumbling back into the General Mixed Workhouse.

The dominant exigencies that must govern all proposals for reform in this field are, as we have described in the preceding chapter :—

(*a*) The existence, practically at all times, of honest and respectable workmen in distress from Unemployment ; either because they have fallen out of permanent situations, or because the interval between jobs is unusually prolonged.

(*b*) The chronic state of Under-employment in which hundreds of thousands of workers, especially at the seaports, and in all the great towns, habitually exist, owing to the casual and intermittent nature of their engagements.

(*c*) The vague and aimless wandering in search of work, either within a large town, or from town to town, which leads to demoralisation and vagrancy.

(*d*) The lack of any systematic provision for the training in new means of livelihood, whether in industry or in land settlement, of men displaced by new processes, machinery or other industrial changes.

(*e*) The intermixture among the Unemployed, the Under-employed and the Vagrants, of all sorts of "unemployables"—the debilitated and the demoralised, loafers and wastrels, beggars and criminals, who, whilst in one way or another maintaining a degenerate existence at the public expense, are always ready to appropriate and pervert any provision made for the more deserving sections.

Our Proposals for Reform are designed to meet all these exigencies.

(A) The National Labour Exchange.

The first requisite is the organisation throughout the whole of the United Kingdom of a complete system of public Labour Exchanges on a national basis. This National Labour Exchange, though in itself no adequate remedy, is the foundation of all our proposals. It is, in our view, an indispensable condition of any real reform.

We are impressed by the need, throughout nearly the whole field of industrial life, of some better means than at present exist by which those seeking employment can discover, *quickly, gratuitously and with certainty*, exactly what places are vacant, and where these are situated ; by which employers seeking assistance can have before them those persons who happen to be disengaged ; and (what in our view is no less important) by which it may be conclusively ascertained that no opportunities of employment exist for particular kinds of labour at particular times. Some such organisation of information has clearly become necessary in practically all trades, if not to employers, at any rate to all sections of the Unemployed. It was easy, in the village, or even in the small town, with scant variety of occupation, for employers and wage-earners to be aware of all vacancies and of all available men. But in the huge wildernesses of London and other great cities, with the bewildering multiplication of occupations and specialisation of employments, a deliberate organisation of means of communication between employers and employed is as indispensable, if time is not to be wasted in endless runnings to and fro, as the central sorting room of the Post Office or the Telephone Exchange. *

* It is interesting to find the National Labour Exchange advocated as long ago as 1869 by a charitable worker and Poor Law Guardian of great experience. "We do not," said the Rev. Brooke Lambert, "want Government to spend money on Emigration . . . but whilst applying such exceptional remedies as the case may require, to institute or promote a *general system of registration whereby men might learn where labour was wanted*. If some such plan was in force, a great deal of valuable labour which is, by emigration, for ever lost to the country, might be kept in it to add by its produce to the wealth of the land." ("Emigration," by Rev. Brooke Lambert, in Transactions of Social Science Association, 1869, p. 537.)

(i) *The Experience of Germany.*

But the utility of the Labour Exchange has been abundantly demonstrated. In nearly all the large towns of Germany such an institution has now been established; and we have available, in some cases, the testimony of ten, and even of twenty years' experience. Over 700 Labour Exchanges of one kind or another are now regularly reporting to the Imperial Statistical Office at Berlin. They are filling about *two millions of situations annually.* These Labour Exchanges are of various sorts, but the most interesting to us are the Public General Exchanges, established by the municipal authorities in practically every town of 50,000 inhabitants. Perhaps the most remarkable example is that of Stuttgart, a town standing in population between Leicester and Newcastle-on-Tyne, where the Public Labour Exchange, which has been in operation since 1895, finds situations for *more than a thousand male and female workers every week in the year.* Here the Labour Exchange has the hearty support of both employers and workmen. All the large Trade Unions (with one exception) have voluntarily given up their own registers of unemployed members, preferring such members to utilise the Public Exchange. Many Trade Unions (including those of the wood-workers, metal-workers, bookbinders, saddlers, millers and brewers' operatives) compel their unemployed members to report themselves daily at the Public Exchange as a condition of receiving their out of work pay. Turning to another German city, we may note that the Labour Exchange at Munich, which has a salaried staff of eighteen clerks, etc., and fills *over* 200 *situations a day*, "is situated on an island over which passes the principal bridge connecting the two halves of the city. The accommodation consists in essence of a number of waiting-rooms opening off a central corridor, and each communicating directly with the office of the superintendent in charge of the particular section. There are, for instance, three sections for men—unskilled, skilled workers in iron and wood, and all other skilled workers—each with its own waiting-room and superintendent; one for apprentices and two for women (industrial workers and domestic servants). Applicants for employment come to the appropriate waiting-room and fill up there a short form, indicating name, address, age, whether married, single, or widowed, occupation and work desired, last employer, and one or two other details. Applications for workpeople are received in the corresponding office by personal call on the part of the employer or his representative, by post, or most commonly by telephone. As they are received they are announced by the superintendent in the waiting-room, and the number required picked out from the men presenting themselves. From the forms already filled in by the men the superintendent enters the essential points in a current register, and sends the men off to the employer with a card of identification. The employer receiving the card is requested to note on it which, if any, of the men he has engaged, and to return it through the post—it is already stamped and addressed—to the Labour Office. Where the employer has called in person or sent an agent, this is, of course, not necessary; the hiring is concluded there and then at an interview in the superintendent's office. In the unskilled section men may stay in the waiting-room all day. In the skilled sections there are fixed hours—generally one in the morning and one in the afternoon for each trade. It should be added that any situation not at once filled is notified on a blackboard in the waiting-room, so that any man coming in later and desiring to apply for one of them may at once present himself to the superintendent. Twice a week, moreover, lists of situations unfilled are drawn up and exhibited in public places. They are also inserted in the Press and sent round to all the neighbouring Labour Exchanges.

"The Labour Office appears to concern itself very little with inquiries as to the character of applicants for employment. They are not even always asked to produce their infirmity insurance cards. Efforts are, of course, made to send the sort of man asked for by the employer, but, in the unskilled section at least, the attitude is taken that it is ultimately the employer's business to satisfy himself as to the capacity of the men he engages. The Labour Office is essentially a means of communication. It does, no doubt, in the long run, give the employer a better workman than he would get by chance from the streets; the superintendent has almost always a certain choice in the waiting-room, and can pick the abler or the better-known man. This, however, is only an indirect service. The direct utility of the Labour Office—as it presents itself unmistakably to anyone spending a morning in any one of its rooms—is to prevent economic waste by reducing to a minimum the period during which employers are seeking for men or men for employers. *In the unskilled section, with men always in the waiting-room and applications from employers arriving in an almost continuous stream, business has to be conducted at lightning speed.*"*

* "Public Labour Exchanges in Germany," by W. H. Beveridge (*Economic Journal*, March, 1908); included in "Unemployment, a Problem of Industry," by the same (1909). Nearly all the German Labour Exchanges charge no fee, and in the others the tendency is towards gratuitousness of service.

(ii) *The Experience of London.*

Nor are we without experience of the working of a Public Labour Exchange in this country. As we have mentioned, the Central (Unemployed) Body began, in 1906, the organisation of a system of Labour Exchanges for London as a whole.* In spite of many difficulties, which are gradually being overcome, this score of Metropolitan Labour Exchanges, at last covering all London, are now, each year, regularly receiving from employers information as to about thirty to forty thousand permanent situations that are vacant; and are actually filling, from among the workpeople who gratuitously register themselves as desiring places, no fewer than 25,000 situations a year. What is interesting is to find that, although there are many applicants for employment for whom situations are not found, *there are also many vacancies notified by employers, for workers of particular experience, which cannot be filled.* Still more numerous are the situations notified to any one Exchange which that Exchange, for all its long list of waiting applicants, is unable to fill. A steadily increasing use is accordingly being made of the Exchanges in other parts of London, and the central office. An employer sends to the local Exchange for a workman of such and such a kind. The Superintendent of the local Exchange finds that he has none on his "live register." He telephones to the central office, and the inquiry is sent to every one of the London Exchanges. It is significant of the proved value of the organisation that no fewer than *a hundred situations per week are filled from applicants in other districts.* The working of the Metropolitan Exchanges shows, in fact, that, whatever the state of trade, the wider the area covered by the Labour Exchange organisation, the larger is the proportion of situations filled, the fewer the employers whose wants remain unsatisfied and the smaller the remnants of applicants for employment for whom places cannot be found. But the Metropolitan Exchanges are working under great difficulties. They find their operations confined by the boundary of the Administrative County of London, whilst industry has spread out into West Ham and Tottenham, Willesden and Ealing, Wimbledon and Croydon. With such industrial "overflows" from London as the rapidly-growing factories of Luton and Reading, Chelmsford and Erith, and all the intervening country, the London Exchanges are practically unable to get into easy and regular communication. From places further afield they are wholly cut off. It is, in fact, a grave misfortune that, as we have seen, the "network of Labour Bureaux" covering the whole country,† which the Unemployed Workmen Act ordered to be established, has not yet come into existence.

(iii) *The Experience of the Seamen's Labour Exchange.*

What is in some respects an even more interesting experiment in Labour Exchanges is that, confined to a single industry, but extending to the whole of the United Kingdom, which the Board of Trade has conducted for nearly half a century under the Merchant Shipping Acts. Under certain sections of these Acts, which were designed to suppress the evils of "crimping," every engagement of a seaman, a fireman, a cook, a cabin-boy, or other person in the mercantile marine is required to be entered into at the public office maintained by the Government for that purpose. There are nearly 150 Mercantile Marine Offices in as many different seaports, at which places alone seamen can be hired. Thirty-seven of these are nothing but Labour Exchanges, whilst the others are adjuncts of the local Customs offices. There is a waiting-room where Jack can sit and smoke; a register where he can inscribe his temporary address; even a small staff of "runners"—in the Civil Service Estimates euphemistically entered as messengers—whose business it is to know Jack's haunts, so as to find him promptly when he is required. "We undertake practically to find a crew for every ship," said one enthusiastic Superintendent. The master mariner comes to the waiting-room; questions the men; picks out those whom he thinks will best suit his ship; and enters into contract with them then and there, in the presence of the Superintendent, who sees that the conditions of the contract include such as the law makes obligatory, but has otherwise no authority in the matter. These offices are situated where most convenient to the shipping trade, and they are open for the most suitable hours—even, as at Grimsby, where fishing boats need to catch the tide, in the middle of the night. If no suitable man can be found in the port—say, for a boatswain's place—the Superintendent may, at the master's expense, telegraph to the Mercantile Marine Office at the next port

* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LXXXVI. (A) to (E) to Vol. VIII.
† *Ibid.*, Q. 77737.

and have, as a favour, a suitable man advanced his railway fare and sent along. These 150 Mercantile Marine Offices fill more than half a million situations a year; 492,133 in 1906 in the 37 principal offices alone. No seaman is ever at a loss where to apply for whatever situations in his calling may be vacant. It is an interesting reflection upon this experiment that in all our investigations into the tens of thousands of Unemployed whom the Distress Committees have had on their hands, *we have seldom found a seaman*—practically none from the Royal Navy, and very few from the Mercantile Marine.

(iv) *The Functions of the National Labour Exchange.*

We propose that the institution of the Labour Exchange, using the experience of Germany and the Metropolis, should be adapted to the needs of each of our four classes of the Unemployed.

(*a*) *The Labour Exchange and the Men from Permanent Situations.*

The Men from Permanent Situations—our Class I.—would discover at once what situations were vacant, and in what towns; would learn promptly if there was nowhere any opening for them; would ascertain whether the particular services for which they had been trained were being superseded by industrial changes; and, if so, to what occupations they could best turn. Where Trade Unions existed, they could, if desired, use the public offices of the Labour Exchange for keeping their "Vacant Books," and even for their branch meetings. For the Men from Permanent Situations, indeed, the National Labour Exchange would, as we shall presently describe, become the axis of a system of subsidised Trade Insurance against Unemployment. But for the whole of this class, and for their employers, and therefore for the majority of the persons engaged in the industry of the nation, the use of the Labour Exchange might, we suggest, be left entirely optional.

(*b*) *The Labour Exchange and the Men of Discontinuous Employment.*

For the second class, the Men of Discontinuous Employment, the Labour Exchange has to fulfil a more important function. The need for bringing together employer and workman, in our Class I. only an occasional requirement, is, in our Class II., a perpetually recurring need. By its rapid and continuous collection of information, the Labour Exchange would be able to obviate the present futile drifting about in search of work and the incessant "leakages" of time between jobs by which so many men are ruined. The operatives in the building trades and the navvies might ascertain, even before the actual expiration of one job, what other jobs were beginning. In each large urban aggregation, whether the 300 square miles of the Metropolitan business area, or the 50 to 100 square miles of the other great centres, it would be possible, by a free use of the telegraph and telephone, to make known, hour by hour, exactly what openings there were, for each class of labour, in each part of the town. Every morning it could be published all over the Kingdom, in which towns, if any, there was an unsatisfied demand for labour, and for what kind of labour. No less important would it be to make known in which trades, and in which towns, there was an ascertained surplus of workers for whom no places could be found. The navvies, for instance, instead of wandering hither and thither on mere rumours of public works, could be directed straight to the places in which they were needed, in exactly the numbers required. We think that it will probably be found desirable—and, indeed, for the common convenience of employers and employed—that, as in the case of the seamen, it should be made compulsory, at any rate, in certain scheduled trades, for all engagements to be made, not necessarily on the premises of the Labour Exchange, but at least through its organisation, and registered in its books.

(*c*) *The Labour Exchange and the Seasonal Trades.*

A special type of Discontinuous Employment is presented by those trades which have fairly regular fluctuations in the volume of work according to the season of the year. Here the workers find themselves busy during certain months, and habitually short of work during others. As workers in these "seasonal" trades supply a considerable proportion of the Unemployed, we were glad to be furnished by the Board of Trade with statistical returns of their fluctuations during the decade, 1897–1906.

> "These Returns show, in the first place, a good many spring and summer trades. Of these building . . . is the most obvious. During spring, employment improves rapidly, and receives a fresh impetus in July; from the end of August it falls off quite steadily, till the end of the year. Furnishing follows the same general course with a busy time more concentrated in the spring, and coach-building with one in June and July. In coopering, the season comes somewhat later, and is carried

on with only slightly diminished briskness till the end of the year. Brush-making and hat-making have each a second season in the autumn. In clothing, the worst time is in October and November; every subsequent month shows improvement till the late spring. Leather-workers and mill-sawyers, though also busiest in spring and summer, and slacking off to the winter, have not such well-marked seasons. . . .

"The Returns show, in the second place, certain trades whose general tendency is directly the contrary of that outlined above. They may be regarded as winter trades. Steel-smelting, while somewhat irregular, has undoubtedly its slackest times in June and July.

"In the third place, certain trades have . . . very characteristic fluctuations, which are apparently more dependent on social habits than on climatic conditions. Printers are always busiest at the end of November, grow slack as soon as Christmas is past, grow busy in February and March, and slack again from April to June, always recover a little in July, and then fall into a dead season during the summer holidays. Paper-makers, as might be expected, follow the same course, though not so regularly. Tobacco-workers also are busiest in November, and stand idle in July and August. Book-binders . . . agree with printers in being busiest in November, but have a slack season more or less throughout the late spring and summer.

"It will be seen that there is, in coal-mining, a definite seasonal fluctuation. December is busiest; employment falls off in January to recover in February and March; after which it falls off in April, and though recovering in May, becomes slack again throughout June, July and August. With September, there is, in all cases, a recovery. . . . Iron-mining shows definite though limited seasonal fluctuations. The last four months of the year, and May, are busy times; January, April and June to August are times of comparative slackness. For iron and steel works . . . the three months June to August, and January, are marked out as periods of comparative slackness. The tin-plate industry . . . has apparently a similar fluctuation."*

It thus appears that there is no such marked predominance of briskness in the spring and slackness in the winter as is commonly supposed. On the contrary, many industries are at their busiest in the winter months. There is, indeed, no month in the year in which some trades are not usually at their busiest; and no month in the year in which some trades are not usually at their slackest. Thus, January is the busiest of all months at the docks of London and most other ports and one of the busiest for coal-miners; February in paper-making; March in steel-smelting and textile manufacture; April in brush-making and the furnishing trades; May in engineering and ship-building, coach-making, hat-making and leather work; May, June, and July in all the ramifications of the clothing trades, as well as among mill-sawyers; July and August for the railway service and all occupapations in holiday resorts, as well as for carpenters and coopers; August and September for all forms of agricultural harvesting; September for plumbers and iron-miners; October in iron and steel works; November for printing and book-binding, for the tobacco trade, the tin-plate manufacture and the metal trades generally; whilst in December coal-mining, the very extensive theatrical industry, the Post Office service and the gas and electricity works are all at their greatest volume of employment. On the other hand, January shows iron-mining and the furnishing trades to be at their slackest; in February (contrary to popular belief), the plumbers have the most Unemployment of any time of the year; in March and April the coopers; in May and June the London dock labourers and the coal-miners; in July the iron and steel and tin-plate workers; in August the paper-makers, printers, book-binders and tobacco workers; in September the textile operatives and various metal-workers; in October all the clothing trades are at their slackest; in November ship-building is, on the average, at its minimum; whilst December is the worst month for carpenters and engineers, mill-sawyers and coach-builders, leather-workers and brushmakers.

The inference is irresistible that, if we had accurate statistics of the daily volume of employment in all industries, it might well be that we should find the aggregate for all trades, in all parts of the country, to be approximately uniform throughout the year. And this, when we come to think of it, is suggested by the character of the consumers' demand. The income of any highly differentiated industrial community accrues to it from day to day, and becomes available for personal expenditure from week to week, in approximately equal instalments throughout the year. Though each family varies its consumption of different services and commodities at different seasons—now buying winter clothes, now summer clothes, now using more coal, now taking holidays—the total amount of the weekly outlay of the typical household does not exhibit any great variation throughout the year. It is clear, at least, that the variation from season to season, when we take the aggregate for all industries and for the nation as a whole, must be very much smaller than the seasonal slackness which, at present, in trade after trade, annually brings tens of thousands of families into the desolation of prolonged Under-employment.

* Board of Trade Memorandum on Statistics of Seasonal Industries, and Industries carried on by Casual Labour: Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No XXI. (D) to Vol. IX.

The Discontinuous Employment due to seasonal slackness is, in fact, so far as the labourers and all unspecialized workers are concerned, strictly analogous to the Under-employment of the dock and wharf-labourer. Just as each employer of this kind of labour tends to keep his own reserve, or "Stagnant Pool," which he drains only on his busiest day, so each seasonal trade attracts to itself, not merely enough workers to do its daily average of business throughout the year, but enough for its busiest season, with the result that each trade in turn, as its own particular slack season comes round, has a large proportion of its workers under-employed.

This, however, overstates the case. In some cases the seasonal industries avoid variations of staff by working more continuously in the busy season and "short time" in the slack months. This, in various forms, is the practice of the coal-miners, the textile operatives, the iron and steel and tin-plate workers, and many kinds of factory operatives. It is also to a great extent the practice in agriculture and many minor industries. Where wage-earners enjoy practical continuity of employment under the same employer (but only in those cases), this variation of the length and assiduity of the working time is no doubt the most convenient way of meeting the variation of the demand, especially for the men of any specialized skill.*

In other seasonal trades there is a certain amount of unorganised "dove-tailing." The hop-gardens get their harvesting done by 20,000 workers drawn each September and October from other occupations. About 25,000 Irish labourers still come from Connaught to help to reap the potatoes, and do other harvesting work from Perthshire to the Fen Country.† Some of the Thames riverside workers supply the increased staff still required in the winter (though to a lesser extent than before so much machinery was employed) in the London gas-works. And everywhere in all sorts of industries a certain amount of individual and almost casual "dove-tailing" goes on, by which workers, in their own slack season, contrive to earn a little irregular income at other occupations.

With a National Labour Exchange in effective operation this "dove-tailing" of one seasonal trade into another could be enormously increased, at any rate among the labourers who follow each trade, the women workers, the less specialized of the skilled workers, and the "handy men" and nondescripts whom every industry employs. Thus, to take dock labour and three other large industries only, employing a large proportion of general labourers and only slightly specialized men, we have been furnished by the Board of Trade‡ with figures showing the average number of men employed daily in each month of the year, during 1906, at the London docks and wharves, and in the gas-works, at the water-works, and on the tramways of the whole country. Each of these industries, by itself, shows a variation between its busiest month and its slackest month of between 9 and 22 per cent., the fluctuations affecting some 10,000 men, and that repeatedly. Adding them together, the variation between the total employed at the extremes of high pressure and slackness is only 7 per cent.; the most extreme fluctuation affecting only some 5,000 men, *and the busiest months being those of November, December and January*, when the building trades and brick-making are at their slackest. It is probable that the inclusion of the unskilled men in these two further industries would reduce the aggregate seasonal variation to a vanishing point. This it would be the business of the National Labour Exchange to accomplish. In this way, a much greater continuity of employment throughout the year could be secured for those persons who were employed at all; at the cost (which accompanies every stage in the Suppression of Under-employment) of squeezing out altogether, once and for all, some of those not really required for the work to be done, who now pick up, owing to the absence of organisation, half a subsistence in chronic Under-employment. For these, of course, as a condition of the reform, suitable provision would have to be made.

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* It is in these trades also, that the variations in the consumers' pressure can be made much less extreme by means of a legal limitation of the hours of labour. When the hours of cotton operatives were settled by the individual mill-owner, cotton-spinning and weaving were extreme instances of seasonal trades; as the manufacturer was unable to resist the customers' insistence on instant delivery. Now that the maximum hours are legally fixed, the buyer has learnt to be more regular in his demands. The extreme seasonal irregularity of the London dressmaking would undoubtedly be mitigated if dressmakers were absolutely prevented from working more than a fixed maximum day. Customers would simply not be able to insist on delivery in an unreasonably short time.

† Report . . . relating to Irish Migratory Agricultural Labourers, for 1906 (Cd. 3481).

‡ Board of Trade Memorandum on Statistics of Seasonal Industries, and Industries carried on by Casual Labour (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (D) to Vol. IX.). The case would be stronger if the statistics for dock labour could be given for all the ports, and not merely for London. At Liverpool, also, and apparently at most ports, the dock labourer is busiest in the winter.

(d) The Labour Exchange and the Under-employed.

The Men from Permanent Situations, the Men of Discontinuous Employment, and especially those among them whose industries are subject to considerable seasonal fluctuations, are, as we have shown, in the preceding chapter, constantly dropping into our Third Class—the men who are, year in and year out, chronically Under-employed. It is with regard to this class that the Labour Exchange reaches its highest utility. It presents us with what, in our opinion, is the indispensable instrument for dealing with Under-employment. We must postulate, to begin with, the great desirability, from the standpoint of the community, of putting an end to all this "casual" or irregularly intermittent wage-labour, if we could do so, because of its social effects. No housekeeping can stand a demoralising uncertainty as to whether the week's income will be five shillings or five and twenty. We cannot, however, hope to abolish the irregularity of demand which lies at the root of Under-employment. At every port the loading and unloading of ships necessarily depends on their arrival and departure. Whether we have to do with the private enterprise of unloading ships or harvesting crops, or with the public service of the Post Office or the tramways, we cannot expect ever to prevent incessant fluctuations from day to day in the number of men required. But although we cannot prevent, and may not even be able appreciably to lessen, the fluctuations of employment, by each separate firm, and in each separate industry, it is not necessary that these fluctuations should work themselves out, in the world of labour, into *an army of hundreds of thousands of men who are chronically Under-employed.* What a National Labour Exchange could remedy would be the habit of each employer of keeping around him his own reserve of labour. By substituting one common reservoir, at any rate for the unspecialized labourers, we could drain the Stagnant Pools of Labour which this habit produces and perpetuates.

For this purpose, an element of compulsion is indispensable. The evils of the present way of engaging Casual Labour are so manifest, and its direct results in Pauperism and demoralisation have been so clearly ascertained, that our Investigators were led to propose, with regard to dock labour at any rate, that it should be prohibited by law.

> "There seems to be no right," they report, "to claim that such a state of things should continue. We believe that the voluntary establishment of a weekly wage for the great majority of the labourers employed, if not for all of them, is possible, and that if this is done, an employment of such a nature, which requires its extra hands in the winter, might prove a boon to the unskilled workers in other trades, whose busy time is in the summer. Lastly, if no system of weekly engagements is voluntarily established (and we believe it would be an advantage to employers as well as employed), we would be prepared to go further, and suggest *that such a minimum period of engagement be made a legal obligation.*"*

To some such legal prohibition of a method of hiring labour that is demonstrably quite as injurious to the community as was the Truck System, we must inevitably come, if no other remedy can be found. Stopping short, however, of the legal prohibition of casual hirings, we may reasonably ask those employers who continue to adopt this mode of engaging labour to submit to some slight regulations calculated to reduce the social evil that they undoubtedly cause. We propose that it should be made legally compulsory on employers (being persons carrying on industrial or commercial operations for profit), in all those cases in which it is not convenient to them to guarantee a minimum period of employment, which might be put at a month (subject, of course, to the power of dismissal of any particular individual for misconduct, and even of arbitrary replacement of one man by another if desired), to hire such labour as they want, whether for a job, a day, or a week, exactly as is done without complaint in the mercantile marine, *exclusively through the National Labour Exchange.*

We recommend that the National Labour Exchange should make a point of accommodating itself to the needs of every kind of fluctuating industry; that it should be assisted in each locality by an advisory committee of employers and employed; having offices opened exactly where most convenient to employers (for instance, actually inside the dock gates, or at the principal wharves, or at any other places where sudden demands for labour occur); keeping whatever office hours were required (ready, for instance, to supply labourers at five in the morning); and, of course, telephonically interconnected, and organised up to the maximum efficiency. As there would be no other opportunity of getting casual employment at all (with the possible exception of the odd jobs offered by private persons, not engaged in business; and even these we may hope to diminish),

* Final Report on the Relation of Industrial and Sanitary Conditions to Pauperism, by Mr. A. D. Steel-Maitland and Miss Rose Squire, p. 35.

it would not be necessary to make it legally compulsory on the labourers to enrol themselves at the Labour Exchange, except under the circumstances that we have described. Nor would it be necessary legally to prohibit the existence of other agencies for filling situations. As employers would not be able to use them for casual labour, such agencies, dealing, as they do, almost entirely with certain specialized kinds of employment, such as domestic servants, hotel employés and secondary school teachers, would scarcely compete with the National Labour Exchange, and would have, perforce, to confine themselves, as they practically do now, to filling situations of at least a month's duration.

This plan, it will be seen, reduces to a minimum the proposed restriction on the employer, or the interference with his business. It would cause him absolutely no increase of expense. In so far as he can offer regular employment of a month's duration, he is not affected at all. Even for casual labour, he remains as free as before to hire it by the job or by the day only, for as short a period as he chooses. He will have at his disposal all the men in the whole town who are not already engaged. He is able, in fact, to draw from a common reservoir instead of from his own Stagnant Pool. He may have his own choice of men (assuming that they are momentarily disengaged). He may ask for this man or that; he may keep his own list of "preference men"; he may send for ten or a hundred men in order of his preference, or send merely for so many men without naming them. He may even bargain privately with the man of his choice, and virtually secure him beforehand; provided that he lets the formal hiring take place through the Labour Exchange. All that he is forbidden to do is, at any time or under any circumstances, to take on casual labour otherwise than through the Labour Exchange.*

The result to the labourer living by casual employment will be that he will find effectively open to him, not merely the particular demand for labour of this or that wharf, or this or that foreman, on which he has been in the habit of waiting, but the whole aggregate demand of the town. One employer needs men to-day only, but another needs men to-morrow; one trade is busy this month, another next month. The policy of the National Labour Exchange would be, subject to any preferences expressed by employers, so to distribute the available men, and so to "dovetail" the engagements offered to each of them, as to secure to each man who was employed at all five or six days' work in every week. In so far as this was achieved, we should have done for Casual Labour what has been done compulsorily for every person employed in the mercantile marine, and voluntarily for skilled nurses in most large towns by the various nurses' institutes, etc., and for the members of the Corps of Commissionaires in London, namely, combined freedom to the employer to hire only for a job, with practical continuity of work to the person employed. To quote the words of an able student of this problem, "decasualisation will reconstruct the whole conditions of life in the lowest ranks of industry, sifting out for remedial treatment a certain number of 'unemployables' and forcing up the level of all the rest. It will replace the casual class—always on the verge of distress, always without reserves for an emergency—by a class for whom the words foresight, organisation, and thrift may represent not a mockery but a reality."†

The question may present itself, why, if the chronic Under-employment of the labourers can be thus prevented, has it not already been prevented? The answer is to be found, as has been demonstrated at Liverpool and elsewhere, partly in the difficulty that each individual employer experiences in attempting to reorganise the habits of a trade; partly in the difficulty of even a whole trade by itself affecting a change; but very largely also in the very real opposition which the labourers themselves have offered to the introduction of regular employment. There is, indeed, a difficulty which has to be faced. If, by means of an effective Labour Exchange at Liverpool, the whole work of the docks could be done by 8,000 men con-

* We see no reason why it should not be open to the employers in any particular trade to undertake, if they prefer, the organisation of their own casual employment. The Liverpool shipowners, who now refuse to avoid creating a quite unnecessary congestion of surplus labour at the Liverpool Docks, with the gravest social consequences, might elect (rather than rely exclusively on the National Labour Exchange) to establish such an organization for themselves. Provided that they offered continuous employment of not less than a month to their men—as a very little organisation and a small insurance premium would enable them to do—they would be free to make their own arrangements. They might, for instance, establish a mutual society, which itself engaged the labourers by the month, and supplied them to the shipowners as required. They might even combine both advantages, the mutual society engaging and supplying the regular corps of men, of the number up to which constant employment could be guaranteed, and also drawing on the National Labour Exchange in any temporary emergency (as any individual shipowner could also do). Analogous arrangements might be made by other Associations of Employers.

† "Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909, p. 219.

tinuously employed, with a thousand or two more retained for exceptional times of pressure, instead of (as at present) being spread over 15,000 men who are chronically Under-employed, the social gain to Liverpool would be great, but there would be 5,000 men squeezed out altogether. Every dock labourer in Liverpool fears that he would be among the excluded. It is, in fact, not possible to abolish Under-employment, except at the cost of depriving some of the Under-employed men even of the employment that they have. Hence the task cannot be undertaken except by a public Authority, and by one prepared at the same time to provide, adequately and honourably, for the men displaced by the improvement. We deal with this in our sections on the Absorption of the Surplus and the Provision for the Unemployed.

(e) *The Labour Exchange and the Suppression of Vagrancy.*

The National Labour Exchange presents what, in our opinion, is the only effectual way of suppressing Vagrancy. As is recited in the Report of the recent Departmental Committee,* every variety of treatment of the Vagrant, from the most penal severity to the most generous laxity, has been tried in vain. So long as the only method of finding work is for the workman simply to go and seek it, there is no possibility of preventing the Unemployed from wandering from town to town. So long as the workman in search of a job has to wander, it is impossible to distinguish between him and the Professional Vagrant. So long as the "public works men" are left to stream helplessly from one job to another on mere rumour, without any kind of adjustment between the numbers attracted and the numbers required, it is impracticable to stop the swarm of "cadgers," who prey on the generosity of the navvy and contaminate the locality in which the contractor is at work. "The knowledge of men of this class which I have gained," sums up Captain Eardley-Wilmot, "in my experience as governor of both convict and local prisons, and more recently as an Inspector, has convinced me that no alteration in treatment, within the limits that would be allowed in this country, could affect their number. Causes for increase must be looked for in the social and economic conditions of the period under discussion. I may add that this is the opinion of every thoughtful and experienced prison official with whom I have discussed the question."†

With the National Labour Exchange organised in all towns it will become possible for the unemployed workman in any part of the Kingdom to inform himself, with precision, whether or not he is required in any other place. There will cease to be any excuse for wandering in search of work. We propose that, if it appears, on telegraphic or telephonic communication, that there is reason to believe that a workman can obtain employment in another town, and if he wishes to go there for that purpose, but has not money, a special non-transferable railway-ticket should be supplied to him, upon an obligation to report himself the same day at the Labour Exchange of the town to which he is sent, and to repay the cost of the ticket by weekly instalments from his wages. Arrangements could be made, whenever thought desirable, for the man to be met on arrival, and conducted to the Labour Exchange. If this were done, it would be possible to prohibit all wandering without means of subsistence and to abolish the Casual Ward. But we do not propose that the man found destitute "on the road" should be sent to

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* After elaborate inquiry, the Departmental Committee, in the absence of a National Labour Exchange, found no better expedient to recommend than the revival of a device which has already had a long career of failure. Without alluding to the hopeless breakdown of the plan of giving "passes" to such persons as were considered legitimately entitled to travel on foot from place to place—a breakdown amply recorded in the official records—the Committee recommended "that the police should be empowered to issue a way-ticket to a man who can satisfy them, either that he has worked at some employment (other than a casual job) within a recent period, say, three months, and that he has reasonable ground for expecting to get work at a certain place, *and that he is likely to keep to it* (!), or that he has some other good ground for desiring to go to some particular place" (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, p. 481). The way-ticket is then to entitle the bearer to food and lodging each night at the Casual Ward. Thus, it is actually recommended in 1906, that working men should be encouraged and helped to *walk* to the town in which they can get work though it would be far cheaper (considering the loss of time and the daily cost of food, etc.), to send them by rail! "Going on foot," deposed a distinguished economist, "is the dearest way of travelling; I should certainly send him by train" (Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 88146). Moreover, as the Committee itself sagely remarks elsewhere, in contradiction of its own recommendation, "a ticket giving the right to wander . . . is in itself *an inducement to tramp*, and the habit of Vagrancy and a confirmed love of the road, would, in our view, more probably result than the finding of any settled employment" (Report of Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1906, p. 48). We concur in this opinion, and we consider that any form of way-ticket would prove, *as it has repeatedly proved already, whenever it has been tried*, a positive aggravation of the evil.

† *Ibid.*, p. 122. (Memorandum by Captain Eardley-Wilmot.)

prison." His duty would be to report himself to the nearest branch of the National Labour Exchange, where he would find, without fail, either opportunity of working, or else the suitable provision that we shall describe. If this were done it would be possible to make all the minor offences of Vagrancy—such as begging, "sleeping out," hawking or peddling without a licence, wandering without means of subsistence, wandering with children in such a way as to subject them to hardship or deprive them of the means of education, etc.—occasions for *instant and invariable commitment* by the Justices, not for short sentences to the ordinary prison, which experience shows to be useless, but to one or other of the reformatory Detention Colonies which must form an integral part of the system of provision, and which will be described in our section on the Provision for the Unemployed.

(f) The Labour Exchange as a Method of enforcing Personal Responsibility.

A large part of what is erroneously classed with Vagrancy is, as we have seen, merely a failure of a section of the residents of the great cities to get work sufficient even to provide themselves with a night's lodging. At present there is, indeed, no practical method of enforcing upon able-bodied men the obligation of working. Every large town has its class of "houseless poor" who, with the aid of Free Shelters and philanthropic distributions of food, and occasional resorts to the Casual Ward and to "sleeping out," manage to exist with the very minimum of work. This deteriorating and contaminating class cannot at present be suppressed, because (in the absence of any proof that they could get work for the asking) public opinion does not permit of any real punishment of their offence, and persists, in fact, in relieving their physical wants. An analogous difficulty stands at present in the way of any real enforcement on negligent or drunken parents of their parental obligations. The Local Education Authorities, who find children hungry at school, and the Local Health Authorities, who are driven to supply milk to starving infants, find it practically impossible to prosecute even the most criminally negligent parents, because there is no proof that they could get work if they chose. We have seen, moreover, in our chapter on Charge and Recovery, how difficult it is for the Poor Law Authorities, even where men could earn substantial wages, to bring sufficient proof to convince County Court Judges and Magistrates that they are in a position to pay what is due from them. In all these directions the existence of the National Labour Exchange, where any man may be ensured either the opportunity of working, or else the provision that we shall presently describe, will enable personal responsibility to be far more effectually enforced than is now possible. Whilst no man who is fulfilling all his obligations need be compelled to report himself to the Labour Exchange, even if he is Unemployed, such attendance and report would, of course, be an imperative requirement and condition of any form of Public Assistance. If a child is found hungry at school, or without boots, the first question will be why is the parent not at the Labour Exchange, where either work or adequate provision is available for him. When this is understood, it will be found possible to take much more drastic action against those who, out of idleness, selfishness or negligence, or through drunkenness, refuse to provide themselves with lodging, or deprive their wives and children of the necessary food and clothing, or fail to make any payments that are due from them.

(g) The Absorption of the Surplus.

Some enthusiastic advocates of the Labour Exchange think so highly of the improvement that it would introduce in the organization of the nation's industry that they believe it would be possible to give continuous employment to those at present unemployed, and at the same time, through the constant growth of the nation's industry, obtain other places for the section of the Under-employed who would thereby be squeezed out. We do not take this view. We think that the "Decasualisation of the Casual Labourer" and the Suppression of Under-employment cannot be undertaken, and ought not to be undertaken, without simultaneously providing, in some way or other, for the men who would be thrown out. We have shown that there exists in the United Kingdom to-day no inconsiderable surplus of labour—not, indeed, of workmen who could not, with an improved organization of industry, be productively employed; but of workmen who are, as a matter of fact, now chronically Under-employed, and of whose potential working time a large part is, to their own mental and physical hurt, and to our great loss, at present wholly wasted. By the working of a National Labour Exchange such as we have proposed, and by the deliberate draining of the Stagnant Pools of Labour into a common reservoir, we contemplate that a rapidly increasing number of these Under-employed men will find themselves employed with practical continuity, whilst there will be a corres-

ponding section left without any employment at all. For the surplus of labour power which already exists in the partial idleness of huge reserves of Under-employed men, and which will then for the first time stand revealed and identified in the complete idleness of a smaller number of wholly displaced individuals, we want to ensure that the National Labour Exchange shall be able to find appropriate employment at wages. It so happens that there are three social reforms of great importance which would promote this object, and which, accordingly, we recommend for adoption concurrently with any attempt to drain the morass of Under-employment.

(i) *The Halving of Boy and Girl Labour.*

We have seen that one of the most prolific sources of Casual Labour, with its evil of chronic Under-employment, is the employment of boys in occupations which afford them no industrial training; and which, whilst providing them with relatively high wages during youth, leave them stranded when they reach manhood. The extensive and, as we fear, the growing use of boy-labour in this uneducational way produces a four-fold social detriment:—

> "There is, first of all, the evil, through the multiplication of van-boys, errand boys, messenger boys, etc., of recruiting a chronically excessive army of unskilled, casually employed, merely brute labour. There is, further, the illegitimate use, by employers, of successive relays of boys, not as persons to whom a skilled trade has to be taught, but, by ignoring that responsibility, as cheap substitutes for adult workers, who are thereby deprived of employment. There is, as the other aspect of this, the failure to provide for the healthy physical development of the town boy, whose long hours of monotonous and uneducational work leave him a 'weedy,' narrow-chested, stunted weakling, whom even the recruiting sergeant rejects, and who succumbs prematurely to disease. Finally, there is the creation of the 'hooligan'—the undisciplined youth, precocious in evil, earning at seventeen or eighteen more wages than suffice to keep him, independent of home control, and yet unsteadied by a man's responsibilities."*

It may be said that it is the duty of the parents to take care that their sons are placed out in situations where they will receive proper industrial training. Unfortunately, as is only too clear, the great majority of parents, even when they give sufficient thought to the matter, find it impossible to give their sons a proper start in life.

> "What stares in the face the exceptionally careful parent of the poorer class who tries to start his son well is, in London, the difficulty of discovering any situation in which his boy can become a skilled worker of any kind, or even enter the service of an employer who can offer him advancement. We have, on the one hand, a great development of employment for boys of a thoroughly bad type, yielding high wages and no training. We have, on the other hand, a positive shrinkage,—almost a disappearance—of places for boys in which they are trained to become competent men. London employers not only refuse to teach apprentices, even for premiums—they often refuse to have boys on those parts of their establishments in which anything can be learnt."*

Exactly the same difficulty is found, in fact, by the Poor Law Authorities in placing out the pauper children for whom they are responsible. We are not satisfied that, as regards the boys in particular, these do not, to a considerable extent, eventually recruit the ranks of the Under-employed; so that the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and the Parish Councils in Scotland, may be, to no small degree, creating their own future difficulties. Out of the 300,000 boys and girls maintained out of the Poor Rate, for whose upbringing the Poor Law Authorities are definitely responsible, something like 20,000 have annually to be started in employment. With regard to some 15,000 of these, whom the Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils have elected to maintain on Outdoor Relief, we cannot discover that any care is taken that they should be either apprenticed or brought up to a trade at which they can get regular employment. There is, in fact, only too much reason to fear that practically the whole of these 15,000 "Children of the State" pass into ill-paid occupations, in which they can eventually earn no regular livelihood, and that (as regards the boys at any rate) they almost wholly recruit one or other sections of the Under-employed. With regard to the remaining 5,000 who have been in Poor Law Schools, or Cottage or Scattered Homes, or "boarded-out," more care is taken by the Poor Law Authorities; and practically all the girls go into domestic service. For the boys, too, in many places, as much as possible is done, but the dearth of openings for indoor apprentices in skilled trades compels a very large proportion to enter the Army as bandsmen; and it is hoped that on the expiration of their military service they find remunerative occupation as musicians. We think that there should be more alternatives open.

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 93031, Part I.
† *Ibid.*

There is, unhappily, no little evidence to show that the difficulty that parents and Poor Law Authorities alike experience in placing out boys in occupations affording them regular work and a constant livelihood is not confined to the Metropolis. There is the same difficulty in Glasgow and Liverpool, Manchester and Hull. The evil is not that boys are employed, or that they suffer from Unemployment; but that they are employed all day at non-educational occupations. In Dundee a large majority of the boys have to find employment in places in which they learn no trade by which they can subsequently earn a livelihood. In the cotton-spinning mills of Lancashire three-fourths of the piecers necessarily fail to become spinners; and have eventually to change their occupations. Even the Postmaster-General, the largest individual employer of labour, employs far more boys in his service than he can use as men; and has accordingly annually to dismiss, about 16, several thousand boys to whom he has taught no trade by which they can earn their bread.*

Such a state of things in which an enormous number of boys obtain no useful industrial training before attaining manhood, calls obviously for remedy. We cannot restore the old apprenticeship system, even if that had anything like its commonly-supposed advantages. At no time did it provide trade teaching for more than a small minority of the population, and then by a method which Adam Smith denounced as extravagantly costly to the community. There is now no method by which, over the greater part of the industrial field, the great mass of boys can be technically educated—whether we mean by this the teaching of manual crafts or merely a wider education of hand, eye, and brain into all-round industrial capacity—other than that of Trade Schools. We see no other way of turning the boy into a trained and fully developed man than that of providing the necessary training between fifteen and eighteen *by the community itself*. The parent demonstrably cannot do it. The employer will not and (under the present industrial conditions) is really often not in a position to do so. We have had before us various proposals for increasing the facilities for evening instruction, and for rendering attendance at evening continuation classes compulsory. It is, however, clear that, useful as evening continuation classes may be to particular individuals, it is impossible for boys who are exhausted by a whole day's physical toil to obtain either physical training or the necessary technical education. The "theory that boys can become errand boys," reports our Investigator, "for a year or two and then enter skilled trades cannot be maintained. Very few boys can pick up skill after a year or two of merely errand-boy work. . . . The great mass of them fall into the low-skilled trades or wholly casual labour."† We have, therefore, come to the conclusion that, if we want to turn into trained and competent workmen the 300,000 boys who now annually in the United Kingdom start wage-earning at something or another, there is only one practicable plan. *We must shorten the legally permissible hours of employment for boys, and we must require them to spend the hours so set free in physical and technological training.*

We think that there would be many advantages in such an amendment of the Factory Acts and the Education Acts as would make it illegal for any Employer to employ any boy at all, in any occupation whatsoever, below the age of fifteen; or any youth under eighteen for more than thirty hours per week; coupled with an obligation on the employer, as a condition of being permitted to make use of the immature in industry, to see that the youth between fifteen and eighteen had his name on the roll of some suitable public institute giving physical training and technical education; and an obligation on the boy to attend such an institute for not less than thirty hours per week. This attendance might either be for five hours every day, in the morning or afternoon respectively, or for ten hours on alternate days, according to the convenience of employers in different industries; or, in order to suit the needs of agriculture, it might be concentrated, wholly or chiefly, in particular months of the year. It should at the same time be made obligatory on the Local Education Authorities to submit schemes for providing within a limited period the necessary institutions for the youths of their districts in whatever way was most suited to the local needs. Such a law would have various advantages:

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* Report on the Effects of Employment or Assistance of the Unemployed, by Mr. Cyril Jackson and Rev. J. C. Pringle, pp. 64–65; Evidence before the Commission, Q. 93386, Par. 6. We have also received a Memorandum from the Postmaster-General (Conditions of Employment of Telegraph Messengers in the Post Office, not yet in volume form), in which, whilst the evil is admitted, attention is drawn, both to the difficulties of the Post Office and to the various steps taken to minimise and remedy it.

† Report . . . on Boy Labour, by Mr. Cyril Jackson, p. 20.

"(1) The employer would find it less advantageous to employ boys, even if he took them in double shifts, and paid them no more per hour than he did before, and he would consequently not be so anxious so to alter his processes as to substitute them for adult men. But (as the supply of boy labour would be halved) there would be a positive scarcity of boys, and their rate of wages per hour would probably rise, so that the employer would tend to employ, instead of boys, actually more adult men than at present.

"(2) The youth, who now has even too much pocket-money, and gets, therefore, too soon independent of home, and too easily led into evil courses, would find his earnings reduced, perhaps not by half, but probably by one-third, and his leisure absorbed under discipline.

"(3) At the Polytechnic it would be possible, in thirty hours a week, from fourteen to eighteen (or twenty-one) to put the youth through a course of physical training, under medical supervision, under which he would learn to swim, to row, to box, to ride, etc.; and it could be ensured that the adverse hygienic conditions of town life would be rectified.

"(4) There would be possible, in the course of four or seven years' half-time at the trade school, an education of hand, eye and brain; a practical ability to use competently the ordinary tools; a knowledge of drawing, practical geometry, and workshop arithmetic; and even a groundwork of training in particular handicrafts; such as few even of duly indentured apprentices get. We need not try, or even desire, to convert every boy into a skilled engineer, cabinet-maker, or compositor. But we could make every boy, whatever his occupation, into a man of trained hand, eye and brain; disciplined, and good-mannered; of sound muscle and fully developed lungs; with a general knowledge of common tools and simple machines; able to read a plan and make a drawing to scale; ready to undertake any kind of unspecialized work, and competent, even if he does unskilled labour, to do it 'with his head.'"*

With regard to the need for extending, to boys between 14 and 18, something like the supervision and control exercised over them whilst at school, there is abundant evidence. At present, as in the past, it is mainly the "juvenile adult," between 16 and 21, who recruits our prison population. It is the absence of any system of control and organization for the employment of the young which is universally declared to be one of the principal causes of wrong-doing. "When a boy leaves school the hands of organization and compulsion are lifted from his shoulders. If he is the son of very poor parents, his father has no influence, nor, indeed, a spare hour, to find work for him; he must find it for himself; generally he does find a job, and if it does not land him into a dead alley at 18 he is fortunate. Or he drifts, and the tidy scholar soon becomes a ragged and defiant corner loafer. Over 80 per cent. of our charges admit that they were not at work when they got into trouble."†

We have hitherto referred only to boys. But the problem of the girl is, from an educational standpoint, analogous. They all need the training of body and brain, hand and eye; they all need the instruction in the use of the household implements and tools; they all need the technical education that is necessary to produce competent housewives and mothers. Even if we regard the industrial work of girls as, for the most part, a "blind alley," destined to end at marriage, the need for their technical training in household duties becomes all the more imperative. They do not, and cannot, get such training before they leave the elementary school. The compulsory release of girls up to eighteen from industrial wage-earning for half their time, and their compulsory attendance at suitable educational courses, in which physical training and the various branches of domestic economy and household management (including how to rear a baby) would find place, offers, in our opinion, the best way of ensuring their adequate preparation for their duties as wives and mothers.

We should recommend these reforms even if they rested solely on their educational advantages. It is upon the proper physical and technical training of its youth that the nation has eventually to depend. But they present also the additional attraction that they would, we believe, arrest the tendency so to arrange industrial operations as to replace the labour of adult men and women by that of boys and girls. We do not think, in the face of the large numbers of the Unemployed and the Under-employed which our inquiry has revealed, that any objection can be made on the plea that the labour of immature boys and girls is indispensable to the nation's industry. One result of halving the effective labour force of boys and girls in industrial employment would, in fact, be to enable the National Labour Exchange to find places, at the time of "decasualisation," for at least as many men as the "Decasualisation of Casual Labour" and Suppression of Under-employment would leave on its hands.

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* Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 93031, Part I.

† Annual Report of the Commissioners of Prisons for 1907–8 (Cd. 4300).

(ii.) *The Reduction of the Hours of Labour of Railway and Tramway Servants.*

We look for a gradual reduction of the daily hours of labour in practically all industries. Just as the fourteen hours' day common in the eighteenth century gave way to the twelve hours' day of the opening of the nineteenth, and this again successively to the ten hours' day of a couple of generations ago, and to the nine hours' day of 1871, so we anticipate that, at no distant date, we shall regard as normal the eight hours' day already obtained in various industries. This, however, has, in our view, little bearing on Unemployment, and none at all on Under-employment. In most cases the improvement in industrial organization, the universal "speeding up" of work, and the diminution of those spells and intervals which, in the longer day, so greatly mitigated the severity of the toil, have resulted in the workers, in most manufacturing processes, at each successive reduction of hours, turning out practically as much product as before. Though the working hours have been reduced, the number of men employed has not thereby been increased. The social and economic advantage of the shortening of the working day, which we think it difficult to exaggerate, are to be found in the increased opportunities which it affords for recreation and self-improvement, and the duties of family life and citizenship.

In one great industry, however, that of the railway service, together with the allied omnibus and tramway services, the working day of nearly all the workers is still greatly in excess of what is socially desirable. The excessive hours of duty of engine-drivers and firemen, guards and porters, and tramway and omnibus drivers and conductors still amount, we regret to say, to a public scandal. It is not in the public interest that men should be on duty for twelve, fourteen, and occasionally even eighteen hours out of the twenty-four; or that they should resume duty after less than ten or twelve hours' interval. The failure of voluntary effort to obtain a reduction of hours led Parliament in 1893 to pass into law the Regulation of Railways Act, under which the Board of Trade was empowered, on being satisfied that the hours of labour of any railway servant were excessive, to require the railway company to submit a new and improved schedule of working hours. Under this Act, which has been slowly enforced by the Board of Trade, a certain improvement has taken place in the course of the fifteen years, especially in the hours of signalmen in busy signal-boxes, who now usually enjoy an eight hours' day.

The hours of most grades of railway operatives are, however, under nearly all the companies, still excessive. The Board of Trade Returns do not now reveal the exact hours of duty of the railway men; and no account is taken of any instances of less than a twelve hours' day, which often means, not forty-eight, but eighty-four hours per week. Yet in the one month of October, 1907, no fewer than 113,490 cases were reported by the railway companies themselves of men who were kept on duty for more than twelve hours in the day. Even deducting the time spent in travelling home (which is, however, rightly paid for as time given to the employer's service), there were no fewer than 56,180 cases in which men were kept on arduous and responsible duty for thirteen hours or more in a day—some of them for fifteen and even for eighteen hours.* That such excessive hours of duty are not really required by the exigencies of railway administration, or by the accidents of fog or breakdown, provided proper arrangements are made, is demonstrated by the fact that the Great Central Railway Company, in the same month of October, 1907, was able to report that scarcely any of its passenger train workers, and a tiny percentage only of its goods train workers had ever once exceeded twelve hours' duty.†

The evil is not confined to the railway service. The great majority of tramway conductors and drivers in the United Kingdom still apparently work, not for forty-eight but for seventy, and occasionally as much as eighty or ninety hours per week; and even those directly in the services of the Municipal Authorities administering their own tramways usually work for twelve hours a day. The day's duty, too, is often made more harassing by being "split" between two turns, with an interval between, so that from start to finish the man is away from home for as much as sixteen or eighteen hours. The work of the omnibus drivers and conductors usually extends to eighty and even ninety hours per week.

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* Return in Pursuance of Sec. 4 of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889 (Cd. 3894), 1908.

† *Ibid.*

Here there is no question of a new principle being involved. For the past twenty years the Board of Trade has intervened, in order to secure, by means of the powers deliberately entrusted to it by Parliament, shorter hours of labour for adult men. We think that the time has come when this intervention should become systematic, covering the whole field of the railway, tramway and omnibus services; and that those responsible for the administration of these services should be required to submit schedules providing that no man's ordinary duty should exceed, if not forty-eight, at any rate, as a maximum, sixty hours in any one week, or should be so divided as to deprive him of proper intervals for sleep, recreation, and the duties of family life.

This reform is advocated and required for its own sake. But such a reduction of the hours of duty of these classes of operatives would have the further advantage of actually increasing the number of men required in an occupation where employment is exceptionally stable and regular. If undertaken concurrently with the suppression of Under-employment, it would undoubtedly enable the National Labour Exchange to find places, not necessarily for the particular men thereby displaced, but for a number of men equivalent to a large proportion of the surplus labour thereby revealed and identified.

(iii) *The Withdrawal from Industrial Wage-Earning of the Mothers of Young Children.*

We have seen that, of the 50,000 widows and deserted wives whom the Poor Law Authorities of the United Kingdom elect to maintain on Outdoor Relief, mainly because of their 135,000 children under fourteen, the vast majority are driven to engage in industrial work, notwithstanding their receipt of Outdoor Relief, because this is deliberately fixed at a rate inadequate for their support. It has long been the policy of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, as well as of that for Scotland, that Outdoor Relief or Aliment, where given at all, should always be adequate for the proper support of the family. It is obvious that, where there are young children, it is suicidal for the nation to drive the mother to earn money in industry, at the expense of so neglecting the children that they grow up, if they grow up at all, stunted, weak and untrained, and almost inevitably destined to recruit the ranks of the Under-employed and of Pauperism. Yet this, as we have seen, is what is happening to-day.

An analogous evil is taking place among the majority of the Unemployed and the Under-employed. Because the man's earnings cease, or are small and uncertain, the wife is driven to earn money at the laundry, or by "charing," by taking work out to be done at home in all the "sweated" trades, or in the thousand and one ways in which hard-driven women toil for a few shillings a week in London and other great cities.

Under a reformed administration such as we propose, the mothers of young children will not be driven to neglect their home duties by engaging in industrial work. If the widow, or other mother to whom Home Aliment is allowed, is not actually unfit to have the charge of her children, the Registrar of Public Assistance will, in accordance with the policy hitherto pressed in vain on the Boards of Guardians, peremptorily see to it that the amount allowed to her is sufficient for the proper support of the family group. The children will be, in effect, "boarded-out" with their own mother; and it will naturally be a condition of such Home Aliment that she devotes her time and energy to their up-bringing, and not to the industrial work which, with its concomitant neglect of the children, is as uneconomical to the nation as it is distasteful to every good mother. Similarly, when we get the Under-employed men, by the operation of the National Labour Exchange, regularly getting five or six days' work a week; and the Unemployed getting either prompt work or the provision that we shall presently describe—this, too, so far as made for the support of wife and children, being conditional on the mother giving her time and energy to her own children—the wives will, at any rate, not be driven to neglect their homes by engaging in industrial work in order to keep the household from starvation. There is, as we have seen, a consensus of testimony that it is the chronic Under-employment of the men, not any craving of the women to leave their home duties, that causes the greater part of the industrial work of wives and mothers. Concurrently with the operations of the National Labour Exchange for the Suppression of Under-employment, we may accordingly count on a considerable voluntary withdrawal of wives and mothers from industrial wage-earning; leaving, therefore, directly or indirectly, in the various re-arrangements of industry that will be taking place, many vacancies to be filled by men.

It is not, of course, suggested that the particular work heretofore done by the boys and girls, by the railway and tramway workers and by the mothers of families should be given to the particular men displaced by "decasualisation." What would happen would be that each employer would so re-arrange his employment of labour as to get his work done as conveniently as before, taking on, as additional hands, the most efficient men that he could obtain. These would leave vacancies which would tend to be filled by men who would otherwise have furnished the daily recruitment of the Under-employed that now goes on; or by the younger, the more energetic of those already in that great army. It is in this way that the total number of those at present Under-employed would be reduced to the number who could get fairly continuous employment. It is not necessary to imagine that the most demoralised and deteriorated man among the casual dock labourers would be able to become either a railway signalman, a telegraph messenger, or a shirt-maker.

(c) The Regularization of the National Demand for Labour.

We have given prominence to the Absorption of Labour by the three desirable reforms that we have just described, apart from the usual expansion of industry, because the nation cannot be expected to undertake even so great an improvement as the Suppression of Under-employment, without adequate assurance that its industry would not thereby be crippled at times by lack of hands, or that openings could be found for the Casual Labourers who would be no longer required as such. But apart from preventing the weary and demoralising aimless hunt for work, and diminishing the present "leakage" of time between jobs, the National Labour Exchange will not prevent Unemployment, whenever the total volume of the business of the nation, and even of all the nations of the world, falls off in those periodical depressions of trade of which we have, as yet, no complete explanation. In the years 1826, 1839–42, 1847, 1857–8, 1867–9, 1878–9, 1884–7, 1892–5, 1903–5, and 1908–9 such cyclical trade depressions of general character have sent up the percentage of Unemployed workmen to three, four and even five times as many as in the better years. The proportion of Trade Union members in Unions paying Out of Work Benefit (as to whom alone there are yet any statistics), who retain their situations, falls from the 97 or 98 per cent. characteristic of good years, to 92 or even to 89 per cent. This means that something like a couple of hundred thousand skilled workmen in the United Kingdom find themselves, through no fault of their own, without work or wages, and unable, whatever their character or their efforts, for a prolonged period to get employment. At the same time all the various grades of unskilled and general labourers find their employment more than usually intermittent, and all the evils of Under-employment and of the seasonal fluctuations are intensified. The National Labour Exchange will be more than ever useful in these years of depression in demonstrating and accurately measuring the surplus of applicants over situations. But it cannot fill vacancies that do not exist. What is needed in the lean years, which we must expect to recur once or twice in every decade, though we cannot yet accurately predict their dates—what is required as much for the skilled men as for the labourers—is some means of keeping the demand for their services at a uniform level.

We think that the Government can do a great deal to regularize the aggregate demand for labour as between one year and another, by a more deliberate arrangement of its orders for work of a capital nature.

> "In round numbers," deposed our most distinguished statistician,* "it may be estimated that 200,000 or fewer able-bodied adult males are out of work from non-seasonal causes one year with another, and have no sufficient resources, and that this number fluctuates between 100,000 in the best year, to 300,000 in the worst. . . . The economic and industrial problem is to re-arrange the demand for labour to the extent indicated by these numbers. . . . There is consequently a need, in the worst year, for wages to the extent of £10,000,000 to bring it to a level with the best, so far as these men are concerned; for the whole of the last ten years £40,000,000 would have sufficed. The annual wages bill of the country is estimated at £700,000,000. . . . Is it possible for the Government and other public bodies who employ labour in large quantities to counteract the industrial ebb and flow of demand by inducing a complementary flow and ebb; by withdrawing part of their

* Mr. A. L. Bowley, Reader in Statistics, London School of Economics, University of London; Evidence before the Commission, *Q.* 88192, Pars. 6, 9; *Westminster Gazette*, March 27th, 1907.

demand when industry needs all the labour it can get, and increasing the demand when industry is slack ? To have a useful effect this alteration would have to be commensurable with the sum named above (£40,000,000 in ten years)."

We think that there can be no doubt that, out of the 150 millions sterling annually expended by the National and Local Authorities on works and services,* it would be possible to earmark at least four millions a year, as not to be undertaken equally, year by year, as a matter of course ; but to be undertaken, out of loan, on a ten years' programme, at unequal annual rates, to the extent even of ten or fifteen millions in a single year, at those periods when the National Labour Exchange reported that the number of able-bodied applicants, for whom no places could be found anywhere within the United Kingdom, was rising above the normal level. When this report was made by the Minister responsible for the National Labour Exchange—whenever, for instance, the Percentage Unemployment Index as now calculated † rose above four—the various Government Departments would recur to their ten years' programme of capital outlay ; the Admiralty would put in hand a special battleship, and augment its stock of guns and projectiles ; the War Office would give orders for some of the additional barracks that are always being needed, and would further replenish its multifarious stores ; the Office of Works would get on more quickly with its perpetual task of erecting new post offices and other Government buildings, and of renewing the worn-out furniture ; the Post Office would proceed at three or four times its accustomed rate with the extension of the telegraph and telephone to every village in the Kingdom ; even the Stationery Office would get on two or three times as fast as usual with the printing of the volumes of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, and the publication of the national archives. But much more could be done. It is plain that many millions have to be spent in the next few decades in rebuilding the worst of the elementary schools, greatly adding to the number of the secondary schools, multiplying the technical institutes and training colleges, and doubling and trebling the accommodation and equipment of our fifteen universities. All this building and furnishing work, on which alone we might usefully spend the forty millions per decade that are in question, is not in fact, and need not be for efficiency, done in equal annual instalments. There might well be a ten years' programme of capital Grants-in-Aid of the local expenditure on educational buildings and equipment. It requires only the stimulus of these Grants-in-Aid, made at the periods when the Minister in charge of the National Labour Exchange reports that the Index Number of Unemployment has reached the Warning Point, for these works to be put in hand by the Local Education Authorities all over the Kingdom to exactly the extent that the situation demands. At the same time the Local Authorities could be incited to undertake their ordinary municipal undertakings of a capital nature, whether tramways or waterworks, public baths or electric power stations, artizans dwellings or Town Halls, drainage works or street improvements, to a greater extent in the years of slackness than in the years of good trade. This, indeed, they are already tending to do ; and to the great development of municipal enterprise in this direction, setting up a small ebb and flow of its own to some extent counteracting the flow and ebb of private industry, we are inclined to attribute the fact that the cyclical depressions of the last twenty years have been less severely felt in the United Kingdom than were those of 1878–9 and of 1839–42.

What we are proposing is not that the Government or the Local Authorities should start Relief Works. It is, indeed, the very opposite of the Relief Works for the employment of the Unemployed to which we have been accustomed :—

" A scheme of this kind," continues Mr. Bowley, " would differ from a crude form of Relief Works in four important ways :—

(*a*) The work concerned would be started before Unemployment became acute, say, when the Percentage Unemployed Index reached 4 per cent.

(*b*) There would be no artificial demand made for labour, only an adjustment in time of the ordinary demand.

(*c*) The Unemployed, as a class, would not be attracted, *for the demand would come through ordinary trade sources*, and before there was any considerable dearth of employment.

(*d*) The wages paid would be measured only by the work done, being contracted out on the ordinary commercial basis.

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* Including expenditure out of loans, but excluding all interest and repayment of debt and pensions.

† But a much more accurate statistical index would presently become available.

"Such a scheme need involve no expenditure, save of thought and of forethought; is of the nature of prevention rather than of cure; and in proportion as the scale of its operation was sufficient would remove the principal legitimate cause of dissatisfaction of the genuine workman with industrial conditions."*

It is, in fact, vital to this plan of Regularizing the Demand for Labour that there should be no attempt to employ the Unemployed as such. The men and women taken on would be picked out for employment, in the ordinary way, because they seemed the most efficient at their trades, and the most suitable for the service required. They would be taken on exactly in the numbers, and in the proportions between grade and grade, as was required for the most economical and efficient execution of the work. It would be quite immaterial whether they were momentarily out of a job or whether they relinquished other employment to take up what seemed a better engagement. In short, whether the works put in hand are done by direct employment (as at Woolwich Arsenal, the Army Clothing Factory or the Government Dockyards), or put out to contract (as with some warships, most of the buildings and stores, and all the furniture and printing), it is essential that they should be done *in the ordinary way*, by the departments or contractors ordinarily concerned, and by the best of the available workmen and labourers usually engaged in just those kinds of work, taken on because their services are wanted, and without any regard to whether or not they are "out of a job". They would have absolutely no connection or contact with whatever provisions were made for the men in want or in destitution. It is not the function of these enterprises to relieve distress—that will, as we have presently to describe, be otherwise provided for—but to prevent, long before they fall into distress, the two or three hundred thousand good and efficient workmen from becoming Unemployed.

The works that the National Government or the Local Authorities might, in this way, put in hand in the lean years of the trade cycle, need not, of course, be confined to the kinds that we have mentioned, or to those to which we have hitherto been accustomed. It has, in particular, been pressed upon us by many witnesses that considerable schemes of Afforestation might advantageously be undertaken by the Government; and one estate in the West of Scotland has actually been acquired for that purpose. Moreover, the attention called to the loss of land by erosion of the coast at various points has led to proposals for Coast Protection and Land Reclamation, for which it has been suggested that "the Unemployed" could be engaged. These latter proposals are under the consideration of a separate Royal Commission, whose Report will doubtless show to what extent and under what conditions any such works could usefully be undertaken. It is, however, clear that, to the extent that it may be profitable for the nation to engage in eitherAfforestation or Land Reclamation, these enterprises should be undertaken, not as Relief Works for the Unemployed, but as public enterprises of national importance, valuable in themselves, but, as we should suggest, executed out of loans on a ten years' programme; and, within the decade, made to vary in volume, in such a way, as far as may be practicable, as to ebb and flow in a manner complementary to the flow and ebb of private industry. Both Afforestation and Land Reclamation have the advantage that they can be done in intermittent spells, the progress made and the staff employed being capable of graduation according to need. But neither Afforestation nor Land Reclamation can be done by men quite unskilled in these occupations. In both cases experience shows that the work is of a kind that is within the compass, if there is to be economy and efficiency, of particular classes of labourers, and of these classes only. It is work for which they have been more or less trained, and akin to that on which they are usually employed. It is these men who ought to be engaged for the work, whenever, in accordance with the Report of the Minister responsible for the National Labour Exchange, it is decided to undertake it, or to augment the staff upon it—not a heterogeneous crowd of men drawn from those who have applied for relief in the large towns. The work of planting trees, for instance, can best be done by the agriculturists out of work; and *so long as any such can be hired by the local superintendent of the plantation*, there is no reason why townsmen should be brought down to do it. To start making embankments and sea-walls with distressed tailors and bricklayers and clerks, when there are navvies looking for employment, is as great a wrong to the navvies (and as uneconomical) as it would be to take on the navvies at the Army Clothing Factory or to put them to build a new school. Each work, in short, should be undertaken, not by any Distress Committee or Unemployment Authority, but by the particular Department requiring it; and should be executed by the best and most efficient of the men accustomed to that kind of work who can, at the time, be found and hired in the ordinary way. Under these conditions we think that

* Evidence before the Commission; Q. 88192, Par. 9.

the Board of Agriculture might well take its share with the other public Departments in regularizing the national demand for labour; and might always therefore have on hand extensive works of Afforestation and Land Reclamation, to be done out of loan, and executed on a ten years' programme, for which it would take on men, or place contracts, to a greater or smaller extent each year, according to the Reports of the National Labour Exchange as to the state of the Labour Market.

It is an advantage of this method of executing the public enterprises of capital value which the nation requires during each decade, that it is actually cheaper than doing them, year by year, without thought of the Labour Market. For (what is usually forgotten) capital is Unemployed and Under-employed to at least as great an extent as labour. It is in the lean years of the trade cycle, when business is depressed, that most capital is Unemployed, and the Bank rate is at its lowest. It is, accordingly, just in the years that Government works are needed in order to keep up the National Demand for Labour that Government can borrow at the cheapest rate. The influence of this fact upon municipal enterprise has, in the last two decades, been most marked. It has, however, as yet scarcely affected the ordering of the national expenditure of a capital nature; partly, perhaps, because the Treasury book-keeping excludes, deliberately, anything in the nature of a capital account, and insists on regarding all expenditure within the year as chargeable exclusively to the income of that year. Yet to concentrate in the lean years most of the whole capital outlay of each decennium is clearly to reduce the cost of the works. This consideration enables us also to see that the undertaking of such works by the Government in the lean years does not, as is sometimes thoughtlessly alleged, cause as much Unemployment as it prevents. On the contrary, it actually increases the total volume of industry for the decade as a whole. It is objected that if the Government spends a pound on employing labour, it has to take that same amount from the taxpayer, who thereupon has necessarily to reduce his own expenditure on labour. But this is to ignore the fact that, in the years of trade depression, if the Government (which need not be subject to depression) sets the machine in motion, it may use, not the proceeds of taxes, but Unemployed floating capital, and mills and plant that are temporarily Under-employed, to employ the labour. If the Government, in years of depression, when no one else is willing to embark in new undertakings, borrows some of the capital that is lying idle and unused—offered, in fact, in vain at 2 or 3 per cent. per annum—in order to augment its own enterprises, it interferes with no taxpayer's employment of his coachmen or gardeners. Even those from whom the capital has been borrowed increase rather than decrease their personal expenditure. Thus there is in this way a real addition to industry. That which would otherwise have been idle is set to productive work. There is here, not merely a Regularization of the National Demand for Labour, but actually an increase, taking the ten years as a whole, over what would otherwise have been demanded. The interest and sinking fund on the loans raised in the lean years has, of course, to be met, but the nation has by that time the advantage of the new work; and the charge falls, moreover, largely on the years of good trade and high profits, when a curb on private expenditure is, from the standpoint of Regularizing the National Demand for Labour, a positive advantage.*

(d) The Provision for the Unemployed.

However effective may be the National Labour Exchange in getting men into continuous employment; however great may prove the opportunities of absorption afforded by limiting the labour of boys and the excessive hours of men; and however successful the Government may be in regularizing the National Demand for Labour, we cannot hope to escape having to make provision for a residuum of men and women who find themselves in distress from want of work. The measures that we have suggested will, we believe, go far to prevent unemployment; and they will certainly reduce the evil to manageable dimensions. Nevertheless there will be, at the outset, a considerable, and, at all times, a certain number of Unemployed, for whom (especially as there will be no Poor Law, and no other public agency dealing with able-bodied men) definite public provision must be made.

* On the other hand, it must be remembered that this plan of using Government Works as the means of Regularizing the National Demand for Labour is entirely inconsistent with the claim sometimes made that the Government and Local Authorities ought to afford constant employment to those in their service, and should never reduce their staffs. Whatever force there may be in the plea for permanence of tenure under the present conditions, we think that it will be greatly lessened when there exists an efficient National Labour Exchange and a sufficiently Regularised National Demand for Labour.

(i.) *Trade Union Insurance.*

We are impressed with the advantages which Trade Union organization offers in dealing with Unemployment. Where a Trade Union is highly organized and efficiently conducted, it possesses, in its branch meetings and its "Vacant Book," machinery for making known opportunities for employment, and for seeing that every unemployed member gets as quickly as possible into a new situation, that cannot be surpassed. With this machinery it can safely offer to give "Out-of-Work Benefit," and thus enable its members effectively to insure against Unemployment. But the cost is heavy, and has been found,so far, beyond the means of any but a small minority of the better paid artizans. The difficulty, too, of getting prompt information of all vacancies, and of ensuring that unemployed members really apply for them, has stood in the way of the payment of Out-of-Work Benefit by the trades in which Discontinuous Employment is the rule.

We propose that the State should help and encourage workmen to insure against Unemployment. We think that the plan now spreading throughout the Continent of Europe, of affording to Trade Unions a subvention from public funds, in order to assist them to extend their own insurance against Unemployment, is one that should be adopted in this country. Under what is called the Ghent system—instituted at Ghent in 1901; since adopted in nearly all (27) the principal towns of Belgium; and now in course of imitation in France (since 1905), Norway (since 1906), Denmark (since 1907), Belgium (since 1907), several Dutch towns, and by St. Gall (since 1905), Basle (since 1908), and Strassburg (since 1906)—a contribution is annually made to the Trade Union equal to something like half of the amount actually paid in Out-of-Work Benefit to members unemployed in the last completed year, apart from any strike or other collective dispute. This contribution from public funds to Trade Unions giving Out-of-Work Benefit has, to quote the words of the Board of Trade, "undoubtedly, in certain cases at least, been accompanied by a great development of Unemployed Benefits on the part of Trade Unions anxious to participate." * What was before financially out of the reach of many of the Trade Unions has now become possible to them, with the result that a greater proportion of the workmen are protected from falling into distress from want of employment. "Insurance," reports the Board of Trade, "is thus encouraged both by the Trade Union motive of protecting the Standard Rate, and by the prospect of a bonus from without. Pressure to join a Trade Union is—at a price—converted by the Municipality into pressure to insure against Unemployment."† We think that a similar inducement should be offered in the United Kingdom with a view, not only to helping the Trade Unions that already insure, but also to inducing the million other Trade Unionists, not at present enjoying this protection, to subscribe for Out-of-Work Benefit.

A further encouragement might well be afforded to the provident workman. As a large proportion of the situations in the skilled trades are not of the nature of casual employment, but do, as a matter of fact, last for a month or more (or could easily be so arranged as to do so), it would not be compulsory for these to be filled through the National Labour Exchange. It might even be desirable to make arrangements also for the shorter engagements and "casual" jobs of the skilled mechanics in such trades to be independently organised. It might be well to provide that where a Trade Union, giving out-of-work benefit, desired (perhaps in conjunction with an organisation of employers) to manage its own register of men unemployed and situations vacant, it would be permitted to do so in close connection with the National Labour Exchange, which would transfer to it at once any application notified by its members, or by the employers in that trade who were in the habit of dealing with the Trade Union, and not fill any such situations unless and until the special office for the trade failed to do so. In this way there would be secured, to those workers in any trade who had been provident enough to insure themselves against Unemployment, a practical preference for the employment thus offered in that trade. This conjunction of the Trade Union register of unemployed workmen with the National Labour Exchange is, as we have already mentioned, coming to be a common feature in Germany, and is also working well in the London Labour Exchanges.

We have had it suggested to us that insurance against Unemployment might be universally extended if it were made compulsory. The idea of throwing upon the

* Board of Trade Memorandum on Insurance against Unemployment in Foreign Countries (Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. XXI. (K), to Vol. IX.).

† *Ibid.*

employers and workmen of particular trades, and through them on the consumers, the burden of the irregularity of employment in these trades has many attractions, but we cannot see that the universal and compulsory union of all the employers and all the workmen in an insurance fund is, even with Government aid, either practicable or desirable. It is worth notice that no such scheme has found a place in the elaborate proposals of the German Government for workmen's insurance; or has been adopted elsewhere.* We do not see how, without the aid afforded by Trade Union organization, a Compulsory Insurance scheme could possibly be worked in such a way as both to provide for the "bad risks"—the men who, for one reason or another, are constantly falling into Unemployment—and yet to take care that these men embrace every opportunity of getting into situations. Moreover, these "bad risks" are, even under the sharp superintendence of a Trade Union, always contriving to draw, each year, their maximum Out-of-Work Pay, and thus to inflict a considerable loss on the insurance funds. The same men are continually "running out of benefit," and becoming ineligible for Out-of-Work Pay, long before they get into employment again; and hence requiring some other provision than any scheme of insurance can make. Moreover, the Trade Union can, and constantly does, exclude from its membership men who have not attained a certain degree of skill, or of regularity of conduct; exactly as a Friendly Society excludes men suffering from syphilis or phthisis, or any mortal disease. Even then insurance is beyond the reach of large sections of Trade Unionists. It would require a beneficient revolution to be effected both in the scale of remuneration and in the continuity of employment of the Casual Labourers of the great cities, and we think also, among the platers' helpers and other ship-yard labourers, and the builders' labourers, before their periods of recurrent Unemployment could be provided for by any insurance premium within their means, even with Government help. Seeing that these ill-paid labourers constitute nearly one-half of all the persons employed in their respective industries, we doubt whether any system of compulsory insurance, administered by a Government Department, could possibly provide for their great needs.

The case may be different if Compulsory Insurance is applied only to particular sections of workers or to certain specified industries, under carefully considered conditions. Any such plan, applicable only to a portion of the industrial field, has the drawback of not solving the problem of providing for the bulk of those in distress from Unemployment; for it would, of course, be the Casual Labourers, and generally the great army of the Under-employed, who would be omitted; and these form, as we have seen, the bulk of the applicants to the Distress Committees. Hence a plan of Compulsory Insurance for some classes of skilled artisans, or for the more regularly employed workers generally, could not be substituted, either for the existing provision under the Unemployed Workmen Act, or for any improvement on it. It could, at best, be only an adjunct to a comprehensive scheme of dealing with Unemployment. But such a scheme of Compulsory Insurance, even if partial, may be worth considering for its own sake. If the Government and the employers were financially interested in it, they would both have a motive, even if somewhat indirect and remote, for reducing Unemployment to a minimum. It seems to us clear, however, that two conditions would be essential. No such scheme could possibly be worked without a national organisation in the nature of a Labour Exchange, *to which all available vacancies were reported*; and to which all insured workmen out of Employment were required to apply for situations. Without machinery of this sort, it would never be possible for the administrators of the Insurance Fund to be sure that the workman claiming benefit was really unable to obtain a situation. The "bad risks" would, in any case, constitute a serious drain on the Fund; and without some means of ensuring that definite situations were offered to them, these "industrial malingerers" would eat it up altogether. In short, resort to the National Labour Exchange would have to be made legally compulsory, in the insured industries, both upon all employers having vacancies to fill, and upon all workers claiming Unemployed Benefit. The second essential condition would be some definition of the terms upon which a workman could be required to accept a situation offered to him, under a penalty of being refused the Unemployed Benefit towards which he had contributed. It is clear that an engineer or a carpenter could only be expected and required to accept a situation in his own trade, and upon the wages, hours and other conditions customary in the locality. For the Government Insurance Fund to refuse to pay the engineer or the carpenter the Unemployed Benefit towards which these workmen had contributed, merely because they had refused to accept situations in "unfair" establishments, at wages below the recognised Standard Rate, or for hours or under other conditions of labour contrary to the customarily recognised Common Rules of the industry, would be to provoke a storm of indignation; and, indeed, to deal a mortal blow at Trade Unionism itself. It is plain that the Unemployed Benefit could not be refused to a workman merely because he declined to accept

* Compulsory insurance against Unemployment has been attempted only in the little Canton of St. Gall in Switzerland, where it proved, for many reasons, a hopeless failure, and was promptly abandoned.

a situation under unreasonable conditions. The conditions which a Government Insurance Fund would declare to be reasonable could, nowadays, hardly be other than what are commonly known as "Trade Union conditions"; namely, the rates of pay, hours of labour, methods of remuneration, and other conditions of employment which have been agreed to, for each locality, by the associations of employers and employed; and which, n the absence of such agreement, are, in practice, obtained by the members of the Trade Unions concerned. Thus, so far as the operations of the Government Insurance Fund extended, these so-called "Trade Union conditions" would, in effect, be compulsorily enforced on all establishments. Without these two essential conditions, a Compulsory Insurance scheme, even if limited to carefully selected sections of the wage-earners, would, in our opinion, be financially impracticable, and inimical to Trade Unionism. In view of the difficulties which so great an extension of the principle of compulsion would present, we prefer to recommend the simpler plan, already successfully put in practice in other countries, which involves no compulsion at all; namely that of a subvention to Trade Unions providing Unemployed Benefit, such as we have already described.

(ii) *Maintenance under Training.*

We have to face the fact that, make what arrangements we will, there will be, at all times and under any organisation of society, a residuum of men who will be found in distress from want of employment. That residuum will be greater or smaller in proportion to the appropriateness and the completeness of the organisation of the National Labour Exchange, the Suppression of Under-employment, the "dovetailing" of seasonal occupations, the measures taken for the Absorption of the Surplus, the Regularization of the National Demand for Labour and the development of Trade Union Insurance. It will, moreover, always wax and wane according to the changing circumstances of particular industries. But great or small, though the individuals will come and go, a residuum will always be there.

We may, however, confidently anticipate that the permanent residuum of men in distress from want of employment will differ very considerably, both in numbers and in composition, from the crowds that now embarrass the Distress Committees at every season of depression. The great bulk of these crowds—at least, one-half of the whole—consists at present of the Casual Labourers, and other members of the chronically Under-employed class; the suppression of which, as a class, is (as we have shown) not only possible but a necessary condition of any improvement whatsoever. When the National Labour Exchange has got thoroughly to work, and has "dovetailed" the jobs so as to provide practical continuity of employment; and when the surplus thereupon revealed and identified has been to a large extent absorbed by the measures that we have described, there is no reason to suppose that this part of the industrial army will furnish a larger contingent of persons in distress through Unemployment than other parts enjoying no higher remuneration do at present. Another important element is to-day contributed by the building trades and other seasonal industries; and these, as we have seen, can be provided for, the better-paid sections by an extension of Trade Union Insurance and the labourers, to a large, and probably a steadily increasing, extent, by the operations of the National Labour Exchange in "dovetailing" employment as between trades having different seasons of slackness. Even the men now out of work through the great cyclical fluctuations of the nation's industry can, as we have shown, be to a great extent provided for by the measures to be taken for the Regularization of the National Demand for Labour, and by the great extension of Trade Union Insurance that this Regularization, the work of the National Labour Exchange, and a government subvention will have made possible. Thus, instead of whole sections and whole classes coming on our hands at every season of stress, what we shall have to deal with will be individuals of all classes.

The individual members of the permanent residuum of men in distress from Unemployment will be of the most heterogeneous kinds and descriptions. There will be the man from Class I., who has fallen out of a permanent situation; who is uninsured because there was no Trade Union to which he could belong; whose savings have been exhausted by illness or other family misfortune; who bears a good character, but for whom the National Labour Exchange fails to find a place—perhaps because of his advancing years, or the lack of adaptability which is the result of his long and faithful service in one narrow groove. There will be the man from Class II., whose discontinuous employment has suddenly become so intermittent that nowhere in the United Kingdom can the National Labour Exchange find him a job; whose Unemployment is so prolonged that he "runs out of benefit" and exhausts his savings. Both these men may be suffering, probably unconsciously to themselves, from a change of process or of industrial organization, which is steadily and permanently enabling their particular service to be partly dispensed with—a case which is to-day that of various grades of boot and shoe operatives, that of the carpenters and bricklayers, and that of grooms and stablemen. And from all grades and sections of industry there will dribble down—we may hope, when chronic Under-em-

ployment and untrained Boy Labour are suppressed, to a smaller extent than at present —individuals of defective will, intelligence or training; of dissolute habits or irregularities of character; or of chronically weak physical health; together with all sorts of industrial "misfits," and, intermingled among them all, the constitutionally vagabond or "work-shy." It is indispensable, alike for social health, and for the success of all the other measures taken to deal with the Able-bodied, that the heterogeneous assortment of "Unemployed," whose existence we have been unable to prevent, should be definitely and adequately provided for. There must be no idea of deterring people from applying. It is, in fact, as essential for industrial well-being that every person in distress from want of employment should receive at once the Public Assistance appropriate to his need, as it is to Public Health that no sick person should go unprovided with medical attendance.

It will, we think, be clear that, for this heterogeneous assortment of individuals, there can be no question of "making work" or providing productive employment at wages. The steps taken by the Government for the Regularisation of the National Demand for Labour and the Absorption of the Surplus will, in fact, have already found employment, at their own trades, and at the Standard Rates of wages, for the men for whom any such work can be provided. To deliberately "make work" for the odds and ends of Unemployed tailors, jewellers, brickmakers, ironmoulders, clerks, handymen and hawkers—for each of them in his own trade, in his own town, at his own Standard Rate of Wages—is not only administratively impossible, but would actually have the effect of ousting from employment some other men of these trades. For, apart from the personal factor, the reason why Unemployment has fallen upon men of these particular trades, rather than upon others, is that the consumers' demand for their particular services, or for the products of their labour, happens to have temporarily or permanently diminished, relatively to the consumers' demand for other services or products. To increase the supply of waistcoats, jewellery, bricks and iron-mouldings, merely in order to give employment in trades which are already suffering from surplus stocks, would be a suicidal proceeding. As a matter of fact, the costliness and the impracticability of providing work "at his own trade" for each of the Unemployed Workmen has saved us from the dilemma. What is actually demanded, and what is occasionally provided in response to this demand, is "work which all can perform."

But it is a fallacy to assume that there is such a thing as work, in the abstract, or of an undifferentiated character. The work that is of any use to the world is always the doing of some specific service, which, however humble and nominally "unskilled," always needs a certain amount of training, experience, and even skill to perform efficiently. A favourite idea is to put the men to cultivate the land. But agriculture is, of course, a highly skilled and very hazardous trade. Even digging—which, however well done, produces no value unless directed by very expert knowledge—requires training to do it effectively, whilst the planting of trees, or the making of a road, an embankment or a sea-wall turns out, on experiment, to be a skilled occupation, of which the raw hand makes a sad botch. Repeated experience has proved, in fact, that there is no productive enterprise, even of the simplest character, which can be undertaken without actual loss by a mixed assortment of individuals of different grades of skill, of all sorts of antecedents, and, for the most part, without experience of the particular kind of work they are called upon to perform. In some respects, indeed, the more superior the men and the more specialized their former callings, the more wholly incompetent they prove at the "common work" which alone can be provided for them. Under these circumstances the men not only fail to earn their keep, which would under any form of provision have to be given them; in nearly every case they fail to produce even the cost of the necessary expert direction and supervision, which is actual out of pocket expense to the community. Nor is it ever possible to arrive at any satisfactory standard of wages. The heterogeneous crowd of men of different antecedents clearly cannot be paid the various Standard Rates to which they have severally been accustomed. If it is determined to pay them the usual Standard Rate for the common work to which they have been put, and to pay them in accordance with their achievements, this results in their earning a shilling or two a day; or less than they can exist on.* But the costliness of this method of providing

* If, on the other hand, some such rate as 20s. or 24s. per week is adopted, as being a sort of "moral minimum" for general labourers in the towns, the works, already carried on at a loss, at once begin to attract an inexhaustible supply of men who desert other employments in which, as a matter of fact, their average weekly earnings are far below this figure. In fact, "the root of the difficulty would remain; that no scale of relief can be made less attractive than the ordinary life of the casual labourer without being made ludicrously inadequate. The root of the difficulty lies in the inconceivably bad conditions of employment and earning in the lowest ranks of independent industry." ("Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge 1909, p. 188.)

for the Unemployed, and the difficulty of finding any satisfactory scale of remuneration, do not, in our opinion, constitute the gravest objections to Relief Works. The first question, to our mind, is, how does this method of provision affect the men subjected to it? Does it make them more fit and better qualified to regain their places in the industrial world, or less fit and worse qualified? It is clear, of course, that adequate maintenance, with any sort of occupation, is better for a workman than starvation and idleness. But no one who has ever watched Relief Works, in any form, or under any administration, can be satisfied with the effect of this kind of provision on the men to whom it is given. The work itself is monotonous and uneducational in character, even when it is not positively detrimental to particular forms of manual skill. With a heterogeneous gang of men, taken on, not because they are used to the work, and can be expected to perform it up to any normal standard of speed or efficiency, but merely because they are in distress from Unemployment, it is invariably found impracticable to discover and to exact from every man the full amount of effort of which he is capable. Inevitably, even if unconsciously, the pace is set for all by the slowest, the least efficient, and often the least willing of the gang. This has a grave effect on the whole gang. Thus the men put on Relief Works are in no way improving themselves for resuming work at their own trades; they are not being trained to other occupations so that they might find work in new directions; and they are steadily being more and more habituated to work at a low standard of speed, a low standard of effort, and a low standard of efficiency, at an occupation which is already chronically over-supplied with workers. For the "common work" thus provided for the heterogeneous assortment of men from all trades always turns out to be the appropriate work of the navvy and "ground labourer." Why is it that the advocates of work for the "Unemployed" of all trades never see anything objectionable in depriving the navvy of some of the jobs on which he would otherwise have been employed? Why, when it is sought to set the Unemployed to work, and when it is discovered that this involves training of some sort, should we always exercise them and train them in the trade of the navvy, and thereby increase the number of competitors of the existing navvies? The position is made the more ridiculous in that it has been abundantly demonstrated that it is just this kind of mere muscular effort and physical strength for which there is, in the industrial world of to-day, a steadily diminishing demand. It is the man who pushes, who lifts, who carries, who drags, who is finding more and more of his employment superseded by the hoist and the pulley, by the grain elevator and the travelling crane, by the "grab" and the "Scotchman" and the "iron man"—in short, by steam or electrically driven machinery of one kind or another.

But Relief Works for the Unemployed represent only a counsel of despair, in a community knowing no better alternative. The reduction in the numbers of those in distress from Unemployment, brought about by the various preventive measures that we have described, will enable the community to deal with the individuals in distress, not by such "wholesale" methods as Relief Works, but, personally, one by one, after careful consideration of each case, by the treatment best calculated to enable him to resume productive employment.

The first requisite is that all persons in distress from Unemployment should be provided with maintenance, so that they and their families may be kept in health and strength, and be prevented from the rapid deterioration to which they would otherwise be subjected. But this maintenance must be merely preliminary to attempting to solve the particular "human problem" that each man presents. What has to be discovered is why these particular individuals, out of the 12,000,000 whom employers have willingly engaged, have been left stranded and unemployed; and how their industrial efficiency can be increased so as to enable them to earn a livelihood. The first thing to be done is to "test" them, using the word in its proper sense, not of seeking how to induce them to take themselves off our hands, but of probing their capacity so as to find out the points at which they are weak, and can be strengthened, and the faculties latent in them which might be developed. No one can have watched the crowd of applicants to a Distress Committee—the scores of narrow-chested men under thirty, the emaciated and flabby men of all ages, the nerveless and rheumatic men, the men with varicose veins or untreated hernia—without realising how sadly "out of condition" are nearly all these "Unemployed," and how enormously their working power would be improved by mere medical advice, hygienic regimen, and physical training. We have to test their eyesight, their colour vision, their hearing, their hearts, their muscular power, the steadiness of their hands, in order to find out what particular exercises or remedies will increase their capacity. Nor must we stop at mere physical improvement. In the rough and tumble of industrial

life, with its monotonous toil in narrow grooves, the adult workman tends to leave dormant all but the one faculty required for his job. The man who has dropped out of a situation which he has held for ten or twenty years would probably have been equally efficient in any one of half a dozen other ways, if he had not been led to adapt himself to the particular line required by his employer. Now that he has lost that situation, and no similar one can be found for him, what has to be done is to see which of his undeveloped or dormant faculties can be stimulated and exercised. But there are moral invalids as well as physical ones. The men who have lost situations through irregularity of conduct of one kind or another plainly need training in character, under the beneficent influence of continuous order and discipline. In short, whatever may have been the economic or industrial cause that has necessitated a certain number of the nation's workers standing idle—and this cause may often be no fault of the workers themselves—it is inevitable that the *particular individuals* who, in that crisis, find themselves the rejected of all employers should be capable of improvement, either physical or mental, or in most cases both. Which of us, indeed, is *not* capable of improvement by careful testing and training? We can clearly best utilise the period of enforced Unemployment by placing these men in training, so that, when the National Labour Exchange eventually finds openings for them, they may return to work in better health, of more regular habits, and with awakened faculties of body and mind. As has been well said, " The capacity of the industrial system to absorb fresh labour is no doubt far from exhausted, but this capacity depends entirely upon the labour being of a sort to be absorbed, that is to say, being suited or able to become suited to the particular developments of the time."*

The National Authority dealing with the Able-bodied requires, therefore, what we might almost term a Human Sorting House, where each man's faculties would be tested to see what could be made of him; and a series of Training Establishments, to one or other of which the heterogeneous residuum of Unemployed would be assigned. These Training Establishments might, some of them, be in the man's own town, so that he need not be separated from his home; though it would be a condition that he should attend with absolute regularity from morning to night. For the young unmarried man, it would probably be best to send him at once to a residential settlement in the country, where he would be free from the distractions of town life. But whether in town or country, it is essential to successful treatment that the training should take up the man's entire day. If he is not at a residential Colony, he will be required to be in attendance at 6 a.m., as he would be if he were in employment; and as the day's training will need to be diversified, and must include organised recreation of various kinds, his obligatory attendance will usually be prolonged until eight or nine at night. This is not the place for any detailed plans of the curriculum and the regimen of these Training Establishments; which would, indeed, have to be worked out for men of different ages, different weaknesses, and different needs. But we can foresee that carefully graduated physical exercises will play a large part; that men of definite trades can be given opportunities for improving their skill and enlarging the range of their capacity in those trades; that practically all men can usefully be taught mechanical drawing, and working to plan and to scale; that they can all usefully improve their mental arithmetic and their power of keeping accounts; that all men nowadays need to know the use of the common tools and how to run the simpler machines; that many men have a desire, at least, to try their hands at the cultivation of the land, and these might well be put to the farm and garden work; and, seeing that all men would be the better for the seaman's knowledge of how to cook, how to clean, and how to mend and wash, there is every reason why all the men should take their share of the necessary work of the establishment.

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* " Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909, p. 116. With regard to women in particular, it was pressed upon us, on behalf of the Women's Industrial Council, that " where remunerative work cannot be provided," maintenance *under training* should be provided, for persons of any age, " on condition that they were learning something "; as " it would be easier to find employment for them after a little training " (Evidence before the Commission, *Qs.* 82517–9; Mrs. J. R. Macdonald). In Liverpool, we were informed, " in most of the needle trades, and in laundry work, the unskilled branches are greatly overcrowded, but there is plenty of room in the higher grades, *e.g.*, washerwomen are abundant, but skilled ironers scarce. A recent advertisement for a woman to run a small hand-laundry, wages £1 a week and a cottage, did not bring a single thoroughly skilled applicant. Again, the Needlewomen's Institute, Great Orford Street, suffers from a chronic scarcity of workers able to make really fine underlinen, etc., but has far more applicants for work in Class 3 (poor clothes, etc.) than it can find room for." (*Ibid.*, *Q.* 83251, Par. 32 (*b*).) In London, the Labour Exchanges of the Central (Unemployed) Body report a chronic state of unsatisfied demand for women of good industrial training.

We think that the proposal of Maintenance under Training avoids the grave defects that characterise the devices of the Poor Law and the "Employment Relief" of the Distress Committees. It is, to say the least, quite as "productive" to the community, as the occupations afforded by the General Mixed Workhouse, or the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, or as any "work at wages" to which the "Unemployed" are now being set by the Local Authorities; whilst it is far more "productive" than these to the man himself. Moreover, it escapes the demoralising element of pretence that the men are earning their own livelihood and have therefore the right to receive wages and to spend them as they choose. It avoids the economic dilemma of how to "set to work" the Unemployed in productive labour without taking away other men's jobs. And it escapes the administrative difficulty of how to keep up the Standard Wage and work the Normal Day without lowering the standard of effort and attracting men from low-paid employment. It avoids even the industrial disadvantage of habituating men to kinds of effort—general labouring, or "ground work," stone-breaking or hand-grinding—of which there is already a large surplus on the market. There is nothing degrading or depressing in physical, mental and technical training; there is in it, indeed, a strong element of stimulus and hope, because it will fit the men to take better situations than they could without it. On the other hand, it is not agreeable to the "average sensual man" to surrender himself continuously to an ordered round of continuous training of any sort under hygienic conditions, with every faculty kept alert by varied stimuli, so as to produce the highest state of physical and mental efficiency of which he is capable. In short, Maintenance under Training, whilst more "eligible" in every sense than starvation in idleness, is less agreeable than the ordinary industrial employment at wages, in one's own occupation, with freedom to spend or mis-spend one's wages and one's leisure as is desired. Thus, the individuals whom distress from Unemployment throws upon our hands will, by this Maintenance under Training, be restored to full health and vigour and otherwise improved, instead of, as at present, being deteriorated. On the other hand we shall, as is essential, leave in full force, not only the incentive to take employment and to keep it, but also the incentive to insure against Unemployment by joining an existing Trade Union, or forming one if none actually exists.

In working out the details of this scheme of Maintenance under Training with men of practical experience in connection with the treatment of the Able-bodied and the Unemployed, we have come face to face with four difficulties which will be urged as objections.

It is clear that Maintenance under Training will involve a greater expenditure per head than maintenance without training. But the grant of mere maintenance—that is, unconditional Outdoor Relief—is plainly impossible; and experience shows that both Relief Works and Workhouses are, as a matter of fact, with all the necessary plant and administrative expenses, themselves extremely costly, as well as extremely demoralising. It may, however, be admitted that the State could hardly undertake to provide very elaborate forms of training for hundreds of thousands of men. There can be no successful treatment of the Able-bodied unless they are dealt with *individually*, man by man. We agree with General Booth when he declares that he placed "Individual Reformation in the front in all operations which have for their object the betterment of society. Any effort at social reform that does not provide facilities for the regeneration of the individual is, in my opinion, foredoomed to failure." * Under the proposals that we are making the numbers of the Unemployed will be greatly reduced; and the ultimate residuum that must be maintained ought not to be so numerous as to transcend our powers. And the training must be adapted to circumstances. When the numbers in any one place become large it may not be possible to afford much beyond the simpler forms of physical training and elementary instruction, which can be inexpensively provided for men in mass. The more specialized treatment must necessarily be adapted to individuals, or small groups of similar individuals, which a National Authority could collect in particular establishments each with its own special variety of training. There is no reason why these should be more expensive per head than the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony. It is, indeed, inherent in any form of provision which aims at improving the quality of the material to be dealt with that some expense should be involved. The question is whether there is any alternative really cheaper to the nation.

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* Evidence before the Commission, Appendix No. LVIII., Par. 1 (*a*), to Vol. IX.

It is objected that Maintenance under Training, although distasteful to the average workman, will be found attractive to some, at any rate, of the men; and that these will be constantly falling out of employment in order to resort to it. The Superintendent of every institution learns to recognise the docile man, with no vices and no initiative, who is inertly content with the day's routine, and who asks nothing better than to be allowed to go on for ever. Such men, at present, linger on indefinitely at Relief Works, or in the Labour Yard; and even in the Workhouse. It is, however, just one of the advantages of training, as it is of the skilled medical treatment of the sick in hospital, that it can be indefinitely adjusted so as to apply to each patient the exact stimulus required to call out his faculties. With what we may call the "industrial malingerer" there will be other remedies. With the co-operation of the National Labour Exchange he can be given successive chances of employment; and, after a certain number of trials, his repeated return will be a cause for his judicial commitment to a Detention Colony.

An entirely opposite objection is urged by others, namely, that Maintenance under Training will be so repellent to those in distress from Unemployment that they will put up with any hardship rather than submit to it. Many men are unconscious of personal defect, or shortcoming, or weakness of body or mind; and will be unable to understand why they should go into training. We all shrink instinctively from a searching medical examination; and we should shrink still the more from a testing of all our faculties. But, as a matter of fact, the difficulty is an imaginary one. Whatever may be our objection to medical and other examinations, this is not found, in any grade of life, to stand in the way of applying for what we want, whether it be an appointment in the Army, Navy, or Civil Service, or admission to the police force or the railway service. No man in distress, or whose family is suffering distress, will let a medical examination stand between him and adequate provision. And the medical examination and testing of faculties convinces every man of his need of training, in one respect or another, whilst the training itself soon brings home to him that he is susceptible of improvement. Yet we need force no man to come in, nor detain any unwilling subject. He has always the alternative of trying to earn his own living outside. The National Labour Exchange will, at any time, do its best to help him to get a place. So long as he commits no crime, and neglects none of his social obligations—so long as he does not fail to get lodging, food and clothing for himself and his family—so long as his children are not found lacking medical attendance when ill, or underfed at school—so long, indeed, as neither he nor his family ask or require any form of Public Assistance, he will be free to live as he likes. But directly any of these things happen, it will be a condition that the husband and the father, if certified as Able-bodied, shall be in attendance at the Training Establishment to which he is assigned. If he is recalcitrant, he will be judicially committed to a Detention Colony.

The final objection is that "the Unemployed" are not worth training; that they are, in effect, Unemployable, and incapable of being improved. We do not think that any instructed person can seriously assert that there are not, among those in distress from Unemployment, many men—probably, at present, many thousands of men—who are in every way eligible and suitable for training of one sort or another. But if there are none such, the first step is to ascertain and certify the defectiveness of the persons in distress in order that they may be segregated in appropriate institutions. We do nothing to test and discover which are really the Unemployable by offering tasks of work to half-starved crowds demoralised by periods of Unemployment. The men in distress present every possible variety; and the preliminary examination and testing of faculties, along with subsequent observation under training, will be always weeding out the definitely Unemployable. It will be the rule that no man is to be retained in any Training Establishment unless it is believed that he can be made fit, at some time or another, to resume his place in industrial employment. There will be room for experiment with different kinds of training, in different establishments, as well as in different opportunities of wage-earning. But there will inevitably be some hopeless cases. There will be men permanently incapacitated by physical defects, which cannot be cured, and which do not permit of their earning a living wage at any occupation whatsoever. Such men will, like those who fall ill during training, have to be remitted to the Local Health Authority, where they will be appropriately provided for as we have described (Part I., Ch. V. and VII.). There will be men found to be so mentally defective—whether epileptic, feeble-minded, or chronically inebriate—as to be incapable of continuing in wage-earning occupation. These will be handed over to the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective (Part I., Ch. VI.). There will be other men adjudged capable in body and mind of earning

a livelihood, but persistently neglecting or refusing to do so—whether as what we now know as Professional Vagrants, or as merely "work shy" and recalcitrant to discipline. These men will remain on the hands of the National Authority dealing with the Able-bodied; but they will leave the free Training Establishments and be judicially committed to a Detention Training Colony.

What is essential to the success of these Training Establishments is, not only the power of exclusion of those found to be mentally or physically hopeless, but also the stimulus of Hope. Every man in the establishment, staff as well as patients, must be always conscious that men enter with the prospect of improving their condition, and that, in fact, men are, after training, constantly passing out to better positions. It is therefore vital to these establishments to have the means of placing out the men whom they have found to be fit, or have made fit. This is one reason why the Training Establishments must be in the closest possible connection with the National Labour Exchange, and therefore under the same authority. They will receive constant advices from the National Labour Exchange as to what kinds of training are most in demand. They will be constantly passing individuals back to the National Labour Exchange, at this point or that, when there is any prospect of places being found for them. And when there is any great accumulation of men in the Training Establishments, who are, or who have been rendered, fit for employment, but for whom employment, owing to the depression in trade, cannot be found, it will be a case for representation to the other Departments of the Government that the time has come for putting into operation the action already described for Regularizing the National Demand for Labour.

There is, however, one special direction in the United Kingdom in which the Training Establishments will, we believe, constantly be able to place out some of their best men. Experience shows that a certain number of the best of the Unemployed—especially among our Class I.—have a desire for country life; and can be successfully established on Small Holdings. The Board of Agriculture should, we think, be able to afford opportunities—possibly in connection with its works of Land Reclamation—for these selected men to settle on the land.

Finally, there is emigration to other parts of the British Empire, where labour of various kinds is in greater demand than in these islands. For men who desire to try their fortunes in Canada or South Africa, Australia or New Zealand, residence at one or other of the Training Establishments will afford, not only useful training, but also a valuable opportunity for proving whether the would-be emigrant has such qualities and capacities as warrant the belief that he can make a successful start in a new country.

There remains the Detention Colony, the existence of which, as a place to be avoided, is an indispensable element in any scheme of dealing with the Able-bodied. The Detention Colony, though it will be entered only upon commitment by a judicial authority, will not be a prison, or a convict settlement. It is essential that the men committed to it should not be regarded as criminals. For this reason it should not be administered by the Prison Commissioners, or be under the Secretary of State for the Home Department. It should remain, in fact, as merely one among the Training Establishments, under the Minister dealing with the organisation of the National Labour Market. The Detention Colony will be, in fact, merely a Training Establishment of a peculiar kind, which has necessarily to have the characteristic of compulsory detention. Its inmates are sent there to be treated for, and if possible cured of, a morbid state of mind, which makes them incapable of filling a useful place in the industrial world. The general lines of the appropriate regimen have been laid down by various experimental colonies in Switzerland and Germany, Holland and Belgium; but there is much yet to be done to adapt them for this country, and to work them out in detail. Enforced regularity of life, and continuous work, of a stimulating and not monotonous kind; plain food, with opportunities of earning small luxuries by good conduct and output of work; restriction of personal liberty; and power to those in charge to allow return to one of the ordinary Training Establishments on probation, as soon as ever it is believed that reformation has been effected—these features sufficiently indicate the outlines of the experiment. Repeated recalcitrance, and, of

course, any assault on the persons in charge, would be criminal offences, leading to sentences of penal servitude in a convict settlement.*

(E) The Ministry of Labour.

It is, we think, clear that the whole of the elaborate organization that we have outlined for dealing with the various sections of the necessitous and destitute Able-bodied and of the persons in distress from want of employment must be the work, not of Local Authorities, having jurisdiction only over limited areas, but of a Department of the National Government. Whether we consider the fifty to eighty thousand Vagrants perpetually drifting, at the expense, one way or another, of the rest of the community, from North to South and from South to North, or the large Stagnant Pools of Under-employed Labour which make up so much of waterside Boroughs such as West Ham, it is plain that the problem, by its very nature, transcends the powers of even the ablest Local Governing Body. The remedies are not within its scope. The network of Labour Exchanges must, it is obvious, be free to act, and to find situations for the Unemployed and to select men for employers, quite irrespective of their places of residence—or of business. The areas of the various Local Authorities, whether urban or rural, are usually very far from coincident with the geographical aggregations of manufactures and commerce. The Metropolitan area for business purposes already greatly transcends that of the Administrative County of London; and its Labour Market cannot be organised without including East Ham and West Ham, Walthamstow and Tottenham, Willesden and Ealing, Richmond and Croydon—not to speak of Chelmsford and Luton, Reading and Guildford, Erith and Tilbury. We could not possibly have independently governed Labour Exchanges for Manchester, Salford, Prestwich, Stockport, Hyde and Oldham; or for Liverpool, Birkenhead and Bootle; or for all the separate Counties and Boroughs that make up the busy and closely interlaced industrial districts of the Lower Clyde, Tyneside, the West Riding and the Black Country respectively. The various local branches of the Labour Exchange must be free, it is clear, to fill situations and to place men where they can, anywhere in the Kingdom, without the clogging influences of local preferences for finding work for local men, or "keeping all our herrings for our own sea-maws." Moreover, it is essential that the Labour Exchange should work in the closest co-operation with the Associations of Employers and the Trade Unions; and these are organized without any regard for municipal or county boundaries, and are, indeed, to a great extent, national in scope. Any scheme of Government aid to Trade Union Insurance, dealing as it would with the great national trade societies, must clearly be national in its administration. Similarly, the Training Establishments, at which the ultimate residuum of Unemployed must be maintained whilst they are being tested and improved, are plainly beyond the capacity of the Local Authorities. Some kinds, like the Detention Colonies, will be few in number; possibly only one or two for each of the three Kingdoms. Of the others, the more highly specialized, providing particular kinds of training, or dealing with men in particular states of body or mind, must, like specialized hospitals, draw their patients from all over the country. Moreover, all these institutions must be in close and easy communication with each other, so that men can be transferred without any question of finance, from one to the other, being freely passed from grade to grade, and from training to training, according to their condition and their need. They must always be, too, in intimate touch with all the branches of the National Labour Exchange, acting constantly in conformity with its Reports as to the state of the Labour Market and its changing needs. But beyond all considerations of administrative efficiency of the Labour Exchange, Trade Union Insurance, and the Training Establishments, it seems to us essential to success that we should link up these measures of provision with the measures of prevention that are no

* The evidence in favour of such Detention Colonies, alike before our Commission, the Vice-Regal Commission and the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, was overwhelming, and almost unanimous. "Our opinion," reported the Vice-Regal Commission, "agrees with that of the majority of witnesses examined before us that people who are travelling about the country without employment, without any means of their own, and who have to support themselves by mendicancy or recourse to the Poor Law, or by sleeping-out, should be brought by the Police before a Court of Justice. If they could not then, or through the Police or other agency after remand, give satisfactory evidence (documentary or other) to the Court of their being habitually hard-working and self-supporting, there should, we suggest, be power conferred upon a Court of Summary Jurisdiction to direct them to be sent for a term of from one to three years to a Labour House, in which the inmates should, as is said to be the case in Belgian establishments, be required to make or produce, as far as possible, the food, clothing and necessaries for such an institution. We think that at all events to begin with, four such Labour Houses might be established for Ireland, and that four disused Workhouses might be set apart for the purpose." (Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, 1906, Vol. I., p. 55.)

less required for the absorption of the surplus and the mitigation of the recurrent fluctuations of Trade. The legislative restriction of Boy Labour and the legislative reduction of the hours of the railway and tramway servants need to be put into operation in concert with the operations of the Labour Exchange. If there is to be any Regularization of the National Demand for Labour, by means of a Ten Years' Programme of Government Works, to be started by the various Departments in the years of depression, it is clear that this action can safely be taken only on the advice of another Department of the Government. If the provision for the Unemployed were in the hands of the Local Authorities, each of them would be pressing the National Government to start the supplementary Government Works whenever its own local industry happened to be depressed, irrespective of the state of the Labour Market in the nation as a whole; and to start them, too, within its own area, for the convenience of its own Unemployed, irrespective of the national needs. The result would inevitably be that, in order to prevent the measure degenerating into the mere opening of local relief works, the Government would tend to disregard the representations altogether. For all these reasons, it is imperative, in spite of the difficulty of inducing the National Government to undertake an extensive new service, that the Local Authorities, whom we are already sufficiently burdening, should insist on being relieved, once and for all, of all duties relating to the Able-bodied and the Unemployed.

(i) *The Minister for Labour.*

We propose that, in order to ensure complete ministerial responsibility, and the full and continuous control of Parliament over so important a branch of industrial organisation, the whole work should be entrusted to a Minister for Labour, who would naturally be a member of the House of Commons and included in the Cabinet. His Department would embrace three entirely new administrative services, namely, the National Labour Exchange, the Trade Insurance Division, and the Maintenance and Training Division. To these three Divisions, we should be disposed to add, by transfer, three existing branches of other Government Departments; so that the Ministry of Labour would consist of six separate and distinct Divisions, each under its own Assistant Secretary. We should transfer, in this way, to form a new Industrial Regulation Division, all the administration of the laws relating to hours, wages and conditions of employment, including the Factories and Workshops Acts, the Shop Hours and Truck Acts, and the Mines Regulation Acts, from the Home Office; and the Regulation of Railways Act, 1893, from the Board of Trade. The Labour Department of the Board of Trade would form the nucleus of a new Statistical Division, and the Emigrants' Information Office under the Secretary of State for the Colonies the nucleus of a new Emigration and Immigration Division.

It has been suggested that the Minister for Labour should be the President of a Board including representatives of employers and employed. We are entirely opposed to any such arrangement, as calculated to interfere with the control of Parliament, and the complete responsibility of the Minister to the House of Commons. Unless the Minister, and the Minister alone, is placed in a position to decide what is to be done, it will be difficult for Parliament to ensure that its views upon policy will not be thwarted by influences over which it has no control; and impossible for the House of Commons to hold the Cabinet in general, and the Minister for Labour in particular, responsible for the results of his administration. The place of representatives of employers and employed is on Advisory Committees, which should be either constituted permanently or convened from time to time as required, to make suggestions, offer criticism, and supply information, in connection with particular subjects; or even generally with regard to such branches of the administration as the working of the National Labour Exchange, the arrangements for insurance or emigration, or the organization of the institutions for training.

There would be many advantages in making the Department of the Minister for Labour responsible for the whole of the United Kingdom, as are the Treasury (with the Inland Revenue, Customs and Post Office); the Board of Trade (with its Mercantile Marine Offices and its Labour Department); and the Home Office (for Prisons and Factory Acts). We think, however, on the whole, that the work would probably be organized with less friction if separate Departments on similar lines were arranged for Scotland and Ireland respectively; under the responsibility of the Secretary for Scotland, and the

Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary for Ireland.* We do not presume to suggest with what branches of the existing Scottish and Irish administration the new Department could be most conveniently associated.

(ii) *The National Labour Exchange.*

It would be the first task of the Minister for Labour to organize, in every populous centre, one or more branches of the National Labour Exchange, and to convert them, as contemplated by the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, into a network of intelligence as to the demand and supply of labour. These local offices would naturally vary in size and organization. In London the Minister would find ready to hand, and would naturally take over, the system of Exchanges now administered by the Central (Unemployed) Body. In a few other towns the " Labour Bureau " or Employment Exchange run by the Municipality under the Unemployed Workmen Act is sufficiently distinct to be also taken over. But the National Labour Exchange must, from the outset, make it clear that it has nothing whatever to do with the relief of Distress from Unemployment, and must therefore carefully avoid connecting itself in the public mind with the registers of applicants to Distress Committees.

The Labour Exchange would, of course, not confine itself to filling situations in the ranks of casual employment, or from among those who had to be supported or assisted in one way or another. It would receive, and in every way encourage, voluntary applications from employers for labour of better grades, for durable situations ; which it would do its best to fill from the best of those whom it had on its books, whether or not they were in distress, or even actually out of work. Its business, in short, is to find situations for all men who desire them, whether or not they are actually Unemployed, and quite irrespective of their affluence or their distress ; and to find men for all the vacancies notified by employers, entirely without reference to whether the successful candidates are married or single, in want or not. Indeed, in Germany a large proportion of the applicants are men who have not yet left their situations, or employers who expect to have vacancies. The object to be kept in view is that the Labour Exchange should be used by everyone who needs its services, just as if it were a post office or a railway station. Hence, in all populous centres the Labour Exchanges should have premises in prominent positions, sufficiently large to allow of capacious waiting-rooms, and different entrances and exits : and also suitable rooms for the meetings of Associations of Employers and Trade Unions, whom it is desirable to encourage to use the Exchange. Experience would show how far it was desirable to develop separate Labour Exchanges for particular industries like that at present maintained by the Board of Trade for the mercantile marine which should presumably be transferred to the new department. In any case there should be, in each town, a Local Advisory Committee of representatives of the employers and of the Trade Unions, which should supervise the working of the Exchange ; and which could supply, not only useful criticisms and suggestions, but also valuable information without which the institution can never achieve its full measure of success.†

There will remain, after the Labour Exchange has met all the demands upon it, a residuum of men, who are demonstrably not wanted at that moment, in that place. This " surplus labour " will be a varying amount from day to day. Some of it will be needed to meet the periods of increased demand for labour—the " wools" and the " teas " at the docks, the pressure on the railway companies at the holiday seasons, the extra postmen at Christmas, the " glut men " at the Custom House, the curiously regular irregularities of the printing and bookbinding trades, the increased demand in winter of the gas companies on the one hand and the theatrical industry on the other, the spring rush on painters and builders' labourers, on dressmakers, and trouser-finishers, and so on. But we shall

* With regard to Ireland our proposals might be considered in connection with the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland, more especially, we think, the Minutes of Dissent of Lord Macdonnell. He suggests (p. 172) that the present Congested Districts Board should be merged in two Government Departments, one of which would be concerned with agriculture, the development of fisheries, and the promotion of industries, including technical instruction. In view of the close connection betweenAble-bodied Destitution in Ireland and the land question, it might be desirable to make the new services of the Labour Exchange, Trade Insurance, and Maintenance under Training, subordinate departments of the Authority dealing with agriculture, fisheries, etc.

† The Labour Exchange would probably adopt the practice of the Exchanges in London of suspending action, with regard to any particular trade, in a particular locality, as soon as any strike or lock-out was notified to it.

be surprised to find how easy it will prove, after a year or two's experience, to forecast these requirements *for the town as a whole;* and, as we have suggested, how comparatively small is the variation in the aggregate volume of employment for unskilled and casual labour of one day or of one month, or of one season of the year, compared with another. What remains to be discovered is how far the different sporadic demands can be satisfied interchangeably by the undifferentiated labour that is available. Complete interchangeability of labour, and complete " dovetailing " of situations may, of course, even in the realm of casual unskilled labour not be possible. But probably it would become every year more practicable ; and it will obviously be part of the training of the ultimate residuum of Unemployed to promote a more complete interchangeability ; moreover, whilst it would be the policy of the Minister for Labour so to direct the operations of the National Labour Exchange as to bring about the " Decasualization of Casual Labour," and the Suppression of Under-employment, and of the peculiar Discontinuity of Employment characteristic of the seasonal trades, this would have to be undertaken gradually and with caution. It could only proceed step by step with the arrangements for the Absorption of Labour that we have described, and with the organization of Training Establishments at which maintenance under training was provided for any person who might find himself without employment.

When the whole of the anticipated requirements of each town are provided for—and, of course, at all times as regards individual cases—it should be the duty of the various Labour Exchanges to communicate with each other as to the actual or anticipated requirements of other towns. Just as all the Labour Exchanges in one town would report, day by day, and even, telephonically, hour by hour, to a central office in that town, from which they would all be advised as to the localities where additional men were required, so the Labour Exchanges of all the different towns would report, at least once a day, to the Ministry of Labour as regards England and Wales, and to the corresponding Departments as regards Scotland and Ireland, stating :—

(*a*) What surplus labour they had ; and

(*b*) How much of it was not needed for the proximate local requirements ; or on the other hand

(*c*) What shortage of labour they had, or expected to have.

Particular Labour Exchanges could then be put telephonically in direct communication with each other, either with a view to filling particular situations or with a view to an offer, to those labourers who were disengaged, of the chance of migration to the town in which additional labour of any particular sort was required. It might well be part of the help afforded by the State to make this mobility possible by advancing any necessary railway fares, in the form of special, non-transferable railway tickets, available only for the particular journey authorised.

(iii) *The Trade Insurance Division.*

The Trade Insurance Division would, in the main, deal with finance and accounts. As we have explained we do not recommend any Government Insurance Fund to provide Out-of-Work Pay in competition with the Trade Unions. The Trade Insurance Division would prepare and administer the regulations under which the Government Subvention to the societies providing insurance against Unemployment was annually granted. It is not suggested that the Government should assume any responsibility for the management, or the financial soundness of the societies to which it paid its subvention. Nor would the Government give any undertaking as to the future ; or come into contact with any individual member. All that it would do, year by year, would be, in recognition of the fact that certain voluntary associations had, by their system of Trade Insurance, actually provided Out-of-Work Pay in the preceding year for so many men, at such and such a cost, and thereby greatly relieved the burden which the Unemployed cast upon the Government, to grant to such societies amounts equal to some fixed proportion (not exceeding one-half) of the sums thus already disbursed. This would merely involve the making of an annual application by the Trade Union, supported by statistics from its duly audited accounts, stating the particulars of all its Out-of-Work Benefit for the preceding year. The Trade Insurance Division would, of course, be entitled to make any inspection of books, or other investigation necessary for satisfying itself that the application was, in all its details, in accordance with the regulations. But there would be no control over policy. The Trade Insurance Division would have no further power than to withhold payment of its subvention in respect of any cases in which it was not

satisfied that the Out-of-Work Benefit had been granted only in relief of members unemployed through slackness of trade.

The relations of the Trade Insurance Division with the Executive Committees of the different trade societies would be facilitated by the fact that their connection would be entirely voluntary, and terminable at any time. There is no advantage in pressing, still less in compelling, a Trade Union to accept the subvention offered to it. It might be allowed, if it chose, to remain as at present, paying its own benefits for its own members exclusively from its own funds; or declining to take up Out-of-Work Benefit.

(iv) *The Industrial Regulation Division.*

We need not describe the function of this Division, of which the present Factory Department of the Home Office and the analogous department of the Board of Trade dealing with the hours of railway servants, would form the most substantial part. We imagine that this department will be presently reinforced by the organization of boards of employers and workmen to decide on the conditions of employment which should obtain in particular industries, and to get these embodied in new clauses of the Factory Act or voluntarily agreed to by employers and workpeople. Some such industrial organization will become more than ever desirable in order to guide the National Labour Exchange with regard to particular industries.

(v) *The Emigration and Immigration Division.*

This Division would develop the office now maintained under the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in close communication with the responsible governments of other parts of the Empire. In particular it will be constantly transmitting information to the Maintenance and Training Division as to the qualities needed to make a man or woman fit to emigrate with a prospect of success. But we anticipate that this Division will not confine itself to overlooking the emigration of our citizens; it will also supervise and, if necessary, check the immigration of alien labour. When a National Labour Exchange has undertaken the responsibility of finding situations for unemployed citizens, and a Maintenance and Training Division has undertaken to provide for those for whom situations cannot be found, we do not think it likely that the community will acquiesce in any indiscriminate invasion by necessitous foreign wage-earners at times when the home market is overstocked. The principle of supervision has already been enacted by Parliament and we recommend that the carrying out of this statute should be transferred to the Ministry of Labour. With regard to the emigration of individuals to other parts of the Empire, we think that the Division should consider the expediency of making use of the organization of the various Colonial Governments and Voluntary Associations.

(vi) *The Statistical Division.*

The Statistical Division would work in close connection with the rest of the Department. It would summarise and collate all the information available with regard to the labour market, the temporary or permanent depressions in certain industries, the level of wages and hours, and the flow of labour in and out of the country. On this material it would be able to calculate the beginnings of waves of depression or waves of inflation with more certainty, and, we hope, with more practical result than the Meteorological Department forecasts the weather. Upon these statistics the Minister of Labour would inform the Ministers responsible for the spending departments of the approaching scarcity or surplus of Labour in particular trades or in the country at large. These statistics would be also available to calculate insurance premiums, or to guide the Maintenance andTraining Division in the determination of the kind of training required. Upon these statistics boards of employers and workmen might determine, subject to any statutory regulations, the hours and wages of particular occupations. Finally, on these statistics would be determined how far it was desirable to encourage emigration out of the United Kingdom, or permit immigration into it.

(vii) *The Maintenance and Training Division.*

To this Division there falls the most difficult and perhaps the most important task, that of working out the *technique* of an entirely new departure, in which previous experience, whether under the Poor Law or under the Unemployed Workmen Act, offers but little beyond examples of what to avoid.

We see at once that there will have to be one or more spacious Receiving Offices in each considerable centre of population, to which able-bodied persons in distress from want of employment, or unable to get food or lodging, could apply for maintenance. Such persons would either apply spontaneously, or they might be referred or brought in by the police, or by the officers of the Local Health or Education Authorities. Their urgent wants would have to be met, as they have to be at present under the head of "Sudden or Urgent Necessity"; and they would then be medically examined, and their faculties tested, to see what could be done for them. The Receiving Office would promptly pass all its cases on to one Training Establishment or another; but it would plainly require to have a certain amount of cellular sleeping accommodation available for occupation by persons absolutely homeless, pending their removal. The officers of the Receiving House for the Able-bodied would naturally act in close concert with those of the Local Health Authority and Local Education Authority, all alike "searching out" destitution, and passing to one another the cases with which each was specially concerned—all destitute children, for instance, being instantly taken charge of by the Local Education Authority, and all sick persons in distress by the Local Health Authority.

We have explained, in the Scheme of Reform with which we concluded Part I. of this Report, how the various classes of the Non-Able-bodied would be taken charge of by the several specialised statutory committees of the County or County Borough Councils—the children of school age by the Local Education Authority; the infants, the sick, the permanently incapacitated and the aged requiring institutional treatment by the Local Health Authority; the mentally defective of all kinds by the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective; and the aged in receipt of local or national pensions by the Local Pensions Authority. In order to avoid overlapping of assistance to different members of the same family, or to one and the same person by different Authorities or by private charity, as also to ensure that all necessary requirements are fulfilled, we have proposed that all forms of Public Assistance should be entered in a common Register for each County or County Borough; and that all proposals for the grant of Home Aliment by any Committee should be submitted for sanction to the local Registrar of Public Assistance. It is clear that the same course should be followed with all Public Assistance granted to the Able-bodied. The Superintendent of the local Receiving House for the Able-bodied would, in fact, stand in the same relation to the Registrar of Public Assistance as the various Local Authorities for the several classes of the Non-Able-Bodied.

From the Receiving Office the Able-bodied person in distress would be assigned to one or other of the Training Establishments according to the circumstances of his case. If he was a married man with a home, he would probably be directed to attend next morning at 6 a.m., at the Day Training Depot of his town or district, where his whole day would be taken up with the training appropriate to his needs; with good plain meals on the dietary prescribed by the Trainer. But he would return home at night. Day Training Depots of this kind will be required on the outskirts of all large towns though they will not all necessarily be on the same model. If there were dependent children at home, the Superintendent of the Receiving Office would have to apply to the local Registrar of Public Assistance (giving simultaneous notice to the officers of the Local Education Authority and Local Health Authority) for sanction to have Home Aliment paid. This would be charged to the Local Education Authority; and if that Authority was not satisfied with the home circumstances for the children, it could elect to take them into one of its residential institutions, or admit them to its Day Industrial School.

But the unmarried or homeless man would probably find himself assigned to one or other of the residential Training Establishments in the country. These Farm Colonies would be established as and where required. They would adopt different kinds of training and different types of regimen, according to the needs of their respective classes of inmates. Hence the Superintendent of the Receiving House would have to decide where each applicant could most appropriately be sent. He would bear in mind also the state of the local labour market, and whether it was expected that there would be an early increase in the demand. He would consider also the peculiar needs of each man, and where he was most likely to be benefited.

We have to consider the case of women as well as of men. There must, it is clear, be a Women's Side of the Receiving Office, under a female officer. The able-bodied woman applicant would be dealt with exactly on the same lines as the man; being assigned, if single and without children, or if homeless, to a suitable day or residential Training Estab-

lishment for women only. The woman with dependent children, and with a home which satisfied the minimum requirements of the Local Health Authority and Local Education Authority would receive (unless she was adjudged unfit to have the charge of the children) Home Aliment for their support from the Local Education Authority, subject always, in order to prevent overlapping and infringement of economic conditions, to the sanction of the local Registrar of Public Assistance. Far from being provided with industrial employment, the mother with whom her children were thus " boarded out " by the Local Education Authority would be required to devote herself wholly to their care, on pain of having them withdrawn from her.

There remains the case of the Able-bodied wife, without dependent children, of the able-bodied man having a decent home, but yet in need of assistance. Usually the man would be assigned to the Day Training Depot, where he would have his food. For the wife, the Superintendent of the Receiving House would enquire from the Labour Exchange whether employment of suitable nature could be found, which would permit her to keep up the home. If not, he would apply to the local Registrar of Public Assistance for sanction for the grant of Home Aliment, out of national funds, to the woman herself. This should be made conditional on her taking such steps for her own self-improvement as the Local Women's Advisory Committee might suggest ; including, probably, daily attendance at the nearest Domestic Economy School for further training in cookery, dressmaking and housekeeping.

The Maintenance and Training Division would, it is clear, be able to make great use, at each stage of its work, of voluntary helpers and voluntary institutions. It would have its Local Women's Advisory Committees, and its volunteer visitors, who would look after the wives, and help with the women inmates of the Women's Training Establishments. In the establishment and management of these institutions, the Government might receive, too, a practically unlimited amount of voluntary help and co-operation. In this connection there would be a great opportunity for making use of the fervour and zeal of philanthropy and religion. The greatest results in the way of the reclamation and training of individuals have always been achieved by religious organizations. It would be wise for the State to make a greatly increased use (with proper inspection) of farm colonies and similar settlements and homes, conducted by religious and philanthropic committees, for such of the residuum as may be willing to be sent to them in preference to the Government establishments. It may well be that for all that important side of training that is implied in the strengthening of moral character, the building up of the will, the power to resist temptation, and the formation of regular habits, the most effective instruments are a degree of love and of religious faith that a Government establishment with a Civil Service staff may not always be able to secure. The Ministry of Labour would therefore be well advised to let the denominations and the philanthropists have all the scope that they can take, and only to establish such additional Government farm colonies as are found needful to supplement the private effort. This private effort could be subsidised by payments for each case, as has long been done for a whole generation in the reformatory schools, and is now being done in inebriate homes.

(F) " Utopian ?"

This elaborate scheme of national organization for dealing with the grave social evil of Unemployment, with its resultant Able-bodied Destitution, and its deterioration of hundreds of thousands of working class families, will seem to many persons Utopian. Experience proves, however, that this may mean no more than that it will take a little time to accustom people to the proposals, and to get them carried into operation. The first step is to make the whole community realise that the evil exists. At present, it is not too much to say that the average citizen of the middle or upper class takes for granted the constantly recurring destitution among wage-earning families due to Unemployment, as part of the natural order of things, and as no more to be combated than the east wind. In the same way the eighteenth century citizen acquiesced in the horrors of the contemporary prison administration, and in the slave trade ; just as, for the first decades of the nineteenth century, our grandfathers accepted as inevitable the slavery of the little children of the wage-earners in mines and factories, and the incessant devastation of the slums by " fever." Fifty years hence we shall be looking back with amazement at the helpless and ignorant acquiescence of the governing classes of the United Kingdom, at the opening of the twentieth century, in the constant debasement of character and *physique*, not to mention the perpetual draining away of the nation's wealth, that idleness combined with starvation plainly causes.

The second step is for the Government to make a serious endeavour to grapple with the evil as a whole, on a deliberately thought-out plan. By the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, Parliament and the nation have admitted the public responsibility in the matter. We may agree that the work of the Distress Committees has resulted in little. But the experiments of the last few years have definitely revealed the nature of the problem, and the lines on which it can be dealt with. *We have to report that, in our judgment, it is now administratively possible, if it is sincerely wished to do so, to remedy most of the evils of Unemployment* ;* to the same extent, at least, as we have in the past century diminished the death rate from fever and lessened the industrial slavery of young children. It is not a valid objection that a demonstrably perfect and popularly-accepted *technique*, either with regard to the prevention of Unemployment, or with regard to the treatment of the Unemployed, has not yet been worked out. No such *technique* can ever be more than foreshadowed until it is actually being put in operation. Less than a century ago the problem of dealing with the sewage of London seemed insoluble. Half a million separate private cesspools accumulated each its own putrefaction. To combine these festering heaps into a single main drainage system seemed, to the Statesmen and social reformers of 1820 or 1830, beyond the bounds of possibility. We now take for granted that only by such a concentration is it possible to get rid of the festering heaps and scientifically treat the ultimate residuum. In the same way, a century ago, no one knew how to administer a fever hospital; the eighteenth century "pesthouse" must, indeed, have killed more people than it cured. Yet it was only by establishing hospitals that we learnt how to make them instruments of recovery for the patients and of a beneficent protection to the rest of the community. And, to take a more recent problem, less than half a century ago, when millions of children in the land were growing up untaught, undisciplined, and uncared for, it would have sounded wildly visionary to have suggested that the remedy was elaborate organization on a carefully thought-out plan. Could there have been anything more "Utopian" in 1860 than a picture of what to-day we take as a matter of course, the 7,000,000 children emerging every morning, washed and brushed, from 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 homes in every part of the Kingdom, traversing street and road and lonely woodland, going o'er fell and moor, to present themselves at a given hour at their 30,000 schools, where each of the 7,000,000 finds his or her own individual place, with books and blackboard and teacher provided? What has been effected in the organisation of Public Health and Public Education can be effected, if we wish it, in the Public Organization of the Labour Market.

(G) Summary of Proposals.

We therefore recommend :—

1. That the duty of so organising the National Labour Market as to prevent or to minimise Unemployment should be placed upon a Minister responsible to Parliament, who might be designated the Minister for Labour.

2. That the Ministry of Labour should include six distinct and separately organized Divisions, each with its own Assistant Secretary; namely, the National Labour Exchange, the Trade Insurance Division, the Maintenance and Training Division, the Industrial Regulation Division, the Emigration and Immigration Division and the Statistical Division.

3. That the function of the National Labour Exchange should be, not only (*a*) to ascertain and report the surplus or shortage of labour of particular kinds, at particular places; and (*b*) to diminish the time and energy now spent in looking for work, and the consequent "leakage" between jobs; but also (*c*) so to "dovetail" casual and seasonal employments as to arrange for practical continuity of work for those now chronically Under-employed. That whilst resort to the National Labour Exchange might be optional for employers filling situations of at least a month's duration, it should (following the precedent of the Labour Exchange for seamen already conducted by the

* "If . . by a solution is meant that no man able and willing to work should come to degradation or destitution for want of work, then a solution is not indeed within sight, but by no means beyond hope. Its direction is certain, and its distance not infinite. . . . It is a policy of industrial organization, of meeting deliberately industrial needs that at present are met wastefully because without deliberation. Fluctuations of demand are now provided for by the maintenance of huge stagnant reserves of labour in varying extremities of distress. There is no reason in the nature of things why they should not be provided for by organized reserves of labour raised beyond the reach of distress." ("Unemployment: A Problem of Industry," by W. H. Beveridge, 1909, p. 236.)

Board of Trade in the Mercantile Marine Offices) be made legally compulsory in certain scheduled trades in which excessive Discontinuity of Employment prevails ; and especially for the engagement of Casual Labour.

4. That in our opinion no effective steps can be taken towards the " Decasualisation of Casual Labour," and the Suppression of Under-employment, without simultaneously taking action to ensure the immediate absorption, or else to provide the full and honourable maintenance at the public expense, of the surplus of labourers that will thereby stand revealed.

5. That, in order to secure proper industrial training for the youth of the nation, an amendment of the Factory Acts is urgently required to provide that no child should be employed at all below the age of fifteen ; that no young person under eighteen should be employed for more than thirty hours per week ; and that all young persons so employed should be required to attend for thirty hours per week at suitable Trade Schools to be maintained by the Local Education Authorities.

6. That the terms of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1893, should be so amended as to enable the Minister of Labour to require the prompt reduction of the hours of duty of railway, tramway, and omnibus workers, if not to forty-eight, at any rate, to not more than sixty in any one week as a maximum.

7. That all mothers having the charge of young children, and in receipt, by themselves or their husbands, of any form of Public Assistance, should receive enough for the full maintenance of the family ; and that it should then be made a condition of such assistance that the mother should devote herself to the care of her children ; without seeking industrial employment.

8. That we recommend these reforms for their own sake, but it is an additional advantage that they (and especially the Halving of Boy Labour) would permit the immediate addition to the number of men in employment equal to a large proportion of those who are now Unemployed or Under-employed.

9. That in order to meet the periodically recurrent general depressions of Trade, the Government should take advantage of there being at these periods as much Unemployment of capital as there is Unemployment of labour ; that it should definitely undertake, as far as practicable, the Regularization of the National Demand for Labour ; and that it should, for this purpose, and to the extent of at least £4,000,000 a year, arrange a portion of the ordinary work required by each Department on a Ten Years' Programme ; such £40,000,000 worth of work for the decade being then put in hand, not by equal annual instalments, but exclusively in the lean years of the trade cycle ; being paid for out of loans for short terms raised as they are required, and being executed with the best available labour, at Standard Rates, *engaged in the ordinary way.*

10. That in this Ten Years' Programme there should be included works of Afforestation, Coast Protection and Land Reclamation ; to be carried out by the Board of Agriculture exclusively in the lean years of the trade cycle ; *by the most suitable labour obtainable taken on in the ordinary way,* at the rates locally current for the work, and paid for out of loans raised as required.

11. That the statistical and other evidence indicates that, by such measures as the above, the greater part of the fluctuations in the aggregate volume of employment can be obviated ; and the bulk of the surplus labour manifesting itself in chronic Under-employment can be immediately absorbed, leaving, at all times, only a relatively small residuum of men who are, for various reasons, in distress from want of work.

12. That with a lessened Discontinuity of Employment, and the Suppression of Under-employment, the provision of Out-of-Work Benefit by Trade Unions would become practicable over a much greater range of industry than at present ; and its extension should, as the best form of insurance against Unemployment, receive Government encouragement and support. That in view of its probable adverse effect on Trade Union membership and organization, we are unable to recommend the establishment of any plan of Government or compulsory Insurance against Unemployment. That we recommend, however, that, following the precedents set in several foreign countries, a Govern-

ment subvention not exceeding one-half of the sum actually paid in the last preceding year as Out-of-Work Benefit should be offered to Trade Unions or other societies providing such Benefit, in order to enable the necessary weekly contributions to be brought within the means of a larger proportion of the wage-earners.

13. That for the ultimate residuum of men in distress from want of employment, who may be expected to remain, after the measures now recommended have been put in operation, we recommend that Maintenance should be freely provided, without disfranchisement, on condition that they submit themselves to the physical and mental training that they may prove to require. That it should be the function of the Maintenance and Training Division of the Ministry of Labour to establish and maintain Receiving Offices in the various centres of population, at which able-bodied men in distress could apply for assistance, and at which they would be medically examined and have their faculties tested in order to discover in what way they could be improved by training. They would then be assigned either to suitable Day Training Depots or residential Farm Colonies, where their whole working time would be absorbed in such varied beneficial training of body and mind as they proved capable of; their wives and families being, meanwhile, provided with adequate Home Aliment.

14. That no applicant for employment or man out of work need be legally required to register at the National Labour Exchange, or to attend or remain in any Training Establishment, so long as he abstained from crime (including Vagrancy and Mendicity), and maintained himself and his family without receiving or needing Public Assistance in any form; but that such registration, and, if required, such attendance, should be legally enforced on all men who fail to fulfil any of their social obligations, or are found houseless, or requiring Public Assistance for themselves or their families.

15. That the Maintenance and Training Division should also establish one or more Detention Colonies, of a reformatory type, to which men would be committed by the Magistrates, and compulsorily detained and kept to work under discipline, upon conviction of any such offences as Vagrancy, Mendicity, neglect to maintain family or to apply for Public Assistance for their maintenance if destitute, repeated recalcitrancy or breach of discipline in a Training Establishment, etc.

16. That for able-bodied women, without husband or dependent children, who may be found in distress from want of employment, there should be exactly the same sort of provision as for men. That for widows or other mothers in distress, having the care of young children, residing in homes not below the National Minimum of sanitation, and being themselves not adjudged unworthy to have children entrusted to them, there should be granted adequate Home Aliment on condition of their devoting their whole time and energy to the care of the children. That for the childless wives of able-bodied men in attendance at a Training Establishment, adequate Home Aliment be granted, conditional on their devoting their time to such further training in Domestic Economy as may be prescribed for them.

17. That upon the establishment of the Ministry of Labour, and the setting to work of its new organisation, the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 should cease to apply; and the Local Authorities should be relieved of all responsibilities with regard to the Able-bodied and the Unemployed.

18. That upon the necessary legislation being passed, a small Executive Commission be empowered to effect the necessary transfer to the Ministry of Labour of the functions with regard to the Able-bodied and the Unemployed at present performed by the Poor Law Authorities and the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act; and to make, as from the Appointed Day, all necessary transfers and adjustments of buildings and officers, Farm Colonies and Labour Exchanges, assets and liabilities.

We cannot end our Report without expressing our great appreciation of the services rendered by the whole of the staff of the Commission. We have particularly to record our sense of obligation to the Secretary, Mr. R. G. Duff, and to the Assistant Secretaries, Mr. J. Jeffrey and Mr. E. Craven. This is, on our part, no mere conventional compliment. The task of serving a large Commission, made up of persons of very varied opinions, is as delicate as it is arduous. By their unfailing courtesy and helpfulness, and their constant impartiality, the Secretaries have lightened the work of every member of the Commission. Their ability, knowledge and varied experience have been uniformly at the service of the Minority no less than of the Majority.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF PART I. AND PART II.

Part I.—The Destitution of the Non-Able-Bodied.

Chapter I. The General Mixed Workhouse of to-day, pp. 726–738.

1. That the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland, and the Poorhouses of Scotland, whether urban or rural, new or old, large or small, sumptuous or squalid, all exhibit the same inherent defects, of which the chief are promiscuity and unspecialised management.

2. That these institutions have a depressing, degrading, and positively injurious effect on the character of all classes of their inmates, tending to unfit them for the life of respectable and independent citizenship.

3. That the institution of a General Mixed Workhouse, whether large or small, was decisively condemned by the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834; that it has been repeatedly condemned since that date by a succession of competent critics; that this condemnation has been confirmed by the evidence given before us, by the reports of our own Investigators and by the individual inspections that we have been able personally to make in many different parts of the United Kingdom.

4. That the institution is everywhere abhorred by the respectable poor, and that, in our judgment, the continued incarceration within its walls of the non-able-bodied or dependent poor, who are admittedly incapable of earning an independent livelihood, cannot be justified.

5. That the continuance of the General Mixed Workhouse as the main method of institutional treatment, alike by the Boards of Guardians of England, Wales and Ireland, and by the Parish Councils of Scotland, in spite of such long continued and widespread condemnation, is to be attributed to the fact that these bodies are essentially Destitution Authorities, charged with the "relief" of persons of the most different ages, ailments and conditions, in respect only of their destitution.

Chapter II. The Outdoor Relief of to-day, pp. 739–771.

6. That the abolition of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied is, in our judgment, wholly impracticable, and, even if it were possible, it would be contrary to the public interest. There are, and, in our opinion, there always will be, a large number of persons to whom public assistance must be given, who can, with most advantage to the community, continue to live at home; for instance, widows with children whose homes deserve to be maintained intact, sick persons for whom domiciliary treatment is professionally recommended, the worthy aged having relatives with whom they can reside, and such of the permanently incapacitated (the crippled, the blind, etc.) as can safely be left with their friends. Nor can the community rely on voluntary charity providing for these cases. In many places such charity does not exist, and in many others there is no warrant for assuming that it would ever be adequate to the need. Moreover, our investigations show that voluntary charity, in so far as it exists in the form of doles and allowances to persons in their homes, has all the disastrous characteristics of a laxly administered Poor Law.

7. That so long as the alternative is admission to the General Mixed Workhouse, the policy of systematic refusal or restriction of Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied, pursued by a few Boards of Guardians in England, cannot be recommended for general adoption. We are unable to resist the evidence that this policy of "offering the House," even to the non-able-bodied, results, in not a few cases, in unnecessarily destroying the home and breaking up the family, in separating child from mother, and in exposing young and innocent persons to the demoralising atmosphere of the General Mixed Workhouse. Such a policy, moreover, by deterring the poor from applying for relief, leads, in far too many cases, to semi-starvation and physical and mental degeneration, from which the women and children especially suffer, and, in a small number of cases, even to death from want and exposure. The proposal made to us by some witnesses that, in order to obviate this latter danger, the Destitution Authority should be granted powers of compulsory removal appears to us—in view of the character of the General Mixed Workhouse in which these poor people would be incarcerated—wholly out of the question.

8. That the present system of administering Outdoor Relief to the non-able-bodied in England, Wales and Ireland, and to a lesser degree also in Scotland, is open to the gravest criticism. The large sum of nearly £4,000,000 which is now expended in this way annually—a burden on the community that is steadily increasing—is being dispensed, without central inspection or control, in doles and allowances, awarded upon no uniform principle, and differing widely from place to place. This lack of common principle is observable even in the Bylaws or Standing Orders by which the best administered Unions in England profess to guide their action. But in the actual practice the diversity between one place and another, in large districts between one Relief Committee and another, and sometimes even between one meeting and the next, according to the accident of which members attend—a diversity applying alike to the persons to whom Outdoor Relief will be given, to its amount and to its conditions—is still more extreme. It can, in fact, be described only as a total absence of principle.

9. That amid all this diversity of principle and practice, we find certain evil characteristics practically universal. Except in an insignificant number of well-administered districts in England and Scotland, the doles and allowances given are manifestly inadequate for healthy subsistence. They are given, not in relief of destitution, strictly so-called, but in supplement of other resources that are assumed to exist. In many cases, such other resources—whether earnings, charitable gifts or the contributions of relations—do exist, but are insufficient. In some cases, on the other hand, the total income of the household is such as not to warrant any relief from the Poor Rate. But no Destitution Authority that we have seen succeeds in ascertaining what other sources of income exist or whether any such exist; and the majority of them do not seriously attempt to do so. The result is that there are a great many cases in which, whilst Out-relief is given on the assumption that other resources will be forthcoming, none such are found; so that the dole of Poor Law relief—upon which thousands of old people, sick people and even widows with young children are steadily degenerating—is a starvation pittance.

10. That an equally grave defect in the Outdoor Relief of to-day, at any rate from the standpoint of the nation, is the unconditional character of the grant. With a few honourable exceptions, no attempt is made by the Destitution Authority even to ascertain how the household is actually being maintained upon the Outdoor Relief that is granted, still less to effect any necessary improvement in the home. The result, as we have grave reason to believe, is that a large part of the sum of nearly £4,000,000 sterling is a subsidy to insanitary, to disorderly, or even to vicious habits of life. The saddest feature of all is that no small proportion of the 234,000 children whom, in the United Kingdom, the Destitution Authority elects to bring up upon Outdoor Relief—in the course of a year, probably as many as 600,000 different children—are to-day without any interference by these Authorities chronically underfed, insufficiently clothed, badly housed, and, in literally thousands of cases, actually being brought up at the public expense in drunken and dissolute homes.

11. That we do not ascribe the disastrous social failure of the Outdoor Relief of to-day to any personal shortcomings of the individual members of Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, or of Parish Councils in Scotland. We have found no evidence that the corrupt and criminal practices which have unhappily occurred in certain places, are at all frequent or widespread. Nor have we reasons to suppose that the evil influences of electoral or social pressure have been otherwise than exceptional. We have, indeed, been impressed by the vast amount of zealous and devoted service, unremunerated and unrecognised, that is being rendered in all parts of the Poor Law administration of the United Kingdom, by men and women of humanity and experience. We ascribe the defects and shortcomings of the present administration of Outdoor Relief to the very nature of the Local Authority to which this duty is entrusted.

12. That we attribute the almost universal failure of the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and of the Parish Councils in Scotland, in the matter of Outdoor Relief, in all districts, and in every decade, partly to an illegitimate combination, in one and the same body of duties which can be rightly done by a board or committee, and those which can be efficiently discharged only by specialised officers continuously engaged in the task. The " many-headed " body is exactly what is required, whether for Outdoor Relief or for the management of institutions, for arriving at decisions of general policy; for prescribing the rules that are to be followed in determining

particular cases ; and for examining grievances and preventing the abuse of their powers by the officers. But if the administration is to be democratic in its nature—if, that is to say, the will of the people is to prevail—it is absolutely necessary that the application to individual cases of the rules laid down by the board or committee should be determined evenly, impartially and exactly according to the instructions, by a salaried officer, appointed for the express purpose. We recognise this at once in the management of a school, a hospital or an asylum, where the most democratic committee finds the best guarantee for the execution of its will in ordering its salaried officials to apply the rules that it lays down. But in the dispensing of Outdoor Relief the same "many-headed" body that makes the rules has also attempted to apply them to individual cases ; and in doing so inevitably brings in personal favouritism, accident and the emotion of the moment, to thwart the will of the community as a whole. The relative success of the Outdoor Relief administration of some of the best governed parishes of Scotland is due, we think, to the fact that, whilst the Parish Council makes the rules, their application to individual cases is not left to the chance membership of a particular meeting, but is in practice largely entrusted, as a judicial function, to the Inspector of the Poor.

13. That it is, however, not merely that "many-headedness" of the existing tribunal that is the cause of the failure of the Outdoor Relief administration of to-day. We ascribe that failure quite as much to the fact that the duty is entrusted to a Destitution Authority, served by subordinates who are essentially Destitution Officers. To entrust, to one and the same authority, the care of the infants and the aged, the children and the able-bodied adults, the sick and the healthy, maids and widows, is inevitably to concentrate attention, not on the different methods of curative or reformatory treatment that they severally require, but on their one common attribute of destitution, and the one common remedy of "relief," indiscriminate and unconditional. And just as this Destitution Authority tends always, in institutional organisation, to the General mixed Workhouse, with its promiscuity and unspecialised management, instead of to the appropriate series of specialised nurseries, schools, hospitals and asylums for the aged that are needed, so it tends also, with its general "mixed official," the Relieving Officer, to provide, alike for widows and deserted wives, the sick and the aged, infants and school children, one indiscriminate unconditional dole of money or food, instead of the specialised domiciliary treatment, according to the cause or character of their distress, that each class requires.

CHAPTER III. Birth and Infancy, pp. 772–800.

14. That the Boards of Guardians of England, Wales and Ireland, and the Parish Councils of Scotland have proved themselves to be, by their very nature as Destitution Authorities, wholly unsuited to cope with the grave threefold problem as to Birth and Infancy with which the nation is confronted. Alike in the prevention of the continued procreation of the feeble-minded, in the rescue of girl-mothers from a life of sexual immorality, and in the reduction of infantile mortality in respectable but necessitous families, the Destitution Authorities, in spite of their great expenditure, are to-day effecting no useful results. With regard to the first two of these problems, at any rate, the activities of the Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils are, in our judgment, actually intensifying the evil. If the State had desired to maximise both feeble-minded procreation and birth out of wedlock, there could not have been suggested a more apt device than the provision throughout the country of General Mixed Workhouses, organised as they now are to serve as unconditional Maternity Hospitals. Whilst thus encouraging irregular sexual unions and the procreation of the feeble-minded, the Destitution Authorities are doing little to arrest the appalling preventable mortality that prevails among the infants of the poor. The respectable married woman, however necessitous she may be, can with difficulty take advantage of the free food, shelter and medical attendance provided at great expense by the Destitution Authority for Maternity cases. In Scotland she is, if living with her own husband, he being in good health, absolutely debarred from relief by law. In England and Wales she is, as far as possible, deterred.

15. That in view of the fact that the Destitution Authorities of the United Kingdom have constantly on their hands more than 65,000 infants under five years of age, and that there is grave reason for believing the mortality among them to be excessive, alike among the 50,000 who are maintained on Outdoor Relief and among the 15,000 in Poor Law Institutions, careful statistical enquiry ought immediately to be made, in order to discover where the mortality is greatest, and how this loss of life can be prevented.

16. That, in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feebleminded, those unmarried mothers who come on the rates for their confinements and are definitely proved to be mentally defective should be dealt with exclusively by the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective.

17. That whatever provision is made from public funds for maternity, whether in the way of supervision, or in domiciliary midwifery, or by means of Maternity Hospitals, should be exclusively in the hands of the Local Health Authority.

18. That, in accordance with the recommendations of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland, the fullest possible use should be made, under the inspection and supervision of the Local Health Authorities, of such Voluntary Agencies as Rescue and Maternity Homes, Midwifery Charities, and Day Nurseries.

19. That the system, whfch has already proved so successful, of combining the efforts of both salaried and voluntary Health Visitors with the work of the Medical Officer of Health and his staff, should be everywhere adopted and developed so as to extend to all infants under school age.

20. That the Local Health Authority should, in all its provision for birth and infancy, continue to proceed on its accustomed principles of:—

(*a*) The provision, free of charge, of hygienic information and advice to all who will accept it;

(*b*) The strict enforcement of the obligation imposed upon individuals to maintain in health those who are legally dependent on them; and

(*c*) Where individual default has taken place in this respect, the immediate provision of the necessaries for health, and the systematic recovery from those responsible, if they are able to pay, of repayment according to their means.

21. That the Destitution Authorities of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland have proved themselves—in spite of the devoted personal service of many of their members—inherently unfitted, by the very nature of their functions, to have the charge of the 237,000 children of school age for whom the State, in the United Kingdom, assumes the responsibility of whole or partial maintenance.

CHAPTER IV. Children under Rival Authorities pp. 801–845

22. That, as a result of this inherent unfitness of a Destitution Authority for the rearing of children, it has been demonstrated to us by our own expert investigators, and confirmed by other evidence, that certainly a majority of all the Outdoor Relief children—probably 100,000 boys and girls—are to-day suffering, definitely and seriously, in health and character, from the circumstances of their lives—these circumstances being, in great part, the inadequate and unconditional character of the Outdoor Relief upon which they are supposed to be maintained, and the lack of care and supervision exercised by the Destitution Authorities and of inspection by the three Local Government Boards, to prevent the too frequent neglect and ill-treatment of these wards of the State.

23. That, in spite of almost universal condemnation and notwithstanding a whole generation of effort on the part of the three Local Government Boards to get the children otherwise maintained, there are, in Great Britain three or four thousand, and in Ireland as many more, children of school age being brought up in the demoralising atmosphere of the General Mixed Workhouse; and we have found no evidence of any effective desire or intention on the part of the Destitution Authorities to take steps to bring to an end this discredited method of providing for children.

24. That the system of "boarding-out" the children with foster-parents, or placing them in certified institutions—a system which, under careful and continuous supervision, and confined to a minority of suitable cases, has much to recommend it—is, at present, seriously prejudiced by the fact that the Destitution Authorities and their officers are, by the very nature of their functions, unqualified to maintain an efficient inspection of the homes and institutions which they select for their children, let alone any continuous supervision of their welfare. In some cases it has even been deemed advisable to discourage or prohibit such visiting of the homes or institutions in order to avoid the connection of the children with the Destitution Authority, which is supposed to look after them.

25. That the children in Poor Law Schools and Cottage Homes—the conditions of which have, for the most part, greatly improved—are, in many instances, maintained at an unnecessary cost; an excessive expenditure sometimes directly attributable to the inexperience of a Destitution Authority in school management, and one which still leaves the children suffering, even in well-administered institutions, from:—

(*a*) The difficulty of getting the best teachers in Poor Law Schools;

(*b*) The impracticability of affording these "institutionalised" boys and girls proper experience of life in a small home; and

(*c*) The educationally defective grouping together of children merely by the common attribute of their parents' destitution, instead of allocating them severally to the particular types of school (*e.g.*, mentally-defective schools, crippled schools, higher-grade schools, technical schools, etc.) that their individual characteristics require.

26. That owing to their lack of any appropriate machinery for the purpose, the Destitution Authorities fail to-day even to discover a large amount of the destitution that exists among children in the great towns; and this not merely in the matter of medical treatment urgently required, but even in the matter of actual inadequacy of food, so that the powers entrusted to the Boards of Guardians for the prosecution of cruel or neglectful parents are hardly ever put in force, and many thousands of children are, for lack of the necessaries of life, growing up stunted, debilitated and diseased.

27. That, as a consequence of this failure of the Destitution Authorities to prevent or to relieve child destitution, Parliament has been led, after many official investigations, to entrust to the Local Education Authorities the duty of providing meals for the children found at school unfed, at any rate on those days of the week, and those weeks of the year when the elementary schools are open; with the result that these Authorities are in England and Wales, during the present winter, feeding more than 100,000 children, and probably nearly as many children of school age as are being relieved, otherwise than in institutions, by all the Destitution Authorities put together.

28. That these competing systems of relieving child destitution by rival Local Authorities in the same town—in many cases simultaneously assisting the same children—without any effective machinery for recovering the cost from parents able to pay, and for prosecuting neglectful parents, are undermining parental responsibility, whilst still leaving many thousands of children inadequately fed.

29. That it is urgently necessary to put an end to this wasteful and demoralising overlapping, by making one Local Authority in each district, and one only, responsible for the whole of whatever provision the State may choose to make for children of school age.

30. That the only practicable way of securing this unity of administration, and also the most desirable reform, is, in England and Wales, to entrust the whole of the public provision for children of school age (not being sick or mentally defective) to the Local Education Authorities, under the supervision of the Board of Education; these Local Education Authorities having already, in their Directors of Education and their extensive staffs of teachers, their residential and their day feeding schools, their arrangements for medical inspection and treatment, their School Attendance Officers and Children's Care Committees, the machinery requisite for searching out every child destitute of the necessaries of life, for enforcing parental responsibility, and for obviating, by timely pressure and assistance, the actual crisis of destitution.

31. That in Scotland the whole of the public provision for children of school age might be entrusted, at any rate in the large towns, to the School Boards, and elsewhere, perhaps, either to the District Health Committee or to the newly-formed "County Committee of the District," under the supervision of the Scottish Education Department.

32. That in Ireland, where no Local Education Authorities exist, it should be considered whether the whole of the public provision for children of school age might not advantageously be entrusted to the County and County Borough Councils, acting through special "Boarding-out-Committees," on which there should be women members, and sending the children to the existing day schools.

33. That the continued existence of two separate rate-supported Medical Services in all parts of the kingdom, costing, in the aggregate, six or seven millions sterling annually —overlapping, unco-ordinated with each other and sometimes actually conflicting with each other's work—cannot be justified.

34. That the very principle of the Poor Law Medical Service—its restriction to persons who prove themselves to be destitute—involves delay and reluctance in the application of the sick person for treatment; hesitation and delay in beginning the treatment; and, in strictly administered districts, actual refusal of all treatment to persons who are in need of it, but who can manage to pay for some cheap substitute. These defects, which we regard as inherent in any medical service administered by a Destitution Authority, stand in the way of the discovery and early treatment of incipient disease, and accordingly deprive the medical treatment of most of its value.

35. That it has been demonstrated to us beyond all dispute that the deterrent aspect which the medical branch of the Poor Law acquires through its association with the Destitution Authority causes, merely by preventing prompt and early application by the sick poor for medical treatment, an untold amount of aggravation of disease, personal suffering and reduction in the wealth-producing power of the manual working class.

36. That the operations of the Poor Law Medical Service, being controlled by Destitution Authorities and administered by Destitution Officers, inevitably take on the character of unconditional "medical relief"—that is, relief of the real or fancied painful symptoms—as distinguished from remedial changes of regimen and removal of injurious conditions, upon which any really curative treatment, or any effective prevention of the spread or recurrence of disease, is nowadays recognised to depend.

37. That whilst domiciliary treatment of the sick poor is appropriate in many cases, it ought to be withheld:—

(i.) Where proper treatment in the home is impracticable;

(ii.) Where the patient persistently malingers or refuses to conform to the prescribed regimen; or

(iii.) Where the patient is a source of danger to others.

It has become imperative in the public interest that there should be, for extreme cases, powers of compulsory removal to a proper place of treatment. Such powers cannot, and in our opinion should not, be granted to a Destitution Authority.

38. That where Destitution Authorities cease to abide by the limitation of their work to persons really destitute, or pass beyond the dole of "Medical Relief," their attempt to extend the range or improve the quality of the Poor Law Medical Service brings new perils. We cannot regard with favour any action which, in order to promote treatment, openly or tacitly invites people voluntarily to range themselves among the destitute; or which tempts them, by the prospect of getting costly and specialised forms of treatment, to simulate destitution. Nor do we think that an Authority charged with the relief of destitution, whatever its method of appointment or whatever the area over which it acts, or any Authority acting through officers concerned with such relief, whatever their official designation, can ever administer a Medical Service with efficiency and economy.

39. That, with regard to the suggestion that the medical treatment of the sick poor should be left either to provident medical insurance or to voluntary charity, it has been demonstrated to us that these offer no possible alternative to the provision for the sick made by the Public Authority. With regard to domiciliary treatment, the evidence as to medical clubs, "contract practice," Provident Dispensaries and the out-patients' departments of hospitals is such as to make it impossible to recommend, in their favour, any restriction of the services at present afforded by the District Medical Officers and Poor Law Dispensaries. Nor do we feel warranted in giving any support to the proposal made to us that the whole of this Outdoor Medical Service of the Poor Law should be superseded by a publicly subsidised system of letting the poor choose their own doctors. Any such system would, in our judgment, lead to an extravagant expenditure of public funds on popular remedies and "medical extras," without obtaining, in

return for this enlarged "Medical Relief," greater regularity of life or more hygienic habits in the patient. With regard to institutional treatment, we gladly recognise the inestimable services rendered to the sick poor by the hospitals, sanatoria and convalescent homes supported by endowments or voluntary contributions. We approve of the use now made of these institutions by Public Authorities, and we think that many more suitable cases than at present might, on proper arrangements as to payment, be transferred from rate-maintained to voluntary institutions. But it is clear that such institutions provide only for a small fraction of the need, and that they leave untouched whole districts for some cases, and whole classes of cases everywhere, which there is no prospect of their being able or willing to undertake.

40. That the Medical Service of the Public Health Authorities, which now extensively treats disease, and actually maintains out of the rates a steadily increasing number of the sick poor, is based on principles more suited to a State Medical Service than that of the Poor Law. These principles, which lead, in practice as well as in theory, to searching out disease, securing the earliest possible diagnosis, taking hold of the incipient case, removing injurious conditions, applying specialised treatment, enforcing healthy surroundings and personal hygiene, and aiming always at preventing either recurrence or spread of disease—in contrast to the mere "relief" of the individual—furnish in fact the only proper basis for the expenditure of public money on a Medical Service.

41. That such compulsory powers of removal in extreme cases, as have been asked for, are analogous to those already exercised, with full public approval, by the Public Health Authorities; and that the proposed extension of such powers can properly be granted only to an authority proceeding on Public Health lines.

42. That we therefore agree with the responsible heads of all the four Medical Departments concerned—the Chief Medical Officer of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, the Medical Member of the Local Government Board for Scotland, the Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland, and the Medical Officer of the Board of Education—in ascribing the defects of the existing arrangements fundamentally to the lack of a unified Medical Service based on Public Health principles.

43. That in such a unified Medical Service, organised in districts of suitable extent, the existing Medical Officers of Health, Hospital Superintendents, School Doctors,* District Medical Officers, Workhouse and Dispensary Doctors and Medical Superintendents of Poor Law Infirmaries—the clinicians as well as the sanitarians—would all find appropriate spheres; that one among them being placed in administrative control who has developed most administrative capacity.

44. That we do not agree with the suggestion that the establishment of a unified Medical Service on Public Health lines necessarily involves the gratuitous provision of medical treatment to all applicants. It is clear that, in the public interest, neither the promptitude nor the efficiency of the medical treatment must be in any way limited by considerations of whether the patient can or should repay its cost. But we see no reason why Parliament should not embody in a clear and consistent code definite rules of Chargeability, either relating to the treatment of all diseases, or of all but those

* The question has been raised of the relation in which, with a unified Medical Service, the nascent medical activities of the Local Education Authorities should be placed. The question is one to be determined, in our opinion, by the dominant characteristic of the service. Within the limits of school age, the predominant service should be that of education; and the responsibility for the normal child should rest with the Local Education Authority. The case is different with the mentally defective child, for which the new Local Authority for the Mentally Defective will have the responsibility; and with the child withdrawn from school for definite illness, for which the Local Health Authority will be responsible. But when the child, without being so ill as to be withdrawn from school, requires the services of a doctor—as, for instance, in school medical inspection, in medical examination for scholarships, and in the treatment of minor ailments—we suggest that the Local Education Authority should, where the two Authorities are Committees of the same Council, not set up a medical staff of its own, but call in the Local Health Authority as its agent; just as it does already with regard to inspecting and certifying the drainage of the school building. On the other hand, where the children in the hospitals and sanatoria of the Local Health Authority are in need of education (a point now often neglected), we suggest that the Local Health Authority should not have its own teachers, but should call in the Local Education Authority as its agent. The case may be different where (as at present in England and Wales, outside the County Boroughs) the two Authorities are not Committees of the same Council, and do not serve the same areas. But even here arrangements could usually be made on similar lines.

specifically named; and of Recovery of the charge thus made from all patients who are able to pay. In our chapter on "The Scheme of Reform," we propose new machinery for automatically making and recovering all such charges that Parliament may from time to time impose.

45. That the existing provision for the Mentally Defective persons maintained in the United Kingdom at the public expense, probably approaching 200,000 in number, is far from satisfactory. CHAPTER VI. The Mentally Defective, pp. 891–898.

46. That the existence everywhere of rival Local Authorities maintaining the Mentally Defective, and the division of the supervision and control over their work among three (or even four) different Government Departments, no one of which has full responsibility, or combines in itself technical knowledge and financial control, involves —to use the emphatic words, formally given in evidence, of the Local Government Board for England and Wales—"*a large amount of unnecessary expenditure.*"

47. That the continued detention in the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland, and, to a lesser degree those of Scotland, of no fewer than 60,000 Mentally Defective persons, including not a few children, without education or ameliorative treatment, and herded indiscriminately with the sane, amounts to a public scandal.

48. That the practice of Ireland, where the inmates of the County Lunatic Asylums are wholly unconnected with the Poor Law, and are not stigmatised as paupers, should be adopted for Great Britain.

49. That we concur with the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland in thinking that all persons of unsound mind, whatever their mental state, and whatever their age, should be everywhere wholly removed from the Workhouses.

50. That, in the words of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, it is "the mental condition of these persons, and neither their poverty nor their crime" that "is the real ground of their claim for help from the State."

51. That we accordingly concur with that Commission in the view that all grades of the Mentally Defective (including the feeble-minded, the epileptics, the inebriates, the imbeciles, the lunatics and the idiots) should, at all ages, be wholly withdrawn from the charge of the Destitution Authorities, and from pauperism, as well as from the Local Education Authorities, and that the entire responsibility for their discovery, certification and appropriate treatment (whether institutional or domiciliary) should be entrusted in England, Wales and Ireland, to the County and County Borough Councils, acting by statutory Committees for the Mentally Defective, in which the present Asylums Committees would be merged, and in Scotland to the County Councils and principal Town Councils, from which the District Boards of Lunacy are (with the exception of six towns) selected.

52. That the whole duty of supervision and control of the action of the Local Authorities in respect of the Mentally Defective, including the administration of the Grants-in-Aid, should be concentrated, in England (including Wales), Scotland and Ireland respectively, in a single self-contained and fully equipped Division or Department, concerned with the Mentally Defective alone, however that Division or Department may be grouped with others under a Minister responsible to Parliament.

53. That the inclusion, under the Poor Law, in one and the same category, of the congeries of different classes known as "the aged and infirm" is fundamentally inconsistent with any effective administration. CHAPTER VII. The Aged and Infirm, pp. 899–927.

54. That the majority of Destitution Authorities of England, Wales and Ireland make no other provision for this aggregate of diverse individuals, of all ages and of different mental and physical characteristics, than the General Mixed Workhouse on the one hand and indiscriminate, inadequate and unconditional Out-Relief on the other—forms of Relief cruel to the deserving, and demoralisingly attractive to those who are depraved.

55. That some of the Parish Councils of Scotland and a few Boards of Guardians in England have honourably distinguished themselves by providing, for aged persons of deserving conduct, either comfortable quarters or pensions in their own homes; though in the English Unions this provision has been unduly restricted by irrelevant conditions as to prolonged residence in one district, or as to the existence of relations not legally liable to contribute.

56. That no corresponding classification has been made among persons permanently, though prematurely, incapacitated, so that even the most deserving of these are very harshly dealt with.

57. That it is a necessary preliminary of any effective reform to break up the present unscientific category of "the Aged and Infirm," and to deal separately with distinct classes according to the age and the mental and physical characteristics of the individuals concerned.

58. That we concur with the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded that all persons, whatever their age, who are certified to belong to one or other grades of the Mentally Defective—including not only the lunatics and idiots, but also the feeble-minded and those suffering from senile dementia—should be entirely removed from contact with any form of Poor Law and should be placed wholly in charge of the Local Authority for the Mentally Defective.

59. That the establishment by Parliament in 1908 of a National Pension Scheme affords the proper provision for the aged who satisfy the necessary conditions in respect to income, residence in the United Kingdom, and conduct; but that it will be requisite at the earliest possible date to lower the pensionable age to sixty-five, if not to sixty; and that it is neither practicable nor desirable to make the previous receipt of any form of public assistance a ground for disqualification.

60. That, as there must always be a certain proportion of persons technically disqualified for a National Pension, for whom public provision must be made, and for whom institutional provision is neither necessary nor desirable, the Pension Committees of the Local Authorities should be empowered to grant out of the Rates, according to conditions settled by their Councils and approved by the Central Authority, pensions to persons of decent life, not being less than sixty years of age, who are not eligible for a National Pension.

61. That, whilst we anticipate considerable growth of voluntary agencies for securing, by insurance, supplementary pensions and provision for premature invalidity, we cannot recommend that the State should enter into competition for the workers' weekly pence with the Friendly Societies and Trades Unions, by any scheme of compulsory insurance; which would, we think, provoke the strenuous opposition of these societies, if they were left outside the scheme; and which must inevitably entail a national guarantee of their solvency, and Governmental control, if they were to be made part of the compulsory scheme.

62. That the responsibility for making suitable provision, domiciliary or institutional, for the prematurely incapacitated and the helpless aged, together with the necessary institutional provision for the aged to whom pensions are refused, should be entrusted to the Local Health Authority.

63. That the Local Health Authority should be granted compulsory powers of removal and detention similar to those which it now possesses in respect to certain infectious diseases, with regard to all aged and infirm persons who are found to be endangering their own lives, or becoming through mental or physical incapacity to take care of themselves, a nuisance to the public.

64. That, whilst all the obligations to support aged and infirm relations that are imposed by law should be strictly enforced by the appointed officers, where there is proof of ability to pay, no attempt should be made by any public authority to extract contributions from persons not legally liable, by subjecting aged or infirm persons, or threatening to subject them, to any treatment other than that deemed most suitable to their state.

65. That the existing provisions of the law for charging to, and recovering from, particular individuals, the cost of various forms of public assistance afforded to them, to their dependents or to other persons for whom they are legally liable to contribute, are confused and inconsistent with each other, and are based on no discoverable principle.

CHAPTER VIII. Charge and Recovery by Local Authorities, pp. 928–947.

66. That the practice of the multifarious Local Authorities, with regard to charging or recovering the cost of public assistance, varies, for identical services rendered to persons in identical economic circumstances, from place to place, from case to case, and even from time to time in one and the same case, according to the idiosyncracies of the members who happen to be present at successive meetings.

67. That the confused and uncertain state of the law, and the haphazard conflict of practice, lead to hardship and oppression on the one hand, and to demoralising laxity on the other; the net result being that a serious loss of revenue is incurred, the law-abiding citizen paying, and the habitual "cadger" escaping scot-free; with the additional absurdity that the patient for whom the cost is repaid is often classed as a pauper, whilst other patients suffering from the same disease get wholly gratuitous treatment and retain their *status* of citizenship.

68. That we recommend that a Departmental Committee should be appointed to consider the whole question of what forms of public assistance can properly be made the subject of these "Special Assessments," and upon what persons these assessments should be made; in order that the law may be amended on some definite principle, and consolidated by Parliament into a single statute.

69. That the duty of determining what Special Assessments are due according to the law, and from whom, together with the decision whether the person liable is of sufficient ability to pay, and the duty of enforcing payment by proper legal process, ought to be entirely separated from the work of administering the public assistance; and it would be most suitably undertaken, for all the forms of public assistance afforded in a given district, by a salaried officer of adequate *status*, appointed by and acting under the County or County Borough Council, but unconnected with either the Health, Education, Mentally Defectives or Pension Committees.

70. That we wholly disapprove and condemn the practice of some Boards of Guardians in England of varying the treatment, or threatening to vary the treatment—offering the Workhouse, for instance, instead of Outdoor Relief—in respect of persons entitled to relief from them, with a view to extracting contributions from other persons, whether or not these are legally liable for the payment. We think that it should be definitely laid down that the kind and amount of relief or assistance granted in any case should be determined solely by a consideration of the circumstances of the applicant or patient himself, and ought never to be made dependent on whether somebody else fulfils, or does not fulfil, a legal or moral obligation.

71. That the existing Law of Settlement and Removal, wasteful in its cost and occasionally the cause of hardship to the poor, will, under the scheme of reform which we are proposing, automatically cease to be applicable; and all the statutes bearing on the subject should be definitely repealed.

CHAPTER IX. Settlement and Removal, pp. 948–952.

72. That the assumption of the greater part of the charge for the aged by the National Government, and the proposed transfer to a Government Department of the provision for all sections of the able-bodied, will, in a large proportion of cases, obviate the necessity for raising the question of eligibility of an applicant for public assistance in respect of his previous residence.

73. That the re-organisation of the various services now included in the Poor Law on the lines of a County or County Borough administration under the several committees concerned, with the County or County Borough as the unit for rating, will, in the great majority of cases, render it unnecessary to raise the question of past residence.

74. That with regard to services rendered by the Local Health Authority, it should be made a condition of the proposed Grant-in-Aid that no question of the past residence of any applicant should be raised, except only with regard to admission to

any specialised institution; and in the latter case admission may, if thought fit, be confined, except on terms to be prescribed, to persons who have resided in the district for one year—any other persons being, if thought fit, refused admission (except when such refusal would involve danger to life), and relegated to the General Infirmary, or removed, under proper conditions and safeguards, to the specialised institution of the County to which they belong.

75. That (beyond the retention of the power to contribute towards school accommodation for "boarded-out" children) there is no need for any question of past residence to be raised in connection with the work of the Local Education Committee; and this should be made a condition of the Government Grants.

76. That whatever provisions are made in this respect, there should be identical and reciprocal rights as between England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

CHAPTER X. Grants-in-Aid pp. 953–976.

77. That alike in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, the Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure of the Destitution Authorities are urgently in need of revision. In return for the sum of £3,500,000 annually, which is being contributed to Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils, the various Departments of the National Government, which are charged with the supervision and control of the Local Authorities, now obtain the very minimum of power to prevent either extravagance or inefficiency, or of influence towards a greater efficiency of service. The relief afforded to the local ratepayer is so unequal and so arbitrarily distributed as to amount to a gross injustice, which is all the more intolerable in that, especially in Ireland, the poorest districts and those most heavily burdened often obtain the least relief. And the conditions of the Grants, whilst seldom so framed as to cause a wise discrimination in favour of the more desirable methods of expenditure rather than others, sometimes result in positively encouraging extravagance, laxness and refusal to carry out the policy desired by the Legislature.

78. That, in our opinion, in view of the large share of the cost of providing for the aged in their homes now borne by the National Exchequer under the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, and of the share which we think it necessary for the National Government to take in the administration of the provision for the Unemployed and Able-bodied, we consider that no Grant-in-Aid should be made to the Local Authorities in respect of these two services.

79. That when all grades of the mentally defective are placed in the hands of the proposed new Local Authorities for the Mentally Defective, a Grant should be made to those Authorities in respect of all the persons satisfactorily provided for by them. It would be desirable that this Grant should be made on the same basis as that to the Local Health Authorities.

80. That a Grant-in-Aid should be made to the Local Health Authorities in respect of all the work now done by them, or to be hereafter entrusted to them.

81. That it is essential that all Grants-in-Aid should be administered by the particular Government Departments concerned with the particular services to be aided; and paid direct to the Local Authorities.

82. That all Grants should take the form of Grants-in-Aid of local services; that they should be conditional on the efficient performance of the services; that they should be governed by detailed regulations, and accompanied by systematic inspection and audit; and that they should be withheld, wholly or in part, on failure to comply with the law and the regulations in force.

83. That they might, for the convenience of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, be fixed in aggregate total, which might remain unchanged for a term of seven years; but that the allocation of the total among the several Local Authorities should be proportionate to their several expenditures from time to time on the services to be aided, subject to such expenditure being allowed by the Department to count for this purpose, as not being extravagant or improper. If not considered too complicated, the scale of distribution proposed by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, determined jointly by expenditure and by poverty of the district, might advantageously be adopted.

84. That the Local Government Board for England and Wales—and in a lesser degree the Local Government Boards for Scotland and Ireland—have failed to secure the national uniformity of policy with regard to the relief of the poor, which was aimed at in the establishment of a Central Authority upon the Report of 1834.

CHAPTER XI. Supervision and Control by the National Government, pp. 977–998.

85. That this failure has contributed to the extraordinary variations in Poor Law administration in different districts and to the present demoralised state of the majority of the Destitution Authorities.

86. That we attribute the failure, not to any shortcomings in the persons concerned, but to the obsolete character of the administrative machinery with which they have had to work; and notably to their not having been able to keep pace with the virtual transformation of the Destitution Authorities, from bodies set to "relieve destitution" under a deterrent Poor Law, into Local Authorities which, in response to public criticism, have started to provide, for this or that class of their patients, not deterrent relief, but curative and restorative treatment.

87. That the "Poor Law Division," with its General Inspectors, adhering to the old technique of a deterrent "relief of destitution," is unqualified to secure the efficient and economical administration of the different kinds of nurseries, schools, hospitals, asylums, custodial homes, farm colonies, and what not, that are now being run by the hypertrophied Destitution Authorities.

88. That each of the separate services administered by the Local Authorities—such as education, public health and care of the insane—imperatively requires the supervision, guidance and control of a distinct and self-contained Department or Division of a Department, having its own regulative orders, its own technically qualified Inspectorate, and its consistent line of policy; and that just as the Local Destitution Authorities should be broken up and merged in the several Committees of the County or County Borough Council dealing with the several services, so the Poor Law Division of the Local Government Board should be abolished, and its work distributed among the several Departments or Divisions of Departments to which may be entrusted the supervision and control over the Local Education Authorities, the Local Health Authorities, and the Local Authorities for the Mentally Defective, respectively.

89. That we cannot refrain from animadverting on the fact that, notwithstanding the enormous importance and steady expansion of the Public Health work of the Local Authorities, there exists, in England and Wales, no Department, and not even a distinct and self-contained Division of a Department, responsible for their supervision, guidance and control in this important service, and for maintaining in it a definite and consistent policy—the work of dealing with the questions as they arise being intermixed with the business of other services and scattered among five different Divisions of the Local Government Board; none of them having, under its control, any staff of inspectors for the systematic visitation of all the Local Health Authorities, or the administration of any Grant-in-Aid of the services of those Authorities; and none of them being charged with the duty of formulating and maintaining a consistent policy for the service as a whole.

Deferring our proposals with regard to the whole of the Able-bodied until Part II. of the present Report, we recommend:—

CHAPTER XII. Scheme of Reform, pp. 999–1031.

90. That, except the 43 Eliz., c. 2, the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 for England and Wales and the various Acts for the relief of the poor and the corresponding legislation for Scotland and Ireland, so far as they relate exclusively to Poor Relief, and including the Law of Settlement, should be repealed.

91. That the Boards of Guardians in England, Wales and Ireland, and (at any rate as far as Poor Law functions are concerned) the Parish Councils in Scotland, together with all combinations of these bodies, should be abolished.

92. That the property and liabilities, powers and duties of these Destitution Authorities should be transferred (subject to the necessary adjustments) to the County and County Borough Councils, strengthened in numbers as may be deemed necessary for their enlarged duties; with suitable modifications to provide for the special circumstances

of Scotland and Ireland, and for the cases of the Metropolitan Boroughs, the Non-County Boroughs over 10,000 in population, and the Urban Districts over 20,000 in population, on the plan that we have sketched out.

93. That the provision for the various classes of the non-able-bodied should be wholly separated from that to be made for the Able-bodied, whether these be Unemployed workmen, vagrants or able-bodied persons now in receipt of Poor Relief.

94. That the services at present administered by the Destitution Authorities (other than those connected with vagrants or the able-bodied)—that is to say, the provision for :—

(i.) Children of school age ;

(ii.) The sick and the permanently incapacitated, the infants under school age, and the aged needing institutional care ;

(iii.) The mentally defective of all grades and all ages ; and

(iv.) The aged to whom pensions are awarded—should be assumed, under the directions of the County and County Borough Councils, by :—

(i.) The Education Committee ;

(ii.) The Health Committee ;

(iii.) The Asylums Committee ; and

(iv.) The Pension Committee respectively.

95. That the several committees concerned should be authorised and required, under the directions of their Councils, to provide, under suitable conditions and safeguards to be embodied in Statutes and regulative Orders, for the several classes of persons committed to their charge, whatever treatment they may deem most appropriate to their condition ; being either institutional treatment, in the various specialised schools, hospitals, asylums, etc., under their charge ; or whenever judged preferable, domiciliary treatment, conjoined with the grant of Home Aliment where this is indispensably required.

96. That the law with regard to liability to pay for relief or treatment received, or to contribute towards the maintenance of dependents and other relations, should be embodied in a definite and consistent code, on the basis, in those services for which a charge should be made, of recovering the cost from all those who are really able to pay, and of exempting those who cannot properly do so.

97. That there should be established in each County and County Borough one or more officers, to be designated Registrars of Public Assistance, to be appointed by the County and County Borough Council, and to be charged with the threefold duty of :—

(i.) Keeping a Public Register of all cases in receipt of public assistance ;

(ii.) Assessing and recovering, according to the law of the land and the evidence as to sufficiency of ability to pay, whatever charges Parliament may decide to make for particular kinds of relief or treatment ; and

(iii.) Sanctioning the Grants of Home Aliment proposed by the Committees concerned with the treatment of the case.

98. That the Registrar of Public Assistance should have under his direction (and under the control of the General Purposes Committee of the County or County Borough Council) the necessary staff of Inquiry and Recovery Officers, and a local Receiving House, for the strictly temporary accommodation of non-able-bodied persons found in need, and not as yet dealt with by the Committees concerned.

99. That the present national subventions in aid of the Destitution Authorities should be replaced by Grants-in-Aid of the expenditure on the whole of the services to be administered by the Health Committees of the County and County Borough Councils, subject to the administration of these services up to, at any rate, a National Minimum of Efficiency ; the aggregate amount of such Grants-in-Aid for the United Kingdom and their allocation as between England (including Wales), Scotland and Ireland being

fixed and subject to revision only every seven years; but the distribution of this total among the several County and County Borough Councils being made, according to the plan we have specified, in proportion to their several gross expenditures on these services; and at the same time in such a proportion to the poverty of their districts as will enable the National Minimum of Efficiency to be everywhere attained without anywhere exceeding the Standard Average Rate.

100. That the Local Authorities in England and Wales, in respect of the services administered by each Committee, be placed under the supervision of a single Department or Division of a Department of the National Government, which shall itself administer the Grants-in-Aid of its particular services, issue its own regulative Orders, and have its own technically qualified Inspectors: the Education Committees in England and Wales being thus responsible, for the efficiency of all their services, to the Board of Education; the Mentally Defectives (or Asylums) Committees to the proposed Board of Control, in succession to the Lunacy Commissioners; the Pension Committees to whatever Department is deputed to take charge of the administration of the Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908; and the Health Committees, with regard to all their enlarged range of functions, to a separately organised and self-contained Public Health Department, whether this is organised as a separate Division of the Local Government Board or made a distinct Department. The determination of appeals from the decisions of the Registrar of Public Assistance, and whatever national supervision may be exercised over the Grant of Home Aliment to the Non-Able-bodied, should, we suggest, be entrusted to another separately organised and self-contained Department or Division of a Department, which, if it can be dissociated from the Local Government Board, might, with advantage, be placed, along with the Department or Division dealing with Audit, Loans and Local Finance generally, in close connection with the Treasury.

101. That a temporary Executive Commission be appointed to adjust areas, boundaries, assets and liabilities; and to allocate buildings and officers among the future Local Authorities.

Part II.—The Destitution of the Able-bodied.

CHAPTER I. The Able-bodied under the Poor Law, pp. 1036–1094.

1. That instead of the National Uniformity of policy in dealing with the Able-bodied, upon which the Report of 1834 laid so much stress, we find at the present time, among the different Destitution Authorities of the United Kingdom, five different methods of treatment being simultaneously applied.

2. That two of these methods—that of maintenance in a General Mixed Workhouse, and that of unconditional and inadequate Outdoor Relief—in spite of almost universal condemnation from 1834 down to the present day, a condemnation in which we concur, are still extensively persisted in; with the effect of perpetually increasing the area and the demoralisation of Able-bodied Pauperism.

3. That we have been surprised to discover that the number of Able-bodied men in health who, in England and Wales, in the course of each year, receive temporary Outdoor Relief, *without even any task of work*, is very large—numbering apparently between 30,000 and 40,000; some of this relief being given on account of "sudden or urgent necessity," but most of it being given as exceptions to the Orders, and merely reported week by week to the Local Government Board for its approval.

4. That the number of *Able-bodied men in health* now in the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland is large—probably considerably in excess of 10,000—and that there are ominous signs that, in the large towns, the number of sturdy Able-bodied men subjected to these demoralising conditions is steadily increasing.

5. That we have definitely ascertained that—contrary to the common opinion, and even in violation of the law—the huge Poorhouses of the populous towns of Scotland also contain large, and apparently increasing, numbers of Able-bodied men in health, of exactly the same type as the inmates of the General Mixed Workhouses of England, Wales and Ireland.

6. That the three specialised Poor Law methods of dealing with the Able-bodied—the Outdoor Labour Test, the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, and the Casual Ward—all, in our opinion, fail to provide treatment appropriate to any section of the Able-bodied, and are inherently incapable of being made to do so. If these institutions are lax (as is usually the case), they become the resort of wastrels and "cadgers," of the "work-shy" and the dissolute, to whom their demoralising slackness and promiscuity is positively an attraction. To plunge a respectable able-bodied man or woman, in the crisis of utter destitution, into the midst of such persons is, at once, a torture and an almost inevitable degradation. If, on the other hand, the Outdoor Labour Test, the Able-bodied Test Workhouse, and the Casual Ward are made strict in their discipline and prison-like in their regimen, they are shunned by the vagabond and worthless class of "the occasional poor"; who thereupon contrive, to the great annoyance, cost and danger of the public, to exist outside them. Their penal severity then falls only on such comparatively decent men as have become too debilitated and too incompetent to gain even the barest living outside; and these, though finding the regimen unendurable, are driven in again and again by sheer starvation. To subject such men to a brutalising regimen and penal severities is useless and inhuman; and it ought to be (if it is not already) contrary to law.

7. That by its provision of mere subsistence, available just when demanded, the Poor Law treatment of the Able-bodied, by any of the five methods at present in use, actually facilitates parasitic methods of existence, intermittent and irregular effort, and casual employment. In our opinion, this evil influence of the Destitution Authorities in the Metropolis and all the great ports—to some extent, indeed, in all the towns—is to-day spreading demoralisation and manufacturing pauperism on a large scale.

8. That it appears to us open to grave objection that the Destitution Authorities should have been allowed to exercise powers of compulsory detention and of penal discipline, such as those now enforced in the Able-bodied Test Workhouse and the Casual Ward. For the exercise of such powers, we do not think that either the members of a Board of Guardians, or its officers, without legal training, without any prescribed procedure, without appeal and without even a hearing of the person accused, are at all fitted. Nor do we consider that a Destitution Authority, or any staff that it is likely to engage, has the requisite knowledge or the requisite experience to enable it properly to administer penal discipline to those who might, in due form, have been sentenced to submit to it. The very use of compulsory detention and penal discipline by a Destitution Authority tends to defeat itself, as those for whom the rigorous measures were intended will, however destitute, certainly avoid applying for admission. On all these grounds, we must unreservedly condemn the proposal that extended powers of compulsory detention of adult Able-bodied persons should be granted to any Poor Law Authority, however constituted. Any such proposal would, in our opinion, arouse the strongest resentment, and would meet with determined opposition in the House of Commons.

9. That any attempt, by a repeal of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, to force back into the Poor Law those sections of the Able-bodied who are now relieved by the Distress Committees, would be socially disastrous and politically impracticable. On the contrary, it is, in our judgment, of the highest importance to complete without delay the process begun under that Act, and to remove the remaining sections of the Able-bodied, once for all, from any connection with the Local Authorities dealing with the Children, the Sick, the Mentally Defective, and the Aged and Infirm. It is, in our opinion, essential that whatever provision the community may decide to make for Able-bodied persons in distress should be administered by an Authority having to deal with all the Able-bodied and with the Able-bodied alone; and dealing with them, not merely at the crisis of destitution, but in relation to the cause and character of their distress, and the means to be taken for its cure. For all sections of the Able-bodied the Poor Law, alike in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, is, in our judgment, intellectually bankrupt.

CHAPTER II. The Able bodied under Voluntary Agencies, pp. 1095–1101.

10. That, apart from other considerations, the maintenance of a penal Poor Law for the Able-bodied has, in the large towns, been rendered impossible by the development of extensive Voluntary Agencies which refuse to allow the destitute to starve, or the homeless to remain at night without shelter.

11. That so long as the public organisation for dealing with the Able-bodied in distress is so directed as to result in large numbers of persons remaining in want of the actual necessaries of life, on whatever excuse, it is neither practicable nor desirable to prevent Voluntary Agencies from relieving such persons.

12. That the relief thus given by means of Shelters and the distribution of food—whilst it can hardly be made the subject of blame or reproach so long as people are starving and homeless—is almost wholly useless for permanently benefiting the persons relieved; and has, moreover, many objectionable characteristics.

13. That whilst some of the Labour Homes and Rural Colonies present good features, and attain a certain measure of success, they are, in the absence of any Detention Colony for the "work-shy," and of any adequate outlet for those who have been regenerated, unable to deal with more than a tiny fraction of the problem.

14. That the co-existence, in the great centres of population, of a penal Poor Law for the Able-bodied, with extensive, indiscriminate, unconditional and inadequate relief by Voluntary Agencies, produces so much undeserved suffering on the one hand, and so much degradation of character and general demoralisation on the other, as to make it urgently necessary for the whole problem of Able-bodied Destitution to be systematically dealt with by the National Government.

15. That as compared with the methods of relieving the Unemployed under the Poor Law, the experience of the policy— inaugurated by Mr. Chamberlain's Circular of 1886, and definitely confirmed by the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905—of withdrawing the Unemployed from the Poor Law, has proved full of valuable suggestion and promise.

CHAPTER III. The Able-bodied under the Unemployed Workmen Act, pp. 1102–1130.

16. That the precedent of the Lancashire Cotton Famine suggests that Public Works, carried on under specialised organisation for a limited period, with the object of employing particular classes of persons deprived of definite situations by some accidental or temporary cessation of their regular employment, and practically certain to resume their ordinary occupations, may prove the easiest method of relieving their transient destitution.

17. That twenty years' experience has proved that it is not practicable in ordinary times to disentangle these cases from those of respectable men who are chronically Unemployed or Under-employed; with the result that any work at wages afforded by Local Authorities as a method of providing for the Unemployed tends to become chronic, and instead of being confined to the men thrown out of definite situations by the accidental and temporary dislocation of industry, it is, in practice, participated in by those who are chronically Unemployed or Under-employed, to an even greater extent than by those for whom it was intended.

18. That whilst the Unemployed Workmen Act has enabled a certain number of respectable workmen to tide over temporary distress without recourse to the Poor Law, it has demonstrated that, as a method for providing for chronic Unemployment or Under-employment, the provision of work at wages by Local Authorities affords no remedy and tends even to intensify the evil.

19. That the work at wages provided by Local Authorities, is, in practice, either diverted from the ordinary employees of the Local Authorities, or else abstracted from what would otherwise have gone to the regular employees of contractors for public works; with the result, in either case, of creating, sooner or later, as much Unemployment as it relieves, and of thus throwing the cost of relieving the distress upon other wage-earners.

20. That work at wages, given to the Unemployed by Local Authorities for a few days or a few weeks at a time, tends, like the opening of a Labour Yard by the Board of Guardians, actually to promote the disastrous Under-employment characteristic of some industries, and positively encourages employers and employed to acquiesce in intermittent employment and casual jobs, instead of regular work at definite weekly wages.

21. That the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, whilst not excluding temporary Relief Works, contemplated and provided also for other experiments in providing for the Unemployed, which have unfortunately not been adequately put into operation by the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively; or by the Local Authorities.

22. That one of the most promising of these experiments—the provision of Rural Colonies where the Unemployed could be trained with a view to their permanent re-establishment as self-supporting citizens, whether on the land or otherwise, in England or elsewhere—has been tried at the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony, with a considerable measure of success. Unfortunately, as it seems to us, the Local Government Board for England and Wales, now insists on regarding this Farm Colony only as a means of affording temporary *relief* and not as a means of training for future self-support; and refuses to permit any further expenditure for the purpose of permanently establishing even those men who have been selected and trained.

23. That another valuable provision of the Unemployed Workmen Act was that requiring the establishment, quite apart from the existence of distress from Unemployment, of a complete network of Labour Exchanges, covering the whole of the United Kingdom. Wherever a Distress Committee was not established, the Act expressly required the Council of every County and County Borough to appoint a Special Committee to investigate the conditions of the labour market by means of Labour Exchanges, and to establish or assist such Exchanges within its area. Such a network of Labour Exchanges, covering the whole Kingdom, would have afforded, as the experience of the Metropolitan Exchanges now demonstrates, valuable information, both to Unemployed workmen and to Local Authorities dealing with the problem. Unfortunately, this provision of the Act, though, as regards England and Wales, mandatory in its terms, appears to have been ignored by the Local Government Boards for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and has accordingly, with the exception of London and three places in Scotland, not been put in operation.

24. That in consequence of this failure to establish the complete network of Labour Exchanges contemplated by the Unemployed Workmen Act, Local Authorities have been greatly hampered in their attempts to put into operation the other provisions of the Act. Thus, the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony has remained isolated; and great difficulties have been experienced in discovering suitable situations in other parts of England for the men there trained for agricultural pursuits. Moreover, the provision enabling Local Authorities to pay the expenses of removing men to places where situations had been found for them, has, in the lack of machinery for discovering such situations within the United Kingdom, been almost exclusively used for the purpose of conveying them to Canada.

25. That notwithstanding this failure to put the Unemployed Workmen Act in operation in the way that was intended, and the manifold shortcomings of the Act itself, we are of opinion that (as compared with the alternative of throwing the Unemployed back into the Poor Law), it has proved of considerable value; and that it should certainly be continued in force until a more adequate scheme of dealing with the grave social problem of Unemployment, otherwise than under the Poor Law, has been placed upon the Statute Book.

CHAPTER IV. The Distress from Unemployment as it exists to-day, pp. 1131–1178.

26. That distress from want of employment, though periodically aggravated by depression of trade, is a constant feature of industry and commerce as at present administered; and that the mass of men, women and children suffering from the privation due to this Unemployment in the United Kingdom amounts, at the best of times, to hundreds of thousands, whilst in years of trade depression they must exceed a million in number.

27. That this misery has no redeeming feature. It does not, like the temporary hardships of work or adventure, produce in those capable of responding to the stimulus, greater strength, energy, endurance, fortitude or initiative. On the contrary, the enforced idleness and prolonged privation characteristic of Unemployment have, on both the strong man and the weak, on the man of character and conduct and on the dissolute, a gravely deteriorating effect on body and mind, on muscle and will. The

magnitude of the loss thus caused to the nation, first in the millions of days of enforced idleness of productive labourers, and secondly in the degradation and deterioration of character and physique—whether or not it is increasing—can scarcely be exaggerated.

28. That men in distress from want of employment approximate to one or other of four distinct types, requiring, as we have described, distinct treatment; namely, the Men from Permanent Situations, the Men of Discontinuous Employment, the Under-employed and the Unemployable.

29. That what is needed for the Men from Permanent Situations is some prompt and gratuitous machinery for discovering what openings exist, anywhere in the United Kingdom, for their particular kind of service; or for ascertaining with certainty that no such openings exist; with suitable provision, where individual saving does not suffice, for the maintenance of themselves and their households whilst awaiting re-employment. Both the machinery and the provision are at present afforded, in some industries, by Trade Union "Vacant Books" and Trade Union Insurance. This, however, does not meet the need of the large numbers of men in occupations for which no Trade Union exists, or in which no machinery for reporting vacancies and no insurance against Unemployment have been organised. Nor does it meet the cases, unhappily always occurring in one industry or another, of men whose occupation is being taken from them by the adoption of new processes or new machinery, without any effective opportunity being afforded to them of training themselves to new means of livelihood.

30. That for the Men of Discontinuous Employment the same prompt and gratuitous machinery for discovering what openings exist, anywhere in the United Kingdom, is required, not only for individuals exceptionally Unemployed, but for the entire class, at all times; in order to prevent the constant "leakage" of time between job and job, and to obviate the demoralising aimless search for work, whether over any one great urban aggregation, or by means of wandering from town to town. The same machinery becomes imperative, in times of bad trade, in order to ascertain with certainty that no opportunity of employment exists. Without some such machinery, experience shows that Insurance against Unemployment breaks down, owing to the excessive amount of "time lost" between jobs, and the impossibility of securing that every claimant has done his best to get work.

31. That of all the forms of Unemployment, that which we have termed Under-employment, extending, as it does, to many hundreds of thousands of workers, and to their whole lives, is by far the worst in its evil effects; and that it is this system of chronic Under-employment which is above all other causes responsible for the perpetual manufacture of paupers that is going on; and which makes the task of the Distress Committees in dealing with the Unemployed of other types—such as the Men from Permanent Situations, or the Men of Discontinuous Employment—hopelessly impracticable.

32. That we have been unable to escape from the conclusion that, owing to various causes, there has accumulated, in all the ports, and indeed in all the large towns of the United Kingdom, an actual surplus of workmen, there being more than are required to do the work in these towns even in times of brisk trade; this surplus showing itself in the existence of the Stagnant Pools of Labour that we have described, and in the chronic Under-employment of tens of thousands of men at all seasons and in all years.

33. That we have been struck by the fact that this chronic Under-employment of men is coincident with the employment in factories and workshops, or on work taken out to be done at home, of a large number of mothers of young children who are thereby deprived of maternal care; with an ever-growing demand for boy-labour of an uneducational kind; and actually with a positive increase in the number of "half-timers" (children in factories below the age exempting them from attendance at school). Thus we have, in increasing numbers (though whether or not in increasing proportion is not clear) men degenerating through enforced Unemployment or chronic Under-employment into parasitic Unemployables; and the burden of industrial work cast on pregnant women, nursing mothers and immature youths.

34. That the task of dealing with Unemployment is altogether beyond the capacity of Authorities having jurisdiction over particular areas; and can be undertaken successfully only by a Department of the National Government.

35. That the experience of the Poor Law in dealing with destitute able-bodied men and their dependents; of the Distress Committees in providing for labourers out of employment; of the Police in attempting to suppress Vagrancy and "sleeping-out"; of the Prison Commissioners in having to accommodate in gaol large numbers of men undergoing short sentences for offences of this nature; of the Education and Public Health Authorities in feeding and medically treating the necessitous dependents of able-bodied men; and of the Voluntary Agencies dealing with the "houseless poor" of great cities, all alike prove that every attempt to deal only with this or that section of the Able-bodied and Unemployed class is liable to be rendered nugatory by the neglect to deal simultaneously with the other sections of men in distress, or claiming to be in distress, from want of employment. That accordingly, in our judgment, no successful dealing with the problem is possible unless provision is simultaneously made in ways suited to their several needs and deserts for all the various sections of the Unemployed by one and the same Authority.

CHAPTER V. Proposals for Reform, pp. 1179–1217.

36. That the duty of so organising the National Labour Market as to prevent or to minimise Unemployment should be placed upon a Minister responsible to Parliament, who might be designated the Minister for Labour.

37. That the Ministry of Labour should include six distinct and separately organised Divisions, each with its own Assistant Secretary; namely, the National Labour Exchange, the Trade Insurance Division, the Maintenance and Training Division, the Industrial Regulation Division, the Emigration and Immigration Division, and the Statistical Division.

38. That the function of the National Labour Exchange should be, not only (*a*) to ascertain and report the surplus or shortage of labour of particular kinds, at particular places; and (*b*) to diminish the time and energy now spent in looking for work, and the consequent "leakage" between jobs; but also (*c*) so to "dovetail" casual and seasonal employments as to arrange for practical continuity of work for those now chronically Under-employed. That whilst resort to the National Labour Exchange might be optional for employers filling situations of at least a month's duration, it should (following the precedent of the Labour Exchange for seamen already conducted by the Board of Trade in the Mercantile Marine Offices) be made legally compulsory in certain scheduled trades in which excessive Discontinuity of Employment prevails; and especially for the engagement of Casual Labour.

39. That in our opinion no effective steps can be taken towards the "Decasualisation of Casual Labour," and the Suppression of Under-employment, without simultaneously taking action to ensure the immediate absorption, or else to provide the full and honourable maintenance at the public expense, of the surplus of labourers that will thereby stand revealed.

40. That, in order to secure proper industrial training for the youth of the nation, an amendment of the Factory Acts is urgently required to provide that no child should be employed at all below the age of fifteen; that no young person under eighteen should be employed for more than thirty hours per week; and that all young persons so employed should be required to attend for thirty hours per week at suitable Trade Schools to be maintained by the Local Education Authorities.

41. That the terms of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1893, should be so amended as to enable the Minister of Labour to require the prompt reduction of the hours of duty of railway, tramway and omnibus workers, if not to forty-eight, at any rate to not more than sixty in any one week as a maximum.

42. That all mothers having the charge of young children, and in receipt, by themselves or their husbands, of any form of Public Assistance, should receive enough for the full maintenance of the family; and that it should then be made a condition of such assistance that the mother should devote herself to the care of her children, without seeking industrial employment.

43. That we recommend these reforms for their own sake, but it is an additional advantage that they (and especially the Halving of Boy Labour) would permit the immediate addition to the number of men in employment equal to a large proportion of those who are now Unemployed or Under-employed.

44. That in order to meet the periodically recurrent general depressions of Trade the Government should take advantage of there being at these periods as much Unemployment of capital as there is Unemployment of labour; that it should definitely undertake, as far as practicable, the Regularisation of the National Demand for Labour; and that it should, for this purpose, and to the extent of at least £4,000,000 a year, arrange a portion of the ordinary work required by each Department on a Ten Years' Programme; £40,000,000 worth of work for the decade being then put in hand, not by equal annual instalments, but exclusively in the lean years of the trade cycle; being paid for out of loans for short terms raised as they are required, and being executed with the best available labour, at Standard Rates, *engaged in the ordinary way.*

45. That in this Ten Years' Programme there should be included works of Afforestation, Coast Protection and Land Reclamation; to be carried out by the Board of Agriculture exclusively in the lean years of the trade cycle; *by the most suitable labour obtainable, taken on in the ordinary way, at* the rates locally current for the work, and paid for out of loans raised as required.

46. That the statistical and other evidence indicates that, by such measures as the above, the greater part of the fluctuations in the aggregate volume of employment can be obviated; and the bulk of the surplus labour manifesting itself in chronic Under-employment can be immediately absorbed, leaving at all times only a relatively small residuum of men who are, for various reasons, in distress from want of work.

47. That with a lessened Discontinuity of Employment, and the Suppression of Under-employment, the provision of Out-of-Work Benefit by Trade Unions would become practicable over a much greater range of industry than at present; and its extension should, as the best form of insurance against Unemployment, receive Government encouragement and support. That in view of its probable adverse effect on Trade Union membership and organisation, we are unable to recommend the establishment of any plan of Government or compulsory Insurance against Unemployment. That we recommend, however, that, following the precedents set in several foreign countries, a Government subvention not exceeding one-half of the sum actually paid in the last preceding year as Out-of-Work Benefit should be offered to Trade Unions or other societies providing such Benefit, in order to enable the necessary weekly contributions to be brought within the means of a larger proportion of the wage-earners.

48. That for the ultimate residuum of men in distress from want of employment, who may be expected to remain, after the measures now recommended have been put in operation, we recommend that Maintenance should be freely provided, without disfranchisement, on condition that they submit themselves to the physical and mental training that they may prove to require. That it should be the function of the Maintenance and Training Division of the Ministry of Labour to establish and maintain Receiving Offices in the various centres of population, at which able-bodied men in distress could apply for assistance, and at which they would be medically examined and have their faculties tested in order to discover in what way they could be improved by training. They would then be assigned either to suitable Day Training Depots or residential Farm Colonies, where their whole working time would be absorbed in such varied beneficial training of body and mind as they proved capable of; their wives and families being, meanwhile, provided with adequate Home Aliment.

49. That no applicant for employment or man out of work need be legally required to register at the National Labour Exchange, or to attend or remain in any Training Establishment, so long as he abstained from crime (including Vagrancy and Mendicity), and maintained himself and his family without receiving or needing Public Assistance in any form; but that such registration, and, if required, such attendance, should be legally enforced on all men who fail to fulfil any of their social obligations, or are found houseless, or requiring Public Assistance for themselves or their families.

50. That the Maintenance and Training Division should also establish one or more Detention Colonies, of a reformatory type, to which men would be committed by the Magistrates, and compulsorily detained and kept to work under discipline, upon conviction of any such offences as Vagrancy, Mendicity, neglect to maintain family or to apply for Public Assistance for their maintenance if destitute, repeated recalcitrancy or breach of discipline in a Training Establishment, etc.

51. That for able-bodied women, without husband or dependent children, who may be found in distress from want of employment, there should be exactly the same sort of provision as for men. That for widows or other mothers in distress, having the care of young children, residing in homes not below the National Minimum of sanitation, and being themselves not adjudged unworthy to have children entrusted to them, there should be granted adequate Home Aliment on condition of their devoting their whole time and energy to the care of the children. That for the childless wives of able-bodied men in attendance at a Training Establishment, adequate Home Aliment be granted, conditional on their devoting their time to such further training in Domestic Economy as may be prescribed for them.

52. That upon the establishment of the Ministry of Labour, and the setting to work of its new organisation, the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 should cease to apply; and the Local Authorities should be relieved of all responsibilities with regard to the Able-bodied and the Unemployed.

53. That upon the necessary legislation being passed, a small Executive Commission be empowered to effect the necessary transfer to the Ministry of Labour of the functions with regard to the Able-bodied and the Unemployed at present performed by the Poor Law Authorities and the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act; and to make, as from the Appointed Day, all necessary transfers and adjustments of buildings and officers, Farm Colonies and Labour Exchanges, assets and liabilities.

(Signed) H. RUSSELL WAKEFIELD.
FRANCIS CHANDLER.
GEORGE LANSBURY.
BEATRICE WEBB.

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