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PART VI.

DISTRESS DUE TO UNEMPLOYMENT.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page.
CHAPTER 1.—Social and Industrial Developments since 1834	- 304
Section (1) Population and Wealth	- 304
„ (2) Industries	- 305
„ (3) Agriculture	- 306
„ (4) Movement of Wages	- 307
„ (5) Trade Unionism	- 310
„ (6) Industrial Combinations	- 314
„ (7) The Co-operative Movement	- 315
„ (8) Municipal Industries	- 317
„ (9) Friendly Societies	- 318
„ (10) Factory Legislation	- 318
„ (11) Education	- 321
„ (12) The Position of Women and Juveniles	- 322
„ (13) Boy Labour	- 325
„ (14) Trade Cycles	- 328
„ (15) The New Problem—Chronic Under-Employment	- 334
„ (16) The Effect of Machinery	- 341
„ (17) Displacement of Labour—Replies of Employers	- 343
„ (18) Mobility of Labour	- 347
„ (19) Apprenticeship and Technical Training	- 348
„ (20) Country-bred Men in Large Towns	- 351
„ (21) Dock Labour	- 352
„ (22) Conclusions	- 359
CHAPTER 2.—The New Problems	- 360
CHAPTER 3.—Criticism of Existing Methods of Relief	- 364
Section (1) The Poor Law	- 364
„ (2) Charity	- 366
„ (3) Municipal Relief Works	- 377
„ (4) The Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905	- 383
CHAPTER 4.—Proposals	- 396
Section (1) Permanent Preventive Measures of a Social or Industrial Character	- 396
(a) Labour Exchanges	- 396
(b) Intermittent or Irregular Employment, and some Suggested Remedies	- 406
(c) Insurance against Unemployment	- 412
„ (2) The Permanent System of Public Assistance for the Able-bodied	- 422
(a) Class I.—Those who Require Temporary Maintenance with Work	- 424
(b) Class II.—Those who Require for a Longer Period Maintenance with Work and Training	- 426
(c) Class III.—Those who Require Detention and Discipline	- 426
(d) The Methods of Assistance	- 427
(e) Industrial or Agricultural Institutions	- 427
(f) Labour Colonies	- 428
(g) Detention Colonies	- 431
(h) Migration and Emigration	- 432
(i) Political Disqualifications on account of Public Assistance	- 433
„ (3) Transitional Measures	- 434
Analysis of Recommendations and Suggestions	- 440

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 $7\frac{1}{2}$ 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.

* *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).

* *Economic Inquiries and Studies*, Vol. I., p. 332.

† *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

* 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, book-binding, 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.§

* 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 per centage 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. VII., 82805, 82812.)

61. (3) Trade Unionism has declared bluntly and unmistakably for the solidarity of the working classes as against the 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.

* *Vide passim* Evidence of Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., Vol. VIII., 8276

† 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 Squirr, 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 employes 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 employes 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 employes; 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 employes 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

* 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 employes 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."*

78a. 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 in 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.

* 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-hols (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.

* 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 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.

* 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.

* 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.§

* “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, &c. 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

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
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- 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
-

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 un-represented 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).)

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- 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.

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- 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.²

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.”†

* 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. Casualty 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.”

* 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 printing 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

* "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 employes. 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. 2864, 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.

* "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, cavalymen 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.

203. 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. 82903, 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.

* 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 industrial system 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 twenty 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, if 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.

* 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

* 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., Ana. 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.

* 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. VII.)

“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 mechanics 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.

* 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 of 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.

* 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 is 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.

* 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.

* Evidence, Vol. IX., 98014–15.

† 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.

(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., paras. 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.

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 accepted a division into skilled and unskilled¹; with a further sub-division of the unskilled, viz. (1) the upper grade; and (2) the lower grade.²

Comparative condition of various grades of labour.

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 employe, 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.

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 pauperism⁶, 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 Report⁸ 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

Relation of casual labour to pauperism and unemployment.

315. This striking unanimity among our Spécial 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

¹ Jackson and Pringle's Report, App. F. Jenkin Jones, Vol. VIII., App. xlv. (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.

¹ Report of Poor Law Commission, 1832, App. A, Part I., pp. 916-7, and Vol. II., App. 32, p. 108^a
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 1836, Part II., 2^o, 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 Acts³ and the Trade Union standard⁴ 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.

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. iv. (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 workhouse—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.

* 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); Maedonald, 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. 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.

330. Having dealt with the normal Poor Law methods of relieving the able-bodied, The labour yard. 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

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 Unconditional outdoor relief. 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.

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 (3a); Millward, 18749; Ford, 39776 (29); ³ Millward, 18749; Lockwood, 4086, 13236a, 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, 43389 (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 (4a). 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 of the 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

¹ Report of Select Committee on Poor Relief, 1864 (155), 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.

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

Charity and the
Lancashire Cotton
Famine.

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. 2½d. 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 1863⁶, 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

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.)

Charity and the
Lancashire Cotton
Famine.

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

* "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 supplemented full time wages in cases where the material 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, see 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.

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.

* "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.

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?

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. 103. 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.

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 Salvation Army. 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:—

"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 less of character, illness,

¹ Toynbee, 30621 (14b). 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; Korwin, 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. 92.

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

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.

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 independence⁴; 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

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 "com-
mercial" 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

¹ Sixteenth Annual Report Poor Law Board, 1863-4, p. 15. ² *Ibid*, p. 23. 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, p. 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

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 Pringle⁵ 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:—

"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 work 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.

¹Lockwood, 13372. ²App. to Jackson and Pringle's Report, Part III. ³Dawson, Vol. IX., App. xc. (2).
⁴Mr. Whitmore's Return, H.C., 193-1905. ⁵Jackson and Pringle's Report, pp. 45-7. ⁶*Ibid.*, p. 89.
⁷*Ibid.*, p. 45. 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 witnesses² 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

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

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 Ham⁵ 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:—

“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:—

“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. These 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

* 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

* One of these Committees, that of Northfleet, was dissolved in August, 1907.

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

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. Classes of persons who can be assisted under the Act.

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

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

Methods of assisting the Unemployed under the Act.

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 workman irrespective of any other qualification.

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 :—

Provision of work.

(1.) That any such work must be of actual and substantial utility ;¹

(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 defrayed⁶ 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

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, 77733.

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.

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

¹ 15 Edw. VII., c. 18, Sec. 1 (3). ² Balfour, 77825, 77828; see also Maynard, 78383. ³ Lerner, 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). ⁷ Gardner, 92112 (11, 12, 14), 92125, 92130-2, 92367-70; Somers, 82378-88. ⁸ Beveridge, 77831 (8). ⁹ Bailward, 78720, 78793. ¹⁰ Humphreys, 79408 (6), 79418. ¹¹ Morris, 79034 (4). ¹² 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.

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, para. 61-2. ⁹ Nelson, Vol. VIII., App. lix. (4), See also Balfour, 77828-9. ¹⁰ Lerner,
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.

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 Farnbridge 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

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 other 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

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.

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 Walsall⁵ and elsewhere, the unemployed have been given "spells" of three days' work, at Bradford⁶ four days, at Newcastle⁷ 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

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. xxxiii. (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 Bournemouth⁴ 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 inefficient. 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 effort 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.

* 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, 98850.

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.

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 to assist 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 employment¹ 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.

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. xlv. (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 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. 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,

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 62439 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). ⁴ Humphreys, 79408 (26-27). ⁵ Beveridge, 77940, 78174. ⁶ Fair, 81464; 1-33, 81522 ⁷ Fair, 81464 2981506, 81619. ⁸ 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.

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 Labour exchanges in Germany.

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

* 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

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. ⁷ Beveridge, 78163. Bell, 86084 (8), 86118, 86176. Ward, 83744, 83767. Crooks, 91423. Stepney 79619 (13). Fair, 81621. Smith, 86777. Crowther, 90661. Wood, 85855. ⁸ 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.

¹ Beveridge, 78168.
Beveridge, 77964.
³ Beveridge, 77833 (10).

² Beveridge, 78169-71.
⁶ Beveridge, 77833 (16).
⁹ Sidney Webb, 93339.

Fair, 81491.
Cf. Tawney, 96610 (25).

⁴ Wood, 85753, 85863.
⁷ Beveridge, 77936.

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 Wurtemberg, 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

* 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. Shaan, 83857 (22). Wright, 85068. Ward, 83583. Owen, 86001. Hamilton and Jones, 94020. ⁴ Fordham, 81372. Allen, Vol. VIII., App. ii., (8.). Fair, 81464 (25). (I. 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).

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.

* 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 factories⁶ 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

¹ Casey, 86466 (2b); Rouse, Vol. VIII., App. lxxviii. (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.

Labour.

544. Professor Sadler mentions, as an illustration of the "economic results of un-educative 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 casualty, 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 casualty 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

* 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 seq.*). 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.

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:—

Defects in public elementary education.

“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.

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.

Decline of home influence.

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.

Need of physical training.

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

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 Pringle³ 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.

* 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.⁶ 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 un-
employment.

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 *Oberbürgermeister* 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, 77463 (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. lxxv. (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 (*Gelegenheitsarbeiter*) 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, 4½d. 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 1½s., viz., 2s. a day for the first twenty days, and 1s. a day for a further 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."

(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 be fixed 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. 4½d. or less	1½d.	1s. 5½d.
Over 2s. 4½d. 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 is not 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."

575. The great difficulty in regard to any scheme of General Insurance against un-employment 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

* 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.

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.

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

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.

* 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 (10b). ⁴ Chapman, 84791 (43), 84875-6. ⁵ 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

¹ Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi., K. ² *Ibid.* ³ *Ibid.*
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.

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.¹ 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.

Application of principle of Ghent system in England.

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

¹ Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (K). Tawney, 96610 (31-2); Wilson-Fox, 99054; Webb, 98978-84; Gageby, 99261 (11); Tawney, 96782-3.
² Beveridge, 77832 (70); Tawney, 96782-3.
³ Memorandum by Board of Trade on Insurance, Vol. IX., App. xxi. (K). Hamilton, 94018-9; Dawson, 99066-9; Ward, 83670-1.
⁴ Wilson-Fox, 99053-6;

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, 90873, 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 :—

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 the 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 un-employed 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.

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. The principle of co-operation.

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.

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 The principle of discrimination.

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

¹Report 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.)

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). ^{(a) 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 ^{(b) Partial home 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. ^{(c) Institutional Assistance.}

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.

* 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 occupation¹ 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 Bay¹ 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 Lingfield³ and Hadleigh⁴ 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 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.

* 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 Arbeiterkolonien 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.

¹Beveridge, 77832 (49); Hammond, 80733 (1 *et seq.*), T. Smith, 86726 (30); Hunt, 81054. ²Bolton Smart, 84501 (83-88); 84553, 84722-3; Stepney, 79619 (15), 79795-802; Hunt, 80953 (7), 81012-9, 81055-63, 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 and devoted 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.

* 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.

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 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.

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.

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

* 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.

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.

Need of interim measures in case of prolonged acute distress.

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.

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. What ever 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

¹Stubbs, 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.

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. Necessity for preparation beforehand.

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.

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:— 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.)

X.—*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 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. (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 cooperate 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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I.—General Conditions of Charities and their Co-ordination -	448
II.—The Parallelism of Charity and the Poor Law -	450
III.—The Poor Law Commissioners of 1834 and Relief at the Home -	451
IV.—The Classes of Charities -	455
V.—Endowed Charities -	456
VI.—The Charity Commissioners -	457
VII.—The Limitations on the Work of the Charity Commission -	458
VIII.—The Application of the Doctrine of Cy-pres -	460
IX.—The Schemes of the Charity Commission -	463
X.—Boards of Trustees -	465
XI.—Other Methods of Registering Charities -	466
XII.—Further Acts affecting the Registration or Administration of Charities -	468
XIII.—Corporation and Parish Council Trustees -	469
XIV.—Extent and Causes of Poverty -	470
XV.—Endowed Dole Charities in the Country and in Towns -	476
XVI.—Suggestions of Witnesses in regard to Dole Charities and the Local Organisation of Voluntary Aid -	481
XVII.—Poor Law Relief and Endowed Charities considered in Relation to the Unions -	485
XVIII.—The Suggestions and Criticisms of the Investigators -	488
(1) Administrative Relations between Charities and the Poor Law -	489
(2) Mr. Goschen's Minute of 1869. Registration and Prevention of Overlapping -	489
(3) Want of Information and Inquiries -	491
(4) Appropriation of Means and Supervision -	492
(5) Raising Money for Relief Purposes and the Cases Assisted -	493
(6) Pooling of Funds and Supervision -	495
XIX.—The Reformed System of Poor Relief in Germany -	495
XX.—The Method of Decentralised Supervision -	497
XXI.—The Decentralised Method of Supervision in Relation to Voluntary Assistance -	500
XXII.—Statistical Results and Comparisons -	501
XXIII.—Difficulties of the Decentralised Method -	502
XXIV.—The Decentralised and Individual Method in Relation to the Able-bodied -	504
XXV.—The Development of Responsible Voluntary Action and Co-operation -	506
XXVI.—Suggestions of Witnesses for the Re-organisation of Charities in relation to the Poor Law in Country Districts and the Smaller Towns -	508
XXVII.—Mr. Goschen's Minute of 1869 -	509
XXVIII.—The Method of Co-operation between Poor Law and Charity and its Practical Results -	510
XXIX.—Further Developments of Decentralisation and Proposals for Co-operation -	515
XXX.—Voluntary Societies -	517
XXXI.—Conclusions -	520
XXXII.—Establishment of Voluntary Aid Organisation -	525

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.

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.

The generally accepted method of charity.

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 James, c. 1,
sec. 3.

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.

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

* 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, 69063.

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."

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, 1903 [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.

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 lesson of voluntary institutions that give 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:—

"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." Possibilities of supervision and investigation.

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

*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."—

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 Sub-division 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.*

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. Charities classed by reason of the sources of their income.

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 benevolent societies, 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.

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 Charities classed according to their *status*.

29. But broadly "What is a charity?" With the limitations in which the word is here 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. Definitions of "charity" generally endowed or not endowed.

* 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:—

(1) "The expression 'charity' shall mean every endowed foundation and institution, endowed taking, or to take, effect in England and Wales, and coming within the meaning, purview, or charity-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. Definitions of Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, Sec. 66.

(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." Charitable Trusts Act, 1855, Sec. 48.

"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. Re Clergy Orphan Corporation [1894], ch. 3, 145, 150, 151.

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.

¹Tudor on Charities and Mortmain (1906), pp. 8, 18. ²Report 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. ³Sir 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 Charitable 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:—

(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.

* 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

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.

41. We conclude that Section 62 of the Charitable Trusts Act of 1853 should be Conclusion 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.

42. Other limitations depend upon the *status* of a charity. An eleemosynary cor- Incorporation oration created by Act of Parliament can only be altered by Act of Parliament unless, by Act of Parliament. 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

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,

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 follows² :—

"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."

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

Consolidation of charities.
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

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 Camden 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

¹ Young, 31153.

² See Charities Appendix.

³ App. No. xiii. G. Evidence, Vol. I., 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 The purpose 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:—

(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.

¹ Fortieth Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1893, Secs. (24), (25), and (26). No. xiii., Vol. III., pp. 615 and 621. ² Young, 31141. App. 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.

Provision of means of inquiry.

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."

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."

¹ Appendix. Vol. III., p. 616.
⁴ 31178. 31209.

² Young, 31151, 31152.

³ Young, 31145, 31149, 31150.

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:—

"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 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

* It may be mentioned that under Sec. 53 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*

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 said²:—

“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.”

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

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

* 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.

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.”

70. 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 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 (137) 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.

Endowed
Charities
(Almspeople,
Pensioners, etc.).

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.

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.

92. It is stated in the Peterborough Report that “most parishes, except the new districts Diocesan Reports. in towns, have doles of some sort, though they vary from ‘bad,’ ‘mischievous,’ Opinions respect- ‘pauperising’ and ‘leading to jealousy’ to ‘good,’ ‘beneficent,’ ‘useful,’ and ‘adding ing the dole to comfort and happiness.’” To some extent, at any rate this is a matter of administra- charities chiefly tion. In many parishes, however, a share in these ancient charities is obtained by all in country householders who are in receipt of weekly wages as a right, whether in money or districts and small towns. 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 Report¹ 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

¹Diocesan Report, Gloucester.

²Diocesan Report, Exeter.

³Diocesan Report, Hereford.

it ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~usually~~ 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 schema. 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."

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."²

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 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

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. ⁵ 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.³ 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.

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.

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 that⁴:—

"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

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

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 guardiar 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. Baldwin 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

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. ‘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 granted:—

(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.”

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.

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.

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; ³and 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.

¹Cf. the circumstances of Kendal, p. 161. ²See Charities Appendix. ³Report 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 Poor Law Board, 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. November, 1869.

“One of the recommendations there made is ‘that in all those cases where the board of 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 overlapping.

"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.		Amount Received from Charity.				
		£	s.	d.		
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 Chelsea⁴ 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 opinion²:—

"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

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, $\frac{1}{2}$ 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, earned 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, 56. 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 eldest 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.

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.

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.

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."

¹ Report on Voluntary and Endowed Charities, p. 75.
100508, 100511, 100315, 100385, 140389, 100420.

² Report, pp. 78 and 79.

³ Munsterberg,

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

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 (20). 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 Information Administration which supplies to inquirers in regard to cases information drawn from office. 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.

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 Statistical of administration in Germany is the average number of cases, or the average number results. 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

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

¹ Munsterberg, 100309, 100458, 100493, 100300 (23). 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 Measures of the Imperial Penal Code for the punishment of drunkards, idlers, beggars and repression. 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:—

"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.

suggestion of an
administrative
court in relation
to relief work.

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:

"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—

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 committee 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.”

184. But it is only fair to say that this position of granting relief to the able-bodied Insurance it is proposed to buttress by the system of insurance applied to unemployment, a against want of method which, as we have said elsewhere, we would strongly urge for experimental employment. 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.

¹ Report of members of the Commission as to Strassburg. 190471, 100376.

² Munsterberg, 100300 (28), 100468,

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.

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"

¹ Munsterberg, 100319, 100512 ² Blankenberg, 100257-72. ³ Réforme de la Bienfaisance en Belgique: Résolutions 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:—

"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."

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 this 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 that¹—

"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 says²—

"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 White-chapel 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"

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 it 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."

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 said⁴:—

"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 Government 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.”

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 evidence⁵:—

“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

Results of the method of co-operation with guardians and agencies.

¹Charities Appendix. ²Toynbee, 30622 (2); and Dalton, 31363. ³Toynbee, 30622, (60); (6-10), 30715. ⁴30766, 30631, 30639. ⁵Toynbee, 30622, (15). Report on the effect of outdoor relief on wages in London, pp. 18, 31, 33, 36, 38, 40. ⁶Report 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 says¹ :—

“ 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.

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

¹Stephany, 30349, 30499, 30513, 30520, 30314, 30525. ²Dalton, 31567, 31571, 31330, (10).
³Grisewood, 37105, Secs. 24, 25, 63; 37121, 37127, 37328; 37317, 37320. ⁴Cooper, 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

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, 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. xxvii. 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.

¹ Toynbee, 30621, 45. Toynbee, 30705. Nussey, 32917 (4), (6), (7), (16), (18). (66-72).

² Thorburn, 35693

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 second method. A single Committee for the administration alike of rate furnished and of voluntary relief.

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.

The third method. Separate Committees for Public Assistance and for Voluntary Aid.

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.

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-

Establishment of Voluntary Aid Committee and their Duties.

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 Volun-
tary Aid Com-
mittees 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:—

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.*

Registration of
Voluntary
Charities at the
Charities
Commission

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.

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 Local Government Board. The President of the Board would represent it in the House of Commons.

The Charity
Commission to
become a
"Charities
Commission"

231. But apart from the registration of charities it would have a further duty.

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.

The establish-
ment of Volun-
tary Aid Councils

* 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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER 1.—Invalidity Insurance	528
Note as to Foreign Systems of Insurance	530
„ 2.—Settlement and Removal	538
„ 3.—Recovery of Cost of Relief	548
„ 4.—Bastardy	558
(A) Maintenance Orders	558
(B) Treatment of Unmarried Mothers	563
„ 5.—Vagrancy	567
„ 6.—Stocktaking and Workhouse Accounts	580
„ 7.—Public Assistance and Inebriety	581
„ 8.—Compounding for Rates	583
„ 9.—Constructive Relief in the case of the Afflicted	587
„ 10.—The Compilation of the Statistics of Public Assistance	588

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.

* 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 insur-
ance.

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 2½ 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:—*

	Hheads 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 French scheme. of the aged, infirm and incurable who are without resources (*privés de ressources*.)

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 définitif*). 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

* 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 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ 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) 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.

(2) Sick Insurance

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 ^{(3) 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

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 as 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 :—

	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, home 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 Amtes 15 March, 1908, p. 366. ² *Ibid.*, p. 368.
³ *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.

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:—

Discussion of
Memorandum by
Bishop of Lich-
field, Lord
Avebury and
Sir Edward
Brabrook.

- (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

* 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, Coope, 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. 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 View of Com- present time. In 1834 the nine methods in force for obtaining a settlement were as missioners of follows: (1) birth; (2) parentage; (3) marriage; (4) estate; (5) apprenticeship; 1834. (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:

"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

* 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 importance³; 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

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 Charge-
ability 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 advocates 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

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 residence⁴ and a settlement by three years' residence⁵ 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.

* Removal is more frequent in urban Unions than in rural Unions, as the following figures show:—

London - - - - -	One removal amongst	72 paupers
Extra-Metropolitan Unions:		
Wholly urban - - - - -		148 "
Mainly urban - - - - -		183 "
Mainly rural - - - - -		239 "
Wholly rural - - - - -		366 "
		141 "
England and Wales - - - - -		

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 28 & 29 Vict., 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

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

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-imbusement 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.

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.

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

Extension of
powers of Local
Government
Board.

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.

Settlement and
uniformity.

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, 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. ;

Abolition or
modification of
the Laws of
Settlement.

¹ Fothergill, 43877-9. ² Ball, 35467-8, 35587. ³ Brown, 25136-9; King, 25264 (9); Cleaver, 36081-4; Ford, 39826-7; Fothergill, 43825 (13a); 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 necessities 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.

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 Baldwin 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.

77. As a result of these difficulties there is great variation in the practice followed in different Unions. Mr. Baldwin 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

Variations in practice as to relief on loan.

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 given⁷ 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

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

Extended application of system of loan relief.

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.

Simplification of procedure.

nothing whatever is recovered from loan relief, as shown by the table put in by Mr. Baldwin 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.

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

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. ⁹ Briant, 14991. Kerwin, 18280. Henniker, 68011. Batchelor, 68973. Pearson, 72332. Visits, Urban 25 A., 43 A. ⁹ Bagenal, 7371.

86. Mr. G. B. folkes, 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

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.

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

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 folkes, 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, 34a), 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-liaible 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

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. LXXXVIII. (65-7). ⁸ Wilkes, 75346 (9), Thorburn, 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.

97. In a good many cases the amounts ordered to be contributed by sons are not recovered. Mr. Preston-Thomas says :—

Failure to recover amounts ordered.

“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.”

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

Publication of amounts in arrear.

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.

Collection of repayments.

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

Amounts recovered.

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

Larger amounts recovered in respect of out-relief.

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,

Increase in amount of repayments.

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

¹ Chadwick, 47024-5, also 47085. ² Bagenal, Vol. I., App. xv., (J). ³ Price, 67743 (16). ⁴ Bagenal, 7316. ⁵ Craig, 19466 (31). ⁶ Bircham, Vol. I., App. x. (A) (42). ⁷ Peters, 19734 (4). ⁸ Peters, Vol. II., App. viii. (B). ⁹ 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

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.

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.

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.

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 towns¹; 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.² 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

¹ Court, 6174, Vol. I., App. xiii. (14). Burges, 72166. Wood, Vol. VII., App. cxxii. (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:—

“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-labile relatives should, however, be governed by the limitations we have indicated regarding recovery from relatives legally liable.

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, 16428-39. 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.

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

Existing
Statute Law
as to Bastardy.

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

127. "At the hearing, in cases where the application is made by the mother after Procedure. 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

128. "The order on the application of a woman takes various forms according to The Order. 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, if 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.

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 *prima 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.

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

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.

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.

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

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 :

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 unflinching 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.

¹ Zanetti, Vol. IV., App. li. (23). *Vide also* Hill, Vol. IV., App. xl. (7), Wethered, 5382. White, 26407 (33), 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 Vagabonds³ 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 1848⁷, inmates who had no settlement were maintained at the cost of the parish in which the workhouse happened to be.

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 its 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 1842⁸ 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 1844⁹ still in force authorised the formation of districts for providing “asylums” for the houseless poor in London and in five other large towns.

* 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 Eighth 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 1866⁵ 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

¹Tenth Annual Report Poor Law Commissioners, 560, 1844, p. 7. ²Fourteenth Annual Report, 960, 1848, p. 4. ³*Ibid.*, pp. 5–6, and App. 22, etc. ⁴Second Annual Report Poor Law Board, 1142, 1850, p. 6. ⁵Reports 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 provisos 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.

* 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—debaring 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

* 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 navy 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 Return⁵ 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

* 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 (Strafgesetzbuch), 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.

* 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) Incurrible 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

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., c. 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.*, and 1 & 2 Vict., c. 38, Sec. 2; 61 & 62 Vict., c. 39, Sec. 1. ¹² *Ibid.*, and 36 & 37 Vict., c. 38, Sec. 3, and various statutes of Geo. III., and IV. ¹³ 5 Geo. IV., c. 83 Sec. 4. 34 & 35 Vict., c. 112, Sec. 7, 54 & 55 Vict., c. 69 Sec. 6. ¹⁴ 10 & 11 Vict., c. 62, Sec. 10. ¹⁵ 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 authoritative 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.

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.

¹ Report of Departmental Committee on Workhouse Accounts [Cd. 1440] 1903, p. lii. App. iv., pp. 60-1.

² *Ibid.*,

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. 267. 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 Report 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

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 witnesses¹ 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' Association⁷ 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

¹ C. H. Wilson, Stat. 27. Crowder, 175451; Kemp, 46865; 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 result 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.

273. There is, so far as we know, no express definition of a pauper.— Generally Constructive it may be said, however, that a pauper is a person maintained wholly or in part by pauperism. 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.”

275. It will be observed that exceptions are made to the rule of constructive Extension of relief in the case of the blind or deaf and dumb. We see no reason why the exceptions rule of should be limited to those classes, for there are other forms of affliction which cannot constructive 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
statistics.

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.

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.

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 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.

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

Dates of half-yearly returns.
Proposed return of periods and occasions of relief.

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 which 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.

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.

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 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.

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.

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.

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 attention 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 much 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.

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 occupations of persons relieved.

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 Statistics of children in receipt of relief.

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 Infirmary 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.*

¹ Vol. II. of Evidence, Appendix xiii. (B). ² "Children under the Poor Law" by Dr. T. J. Macnamara (Cd. 3899) pp. 22-25. ³ Statistical Appendix, Part xiii.

* See Part VI., par. 473.

PART IX.

REVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROPOSED CHANGES.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
(1) Leading Defects of the Poor Law System - - - - -	596
(2) Public Assistance - - - - -	596
(3) Description of those qualified for Public Assistance - - - - -	597
(4) Area of the Public Assistance Authority - - - - -	597
(5) Division of Existing Poor Law Work - - - - -	601
(6) Breaking up of the Poor Law - - - - -	602
(7) Comparison of Foreign and British Methods of Administration - - - - -	602
(8) Duties and Powers of the Public Assistance Authority - - - - -	604
(9) Constitution of the Public Assistance Authority - - - - -	605
(10) Area of the Public Assistance Committee - - - - -	606
(11) Duties of the Public Assistance Committee - - - - -	606
(12) Constitution of the Public Assistance Committee - - - - -	607
(13) Poor Law Authority for London - - - - -	607
(14) The Central Authority - - - - -	611
(15) Grants in aid of Local Taxation - - - - -	614
(16) Officers of the Local Authorities - - - - -	615
(17) Main Principles of a Reformed Poor Law - - - - -	617
(18) "Indoor" or Institutional Relief - - - - -	617
(19) Outdoor Relief or "Home Assistance" - - - - -	618
(20) Children - - - - -	619
(21) The Aged - - - - -	621
(22) Medical Relief and its Proposed Re-organisation - - - - -	622
(23) The Voluntary Aid Organisation - - - - -	623
(a) Establishment of Voluntary Aid Councils and Committees - - - - -	624
(b) Functions of Voluntary Aid Council - - - - -	625
(c) Functions of Voluntary Aid Committee - - - - -	625
(d) Charities Commission - - - - -	625
(24) Invalidity Insurance - - - - -	626
(25) The Able-bodied and Unemployment - - - - -	628
(a) Education - - - - -	630
(b) Labour Exchanges - - - - -	630
(c) Casual Labour - - - - -	631
(d) Insurance against Unemployment - - - - -	632
(e) Voluntary Aid and Unemployment - - - - -	632
(f) Public Assistance and Unemployment - - - - -	633
(g) Transitional Measures as to Distress from Unemployment - - - - -	633
(h) General Principles governing Public Assistance to the Able-bodied - - - - -	634
(26) Political Disqualifications on account of Public Assistance - - - - -	634
(27) Recovery of Cost of Public Assistance - - - - -	634
(28) Bastardy - - - - -	635
(29) The Detention or Continuous Treatment of Certain Classes of Persons receiving or applying for Public Assistance - - - - -	635
(A) Classes of cases requiring Continuous Treatment - - - - -	636
(B) Procedure for obtaining Order for Continuous Treatment - - - - -	638
(C) Effect of an Order for Continuous Treatment - - - - -	639
30) Settlement and Removal - - - - -	639
(31) Vaccination and Registration of Births, etc. - - - - -	640
(32) Compounding for Rates - - - - -	640
(33) The Compilation of the Statistics of Public Assistance - - - - -	640
(34) Constructive Relief in the case of the Afflicted - - - - -	641
(35) Temporary Commission, etc. - - - - -	641
(36) Our Proposals in relation to Scotland - - - - -	641
(37) Our Proposals in relation to Ireland - - - - -	642
(38) Conclusion - - - - -	643

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.

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 administering 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	72,433
				<i>51</i>	<i>40,797</i>	<i>40,748</i>	<i>37,860</i>
County Boroughs	85	2,323,664	12,725,306	174	102,476	100,964	87,062
				<i>102</i>	<i>84,809</i>	<i>83,135</i>	<i>72,919</i>
Administrative Counties	528	34,928,998	15,266,108	565	119,135	143,378	79,454
				<i>529</i>	<i>114,953</i>	<i>138,951</i>	<i>76,012</i>
England and Wales	644*	37,327,479	32,527,843	883	299,947	322,635	238,949
				<i>682</i>	<i>240,559</i>	<i>262,834</i>	<i>186,791</i>

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.

* 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.

* 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.

* 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.

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.

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.

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.

* 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 Poor Rate for London. over the whole area according to rateable value.

(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 County 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.

* 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.

* *Vide* also para. 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.

* 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,—intrinsicly 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.

(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 2½ 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.

* 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 casualty and then to unemployment. Unless we can arrest at its source this increasing stream of casualty 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.

* 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.

* 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 casualty, 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 malingering 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.

* 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 reformatory 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.

* 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 almshouses 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 discipline and training, which, even if it does not restore the man to a comparative state of industrial efficiency, will at the least for a certain 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 them 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.

* 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 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 Return 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

men.

* 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 pauperism. 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 small 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 extent in the 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 that 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 falsehood. 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 inefficient 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 converseance 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.

* 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.

**INDEX TO LIST OF PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED
IN THE REPORT.**

SUBJECT.	PAGE.
A.—The Local Government Board and its Officers - - - - -	647
B.—The Local Authorities and their Officers - - - - -	649
C.—Methods of Assistance and Treatment of various classes of persons - - - - -	655
D.—The Able-bodied and Unemployment - - - - -	659
E.—Charity and Voluntary Aid - - - - -	665
F.—Disfranchisement on Account of Public Assistance - - - - -	666
G.—Recovery of Cost of Public Assistance - - - - -	666
H.—Bastardy Orders - - - - -	667
I.—Treatment of Unmarried Mothers - - - - -	667
J.—Orders for Detention or Continuous Treatment - - - - -	667
K.—Settlement and Removal - - - - -	668
L.—Compounding for Rates - - - - -	668
M.—Constructive Relief - - - - -	668
N.—Stocktaking and Workhouse Accounts - - - - -	668
O.—Statistics - - - - -	669
P.—Temporary Commission - - - - -	670

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.)

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(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.)

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(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.)

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(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.)

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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.

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* 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.

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(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 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 (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 82*).

(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 country of 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.)

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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.

* See below as to the proposed change in name of the Charity Commission.

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(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.

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(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 or other 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.)

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(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 reformatory 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 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 Assessment and Collection Act, 1869. (IX., 157.)

(M) CONSTRUCTIVE RELIEF IN THE CASE OF THE AFFLICTED.

(216) A person should not be considered constructive in the case of Public Assistance to a dependant, occasioned by such defects as 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. (IX., 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.)

^a 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.

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 of the entire number of the inmates of the workhouses were children under sixteen years of age. Now only one-tenth of the inmates of "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 of all the general hospitals in the whole country. It is a significant proof of the public appreciation of these infirmaries that the proportion of 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 of 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 of 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.

* 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.
<i>London</i> - - - - -	+ 0·7	+ 38·4	+ 6·6	+ 137·9
<i>Extra Metropolitan.</i>				
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
<i>England and Wales</i> - - - - -	+ 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 sufficiently 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 employes, 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 Chancery 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 enthusiasm, 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 ADMINISTRATION 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.

* 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 another's 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.

* 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 30,000 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 than 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 un beholden. 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 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 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 home 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 identifying 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 Phoenix, 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 were 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 neighbourhood 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 two 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 charring. 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 officers of 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 movement, 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 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 Phthisis 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.

L.—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 Crèche	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 Abstemious Sons of the Phoenix	1
Lyndhurst Road Friendly Society	1

* The only agency that has failed to send a representative.—T.H.N.

Agency.	No. of Representatives.
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 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 Offices, 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.

* 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 portorage 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.

* 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.