

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POOR LAWS AND RELIEF OF DISTRESS.

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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'Connor (commonly called the O'Connor 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'Connor Don.