

WORK AND WAGES

IN CONTINUATION OF

EARL BRASSEY'S 'WORK AND WAGES'
AND 'FOREIGN WORK AND ENGLISH WAGES'

PART III.

SOCIAL BETTERMENT

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INTRODUCTION

IN the present volume, Professor Chapman completes the task which, at my instance, he undertook of collating and comparing the costs of labour, the problems of wages and employment, and the conditions of life for the great body of workers, at home and abroad. It was originally intended to limit the inquiry to the subjects dealt with, however imperfectly, by the present writer in a volume published some forty years ago under the title—adopted on the advice of Sir Arthur Helps—of ‘Work and Wages.’ That unpretending effort had been received with a measure of approval highly encouraging to a young and inexperienced writer. Desiring to bring the original work up to date, and being no longer equal to the task, in a happy hour I turned to Professor Chapman. I desire to express my great obligation for the talent, labour, and research he has bestowed on the work which, under the prompting of the highest motives, he undertook. His researches have gone far beyond the scope of the original inquiry: With a wide and masterly sweep, in the present concluding volume, he deals with social progress, housing, public health, training, boy and girl labour, conditions of labour, home-work and the regulations laid down by law for shop-assistants, and, finally, with public aid.

In these introductory words, chiefly designed to express a deep sense of personal obligation, it is unnecessary to analyse the contents of the several chapters. The task may fittingly be left to the readers of these full and instructive pages. I close with the assurance that Professor Chapman will receive the well-earned reward of his protracted labour in the grateful acknowledgements of many active and conscientious workers in the wide field of work for the benefit of mankind which, in these pages, he surveys.

BRASSEY.

BOMBAY,

January 22, 1914.

SOCIAL BETTERMENT

CHAPTER I

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS

THE social betterment movement, with which this volume is concerned, is largely deliberate; and to no small extent its aim is to correct or supplement the effects wrought by the haphazard play of the competitive forces which have been on the whole dominant in modern society in recent times. In the last quarter of a century, and notably in the last few years, this movement has been growing in volume; and the question has naturally arisen as to the possibility of directing, or of successfully directing, social advance.

The main difficulty that has presented itself does not relate to the possibility of attaining an end universally desired, for this is commonly assumed, provided that the end is conformable to social laws and does not imply a human nature different in essentials from what it is. The difficulty relates rather to the limitations of prescience and to diversities of outlook and taste. Because of these the planning of Utopias in the practical spirit of the architect has invariably proved a more or less worthless occupation. But

a distinction must be drawn between the ultimate and the proximate and between broad outlines and detailed schemes. Social ideals, it must be allowed, can only be formulated progressively, as they can only be approached gradually. Still, foreshadowings in vague outline should not be beyond human powers, since pre-vision results from all scientific inquiry—foreshadowings embodying common aspirations.

The likelihood of there being any universality in social aspirations, in view of divergence of taste, may be questioned; and it may be maintained, therefore, that no ideal however nebulous is likely to meet with widespread acceptance. To this dictum we are not prepared to assent. Because of the fundamental resemblances between human beings, the wishes of one person ought to correspond in essentials with the wishes of any other person (discrepancies at one level of investigation being resolvable into correspondences at a lower level), and the more so when account is taken of the effects of reason in prescribing a system of private concessions to secure amenities which could not be secured without them. Moreover, there is the social consciousness, culminating in an unselfish general willing, to be allowed for. It may be granted that few motives of action are purely self-regarding; and, indeed, that many are not merely other-regarding, but actually public-regarding, the interests of the community as a whole being inherent in them. So far as public-regarding motives come into play, given enlightenment, a common willing of the same social end is to be expected from a community of rational human beings.

A comprehensive analysis of the social system with special reference to the proper lines of its evolution

would provide matter for a volume instead of a chapter. We shall, therefore, leave it to succeeding pages to bring out such features of the social end as may be deduced from the sentiments underlying present tendencies, apart from economic characteristics. These latter, however, may be surveyed here in a very cursory fashion in view of the fact that they lend themselves to a more clear-cut statement than the non-economic. They are not very intimately bound up with what follows; but as there is a connection, and they bear also on subjects discussed in our second volume, a brief examination of them will not be entirely irrelevant.

In the first place it seems to us vital that society, ideally regarded, should be conceived as constituted fundamentally of individuals and not of permanent grades, groups, or castes. The social system in which the individuality of the person is obscured by the group must eventually be transformed into one that is founded as much upon the capacity and potency of the individual as upon social unity. Nothing in disparagement of modern teaching as to the importance of the family and the class is intended. The family is essential to the full life of the human being, and the class is needed to mould standards (through which reform is guided), create motive power (through which reform is effected), and quell anti-social self-seeking; but both are largely justified of the persons they give to the world, and no sociological investigation has yet demonstrated that capacity of any given kind is the exclusive endowment of any particular class. The essentially personal foundations of society necessitate what may be termed economic equality as they have necessitated political equality; and

the principle of 'economic equality' should at least involve the direction of social purpose to securing (1) the development in due proportion of the most valuable potentialities of each person, and (2) a minimising of the obstacles which impede the exercise of individual powers. This, though somewhat vague, is unequivocal enough for practical requirements. Ethically it is a platitude, but actually it still needs insistent reiteration. Bearing in mind the fundamental truth, enunciated in this paragraph, which for present purposes may be treated as axiomatic, we may proceed to outline the economic features of the social ideal on the sides mainly of production and distribution.

The end of production is to secure what is demanded at the least sacrifice. In the output and the sacrifice intangible goods as well as tangible goods must be reckoned; and it generally happens that care of the intangible has favourable effects on the tangible. Almost up to the present, since the over-emphasis of material welfare which came with modern industrialism, subjective values (the intangible goods intended above) have been comparatively neglected, though it is evidently worth while dispensing with some objective goods, if necessary, in order to secure that, in the production of those retained, life may be developed and enjoyed. So far as possible, then, the methods of production should be such that their mere performance yields satisfaction or involves a minimum of dissatisfaction—and it goes without saying that, through the medium of education and an elevating environment, people should be induced to find satisfaction in truly valuable things. There is implied in this fundamental principle that the work of individuals should be governed by their

tastes ; which desideratum seems to necessitate freedom in the choice of work, agencies for discovering and training tastes, and facilities for bringing individuals to the work that suits them. Given the realisation of this desideratum, can it be doubted that the quantity and quality of the ponderable output would be improved? In close connection with this problem of maximising enjoyment in work, and with the problem of maximising the external product also—in fact as an integral part of both—there is the question of linking the interest of the operative to the system in which he works, since interest is the fount of enjoyment and the mainspring of efficiency. Further, there is the question of the time devoted to production by any person, which evidently should be such that any alteration in the length of the working day would diminish his balance of satisfaction, when everything was taken into account, on the assumption that the character and proportion of his demands are right. It will be understood that our object now is to fixate fundamental ideas. How far they can be realised through competitive forces or otherwise, it remains to determine later.

Efficiency is the next attribute to emphasise, and we have already seen that it is interwoven with the personal values referred to above. Other things being equal, the more effective the instruments of production are the better. In the instruments of production labour is included. The physical and mental vigour of the workers is therefore a national concern, even if regard is paid solely to the output. Housing, sanitation, and other things bearing on the health of the community, are consequently linked up with the problem

of production. Connected with it also are the means of developing in each worker his highest potential value and securing that his task is appropriate to his cultivated powers. And yet other implications of any policy to augment productive efficiency may be brought out. When the best is made of each worker's inherent capacity, not merely the most efficient use of technological methods, but also their improvement is incidentally insured, if adequate rewards for valuable inventions can be depended upon and research in the sciences which indirectly contribute to them is liberally endowed. In connection with inventions it may be remarked that inventiveness should be guided by the desire to enhance the satisfaction derived from the mere process of production as well as to augment and improve the output. It may be added also, with regard again to the intangible side of public advantage, that progress in productive methods is worth encouraging for itself as well as for its results on the output, in that it keeps the vitality of society at a high level and draws out its latent powers. No community, in the absence of a wide range of experience, can fully realise itself.

Equally with efficiency, stress must be laid on the appropriateness of the output to the needs of consumers—needs as shaped by proper standards of consumption. The things wanted most should be produced first. This appropriateness is not easily reached. Wants, instead of being constant, are constantly altering in intensity and proportion. And the variability of wants is bound to continue—in the demand of an ideal world we should expect to find not crystallisation, but liveliness and individuality. Consequently, the more

sensitively reactive the productive system becomes the better. Changing of occupation may be inherent in rapid responses of production to demand; hence the importance of the adaptability of people, which is important also if advance in productive methods is not to be obstructed.

To sum up as regards the productive characteristics of ideal society, they would seem to include (a) distribution of work according to capacity and taste, (b) efficiency, (c) processes which are educative and yielding in satisfaction, and (d) a sensitive response of the productive system to human needs. By the test of these desiderata, judgments may be passed on not a few proposals for social reform.

In any modern sketch of ideal conditions on the economic side, distribution—that is, the sharing-out of the wealth produced—needs to be outlined. Distribution being the storm-centre of social controversy to-day, no scheme which leaves it out of account altogether can hope to attract much public attention. Unhappily, there is not a little misunderstanding of the manner in which distribution works at the present time and of its effects, with the result that many impracticable or futile schemes are championed. ‘To each according to his needs’ certainly expresses part of the ideal, according to ethical doctrine, if by ‘needs’ is not meant ‘wants’ but the real needs of a person’s nature and occupation, so far as they are commendable. This proposition has been put forward as axiomatic; and it may be defended not merely from the standpoint of equity but also from that of productivity. But it is not the only proposition which is affirmed of ideal distribution. There is

another almost equally fundamental; and it is needful to inquire whether it is reconcilable with the one already laid down. At first it would seem to conflict with it. The other proposition may be phrased as follows: 'Distribution should be proportional to the contribution which each person makes to the value of the product.' This proposition calls for proof; but proof is easily furnished. One function of wages is to act as magnets in attracting labour to the places and occupations where its services are most urgently sought; and if a person get as a wage what is proportional to the value which he contributes to the product, he is naturally induced to render the service which is most valuable to society. How important it is that a person should get such a wage will be obvious, particularly when it is borne in mind that the responsiveness of production to demand is essential to welfare. When the demand for an article rises, its value rises. Consequently, when each person receives as his wage an amount regulated by the value of his contribution to the product, the wages of the people making the article which has risen in value rise. The advance in wages draws more labour to the industry in question, so that its product is increased, which is to be desired. By 'wages' all earnings are meant; and what has been said of wages can be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of interest on capital. Thus, automatically, distribution which is proportional to value contributed to the product makes for efficient production and responsive production. It would seem impossible to design a substitute for such a system of distribution to have the same effects—to keep active the flows of capital and labour, which, like the

circulation of the blood, make for vitality. Moreover, it has been urged on grounds of equity that the value given in earnings should be determined by the value received from a person's efforts.

We may take it, then, that the second proposition, as regards distribution, is established. We have, consequently, two proportions relating to distribution in the perfect community, namely: (1) that distribution should be proportional to needs, and (2) that distribution should be proportional to each person's contribution to the value of the product. Are they antagonistic? They seem at first to be so at all points. A person might have unquenchable desires and but little productive capacity. It is not laid down, however, that every person should get what he desires: all that is affirmed is that he should get what his nature really needs. Now, it has been laid down also that a person's work should be settled by his capacities and tastes—that is, by his natural endowments. May it not be, then, that in part at least the apparent contradiction between the two principles can be explained away on the ground that ideally both a person's work and pay (so far as the latter is governed from the supply side) should ideally be determined by the same facts, the essentials of his nature? It is at least a plausible hypothesis that the wage proportional to a person's contribution to the value of the product, which would have to be sufficient to render him fully efficient in his position, would approximately provide satisfaction of his real needs, provided that the work he was doing happened to be a practical expression of his nature. We are not, then, under any logical compulsion to assume

that the two doctrines relating to ideal distribution are diametrically opposed. But, of course, no sensible person would be so rash as to assert that any modern nation is at or near the ideal as yet, or even that complete correspondence between the practical conclusions derived from the two doctrines can ever be looked for. Needs are only very slowly becoming effective as determinants of earnings; but we move towards the desired end, not only as the mobility of society gets greater and opportunity is more evenly spread, but also as the sway of moral forces becomes more constraining, for a deeper sense of moral obligation implies a stricter government of personal supply prices by proper standards.

The immense inequalities of wealth to-day and the low level of wages in too many cases must be regretfully recognised. But the question may be put whether, apart from exceptional conditions, the solution of the trouble is not to be found in removing the obstacles which prevent distribution according to capacity from leading up to distribution according to needs, and in strengthening the forces which tend to bring about correspondence between the two principles. In view particularly of our very limited understanding of the social organism, the immediate practical social problem does not impress us as one calling for complete reconstruction of the machinery of distribution, though improved distribution must form a large part of the ultimate object of reform. Violent interference with distribution might easily result in ultimate loss to those whom it was intended to benefit. To this matter we shall not recur again. It is not an integral part of our subject in this volume,

but, as a closely related topic, some reference to it was called for. In leaving it, it remains, however, to add that supplementing and modifying the machinery of distribution do not necessarily imply reconstruction, and that exceptionally bad conditions demand exceptional remedies.¹

Distribution and production are so linked up with the consumption of wealth that, to complete what has been affirmed so far, something must be said of ideal consumption, however vague or obvious our remarks may be ; and, apart from its bearing on production and distribution, consumption calls for notice since not a few of our present social ills are intimately connected with it, as will be indicated in later chapters. An income should be spent in such a fashion that the best in the nature of the spender is realised ; and for reaching perfection in expenditure much knowledge is requisite, both of standards and of the facts of life, and also a developed critical faculty and self-control and independence. From greater wisdom in expenditure, society may gain as much as from many new inventions. Simple as the problem of consumption seems to be, its practical solution is at least as difficult as that of any other section of the social problem. On paper its solution is obvious, yet in practice it proves astonishingly unyielding. For the impalpable elements that make up personality are involved, and the situation is complicated by the fact that private initiative in demand is largely over-borne by the massive domination of class-standards of living. It would seem, therefore, that while an individualised treatment of the problem of consumption is not without value, it is to a

¹ See the discussion on Home-work in Chapter VI.

modification of class-ideas that we must look for general advance. A properly designed system of education tends to modify class-ideas by dealing with people in blocks. But, in addition to a subjective educational policy, an objective one, which aims at moulding standards of living through a deliberate shaping of the environment which makes its impress upon them, may be resorted to.

Another problem of consumption is that of rendering certain human needs, which are to-day without influence, effective in demand. The desire for a smokeless town atmosphere does not become an effective individual demand under present conditions. In a case of this kind, reform can only be brought about, apart from State intervention, by concerted action to aggregate and give expression to wants that would otherwise be ineffectual. The mastery of production over demand is a thing to be resisted.

The interests of a community may be divided into those which are private and those which are public. By the public ones are meant those which no individual would be induced to aim at on selfish grounds, apart from the desire to win the approbation of his fellows. The success of the *laissez-faire* movement let slip a multitude of private interests which had hitherto been held in leash. It was hoped by many who took a large and public-spirited view of social progress either (a) that the free interplay of unrestrained private interests would bring about the realisation of public interests, or (b) that a greater good would result from disregarding the latter than from subordinating the former to the latter in any large degree. As a result of experience and a more exhaustive analysis of social

functioning, it is now known that this hope was not well-founded ; that the private interests of those who are weak in the economic system are subordinated to the private interests of those who are strong, and that many public interests are of such a kind that they cannot receive any purely private expression at all. Happily, in the course of social evolution, the forces have been strengthening which express the public side of social life. For many years after the industrial revolution, society was biased on the self-regarding side ; but of late years the social consciousness, which reflects public interests, has developed rapidly (which means that the individual has increasingly identified himself with the social whole) and given birth to an effective general will. One of the chief problems of the day, now commonly recognised, is to make social interests operative where they do not collide with private interests, and strike the proper balance where there is collision. The failures of our social economy in the recent past, their causes, and the means taken or recommended to repair them, will be brought out in succeeding chapters of this book, so far as the ground has not already been covered in our second volume.

We submit that our presentment above of the social ideal on its economic side must appeal to all, whether socialists or individualists. It is too frequently assumed that socialists and individualists are aiming at different ends. This assumption we dispute. If ends are made ultimate enough and ideas are clarified, it will be found that all who are altruists are making for the same goal, but by different routes. To secure explicit agreement as regards the end to

aim at would save endless futilities in discussion and action.

But, whether there is agreement or not on the points put above, our tentative treatment of the social ideal would be left with an obvious gap if it were closed at this point, in view of the extent to which the biological interpretation of social evolution has been emphasised of late. We cannot do better in approaching this side of the problem than to enunciate in an elementary way those biological propositions which are relevant to social questions.

Modern biologists appear to be in the whole agreed that inheritance is from germ-cell to germ-cell, and that the germ-cell is not affected by the ordinary experiences of the parent body, the characteristics of the child being ordinarily determined by the stocks of the parents according to certain laws. So far as this teaching goes, parents may be ill-nourished, or debilitated by bad surroundings or bad habits, but the new life proceeding from them is not affected in its potentialities. The degradation of the parent does not carry with it the degeneracy of the child. The child of enfeebled parents may be less robust at birth than the child of parents who have not lost their vigour; in the early months of life the former may have less chance of surviving, but, if it survive, the potential quality of its life will be as high as it would have been had the parents not been enfeebled. So it is affirmed, and, despite controversy over the point, we shall accept the statement as true with a view to considering what is said to turn upon it.

The principle, it may be observed, carries us along *ad infinitum*. Let the child of the degraded parents be

degraded, still the stock is not degraded. Again, the grand-children start afresh, with all the original properties of the stock ; providence is long-suffering, so to speak, and gives the same chance of recovery again and again. Variations take place, but they are, as it is commonly expressed, accidental or fortuitous so far as they are not governed by the original properties of the parents ; and it would seem that if of a certain magnitude, so to speak, the transmission of these changes may be expected. However, it is generally held that permanent modification cannot be brought about by transmission of acquired characteristics : that just as ill-habits leave the stock of the children unimpaired, so do good habits leave it unimproved. This seems a hard saying and, lest it be misunderstood, it is needful to clear up a confusion which is sometimes latent in the popular distinction between original and acquired characteristics. If the latter are not handed down to succeeding generations, progress might seem to be difficult. But acquired characteristics are merely developments of innate endowments, and there is therefore no real contrast between the two. The born stammerer who cures his stammer does not thereby reduce the chance that his children may have a propensity to stammer, but in transmitting this defect he may transmit with it the power by which he cured himself. This power must have been rooted in an original property of his nature. Thus, in a sense, the acquired characteristic of not stammering might be inherited ; so far as the children inherited all the qualities of the father, the defect would be passed on imbedded in a nature by which it would be repaired. Further, it must be pointed out that the acquired

characteristic is passed on in the sense that the process, once discovered, whereby it was evolved from an original property, can be repeated where the same original property is found, and will tend to be repeated because the discovery becomes a part of the knowledge which is communicated from generation to generation. The first man who walked a tight-rope acquired a characteristic for certain others of his race who desired it as well as for himself.

Now, obviously, the higher the average level of the vital stock of a community the better off is the community. Hence the social question is partly a biological question. This is a truth; but, like most truths, in the minds of some it has been transmuted into error. It has been said that the social problem is exclusively a biological problem in essentials. It is this dictum that must be controverted.

Admittedly, it may be possible to raise the average level of the stock by the study and practice of eugenics. This is not a point that we want to discuss or are competent to discuss; but it is important to observe that any thorough-going advocates of practical eugenics would have to settle what qualities of life are of value socially (as some bio-sociologists have readily granted) and in what proportions they should be encouraged. It may be that the underlying stream of vital potentialities governing the features of society can be modified only by breeding, but the biologist is not competent to pick out and arrange personalities in a social whole in the most satisfactory way. Indeed, is anybody? Anybody who attempted the task, given the power, would probably prove a Frankenstein and create a social monster. Society is an amazing complex; at

its best it is compounded of all sorts and conditions of men and women ; and virtues that seem trivial when viewed in isolation may go a long way to provide that tone which so unmistakably differentiates the attractive from the unattractive society, despite the fact that it appears to melt away in the face of analysis. No writer has grasped this truth more firmly than Dickens : on this account the implicit social ideals in his novels are really safer guides than the mechanical constructions of writers apparently more scientific. Natural selection may easily be perverted, instead of being improved, by making it self-conscious.

This is the first point to insist upon ; though doubtless it is a purely formal one at present, as thorough-going practical eugenics of a positive kind is not for this or the next generation, if it is for any generation. Another point of some significance is that environment is not necessarily so ineffective in its bearing on the future stock as would at first appear. It is true that the self-improvement painfully effected by one generation is not passed on to the next generation in the form of improved stock ; but a good environment, which should conduce to enlightenment and encourage sanity of outlook, may not unreasonably be expected to have an important influence on selection and so upon stock. No doubt the contention cannot be definitely established, but social philosophers who believe that human effort has a far-reaching purpose are not taking up a demonstrably untenable position when they maintain that enlightened individual selection is better for the racial stock than selection which is more or less fortuitous. The more civilised a people the greater will be the proportion of marriages which are ordinarily

described by the indefinite term 'suitable,' implying here a certain indefinable correspondence between the temperaments of the contracting parties. It is a speculative argument, but it is plausible, that any circumstance which helps the realisation of mind and purpose (for instance, a good social environment which includes a good system of education) encourages the selection which is good for the stock.

We now come to our third contention as against those biologists who claim that the social problem is mainly biological. It may be maintained that, even if environment does not have a direct effect which is lasting (because acquired characteristics are not transmitted), yet an improved environment places a community more or less permanently in closer proximity to the perfect state. This is so because the institutions in which environment is fixed are more or less enduring, and the knowledge at the root of the good environment acquired by one generation is communicated to the next. As has already been argued, the social end of man is some kind of community of human beings, not a certain state of certain germ-cells. It is not the germ-cells alone, but the germ-cells and their culture (provided by environment) which make each society what it is. A good environment, then, is a thing to strive for, and is a possession of the race which need not be evanescent, but can be progressively improved. The superior environment means that fewer are ill-nourished and under-educated; and that fewer are born and bred and live in the smoke and dinginess which tend to destroy or pervert the sense of enjoyment. The stock remaining potentially the same, what each generation becomes is less faulty. An important part of the

environment consists in ideas, and admittedly these can be added to and accumulated as a permanent possession.¹

To sum up as regards the place of biological considerations in social reform, the situation may be put in this way. Progress has three constituents: (1) the biological, (2) the social, and (3) the spiritual—or ideas.² Improvement in the second and third conduce to improvement in the first; and the perfection of the first does not necessarily make the perfection of the second and third. With the first unchanged, immense betterment is possible in the social system and in human knowledge, which are goods in themselves.

¹ An admirable discussion of the points raised above will be found in Pigou's *Wealth and Welfare*, chap. iv.

² Schmoller's learned discussion of theories of progress in the last chapter of part ii of his *Grundriss der Allgemeinen Volkswirtschaftslehre* will well repay perusal. The *Year-book of Social Progress* (Nelson's) will be found a useful work of reference on many of the subjects treated in the following pages. Mention may also be made of George's *Engines of Social Progress* and Hobson's *The Social Problem*.

CHAPTER II

HOUSING

WE may suitably begin our sketch of the urban housing problem by considering where we stand in the process of urbanisation, because it is in the great towns that the problem emerges in its worst forms. One is apt to suppose that, as the present in contrast with the past is an age of great towns, so the future, without guidance, will be an age of still greater towns. This supposition, however, must not be allowed to pass without challenge. Its sole foundation consists in the fact that town growth has generally been unbroken hitherto; but, before assuming that the past will reduplicate itself and that the social problems of the future will consequently be staged on vast urbanised areas, it is incumbent upon us to inquire whether the forces governing the distribution of the population are still tending to bring about concentration.

Great towns were created, in the days that are fast becoming history, by (1) the limitation and expense of transport facilities and (2) the undifferentiated form of the productive function. But the extension and cheapening of means of communication and the development of business methods have rendered

it no longer essential that the manufacturer should live in close juxtaposition with the makers of machinery, the producers of or dealers in his material and accessories, and the merchants. Indeed, modern arrangements are increasingly taking shape as a grouping of the industrial parts of a trade around a marketing centre, at various distances from it. In the economic organism as well as in the natural organism the generalisation holds that a homogeneous, incoherent mass tends to differentiate into a heterogeneous and coherent system. Every manufacturer knows that the great town with its high rents, restricted space, crowded streets and choked railway stations is already comparing unfavourably, from the point of view of cost of production, with less populous places where sites may be had contiguous to the railway, and therefore with private sidings, and at a price which is not sufficient to compel the erection of costly many-storied works.

There is no good reason for concluding, then, that in the future bigger towns will have a larger place in our economy than big towns have to-day, and that therefore the housing problem will become more difficult of solution. But the past has left us with an estate in need of repair. Under the domination of *laissez-faire*, existing economic conditions have largely come about of themselves. They are not ideal, and their amelioration has for many years been persistently sought by a growing body of reformers. There is no field in which improvement is more sorely needed, or in which there is a finer chance of achieving better things through the action of associations or governmental authorities. The task which confronts the reformer

is so to interweave associated effort, corporate design and general control with private enterprise, that the provision of houses will be adequate and cheap; that the houses will be suitable, healthy, and, as far as may be, beautiful; and that their arrangement and relation to other buildings will form as a whole a convenient and pleasing town. The most casual observer of urban areas will readily concede that private enterprise has failed lamentably in the past to realise these ends.

There are two main problems, largely distinct though interrelated: the one is to direct the growth of towns along the right lines and in the right forms; the other to reform what exists. Reform of the old must perforce be incomplete and piecemeal; but comprehensive designs are almost as much needed in this case as in the case of extensions; to insure that improvements shall be in harmony with each other and with their surroundings.

The problem of reforming what exists will be treated first. Three evils at once come to light when this problem is analysed, namely: (1) the over-housing of areas, which will be referred to hereafter for short as congested housing; (2) the over-crowding of people in houses, hereafter termed simply 'over-crowding'; and (3) insanitary conditions. Though these defects may be considered separately, they are causally inter-related. For example, over-crowding and over-housing both make for insanitary conditions; and when people become accustomed to insanitary conditions their demand for housing accommodation tends so to deteriorate that the landlord and the builder are induced, the one to permit and even depend upon the overcrowding of his premises, and the other to erect

dwellings too close together. Nor are landlords and builders alone to blame. To provide for an ideal demand which does not exist is to court loss. The degraded demand which can put up with anything, and sets no value on housing amenities, is largely responsible ; but it is fostered in being met. Again, to give another example of the intimate connection between the three faults in housing, from which no large modern town is completely free, over-crowding and congested housing cause each other. It needs but to watch the gradual transformation of a respectable neighbourhood into a slum to feel sure of this. One would expect congested housing at least to check over-crowding ; but its effect is the opposite. Congestion of houses prepares the habits of the people for congestion within houses ; and the latter in turn destroys the demand for the comparatively costly space furnished on a properly utilised site. Thus the social disease, of which the symptom is the slum, feeds on its consequences instead of being retarded by them ; and that it spreads like a malignant fever, the extent of the slums which will spring up in a few years, if local authorities are not vigilant, is sufficient testimony.

No subject with which the social scientist is called upon to deal more profusely illustrates the folly of taking demand as something given, and considering solely the means of securing its satisfaction, than that of housing. There is no case in which, for all practical purposes, it is more important to think nationally and ethically. Slums cannot be regarded as exceptions to the general rule which will never be more than exceptions. There is frequently a danger of their becoming the general rule. And another point to

notice in the housing problem is the great difficulty of modifying demand otherwise than through the kind of provision made for it. A person's nature is so moulded by his home surroundings that ordinarily it is impossible to excite in him effective appreciation for what is wholly discordant with them. Moreover, as will become evident in the course of this chapter, the individual workman is unable to do much more than trim the edges of the provision made for his shelter when he acts in isolation. For reform, we must look in the main to public authorities and associated effort. And the fact that human nature is so dependent upon its immediate environment renders the housing problem the root-problem of social reform.

The bearing of bad housing conditions on health and physical development is so obvious that an elaborate argument need not be attempted. The correlation between death-rates, particularly infantile death-rates, and density of population is undoubted, though rough and inexact in detail; and, despite the fact that among people who live closely packed together other causes of a high death-rate independent of overcrowding are usually operating, we may infer, in view of the mass of evidence at hand, that this correlation reflects a causal connection. Nor is this all. Among the survivors, disease and a low level of vitality become common when population is congested; and it would seem not unlikely that physical conditions are affected also. A Glasgow anthropometric survey, covering a large number of schoolchildren, gave the following remarkable results, when averages were struck for different ages and the figures were tabulated according

to the number of rooms in the homes from which the children came :—

MEASUREMENTS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN IN GLASGOW

Housing	Boys		Girls	
	Height ins.	Weight lbs.	Height ins.	Weight lbs.
One room . . .	46·6	52·6	46·3	51·5
Two rooms . . .	48·1	56·1	47·8	54·8
Three rooms . . .	50·0	60·6	49·6	59·4
Four rooms . . .	51·3	64·3	51·6	65·5

Doubtless these results are connected to some extent with feeding, for the smaller the home the greater the poverty of the parents as a rule; and possibly they reveal the influence of heredity also, for it may be that the less physically fit tend to be the poorer: but, these considerations notwithstanding, the close correlation of height and weight with house-room at least arouses a suspicion that growth is retarded by over-crowding. An inquiry made at Edinburgh yielded similar results.¹

¹ The following striking figures have been put forward :—

MEASUREMENTS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN AT LIVERPOOL

Schools	Seven years		Eleven years		Fourteen years	
	Height ins.	Weight lbs.	Height ins.	Weight lbs.	Height ins.	Weight lbs.
Port Sunlight Schools .	47·0	50·5	57·0	79·5	62·2	108·0
Higher Grade Schools .	47·0	49·3	55·5	70·0	61·7	94·5
Council Schools (a) . .	45·3	44·1	53·1	61·4	58·2	95·8
" (b) . .	44·3	43·0	51·8	59·0	56·2	75·8
" (c) . .	44·0	43·0	49·7	55·5	55·2	71·1

Schools of class (a) are attended in bulk by the children of the well-to-do; those of class (b) by the children of regularly occupied people of

We may pass on now to consider the legislative facilities afforded for housing reform, which began about the middle of the nineteenth century. Legislation on any subject may usually be envisaged as slowly developing towards a position of settlement. The position of settlement is marked by a scheme of law which gives all-round effect to a coherent and systematic policy. It is characterised frequently by the adoption of some all-embracing consolidating Act, which restates and rounds off a scheme that has been receiving shape under opportunistic or dimly enlightened impulses. We have such a measure in the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890. Our plan here will be to indicate the piecemeal emergence of the policy incorporated in the outstanding legislation of 1890; to describe in greater detail the main features of that legislation; and to trace through later amendments its chief modifications. Finally, we shall describe the path-breaking policy legally sanctioned by the Housing,

the labouring classes; and (c) by the children of the poorest and casual labour class. But these figures point to such a superiority of the Port Sunlight children that the presence of some cause contributory to the pleasant and healthy surroundings of Port Sunlight is at once suggested; it is unlikely otherwise that their anthropometric measurements should be better, and markedly better, than those of the children in higher grade schools. Heredity may be such a contributory cause. The workers at Messrs. Levers' soap factory are, generally speaking, a class selected on the score of excellence in physique, and it is the pick of these who live at Port Sunlight; whereas the class from which the children in higher grade schools are drawn has not been picked out, by an economic process of selection, for the possession of physical strength so much as for the endowment of intelligence and alertness. Moreover, those who live at Port Sunlight are the most respectable of Messrs. Levers' workers, and their children are naturally well cared for. However, that the children at Port Sunlight should be so high in the scale, especially when we refer back to the Glasgow figures just quoted, cannot be dismissed off-hand as a fact attributable solely to the causes to which attention has been drawn.

Town-planning, &c. Act of 1909. This last measure is to be regarded as the first legislative step in the direction of a housing policy on a different plane from that assumed in the Act of 1890.

Prior to 1868 municipal lodging-houses were approved (by the Shaftesbury Acts, the first of which is dated 1851); but it was left to private endeavour to erect model workmen's dwellings, associations for which purpose were encouraged in many ways and even by loans from public money (under the Act of 1866), public authorities being meanwhile confined, as regards the housing of the working-classes, to negative action—that is, to proceeding against the owners of bad property for the removal of nuisances (under the powers of the Act of 1855). Progress took the double course of strengthening the hands of the local authorities for negative action and furnishing them with powers of positive action. They were fortified with the first Torrens Act (1868), which enabled them to secure the proper repair or alteration of ruinous or unsuitable dwellings and the demolition of irreparably bad dwellings. Positively, they were permitted to take a first step in 1874, when they were allowed to grant or lease land for the erection of workmen's dwellings; and the next year, under the Cross Act, they were authorised to undertake themselves the re-housing contemplated by the comparatively large improvement schemes to which it referred. Thereafter advance up to 1890 involved no new principles.¹

¹ For readers who desire some detail the following points are added. The first Shaftesbury Act, the Labouring Classes Lodging Houses Act of 1851, though it related only to lodging-houses, was extended by a broadening of the definition of lodging-houses in 1885 to cover workmen's dwellings. This famous permissive measure of 1851 vested in the local

A new era began with the important Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, which reported in 1885, and was followed in the same year by legislation embodying a number of its recommendations. Facilities were extended, particularly to the rural sanitary authorities which had previously been left far behind, and the Shaftesbury Acts were amended to cover workmen's dwellings as well as lodging-houses. But it was only after a short interval that the State gave expression to the ideas brought to a head through the

authorities of certain towns and populous districts the following powers, subject to the consent of the central authority to which they were amenable: powers to acquire land covered or uncovered for the purpose of the Act, to erect lodging-houses, or convert existing buildings into lodging-houses, to borrow on the security of the rates for these purposes, and to sell property thus acquired, if its maintenance proved to be too expensive, after seven years' trial. Next among outstanding Acts comes the first Torrens Act (1868), providing for the improvement or destruction of houses unfit for habitation in places of more than 10,000 inhabitants. This was followed in 1874 by the Working Men's Dwellings Act, which enabled municipal corporations to grant or lease their land for workmen's dwellings and render it suitable for the purpose by road-making, drainage, and fencing. The first of the Cross Acts (the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act), which provided for the improvement of comparatively wide areas, was placed on the Statute-book in 1875. It contemplated re-housing by the local authority, and, by an amendment of 1879, the re-housing could be arranged for elsewhere than in the immediate vicinity where the displacement had occurred. In 1882 the compulsory demolition of premises which caused other buildings to be unhealthy was permitted (the owner being conceded the option to retain the site and receive compensation or sell to the local authority), and the Torrens and Cross Acts were further improved. As regards finance, the arrangements for loans to public authorities, made under the Shaftesbury Acts, were extended in 1866 to associations and companies for the housing of the Working Classes (the formation of which had been facilitated by an Act of 1855) and even to private individuals. Gradually the somewhat onerous and restrictive provisions of the earlier Acts were relaxed, the first notable step being taken in 1879, in which year also a limited application of the principle of betterment in arranging to meet the cost of improvements, which has since been extended, was first permitted. Fuller details will be found in Dewsnup's *Housing Problem in England*.

Commission by adopting the great consolidation Act of 1890. This Act marked a gigantic stride on the housing side of social betterment in contemplating local action on a scale which dwarfed such proceedings as were usual prior to 1890, and, incidentally, through bringing together most matters that related to housing, in creating a distinct branch of public obligation with a housing policy as its objective.

The Act of 1890 contains three main parts, which may be regarded as relating to the three lines of endeavour previously kept apart in the Cross Acts, Torrens Acts, and Shaftesbury Acts respectively. Part I. carries on the policy of the Cross Acts in having reference to unhealthy areas of some magnitude ; Part II. repeats and extends the law laid down in the Torrens Acts for the suppression of individual houses unfit for human habitation and for the improvement of small unhealthy areas ; while Part III. takes up the policy of the amended Shaftesbury Acts entailing the undertaking of re-housing schemes.

The epoch-making character of the Act calls for its examination in some detail. Part I., relating to unhealthy areas, does not apply to rural sanitary districts. The local authorities contemplated are empowered, and in certain events may be compelled, to submit schemes for improving unhealthy areas to the Home Secretary in the case of the County or City of London, and to the Local Government Board in the case of other places. Any scheme may include the compulsory acquisition of land, which need not be in the unhealthy area if its acquisition is essential to a satisfactory scheme. After notice has been served on any owners whose property it is proposed to

take compulsorily, the confirming authority must make a local inquiry, and thereafter it may sanction the scheme, or any modification of it, and issue a provisional order. The order may be opposed by petition and cannot be proceeded with until it is confirmed by Act of Parliament. Reasonable costs of persons affected by the scheme who oppose it may be allowed and charged to the local authority. Every scheme must provide for the re-housing of such numbers of the displaced population as the confirming authority shall require. The whole or any part of the scheme may be carried out by private persons or societies, and the local authorities may lease or sell any part of the land acquired by them with such an end in view. It has been decided that, when intended for workmen's dwellings, land so disposed of may be sold or leased below its market value. Within ten years, unless otherwise determined by the confirming authority, local authorities must dispose of any dwellings erected by them out of funds provided under this part of the Act. Freeholders of the estate may themselves contract to carry out the part of the scheme relating to their estate in lieu of having their land acquired. Provisions are made for modification of the original scheme after it has been sanctioned. The price for acquisition of the land is to be based upon the fair market value of the land and the property covering it, without allowance for compulsory purchase except in the case of land which is not a part of the unhealthy area though it may be needed for the scheme. The sanctioning of the scheme extinguishes rights of way and other easements, but compensation must be paid to any person or persons thereby sustaining loss. For the

purpose of re-housing, local authorities may use land already in their possession or purchase land which may be at a distance from the property primarily affected by the scheme. Money for carrying out the scheme may be borrowed under provisions made for the purpose, and loans may be made by the Public Works Loans Commissioners. Money may also be obtained from the rates, and limits imposed by any Acts of Parliament on rates are not to apply to rates levied for this purpose.

Part II. of the Act deals with unhealthy dwelling-houses, and applies to all sanitary authorities. Local authorities are required to arrange for inspection of their districts from time to time and take action before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction to secure the closure of any condemned dwellings, and the Court is authorised to order compensation for evicted tenants where it seems equitable. If after closure the dwellings are not, or cannot be made, habitable the local authority under proper safeguards may order the demolition of the premises. If the owner fails to demolish the property, the local authority is empowered to do so and sell the materials. If such sale of materials results in a balance over and above the cost of demolition, the balance must be paid to the owner. Appeal to quarter sessions by owners aggrieved under this part of the Act is permitted. When any owner improves any dwelling-house pursuant to an order of the local authority, he is entitled to have created on the property in his interests a transferable rent-charge for thirty years of £6 per £100 expended, which shall have priority over all existing and future encumbrances excepting charges incident to tenure, tithe, commutation rent-charge,

and any charge created under any Act authorising advances of public money. This provision is introduced so that an owner may not be compelled to make a gift to any person who has a charge on his property by enhancing the value of the security for the charge. Buildings which intercept ventilation, or in any other way are an indirect cause of ill-health, may be compulsorily acquired by the local authority and removed; or the owner may pull down the obstructive building, receive compensation for doing so, and retain the site. A portion only of a property may be dealt with as an obstructive building, but in this case the owner must be compensated for any loss of value suffered by the remainder. The local authority may levy a special improvement-rate (on the betterment principle) on any property the value of which has been enhanced by the removal of an obstructive building. A local authority which has acquired the site of an obstructive building must keep as an open space as much as is necessary, and may sell the remainder or so much as is not required for a highway or other public place. In cases in which the simple demolition of a house or houses is not sufficient to make an area healthy and the reconstruction involved does not cover sufficient area for it to be dealt with as an 'unhealthy area,' the local authority may submit a scheme for sanction by the Local Government Board, which sanction may confer ordinary rights of compulsory purchase. Such sanction need not be confirmed by Parliament unless it is opposed by any property owner who is affected by the order. The Board may require in such schemes provision for the re-housing of persons displaced. Any differences as regards compensation arranged for under

Part II. of the Act are to be settled by an arbitrator appointed by the Local Government Board. Estimates of value must be based on fair market value without additional allowance in respect of compulsory purchase, but allowance must be made for any increased value conferred by the improvement on other property possessed by the compensated person. Costs certified by the arbitrator must be paid by the local authority, but he shall not allow costs if the original offer of the local authority was equitable, or if the person entitled to compensation neglected to give proper information to the local authority. Arrangements are made for meeting expenses incurred under Part II. by rates and by borrowing. The Public Works Loan Commissioners may lend if they think fit. The County Council must be kept informed of any action taken by individuals or local authorities under Part II., and if a local authority is neglectful of its duties the County Council may proceed as the local authority is empowered to do. Special provisions as to London may be omitted as they merely arrange for the application of the same guiding principles, with the Secretary of State for many purposes in the place of the Local Government Board.

Part III. deals with the provision of working-class lodging-houses and cottages. It is adoptive and affects urban district councils (including boroughs) and rural district councils (subject to an over-riding control on the part of the County Council). The authorities referred to are empowered to acquire land within their areas by compulsory purchase for workmen's dwellings, and the price paid must be the fair market value, and in addition an allowance for compulsory purchase (which

is generally about 10 per cent.). The land so acquired may be already covered, or in part covered, by workmen's dwellings, and the local authorities may build workmen's dwellings. Land vested in local authorities for the purposes of Part III. of the Act may be sold in order that more suitable land may be purchased, or may be exchanged for more suitable sites. Property which after seven years it is thought unnecessary or too expensive to retain may be sold. All action under Part III. must be sanctioned by the County Council in the case of rural districts and by the Local Government Board in all other cases. Such rents may be charged as the local authorities think fit. Arrangements are made as regards expenses and borrowing. It is provided that Public Works Loan Commissioners may lend not only to local authorities, but to individuals, companies, and public utility societies. The Settled Land Act is also amended to admit of the principles embodied in Part III. Part IV., which is supplementary, deals with unhealthy areas in London, and other matters which need not be noticed in this sketch. Part V. relates to Scotland, and Part VI. to Ireland.

The Act of 1890 has since been amended in some important respects. In 1894 the financial provisions of Part II. were altered. In 1900 urban districts were empowered to buy land (for the purposes of the Act) and build houses outside their districts; some of the difficulties placed in the way of the adoption of Part III. of the principal Act were removed; power was given to lease land acquired under Part III. if its uses for the purposes of Part III. were insured; powers given to rural district councils under Part III. were made transferable to the County Council in the case

of any area whose rural district council had been proved neglectful in exercising such powers. Further improvements in the law were made in 1903. Under the Act of that year the sanction of Parliament for schemes under Part I. of the Act of 1890 is dispensed with when no land is taken compulsorily or no petition by owners of land taken compulsorily is presented or, if presented, is withdrawn. The power of the Local Government Board to compel the adoption and carrying out of a scheme is strengthened, and generally procedure is shortened and cheapened. Local authorities are empowered to recover from the owner losses involved in demolishing premises unfit for human habitation when the owner has neglected to do so. 'Neighbouring lands' may be included under a Part II. scheme, but to these lands the clause prohibiting an additional charge for compulsory purchase does not apply. In Part III. scheme the provision of 'shops, recreation-grounds, or other buildings or land which in the opinion of the Local Government Board will serve a beneficial purpose in connection with the requirements of the persons for whom the dwelling accommodation or lodging-houses are provided' is permitted. Larger periods for repayment of loans are sanctioned, and housing loans are not to be accounted a part of the debt of local authorities, which is limited under the Public Health Act.

Other valuable facilities are added by Part I. of the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 which deals with the housing of the working classes. Part III. of the principal Act (1890) is made to take effect without adoption. Local authorities are allowed to buy land and hold it for future needs, as regards the housing of the working classes, if it is purchased by agreement.

The period within which loans made by the Public Works Loan Commissioners must be repaid is extended. Local authorities may construct roads on land acquired under Part III. of the principal Act or contribute to their cost. The hands of the Local Government Board are again strengthened for enforcing execution of the Housing Acts. Also powers of transferring to the County Council the duties of rural district councils, when they are apathetic, are extended. Occupiers of houses under certain rentals must admit the landlord, or any person authorised by him or the local authority, to see whether the house is being kept reasonably fit for human habitation, and the local authority may, subject to appeal, require work to be done to make such houses reasonably fit for human habitation; or, in default of the owner, perform the work itself and recover the cost. Local authorities may themselves make closing orders, subject to appeal. The hygienic standard required in cellar-dwellings used habitually as sleeping-places is raised. As regards powers of reconstruction, Part II. of the principal Act is made similar to Part I. The need of confirmation of improvement schemes by Parliament is entirely removed. The proceeds of sales of land vested in a local authority for the purposes of Part III. of the principal Act may be applied to any purpose. A general power of entry of dwelling-houses for inspection or survey is given to the local authority and the Local Government Board. The Local Government Board may order inquiries by local authorities with a view to the application of the Housing Acts. Joint housing committees of local authorities for contiguous districts under different authorities may be sanctioned.

It is no longer obligatory for local authorities to sell and dispose of any lands or dwellings acquired or constructed by them for any of the purposes of the Housing Acts. It is no longer lawful to erect back-to-back houses ; but back-to-back tenements are not prohibited providing they are certified by the medical officer of health as so arranged and constructed as to permit of effective ventilation of all habitable rooms in each tenement. The Local Government Board may require the revocation of any by-laws which in their opinion unreasonably impede the erection of dwellings for the working classes.

Thus in the matter of working-class housing a permissive and exceptional authority on the part of local government has expanded into a normal and even obligatory function.¹ The causes are a deeper understanding of the problem of housing, the developing social consciousness—which is markedly associated with town life—and improvement in the means of giving effect to civic aspirations which has resulted from the evolution of local government and the growth of wealth per head of the population.² The progressive circumscription of private rights, while the value of private

¹ Volumes on Housing are now legion. In addition to those already referred to, or to be referred to, specific mention may be made of Eberstadt, *Handbuch des Wohnungswesens*, Thompson's *Housing Handbook* and *Housing Up to Date*, Marr's *Report on Manchester*, and the writings of T. C. Horsfall.

² It is our intention to avoid being drawn into a discussion of financial questions ; but attention must be drawn to the difficulty which local authorities are experiencing with regard to revenue, because of the restricted basis of local taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to this in his budget statement in 1914, and declared that much social betterment work was being held back in consequence. It is intended that the difficulty should be met by larger Exchequer grants, their proper use being secured by a system of distribution according to needs and work undertaken.

property is safe-guarded, though its forms are regulated, is a noticeable feature of the change that has taken place. As an embodiment of value, private property has been left comparatively untouched; but it has been divested of its power of controlling social conditions when the interests of property and of the public conflict, or when the former do not automatically conduce to the latter. Naturally, the change in the balance between private and public liberties is greatest in the towns where a concentration of population has created new public needs. In the towns the change may seem revolutionary when a comparison is drawn over a limited period, but it must be remembered that *laissez-faire* had been rendered excessive by the violent reaction against public restraints of a century ago.

Housing legislation has evolved to a large extent out of general sanitary legislation. This being so, the powers of local authorities in the matter of housing conditions are contained in part in Housing Acts and in part in general Sanitary Acts. Analysis of the intricate problem of health revealed the fact that bad housing was one cause of sickness, and regulations having this primarily in view became a substantial portion of specific housing legislation. In view of the connectedness of Housing Acts and the law regarding Sanitation, something should be said of the latter, but limitations of space prevent anything more than the barest reference. A series of Acts followed the report of the Royal Commission which considered the question of Urban Sanitation in 1844, and, generally speaking, powers were progressively extended and made compulsory.¹ Over-crowding, if it were due to the presence

¹ On the first steps see Miss Hutchins's *Public Health Agitation*.

of more than one family in the house (a limiting proviso removed in 1866), given was a place among the nuisances dealt with by the Act of 1855 in case the over-crowding were prejudicial to the health of the inmates. A great impetus was given to reform by the Sanitary Commission of 1869-71. Almost immediately after its report, the Local Government Board was created the central public health authority, and the whole of England and Wales was divided into urban and rural sanitary districts. As a result of interest in matters of health, reflected in sanitary legislation, the state of towns is very different to-day from what it was a generation ago. It is noticeable too that the campaign against disease is now well in touch with contributory causes. Conditions of life within houses, inspection of foods, and provision of open spaces have, for instance, been brought into line with the more obvious duties of removing refuse, controlling outbreaks of infectious diseases, supervising burial-grounds, and preventing rivers from being transformed into open sewers.¹

To have powers is one thing; to exercise them is another. We must now consider the extent to which the public has had recourse to the laws relating to housing. The Royal Commission reported in 1885 that the then existing laws for preventing the congestion of houses and over-crowding within houses had been little used, 'some of them having remained a dead letter from the date when they first found place on the Statute-book.' For the comparative disregard of the Torrens and Cross Acts—the latter of which, however, were less neglected—some of the reasons would seem to have

¹ General questions of health and the use made of medical officers are discussed on pp. 106-116.

been the trouble involved in putting these Acts in force; the matter of compensation which was originally designed unwisely and is actually said to have induced the neglect of slum-property in certain cases; the piecemeal procedure contemplated by the Torrens Act, corrected in 1882 by allowing a group of as many as ten houses to be dealt with under this Act; the costly procedure involved in handling small areas under the Cross Acts, and the prohibition of the sale of cleared sites except for working-class dwellings. But no doubt the chief reason was lack of public interest in working-class housing, and the modest conception of their duties entertained by local authorities. Local government some years after 1888 became a power of a significantly higher order, with a significantly higher opinion of its importance.

But, as Professor Dewsnap has pointed out, however limited the use made of housing legislation by public authorities before 1890, private enterprise, 'though not legislatively recognised until 1855 (by the Labourers' Dwellings Act) and not financially assisted until 1866, was undoubtedly stimulated by the facilities afforded it.' 'In addition,' he continues, 'to the Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes (1847), and the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes (1850), which were established prior to the enacting of the measures named, the following companies and other organisations were all in operation prior to 1890: the Peabody Donation Fund Trustees (1864); the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1864); the Strand Building Company (1867); the Artisans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1867); Bell

Street, Edgware Road, Trust (1870); the National Dwellings Society, Ltd. (1875); the Victoria Dwellings Association (1877); South London Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1879); the East End Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1885); the Metropolitan Industrial Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1886); the Four-per-cent. Industrial Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1887); the Tenements Dwellings Company Ltd. (1887); besides a few similar organisations in the provinces, such as the Newcastle Improved Industrial Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1870), and the Salford Improved Industrial Dwellings Company, Ltd. (1871). The (London) Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes also did some work in Hull. Under the 1866 and 1879 (Public Works Loans Act) Acts, some of these undertakings borrowed considerable sums from the Loans Commissioners. The Metropolitan Board of Works, it may be noticed, sold most of their sites, cleared under the Cross Acts, to the Peabody Trustees, the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company, and the East End Dwellings Company, the statutory rehousing requirements being fulfilled by the purchasers. The quarter of a century succeeding the year 1865 was a period of marked activity on the part of these companies and associations.¹

Some years after the passage of the Act of 1890, greater public activity was witnessed, and it became the more noticeable as soon as certain needful alterations had been made in the law. The loans sanctioned under the Act of 1890, which amounted to less than £23,000 a year on an average between 1891 and 1899, were ten times greater on an average in the next six

¹ *The Housing Problem in England* (Dewsnup), pp. 140-1.

years. It is true that the average fell by more than 60 per cent. between 1899-1905 and 1906-11; but in the year 1912 the level of 1891-9 was almost recovered with sanctioned loans aggregating £229,000, while in 1913 the amount became £403,000, which just passed the £401,000 of the previous record year—namely, 1901. In addition, loans were made by the Public Works Loan Commissioners to certain companies, public utility societies, or private persons, amounting to £95,000 in 1910, £284,000 in 1911, and £198,000 in 1912. Prior to 1910 the highest figure had been £67,000 (in 1909), and on only four occasions, from 1891 to 1908, had the figure exceeded £40,000. The statistics speak for themselves and with some emphasis.

As regards recent events, the following may be quoted from the 1913 report of the Local Government Board: 'It may, we think, fairly be claimed that the result of the passing of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909, has been to kindle a very remarkable activity on the part of a large proportion of the local authorities, which in its turn has tended to some extent to cause owners of small property to take a more enlightened view of their responsibilities to their tenants. Although we cannot pretend to be completely satisfied with the progress which has been made in the direction of the provision of new houses by local authorities—particularly in the agricultural areas of rural districts—we gladly note that there has been a good deal done; and that if allowance is made for the fact that this is a form of municipal activity with which many local authorities are only just beginning to be familiarised and which is beset with some special difficulties, the results are by no means discouraging.'

From the experience of the past in re-housing, certain maxims may be deduced. An obvious one is that to clear out a slum without regard to what happens to those who lived in it is to insure that another slum shall be created in the place of the one destroyed. It might be thought at first that the sole corollary of this proposition is that re-housing arrangements should precede slum-demolition, as is commonly required at the present time. As a matter of fact, however, this is not a sufficient precaution ; and actually the new dwellings which have been provided under re-housing arrangements in the past have almost invariably appealed to, and been occupied by, a class of tenants different from the class displaced. The new dwellings have commonly been model dwellings ; but, of course, their provision has indirectly relieved the congestion among slum-dwellers. The right inference to draw is that at the very beginning of an attack on a slum the suppression of over-crowding by strict enforcement of sanitary powers must be aimed at ; and that, in carrying out this policy, provision must be made if necessary for the residuum of the community in block-dwellings and lodging-houses where sanitary conditions are rigorously insisted upon.¹ If people's habits are ignored, reforming steps are bound to be futile, and higher standards of living are but gradually induced.

¹ As regards lodging-houses, a matter on which we have no space to expand, it may be pointed out that they must be viewed as serving the double purpose of regular dwelling-places and poor men's hotels. Moreover, the importance of establishing municipal lodging-houses exclusively for women cannot be over-emphasised. One was instituted in Glasgow in 1872, and Manchester opened another in 1910 ; but there are few, if any, others, and private institutions are quite inadequate and unsuitable to meet the demand.

Left free of control, habitual slum-dwellers carry about in themselves the causes of slums, as Miss Octavia Hill has repeatedly affirmed. The kind of psychological curative work done by Miss Octavia Hill is of immense service in preparing the way for slum-demolition. After the object-lesson of her long and successful labour in reforming slum-property, and its tenants at the same time, the community can have no excuse for overlooking the personal factor in the housing problem.

The vital significance of the personal factor in every aspect of social betterment will be impressed upon the reader repeatedly throughout these pages. It is not going too far to say that one essential element in most social problems consists in the fact that certain individuals have slipped down to, or have never risen above, levels of conduct beneath the minimum standard required by the community. A social consciousness, involving certain conceptions of duty, obligation, and decency, is fast becoming standardised—indeed, to be exact, we may say that it is already standardised to some extent in distinct but related types corresponding to different classes. Where social betterment is called for, in the way of repairing flaws in certain conditions of life, it is generally discovered that the persons affected have lost this social consciousness and that enduring betterment can only be secured by aiding them in recovering it. ‘Individualising’ is the term applied when the problem is one of public aid. Miss Octavia Hill’s practical demonstrations, and the relapses that have followed housing reform where they have been ignored, prove that in housing reform this individualising (which means repeating or restoring in the individual such social sentiments and powers of

control as have made through standardisation for the cohesion of the community) is as valuable as in public aid. Miss Octavia Hill's work—or work of a like kind—is being carried on to-day in a few places, and in more than one town it has been taken up by a limited liability company.¹ In Glasgow it is undertaken by the ladies of the Kyrle Society, and in Edinburgh by the Social Union. The latter association acted for some time as 'factor'—that is, agent—for municipal blocks of dwellings, on the request of the Town Council, with marked success.²

It cannot be too emphatically insisted that insanitary conditions must be suppressed as soon as they appear. Not a few of the expensive demolitions in the past would have been unnecessary had the local authorities been in full possession of the facts at an earlier stage, and insisted then on repairs and the maintenance of hygienic conditions; and, at the same time, not a few outbreaks of disease would have been avoided. In many parts of Germany, regular inspection of workmen's dwellings is insisted upon, and under the conditions of modern life it is eminently to be desired. Until recently modified, the English system had been to inspect only when complaint was made, or when disease had broken out, or when there were reasons to expect that conditions were insanitary. But the non-expert occupier cannot be relied upon either to detect gravely insanitary conditions, or to

¹ See e.g. paper by Mr. Wilson in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, February 9, 1900.

² The reports on the experiment made by the Medical Officer of Health and the Borough Engineer were highly favourable. Our thanks are due to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh for kindly placing information at our disposal in the spring of 1910.

declare his mistrust, since the poor occupier is frequently afraid of giving offence to a landlord upon whose goodwill he may be dependent in bad times. Moreover, from the outside of dwellings and without the use of tests, dangers of disease are not likely to be discovered. The only guarantee of safety is official inspection by persons in a sufficiently strong position to resist undue pressure, whether bad sanitation is suspected or not. Few working-class tenants dream of requiring inspection, and it is said to be common for landlords to refuse tenants who demand it. If standards of sanitation are so unreasonably high or inflexible that the landlord must protect himself in this way, they should be modified. Little good can be done by a sanitary law which can be nullified by implicit contracting out. The system which is passing away—but not without sullen resistance here and there—fails just where failure is most dangerous: that is, in the poorest urban districts where insanitary conditions are most deadly because of the congestion of the population.

Under the Act of 1909, it is the duty of every local authority, within the meaning of Part II. of the Act, to arrange for a periodic inspection, with the object of ascertaining whether any dwelling-houses are unfit for habitation. In order to secure the proper performance of this duty, the Local Government Board in the autumn of 1910 issued regulations, as they were empowered to do, and arranged for information to be supplied by medical officers in their annual reports. The Local Government Board does not as yet speak enthusiastically of the surveys, but it prudently aimed first at securing detailed examination where the need

was greatest. Generally speaking, the ideal of thoroughness and comprehensiveness in the matter of inspection has yet to be attained. But there has been striking improvement under the new law. In the years ending March 31, 1911, 1912, and 1913, 19,500, 47,000, and 63,000 houses respectively were made fit for human habitation in England and Wales, and even the smallest number marks a great advance on what was usual some years previously.¹

No discussion of urban health conditions would be complete without some reference to a question which has economic, æsthetic, and social aspects, as well as an hygienic one—namely, pollution by smoke. Coal-smoke in the atmosphere is detrimental to health, both directly and in intercepting the sun's light; poisonous to plant life and destructive in other respects. Moreover, if the air is sooty, the proper ventilation of houses entails the admission of so much dirt that an unsatisfactory compromise is reached in low standards, both of ventilation and cleanliness, which react on the whole *morale* of the district. Some encouragement to hope for better things may be found in the comparative immunity from smoke already attained in a few places as a result of local effort or public spirit. In the matter of domestic hearths, recent testings of grates have proved how considerably smoke may be reduced when certain principles are observed in their construction; and with regard to the furnaces of factories and other works the same has been established. At some time in the future,

¹ See Memoranda of the Local Government Board relative to the operation of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, Cd. 6494 (1912) and Cd. 7206 (1913); also annual reports of the Local Government Board, 1911-13.

to safeguard the health of the community and the amenities of urban life, grates and furnaces will have to take their place, side by side with sanitary arrangements, as things to be brought up to a certain standard through the agency of by-laws and inspection. Without public action, little improvement can be expected, since nothing appreciable would result from any individual's trouble or self-sacrifice in the public interest; and yet everybody would gain if everybody were compelled to minimise the nuisance of his smoke. It should be added that a more extensive substitution of gas for coal has also been recommended. If this line of action is found to be advantageous, it is obviously undesirable that contributions should be made to the rates out of the receipts from municipal gas undertakings.¹ The recently appointed Royal Commission may be expected to give the needful stimulus to thought and action with a view to the abatement of the smoke trouble.

Attention may now be more specifically focused on the policy of house provision by local authorities. The question whether a local authority should itself find houses for the working classes was more frequently asked a dozen years ago than it is to-day. After 1890, extensive schemes of city improvement were undertaken, and municipalities found themselves rebuilding on cleared sites and developing new estates before most of their members or their constituents had realised that an important new departure had been made. 'In Glasgow,' said Professor Smart in his presidential address

¹ On the whole of this subject see Graham's *Smoke Prevention*, Markel's *The Smoke Problem*, and publications of the Coal-smoke Abatement League.

to Section F of the British Association in 1904, 'it began to come home to the citizens that very gigantic operations were being carried out and very gigantic responsibilities for the future being incurred, without, as it seemed, any thorough diagnosis or any definite plan.' The citizens of other towns began to be stirred about the same time, and the more cautious and the more logical anxiously sought for guiding principles. In Glasgow a Municipal Commission, consisting of nine councillors and six private citizens, was appointed with a remit, in effect, to inquire into the whole working-class housing problem of Glasgow; but it was fully understood that municipal enterprise in this sphere was on its trial. It was a foregone conclusion that the Commission would approve the most unbending 'negative action,' as we may call it (that is, insistence on hygienic conditions), on the part of the local authorities; the matter in doubt was whether positive municipal action (i.e. municipal building and landlordism with respect to working-class dwellings) would be approved or not. 'So far as I am able to judge,' wrote Professor Smart in the address already quoted, 'the real housing problem of to-day narrows itself down to this: how far the experience gained points in the direction of the municipality itself building and owning houses for certain of the poorer classes.' Certainly that was the leading question publicly canvassed. To it the Glasgow Commission offered a cautious answer. It recommended a limited scheme of municipal building and owning 'without expressing any opinion upon the general policy of municipal housing.' This non-committal answer was no doubt the most judicious for the time, in approving what was being done, without supporting

the more doctrinaire progressives, who hotly maintained that much house-building and house-owning should follow tramway and gas and water undertakings into the enclosure of public activities.

Against the proposals of the extremists it has been maintained that extensive public landlordism would impose on municipalities a task, in the way of undertaking, management, and finance, of an order of magnitude far above that of any other task hitherto successfully assumed. It has also been maintained that the risk per unit of capital invested would be very considerable; but this is not so obvious, for though private residential estate developing on a moderate scale is highly speculative, estate developing on a large scale need not be so. All must have roofs over their heads, and the municipality could use this necessity to control the vagaries of demand which lie at the root of the riskiness of house property. It could, however, be contended with some force that as the business of house provision was stripped of its speculative elements, local authorities would be in effect clothed with large powers of ordering the manner of life of their constituents, which might prove intolerable. One might conceivably question the ability of town councils to design houses in a pleasing fashion, as well as question their ability to build economically and manage house property efficiently; but, unfortunately, private enterprise cannot point to results, in the way of house provision, which compel an ecstasy of admiration. That there is a well-defined dividing-line between the other economic services furnished by local authorities and house-owning and building, needs no emphasis. As a rule these other

services were wholly or partially monopolised before they were municipalised, and were bound to be so from their very nature, as house-owning and building are not, need not be, and never can be, in large towns. Yet, the foregoing adverse contentions notwithstanding, that local authorities owe a special duty of some kind in the matter of working-class housing, it needs only to be slightly acquainted with the facts to allow fully.

Before an attempt is made to define the sphere of local authorities, with reference to the housing question, recognised by the more cautious reformers, one argument must be dealt with which has constantly been pressed to induce municipalities to extend their housing operations. The argument to be examined insists, rightly, on the importance of good houses; affirms that the poorest classes cannot afford good houses at their existing rents; and claims that it is, therefore, the duty of municipalities to find such houses at such rents as the poorest can pay. Some who subscribe to this declare that rents could be fixed so as to render the investment remunerative and yet be kept low, because of the low rates at which municipalities can borrow; while others boldly take the line that, if need be, rents must be unremunerative and the difference be found out of the proceeds of the rates. Both contentions raise controversial issues.

If any burden falls on the rates, the proposal means supplementing the wages of a large section of the community. In short, what is recommended is a gigantic extension of public aid. It might be desirable to subsidise housing on special grounds—education is free, or State subsidised, and *prima facie* a similar case might be made out for subsidising the

provision of certain kinds of shelter for the community¹—but the alleged inability of a large class of the community to pay sufficient rent does not settle the question. Any such inability has no more specific reference to houses than to other things on which wages are spent, and it therefore raises not a housing question, but the broader question of wages. To an extensive system of allowances on wages there are weighty objections; and, in addition to these, yet another has been brought to the scheme recommended. It is feared that it might have a serious effect in artificially stimulating urbanisation. The reduced rents might attract more people to the towns—and to the large towns, because it is the large towns whose authorities would probably be most active in housing enterprises—and one thing about which all reformers are agreed is that the drift to the towns should not be stimulated artificially. Moreover, given the attraction, urban dwellers would soon be no better off with reduced rents than they had been previously,² for, as their numbers rose, their wages would fall. Would there be effective attraction? we may ask. As to this Professor Smart writes: ‘To deny such causal connection between wages and public subsidies on the ground that it is “only sixpence a week,” or that “people do not come into cities because they can get cheap houses,” is like refusing to believe in natural law because one cannot actually see the minute

¹ See Pigou's *Warburton Lecture* (Manchester University Press).

² This argument could not be pressed, of course, if all rents, including rural cottage rents, were reduced at the same time in a similar manner. It is interesting to note that a Bill proposing in effect the subsidising of rural cottage rents was rejected in 1913.

movements which constitute its operation.’¹ But on the other side it may plausibly be maintained that people are influenced in their determination to go to the towns not by the lot of those who sink, but by the lot of those who swim; and that subsidised dwellings for the former could not, therefore, affect the influx to any appreciable extent. The adequacy of this reply depends in the main upon the possibility of confining the subsidies to people with the lowest incomes.

So much may be said as regards an extensive subsidising of urban rents on the ground of the poverty of the population. And as to the alternative plan of getting low rents, without imposing any burden on the rates, through cheap municipal borrowing, it may be doubted whether this is feasible. Large borrowing and cheap borrowing seldom go together, and there is always the possibility of loss through uneconomical building or management to allow for.

The foregoing *caveats* and criticisms notwithstanding, it cannot be denied that, in the matter of housing, a specially strong case can be made out for some municipal action not merely of the negative kind, particularly in view of the fact that the negative and positive are in reality linked together. Magistrates and local authorities will not be rigorous in exercising their powers, and cannot be expected to be rigorous, if they have a suspicion that they are harassing people to no good purpose, and, maybe, causing additional hardship to those whose lot is already hard enough. Moreover, though there are great differences, as we have affirmed, between, say, the provision of water and

¹ *Report of the British Association, Cambridge Meeting*, p. 644.

the provision of houses, there are also affinities. Both bear intimately on the conditions of health and efficiency, and the latter in addition bears in no remote degree on morals. And, beyond this, there is the further plea that reform is so badly needed that even heavy risks may justifiably be assumed. Inductively and deductively, it seems proven that municipalities owe to the residuum in our cities a special duty, which happens at the same time to be a part of their general duty to the public, and that in performing this special duty they can hardly avoid being drawn into supplying dwellings and managing them. At least model lodging-houses and block-dwellings, strictly regulated, are needed, in the opinion of many, for the restraint and education of those who perpetuate slum-life, as well as for their shelter ; and the problem of slums is too urgent to allow of procrastination in the hope that private endeavour will meet the need, if indeed it can satisfactorily. Without such harbours of refuge in reserve, municipalities would naturally hesitate to push their campaign against dirt and over-crowding, lack of ventilation, bad sanitation, and neglected dwellings. Moreover, it may be to the advantage of the community that public authorities should go yet a step further. To keep alive their ideals and add to their understanding for the control of housing, if for no other reason, it may be desirable that they should try to show by example the right way in working-class housing, provided that no attempt is made to exert a depressing influence on competitive rents. And there are other reasons for public enterprise in this matter. Private enterprise, which works fairly well on the whole and in the long run, now and then fails. In view of the

considerations advanced above, and of the now generally admitted importance of detailed oversight by the town authorities as regards the character of a town's extensions—particularly with the object of preventing snatches at small present gains from causing large future sacrifices and perhaps spoiling a district irretrievably—there is no social affair in which a judicious interweaving of private enterprise, public control, and public enterprise is more urgently requisite than in housing, especially with reference to the working classes.

The fear that local authorities as a whole may go too far in their building enterprises is so infinitely remote that the practically minded will find no interest in discussing the possibility. It is estimated by the Local Government Board that of the dwelling-houses suitable for occupation by the working classes, which may be put at about 5,500,000, no more than 15,000 can have been erected by local authorities since 1890. In view of this, the apprehension that private enterprise has been, or will be, checked may be regarded as devoid of solid foundations. The Board declares that it sees no signs of any such check, and expects none, seeing that it is only when private enterprise has failed that local authorities are required to take action; moreover, it reports that private enterprise would actually seem to have been stirred into action, in some cases, by building, or threats of building, on the part of local authorities. It is true that a raising of the standard of private building may have been necessitated by the competition of municipal houses, which is hardly to be regretted; but, on the other hand, the private builder has gained, in that local authorities have

occasionally discovered by experience that their building by-laws were needlessly restrictive and have amended them in consequence. It is a supine acquiescence in the things that be (even if they include a house famine and a crowd of dilapidated dwellings), rather than a too exuberant exercise of their powers, which the Local Government Board finds it has chiefly to contend against.¹

Though there may be a necessity to re-house the residuum of the population on fairly central sites, there can be no doubt that the ideal as regards ordinary working-class houses is to carry extensions to the suburbs, and even beyond the 'suburbs' as ordinarily understood. This policy may have been impossible in the past, but it is quite feasible in these days of developed transport facilities. All around now one may see it in operation, but nowhere more thoroughly than in Belgium, from the experiences of which country much may be learnt.² Public authorities which manage their own tramways can work housing extension and tramway extension in unison with one another and thus eliminate speculative elements from both. And re-housing schemes can be carried even farther afield with the co-operation of railways.

In 1883 the dispersion of the industrial population for residential purposes was facilitated by the Cheap Trains Act, which enacted that railway companies on providing a sufficiency of trains for workmen going to and from their work between the hours of 6 P.M. and

¹ On all the above, see Part II. of the 1913 *Report of the Local Government Board*, particularly pp. xxxiv to xxxvi.

² See, e.g., Rowntree's work on Belgium, and the writings on the subject by Professor Mahaim.

8 A.M., at such fares as seemed to the Board of Trade reasonable, should be exempt from passenger duties on all fares of no more than a penny a mile and allowed a reduction of passenger duties on other fares on certain conditions. In 1905 the Select Committee in Workmen's Trains noted with admiration the extent to which Belgium had gone in the matter of creating rural residential districts for workmen by furnishing cheap tickets, and recommended further facilities for workmen's travel in Great Britain. The chief of these were: (1) that the time limit of 6 P.M. to 8 A.M. should be removed and the hours of the trains be settled according to local needs, and (2) that cheap workmen's tickets for use on certain ordinary trains should be issued where there was need and workmen's trains were not provided. The reason for the latter recommendation was that it did not pay to start workmen's trains to places at the initial stages of their development, when nevertheless it was desirable to attract working-class residents. The proposals of the select committee have not hitherto been incorporated in legislation, but it is unlikely that they will be entirely without effect on the action of railway companies. Indeed, much has already been done. Running into and from London there were about 260 workmen's trains in 1890, 900 in 1905, and nearly 1,750 in 1911; but the London County Council has been anything but dumbly acquiescent when checked by a policy of inaction or very tentative procedure on the part of railways.¹

Dr. Cannan, in his presidential address to Section F of the British Association in 1902, pilloried the folly

¹ *London County Council Notes on the Housing of the Working Classes in London*, prepared by the Clerk of the Council, pp. 107-9.

of checking by legislation the natural dispersion of the working-class population to the suburbs. 'As great cities grow, it becomes convenient that their centres should be devoted to offices, warehouses, and shops, and that people who work in these places, and still more their families, should live in the outskirts.' It is argued that artificial restraints have secured the perpetuation of what is inconvenient, and brought it about 'that there are in quarters of London, most unsuitable for the purpose, enormous and repulsive barrack-dwellings, the sites of which are devoted *in sæcula sæculorum* to the housing of the working classes; while the immense cost of devoting them to this instead of to their proper purpose is debited to the cost of improving the facilities for locomotion or to education, and is defrayed principally by the rates on London property—which chiefly consists of houses—and to some extent by the higher charges on the railways consequent on the restriction of facilities for extension.'¹ Happily, local authorities, under working-class housing legislation, have been allowed for some time to arrange for re-housing in the suburbs and even outside their own little kingdoms; and it is certain that no restrictions should be imposed upon their liberty of making improvements which to any extent prevent population from being dispersed. As regards the re-housing obligations of railway companies, the Select Committee on Workmen's Trains of 1903-5 recommended that when a railway company displaced workmen's dwellings under statutory powers, it should not be under obligation to erect others in the vicinity of those displaced, but that 'powers should be given

¹ *Transactions of Section F, British Association Report, 1902.*

to the company to acquire land in the suburbs, erect workmen's dwellings there, and convey the workmen by cheap trains.' In making this recommendation, the Committee pointed out that re-housing in the neighbourhood of the demolished habitations had not achieved its ends (directly, at any rate), as, in most cases, the dwellings erected under regulations had been taken and occupied by a class of persons for whom they were never intended. The present re-housing obligations (relating to any authority, company, or person who are acquiring land compulsorily or by agreement under any local Act or Provisional Order or order having the effect of an Act, or are acquiring land compulsorily under a general Act) are contained in Section 3 and the Schedule of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1903. When the displacement of thirty or more persons is involved, the promoters are required to inform the Local Government Board, and, if it is insisted on, adopt a re-housing scheme approved by the Board, who must take into account any displacements that have occurred in the previous five years through the acquisition of land by the promoters (a new provision intended to checkmate evasion, to which attention had been called), and may in addition insist on the completion of all or some of the new dwellings before displacement begins. This arrangement has placed it within the powers of the Local Government Board to render re-housing obligations much more elastic, as they would seem to be doing. In the year 1912-3, in six cases only out of nineteen was any re-housing required.

If dispersion of the population is the end to aim at, the broad question of the sort of houses to be provided largely settles itself; for where land is cheap

the low, self-contained cottage is the most economical form of dwelling. It is only where population is congested and land dear that it pays to work sites intensively, so to speak, and erect on them high buildings with expensive foundations and costly lateral supports. Habit largely settles which form of dwelling is preferred. In many continental towns, several families will frequently occupy a house in separate tenancies; and the same custom prevails to some extent in certain Scotch towns, and in Newcastle-on-Tyne and parts of London. But the one-family house is the ideal, where it is possible, because it makes home-life less public and allows children to run readily into the open air. The other system easily leads to slums. A few dirty and careless tenants tend to contaminate the rest, who must also suffer, however tidily disposed, from the neglectful ways of neighbours using the same stairs.

The tenement-house evil, recently exposed in some American cities, may serve as a warning, though it may be that the trouble is not so extensive as the first alarmists would have led one to suppose.¹ It has been said on good authority that 'in America there are few cities to-day, outside of New York, where there exists a tenement-house problem, and few where there exists even an acute housing problem'; but the New York Commission discovered the germs of a tenement-house problem in Boston, Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Jersey City, and Hartford, and bad housing conditions in other cities. Following the New York lead, other cities made investigations, and in several states useful laws have been enacted. The evils of over-crowding

¹ *The Tenement House Problem*, edited by De Forest and Veiller.

and insanitary conditions in tenement houses in New York were brought to the notice of the public by a committee of the Charity Organisation Society in 1898. The Commission referred to above was thereupon appointed, and it disclosed such a wretched state of affairs in its report of 1900 that there was created for the City of New York a District Tenement House Department, which has already done excellent work. In the Report of the Commission in 1900 it is pointed out that 'the most terrible of all features of tenement-house life in New York . . . is the indiscriminate herding of all kinds of people in close contact.' Some reformers think that the best cure of the evils found in tenement houses is the suppression of the tenement-house system where it is possible. A special report on housing conditions in Buffalo, prepared by two Buffalo members of the Tenement House Commission, declares: 'There is no necessity whatever for the existence of the tenement-house system. There is plenty of room for houses of moderate height, easily accessible from all parts of the city by the present means of transportation. . . . It seems possible, therefore, by the enforcement of sufficiently strict regulations, to exterminate gradually the evil as it exists.' However, it must be remembered that in a city like London the tenement-house system is bound to arise naturally by the mere process of conversion of districts. Many a private family house of the early part of the last century has now become a 'tenement house' or a lodging-house, and the transformation has set its seal on the domestic habits of the people.¹ Many of the districts where the transformation has taken place need

¹ Newman, *The Health of the State*, p. 165.

to be carefully watched. Finally, it may be repeated that, despite the conclusions reached as regards the tenement-house system, no more satisfactory method of dealing with the residuum of the population living in the heart of a great city than to place them in strictly regulated block-dwellings has hitherto been devised.

Much over-crowding in the past was associated with back-to-back houses; but after their condemnation by the Royal Commission on Housing of 1885, public opinion increasingly set its face against them. Their continued erection was prohibited by the Housing Act of 1909, and by that time municipalities were generally refusing to allow more to be built. There were a few notable exceptions among municipal authorities, however, and there are some few people who still contend that, safeguarded by suitable regulations, they present more advantages than disadvantages. They are cheaper because they mean an economy of land, material, and time spent in building, and their external appearance is superior to that of cheap houses with open backs. It is to be feared, however, that ordinarily the penalty for outside neatness, when it is found, which is seldom, is inside filth; and the absence of through ventilation is a serious drawback from an hygienic point of view. In the course of the campaign against them a mass of statistical evidence was brought forward which seemed to place their comparative unhealthiness beyond doubt.¹ Recently (in August 1910) a report was issued by the Local Government Board on the relative mortality in back-to-back houses in thirteen industrial towns in the West Riding, where they are chiefly to be met

¹ For example, Dr. Tatham's reports to the Manchester Corporation.

with. 'On the whole,' says Dr. Mair, who made the investigation, 'it is reasonable to infer from the data given that even in good types of back-to-back houses situated in healthy areas the mortality from all causes is higher by 15 to 20 per cent. than in comparable through-houses, but that this excess is not evident in back-to-back houses built with means of side-ventilation. Furthermore, it may likewise be inferred that the chief sufferers from residence in back-to-back houses are infants, young children, and old persons.' The groups of diseases showing excess are diseases of the chest like bronchitis and pneumonia, and diseases especially associated with defective growth and development of children. The back-to-back plan is consistent with side-ventilation if the houses are built in blocks of four only, so that each house has two open sides and therefore means for a through draught. This arrangement is sometimes known as the Mulhouse system, as houses so designed are common in what is now Mülhausen in Elsass. They unavoidably retain, however, some of the defects of back-to-back houses.

Many years ago, at the time when the dominating economic philosophy was that of *laissez-faire* and the obvious way of social amelioration was thought to lie along strictly individualistic lines, there was no more popular movement than that which aimed at securing for the workman the ownership of his own home. The movement was pushed with fervour, and the building society came to play a leading part in the struggles of industrial communities towards social betterment. To-day in England and Wales the building societies registered under the Acts of 1874 and

1875 have a share capital of close on £40,000,000 and total liabilities which approach £60,000,000 ;¹ in Scotland and Ireland their extent is insignificant. But, despite these impressive figures, they no longer occupy their old place in working-class estimation. Of a large part of the funds mentioned above, the middle classes are the owners.

The desire of workmen to get full control of their homes, and have them at least secure, is fully comprehensible. Moreover, there was another reason for the strength of the building society movement in that many workmen had been taught to think that some peculiar advantage attached to the holding of property connected with the land. When Ricardo's theory of rent had left its mark on popular opinion, the seeming discrepancy between the interest on capital and the rent of houses was attributed to some mysterious property in the land, or in land-owning, which enabled the landlord to exploit the occupier. It was supposed that in some fashion the landlord could squeeze his customers—namely, his tenants—as the butcher and the baker could not. A long succession of losses, partially, but by no means entirely, due to fraud or folly, to prevent which the Acts of 1874 and 1875 were passed, in time convinced small investors that house property might prove a highly speculative holding ; and speculative holdings are not for small investors.² Occupying ownership, if it became customary, would, it is true, reduce the speculative

¹ In addition, some co-operative societies have made loans to members to purchase their homes and also undertaken a certain amount of house-building.

² See Brabrook's *Building Societies* and *Provident Societies*.

character of investment in houses ; but only at the expense of the convenience of occupiers. However, it has never become sufficiently customary to affect the fluctuations in the value of house property to a sensible extent. It is not likely now that any extensive use will be made in urban districts of the Act passed in 1899, known as the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, which authorises county councils, county borough councils, and district councils, subject to the consent of the county council, if their population fall short of 10,000, to make advances to residents of small houses to enable them to become owners. After the first enthusiasm of the building-society movement had cooled, the disadvantage of possessing their homes began to be properly appraised by the operative classes. In owning his house, a workman is tied to a particular locality, even to a particular dwelling. No one can depend upon being able to sell without loss. In order to better his position, any day he may be compelled to migrate to another part of the country. And, even if he continues to work in the same town, his needs and tastes may change. The right size of house for a family depends upon the size of the family, which certainly should not be controlled by the accidental circumstance of the choice of a house when the family was small. Moreover, those who have lived in a densely populated part of the town for some time may find it desirable, or needful for health's sake, to move farther from the centre ; and such movement may be rendered more possible by building-extensions and new transport facilities, and more needful on account of the spreading out of the town's business parts. Nor were the

defects enumerated the sole blemishes of working-class house-ownership. The saving of the extra weekly payments needed to purchase the house may have created a habit of providence on the one hand, but in some places it certainly created over-crowding on the other hand and depressed standards of housing accommodation. Families were tempted to take lodgers when there was insufficient space for lodgers, in order to make up the payments for purchase of the house; and their action was imitated by neighbours without the same need. These ill effects were particularly noticeable where already excessive penuriousness was a prevailing vice. Nowhere do they seem to have been more marked than at Mülhausen in Elsass, where the scheme of working-class house-buying was commonly supposed to have succeeded admirably.¹

Much of the disadvantage of complete occupying ownership is removed, while the advantages are retained and new advantages are added, by the system of co-partnership in housing which, though of recent origin, has already been widely adopted in this country. The system, in combining group-ownership with control of his own house by each occupier, affords some guarantee that the individual can retire from the district without incurring serious loss. Any loss sustained is measured not by the fate of his house in letting, but by the fate of the whole group of houses. The incomer takes a share in the whole property and acquires other shares by periodic payments after he has become a resident. On leaving, he disposes of his shares to the group; but if the property has not been a success it may be at a sacrifice.

¹ Herkner's *Die Arbeiterfrage*, pp. 479-80.

Co-partnership in housing links up the old occupying ownership movement with the new garden-city and town-planning movement. Two generations ago the laying of brick to brick and beam to beam by private enterprise, and the adding of street to street, were hastily effected without much thought being given to arrangement and appearances; but of late an inspiring reaction has set in. The public is awakening not only to the fact that an English town is a maze without a plan, in which health and brightness are sacrificed, but also to the fact that the individual, in having to choose between dull houses in dull streets, is not possessed of a choice worth exercising. Indeed, the effective demand for house-room on the part of the poorer classes has been confined to the category of quantity. As qualitative it has been suppressed in not being catered for. To secure for the individual control over the building of his own home was no way out of the difficulty. It has already been shown that it is not possible to make and keep the surroundings of a house agreeable by isolated action. The attractiveness of a small house consists largely in the attractiveness of its environment. The only possible course for reform to take—apart from town-planning, which would bring certain general amenities—was to organise demand in groups for the development of small estates. This has been done with marked success in many places.

The Co-partnership Tenants' Housing Council incorporates social ideas of a co-operative complexion with purely housing objects. It aims at instituting house-owning groups, the members of which shall be loosely bound together in little communities by

something more than participation in a joint economic venture. The leaders of this movement look forward to a development of social instincts out of the residential unity of each group, and they therefore foster schemes within each group which have as their object its transformation into a 'society' in a wider sense. It is this social aspect of the movement which partly explains the limitations as to size which have been imposed upon each Co-partnership Tenants' Company; but the association aims at taking part in every extensive garden-city scheme as well as at establishing small suburbs on its own account—thus in the Hampstead Garden Suburb there are three co-partnership tenants' companies. The Co-partnership Tenants' Housing Council, like the Town-planning and Garden City Association, has instituted a company to nurse the schemes which arise out of its propaganda. Its business company is known as Co-partnership Tenants, Ltd. By a clause in Part III. of the Housing and Town-planning Act of 1909, County Councils are empowered to promote the formation or extension of co-operative societies having for their object, or one of their objects, the erection or improvement of dwellings for the working classes. It may also assist them (and other similar societies which are not co-operative) with loans or guarantees of loans, and may itself borrow for the purpose; but loans must not exceed two-thirds of the value of the property.

Admirable as it is in essence, in giving embodiment to the social consciousness with regard to one of the most fundamental of human needs, as well as in emancipating the individual from his servitude to circumstances, co-partnership in housing has not been

without its drawbacks.¹ One complaint made is that privacy has been too much sacrificed, sometimes, for the tastes of ordinary folks. Some people are shy of much intimacy with neighbours, particularly English people—‘Wherever we are, wherever we go, we carry our cell with us.’ Here and there residents in garden suburbs have found the constant interest of their neighbours, the publicity of existence, and the strain caused by what is expected of them in relation to their social environment, more than they could bear. But in its first ardour every socialising movement is bound to make itself tiresome, occasionally, in some small respects.

A new departure in the matter of housing has been taken by the passage of the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909, but none the less its policy is in the direct line of descent from two branches of social activity in England in the past. Though we are actually treading in the steps of Germany, and have been greatly influenced by her triumphant—if occasionally mistaken²—city management, we are nevertheless following out the destiny to which our past experience undeviatingly points the way. The initial

¹ Some account of its achievements will be found on pp. 73–5.

² Wide and very solid streets, and the massive buildings necessitated both by building regulations and the high cost of sites caused by the high cost of streets, have created rookeries for the dwellings of the people in many German towns. Not a few regulations in England relating to buildings and streets are out of date also; but it is satisfactory to have to record that a departmental committee has just been appointed to look into the matter. Given the provision of adequate main arteries, many streets might be laid down more cheaply as well as with more effect (see Part II. of 1913 *Report of the Local Government Board*, pp. xliv to xlvi; also pp. 55–6 above).

impulse for the new departure came from two sides. On the one side was the garden-city and garden-suburb movement, into which interest in model villages and co-operation had broadened. On the other side was the demand for town improvement, out of which naturally arose the claim that the general plan of a town should be placed more under the control of the local authorities than it had been in the past.

The history of the development of a town-planning policy, as it is now advocated in this country, is a long tale. The garden-city and garden-suburb movement stretches back to the early days of housing reform and the housing enterprises started by employers for their workpeople, or by landowners for the rural population. Saltaire, built by Sir Titus Salt for his workpeople, was started in 1853; and Bessbrook, near Newry, in Ireland, as early as 1846. And, as regards rural housing, Edensor, on the Chatsworth estate, must be specially mentioned as an experiment in social betterment in advance of its time. Saltaire bears the mark of mid-Victorian conceptions of working-class houses. It cannot be compared in external attractiveness with Bournville or Port Sunlight; but it provided solid comfort, and marked for its day an immense step forward. Abroad, as well as in the United Kingdom, numerous housing estates were started by employers for their workpeople during the second half of the nineteenth century. Of continental enterprises those of the firm of Krupp at Essen call for particular notice, both on account of their magnitude and of the way in which they have progressed with the times. In the early 'sixties' this famous firm housed a number of its people in

cheap and ugly but serviceable barracks. In the 'seventies,' additional 'colonies' were established, including Cronenberg, with its two-story and three-story blocks, containing nearly 1600 separate dwellings. The idea of the garden district was not applied till 1890 at Baumhof, in the name of which the idea is enshrined. Other colonies followed. Of these, one of the last is Margaretenhof, where single-family houses and blocks containing a few dwellings, as well as some large blocks, are to be found, attractively designed and surrounded by tasteful gardens. In the United States, model-village enterprises were afforded a wealth of opportunity by the isolation of works in rural districts; and in England, of late, their possible scope has been enlarged by the tendency to carry large works into sparsely populated districts—a tendency considered at the beginning of this chapter.¹

Every betterment scheme seems to bring with it at first unsuspected defects which time alone can repair. The peculiar defect of employers' model villages was that they robbed some workmen of their independence, or at least of their feeling of independence. To many the all-pervading providence of the employer was spiritually suffocating. In some cases an appreciable effect on the workmen's alertness and initiative was said to be observable, and in other cases

¹ An excellent account of housing schemes, and experiments in factory betterment, will be found in Budgett Meakin's *Model Factories and Villages*. See also, as regards Germany, Eberstadt's *Handbuch des Wohnungswesens*. Full accounts of certain typical model workmen's villages in the United States have been published in the *Fifty-fourth Bulletin of the United States Department of Commerce and Labour*, prepared for the St. Louis Exposition, and in Benoit-Lévy's *Cités-Jardins d'Amerique*. Technical points are discussed in Sennett's *Garden Cities in Theory and Practice*.

a sullen resentfulness, which was obviously generated by a fear of slipping into subserviency. To check these consequences, internal committees of management were frequently set up, while clubs and institutes were left wholly to the control of the inhabitants and the support of their voluntary contributions. In some instances, even, it was felt to be necessary—or, at any rate, to be more in accord with modern democratic notions—to hand over the villages to independent trusts with the object of severing the personal connection of the employer with his workmen's homes; and in yet other instances arrangements were made for the workmen to buy their houses. One employer, who possesses a famous model village, informed us that he thought it wise to discourage his employees from becoming his tenants, because the landlord-tenant relation was spoilt by the employer-employee relation, and the latter was in turn undesirably modified by the former. For reasons which can be discovered in the foregoing, workpeople have not as a rule been advocates of the movement for combining the functions of employer and landlord in the absence of a real necessity. And, given the combination, unremunerative rents are especially objectionable, despite the fact that the employers might regard them as remunerative in the long run, because of the social dividend reaped in the enhanced efficiency of the tenants. The question of the status of the employer in this matter is not an easy one to settle. The tangible benefits which accrue from the foundation of villages by employers are so great when so little is done otherwise, that intangible drawbacks must needs be substantial to counteract them. But, other things being equal, independent housing enterprise is best. Other things, however,

are seldom equal : the alternatives are not infrequently no housing betterment or an employer's ; and there are instances in which no option remains for an employer if he is to be left a free choice of a site for his works. Many possible degrees of relationship connecting employers and workpeople lie between the extremes of the complete patronal system on the one hand and the mere cash nexus on the other hand. It is sufficient for our present purpose to draw attention to the dangers of the former, while approving Carlyle's denunciations of the latter ; to hint at the new way indicated by co-operative house-owning, while pointing out that much of the risk of house-building must be reckoned a cost of the business when works are carried to rural sites ; and, finally, to make the trite observation that circumstances alter cases.

The movement for the improvement of our cities received an immense impulse from the construction of Port Sunlight in 1887 and Bournville, which dates in its present form from 1895. Public opinion at that time was fully prepared to welcome new ideas of social amelioration. These two model villages attracted a great deal of attention ; and in 1898 Mr. Ebenezer Howard's book entitled ' Garden Cities of To-morrow ' put into words the vague thoughts of a growing body of reformers which were slowly crystallising into definite schemes. Strong as the town-planning movement was then, it is immensely more vigorous to-day now that Letchworth is in so large a measure an accomplished fact. In 1903 a beginning was made at Letchworth by a company with a nominal capital of £300,000 ; about the same time co-operation was grafted on to garden-city ideas by the institution

of the first Co-partnership Tenant Society; and even earlier the agitation for housing reform had given rise to the National Housing and Town-planning Council. This latter association, which stood alone for a few years, found itself flanked later by two other associations for making town life more inviting—namely, the Garden City and Town-planning Association, established in 1899, and the Co-partnership Tenants' Housing Council, to which reference has already been made. The former of these two new bodies was responsible for getting the company floated which is developing the garden city at Letchworth. It was also instrumental in founding the Town-planning and Garden Cities Company, which assists schemes on their business side, in the preliminary stages, when practical advice and some financial support are usually a pre-requisite of eventual success.

Impressive results in the form of model residential estates, mainly for people of small means, have been already achieved in Great Britain, and more particularly of late years. So far as can be ascertained, the number of houses provided is approaching 10,000. Of these, 2000 are at Letchworth and about 1700 at Hampstead. Between thirty and forty estates are covered by the total, exclusive of municipal enterprises but inclusive of private schemes. In addition, the Manchester Corporation has started a working-class residential estate (at Blackley), which approximates to garden-suburb lines. About 4500 of the houses mentioned belong to societies affiliated to Co-partnership Tenants Limited; and many other houses belong to co-partnership societies of the same class though they are not affiliated to the central body. Nearly all the estates

to which the figures above relate were developed after 1900.¹

In town-planning, a distinction must be drawn between the idea of making a city convenient and beautiful as a whole and the idea of making pleasant and healthy homes for the poorer classes. It is the former idea which was chiefly instrumental in stimulating town-planning in the United States and many continental cities. It is the latter which has in the main accounted for the town-planning movement in the United Kingdom until recently. Again, a distinction must be drawn between town-planning and site-planning. The former is concerned with the scheme of the whole and the general features of districts, while the latter is concerned with the use made of individual sites.

Examples are not wanting of cities that have been planned from the first. These are naturally found in greatest number in America, where ideas are carried into practice with magical rapidity. If the cities which have grown up haphazard tend to become, in course of time, dirty, unhealthy, and inconvenient, those that were originally planned, though hygienic and convenient, have not escaped a depressing monotony of arrangement, though there are finely planned cities like Washington. Frequently they were laid out on the dull chess-board scheme. The existing demand is not for the substitution of purely artificial design for natural growth, but for a due co-ordination of the two, as will be emphasised again later—for design based upon an understanding of social and economic

¹ Details are given in Culpin's *Garden-city Movement Up to Date*. See also Nettlefold's *Practical Housing*, and the writings of Raymond Unwin.

evolution, reasonable anticipation of future needs (which by unregulated growth are so commonly left unprovided for), and appreciation of the æsthetic aspects of things. When thought, on the broad basis described above, is continually being taken for the future, a community should seldom find itself faced with the disagreeable alternative of resting content with ugliness and ill-adaptedness or embarking upon costly improvements. Faced with this alternative, there are probably very few cities which would follow the example of Paris, where, under Baron Haussman supported by Napoleon III., streets were widened, new avenues were cut, and gardens were laid out, at a cost of some £50,000,000. Town-planning for appearances—of the Paris model, as we may term it—explains the recent activities in Chicago, St. Louis, and elsewhere in the United States. There the reaction is against the old utilitarian simplicity, the failure of which, as an adequate basis for city-making, has been accentuated of late by the high steel-frame buildings which, tame or meretricious in design, have been placed here and there without regard to the character of neighbouring buildings. Undoubtedly much thought is now being devoted in the United States to city improvement on what we have called the Paris model, which includes not merely foundation-plans for streets, boulevards, and open spaces, but also the effective use of sites.¹

In the United Kingdom neglect of planning appears to have been one of the numerous faults encouraged by industrial revolution of glorious memory. This event,

¹ See, *inter alia*, *The American City*, a monthly review of municipal problems and civic betterment.

regarded as a complex of change in sociological outlook, technical advance, and economic progress, brought about a too exclusive concentration on the business aspects of life and a too confiding trust in individual enterprise. Previously, large landowners had frequently developed their urban estates under expert advice with an eye to effect, and some city authorities had carried out important schemes of city development; and even subsequently a limited amount of meritorious site-designing continued against its influence. We may instance certain London squares, property at Bath and other pleasure and health resorts, the Edinburgh planning approved in 1767, and the work of Robert Adam in particular and those under his influence.¹ But these examples have reference in the main to site-planning. There is to-day a new interest in site-planning, but to this is added a desire to control the whole scheme of the city as well as the part. It is getting to be recognised that the individual builder is bound to sacrifice public interest to private interest in competing with other builders, and that the sum of the sacrifices vastly exceeds the sum of the gains. Everybody's business is nobody's business, and it is everybody's business which counts for so much with regard to the general amenities of life.²

In England there has been a haphazard growth of towns in the past which has left to the present as a heritage the need of much costly site-clearing and re-arrangement. And, unfortunately, undirected

¹ See article on 'Civic Design' by Professor Adshead in the *Town-planning Review*, No. 1 of vol. i.

² This is a root-argument for social betterment by public action. See pp. 12-13.

growth is still continuing both in the extensions of old towns and the creation of new ones. At the conference on town-planning, held at the Guildhall, London, in October 1907, Mr. Aneurin Williams said 'it was lamentable to see the lovely valleys of Wales disfigured as they were by hideous, formless rows of houses, packed close together, and straggling about the valleys and hillsides, with no sort of designing, no sort of beauty, and very little accommodation for the people in the way of gardens or even of backyards; and this in places where there was any amount of land which for agricultural purposes was of very little value.' If we are correct in our surmise ventured at the beginning of this chapter, the near future will witness the creation and expansion of new industrial centres, and it becomes a matter of urgency, therefore, that the task of urban designing should be taken in hand without delay. It is a favourable augury that the Council of the Association of Municipal Corporations unanimously approved town-planning before the recent Act was passed; it remains to be seen whether their approval expressed merely a theoretical belief or a real desire to act. The country will not be making a leap in the dark. Town-planning is an established success, and not merely in Germany and the United States.

The provisions of the English Housing and Town-planning Act of 1909 are as follows. The Local Government Board is empowered to authorise a local authority (a town council, or urban or rural district council) to make a town plan affecting land within or in the neighbourhood of its area, which is in course of development or is likely to be used for building purposes; or it

may authorise a local authority to adopt a scheme with or without modifications drawn up by all or any of the owners of such land. The plan may provide for the demolition or alteration of existing buildings. Plans must be approved by the Local Government Board and may be rejected by either House of Parliament. Joint town-planning boards may be formed where the area of two or more local authorities is affected. Once plans are approved, the local authorities are clothed with powers to enforce them, including powers to execute necessary work which owners neglect to perform. In cases of dispute the Local Government Board is to be arbiter. Compensation for persons whose property is injuriously affected is provided for; but no compensation can be claimed if the loss of value is occasioned by provisions concerning the space about buildings, the number to be erected, or their height or character, which the Local Government Board consider reasonable. Half the amount of any increase in value of any property caused by the adoption of the plan has to be paid to the responsible local authority if it make a claim. Any land comprised in a town-planning scheme may be acquired for the purpose of the scheme by the responsible authority, or by the authority of the area in which it lies, even if that authority is not responsible for the plan. The land may be bought by agreement, or acquired compulsorily on authorisation of the Local Government Board, which, on objections being made, may require the sanction of Parliament. The compensation for land acquired compulsorily is not to include an additional allowance on account of compulsory purchase. Certain powers of compelling local authorities to prepare

town plans, or enforce them on representation being made, are conferred on the Local Government Board. Expenses connected with town-planning may be charged to the rates, and borrowing is permitted.

In town-designing the general plan must be flexible, and there must be full right of appeal to the Local Government Board on the part of all interested persons. It is desirable, too, that planning should look many years ahead, in order that enterprise in estate development may not anticipate public foresight and the local authorities be thereby cramped in carrying out their ideas; and also in order that there may be no serious clash between the intentions of land-owners and the wishes of the public—a clash which would be inconvenient in itself and a thing to be avoided because the adoption of the views of the local authorities, if put forward at a late hour, might involve writing down the value of the land. When building restrictions are placed upon land which will not be covered for some twenty years, its value is not appreciably affected. There does remain, however, the difficulty that the land may be divided up under separate ownerships in such a way that it is impossible, or exceedingly awkward, to carry out the scheme of building decided upon. This difficulty has been surmounted in Germany by compulsory purchase, or by arranging for the exchange of sections of sites so as to bring about a partition of sites conformable to the town plans.

If their interests are safeguarded in the manner suggested, there are reasons why landlords—and in particular the owners of buildings—should welcome town-planning. The chief of these is that depreciation of building property, through the erection in its vicinity

of premises which alter for the worse the character of the district, is prevented. This means a distinct gain to landlords as a class. At present it is sacrificed—in the same way as the amenity of a smokeless atmosphere is sacrificed—because each landowner or builder schemes for himself and nobody schemes for them all. Moreover, landlords as a class may expect to benefit, or to recoup losses otherwise entailed, in view of the fact that more land is required for residential purposes when houses are not crowded together. And they will economise on the cost of roads, or at least find that the expense of broad thoroughfares provided for in town plans does not necessitate an addition to outgoings under this head. When population is not congested, side streets may be inexpensively laid down. Again, ‘it will be apparent that once the question of through communication has been satisfactorily settled, the subsidiary arrangement of roads admits of treatment in detail which would be impossible under such provisions of general application as can be included in by-laws. The landowner finds that he can afford to surrender the land necessary for the wide main thoroughfares and to make other concessions for the amenity of the neighbourhood if he is compensated in the residential by-ways by a policy which, whilst demanding plenty of width between houses on the opposite sides of the ways, does not require him to form and metal a 36-foot road in a fashion which would fit it for the heavy traffic of a through route.’¹

This demonstration, intended to show that landlords might not suffer from suburb-planning, may be convincing to the landlords; but, if so, will suburb-planning

¹ Page lix of Part II. of 1913 *Report of the Local Government Board*.

highly commend itself to tenants? Clearly, it might be said, we cannot prove that both will gain, for this would be to prove that two and three make four. But Mr. Raymond Unwin, we imagine, would hold that such a miracle is to be counted on. Taking the value of the land as fixed and leaving out of his reckoning the amenities of spaciousness, he shows that, through the lower cost of roads per acre alone, when houses are reduced from thirty-four to fifteen per acre, tenants would get their gardens and recreation-grounds at an insignificant cost. On his computation it would be as if articles which had been sold at 83 for 8*d.* came to be offered at 261 for 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* The gain to the tenant would evidently be substantial. Nor is this all. A check on the intensified use of land would drive down its value per acre, which would mean further gain to the tenant, and probably without involving urban landowners as a class in any loss, since more land would be given urban value as more would be wanted, and there would be in addition the greater security in the annual value of urban land accruing from the suppression of conditions which occasionally ruin suburbs as things are.¹

Professor Patrick Geddes, at the London Conference on Town-planning in 1907, wisely urged that local authorities should take geography and social science into their counsels. The town, he insisted, must first be considered completely and as a living whole, diseased and congested though it might be. Everywhere preliminary surveys should be made—like those of Mr. Booth for London, Mr. Rowntree for York, Mr.

¹ Pp. 52–9 of the *Warburton Lectures on Town-planning at the University of Manchester in 1912.*

Whitehouse for Dunfermline, Mr. Marr for Manchester, Miss Walker for Dundee, and Mr. Howarth and Miss Wilson for West Ham—but on a much broader basis than most of them, the surveys being brought into relation with the economic, social, æsthetic, and geographical conditions of the districts under the guidance of experts in different subjects. On the basis of these surveys the preparation of designs could begin—architectural, economic, and hygienic authorities collaborating in the work. Finally, plans would have to be exposed for criticism and suggestion before definite conclusions could be reached. As Professor Geddes said in the speech already mentioned: ‘Many people rebel against town-planning because they think it may be too mechanical; because they fear, as in American cities, the passing of a T-square over the area to be built over and the rapid ruling of it into equal and similar parallelograms. We must protect ourselves from that misconception by showing that we nowadays work out our plans upon the actual contour lines, with every regard to variations in relief, &c., so that each city extension should have its individual and unique quality, like that which characterises all the great cities of the past.’ It is important, again, that town plans should not contemplate the rigid division of a town into working-class districts, middle-class districts, and an ascending order of better-class districts. The proximity of the dwellings of rich and poor benefits both, though presenting possibly a few disadvantages. A residential district, instead of being homogeneous, should contain people with incomes covering a wide range, as in the case of the Hampstead suburb, if the division of the nation

into distinct camps is not to be perpetuated and society is to work harmoniously, as a united whole. Moreover, congestion in outlying districts must be avoided, as already hinted. It is now prevented in many German cities, the town plans of which allow less of the site to be covered and fewer stories in dwellings in proportion to the distance of the district from the centre.

Town-planning must be distinguished, as we have already remarked, from site-planning or the particular use made of the site within the regulations laid down in the general plan. But site-planning could be influenced by the suggestions of local authorities, of which property owners might be induced to avail themselves freely if local authorities instituted a department of civic design staffed by recognised experts. A movement intended to pioneer to this desired end has been made at Liverpool (where it was rendered possible by the munificence of Sir William Lever) with the institution of a department of civic design, and the establishment of a professorship of the subject, at the University there.

Hitherto, from schemes submitted to the Local Government Board, proposals for site-planning are absent almost without exception. In the 1913 'Report (Part II.) of the Local Government Board' we read as follows: 'So far, the schemes which have come before us have been chiefly concerned with the laying out of the main routes of communication through and from the areas dealt with; with the provision of open spaces; with the limitation of the number of houses which may be erected upon any particular area; with the careful setting back of the building lines so as not only to

secure abundant air space, but also to enable road widenings to take place hereafter at the minimum cost should unforeseen circumstances render these necessary; and with the restriction of factories and similar buildings to particular areas and the setting aside of particular sites for public purposes.' It is satisfactory to learn that authority had been given by the Local Government Board up to the end of March 1913 for the preparation or adoption of 33 schemes by 27 local authorities, embracing a total area of more than 50,000 acres; and that before the end of 1912 it was known officially at the Local Government Board that 124 local authorities had the question of preparing schemes under consideration.

One notable feature of the Town Planning Act of 1909 is the greater power given to local authorities to purchase land, though it only extends over land comprised in the scheme. It remains to be seen after experience whether this limitation should not be removed. Municipal land-purchase is not essentially involved in town-planning, but it should certainly aid public authorities in carrying out their designs. Numerous cases might be cited in which urban authorities could have bought up, at an exceedingly low price, estates in the neighbourhood of the town over which its spread at some time in the future was almost inevitable. On the other hand, cases might be cited in which suburban land has seriously depreciated in value. To avoid municipal land speculation, it would be expedient that the municipality should purchase only when the reasonableness of the price was beyond doubt; and whether they should be clothed with unlimited powers of doing so depends of course

upon the degree of caution, insight, and single-mindedness to be expected of the most influential members of local authorities. In Germany many towns already hold considerable estates, and there are signs of an extension of the policy of encouraging municipal land-purchase, to which some states have committed themselves for many years. Information is given in an article in 'Sociale Praxis' of the holding of land by thirty-one German towns.¹ Of these only seven had less than 24 square yards per head of the population. Six had per head of the population between 24 and 60 square yards, nine between 60 and 120 square yards, five from 120 to 240 square yards, and four over 240 square yards. English cities may not hold land apart from that which has been acquired for a definite purpose; but, for the sake of comparison, Mr. Horsfall has pointed out that all the land in the Manchester parks mean a city holding of less than 9 square yards per head of the population.

The policy of town-planning, united with the steady advance of urbanisation and the wholly desirable tendency to make greater use of outlying districts for residential purposes, raises the difficult question of the expediency of enlarging the area commonly controlled by a town authority. For many years this question has been simmering, particularly with reference to tramway facilities and finance. Indeed, as regards the latter point, the proposal has been made that towns should have powers of rating over the marginal district surrounding their areas on the understanding that the rate should diminish with 'time

¹ December 25, 1902. Quoted from T. C. Horsfall's *Example of Germany*.

distance ' from the centre by existing means of transportation. But we must not allow ourselves to be drawn into the controversial issues connected with local taxation, which, if dealt with at all, must be dealt with at length in view of the massive official and other publications bearing upon them. Mr. Pethick Lawrence, in his essay on the Housing Problem in the *Heart of the Empire*, supports the proposal that ' Provincial Councils ' should be set up relating to the open areas surrounding towns for distances of several miles. The advantages are apparent; but so are the disadvantages in the form of increased complexity of local government and possibilities of friction. There seems, however, to be no convincing reason against re-arranging local areas eventually; a precedent can be found, if one is needful, in the formation of unions of parishes, and the final dethronement of the parish as a unit, for purposes of Poor Law administration. In addition, where towns lie in close proximity, mutual arrangements would have to be entered into: and already they are being entered into; for example, the whole of the boroughs and urban district councils in South Staffordshire have agreed to consider together inter-communication, sewerage, and similar matters. Joint boards for town-planning are, as we have seen, provided for in the Act of 1909.

When we try to conceive the ' city beautiful ' one thought at once arises: Will the freedom of the few to spoil the environment for the many continue indefinitely, so that it will never be possible to prevent adequately the defacing of our cities by ugly and vulgar advertisements, and by other advertisements unobjectionable in themselves but nevertheless made

objectionable in their surroundings by their incongruity? They may have a use in increasing profits and notifying consumers of new ways of spending money, but the unwilling victims of their assaults on the mind lose in irritation more than they gain in any way, if they gain at all. Hideous advertisements draw the eye with mesmeric force, and it is no more possible to disregard them than to disregard the dentist. A little, a very little, has been done to mitigate the annoyance, and here and there abroad tentative steps have been taken, of which the tax on advertisements is one.

In a well-planned town of a moderate size, with the smoke nuisance abated so that the sun's rays are not intercepted, and the cleanliness of houses is not impossible, and vegetation is not blasted in surrounding tracts of country, urban factory life would seem to offer the best that can be attained; for in a town of sufficient magnitude to support a theatre, concerts, libraries, and societies of all kinds—political, literary, and scientific—the full amenities of social life can be enjoyed as they cannot in rural parts. This ideal of town life is already in sight where public spirit is active and a high degree of concerted effort is a possibility.

The problem of rural housing is distinct from that of urban housing. In country parts there cannot be any serious congestion of houses on area, though there may be, and is, an amount of congestion within houses. Again, the latter is not so grave a matter in the country as in the town, since in the country the fresh air and out-door life render innocuous

conditions that would be deadly in the crowded city. The problem of working-class housing in towns began as an hygienic one. There is also an hygienic problem of housing in rural parts, but it is of much smaller dimensions, and it is not the chief part of the constructive problem of rural housing.¹

The root of the trouble in many parts of the country is that it is an old custom for cottages to be provided on estates at unremunerative rents, their provision on such terms being rendered possible by the rents paid for the land. Cottages were regarded as a part of estate equipment, like hedges, gates, and farm-buildings, and there appears to have been no anxiety in the past to get a reasonable rent for a cottage, provided that the estate as a whole yielded a satisfactory return. But times have changed, and an awkward situation has been created. There has been chafing at the system which leaves cottage landlordism to the landowner or farmer, just as there was at the system of ownership of his workmen's houses by the industrial employer. It is said to undermine the independence of the agricultural labourer. But as things are, with the semi-truck rent arrangements in existence, the competitive provision of houses is out of the question in many districts, even apart from the difficulty of obtaining sites. The habit of paying a low rent is ingrained, and, in addition, most agricultural labourers being very poor, a low standard of housing accommodation has established itself. Moreover, the

¹ There is a considerable literature on the subject. Special mention may be made of the book entitled *To Colonise England*, by various writers, and of the *Report of the Select Committee on Rural Housing* (1906).

position has been complicated by causes disturbing the value of agricultural land, rendering the future uncertain, and creating a drift of capital as well as of labour to the towns. As an indirect result of these causes, cottages have been suffered to fall into disrepair, and many beyond repair have not been replaced.

The reports of the Commissioners who conducted the inquiry for the Board of Agriculture in 1906 are distinctly depressing and confirm the numerous unofficial allegations that have been made from time to time. From the Commissioners' reports we learn as follows, to give a few examples:— In Hampshire 'rural homes are utterly insufficient in number and inefficient in character. Young men and women wait until the chance of a vacant cottage occurs before getting married. . . . Complaints about want of repair or insufficient accommodation seldom reach the owners.' In Monmouth 'men will not live in the hovels in which their fathers brought up families; these are gradually being removed and few new cottages are being built, so that there is a positive scarcity. . . . Landlords are naturally reluctant to build in the face of the indefinite future of land-owning generally.' In Cumberland old cottages are allowed to decay, and increased cost of building and the stringency of by-laws are a hindrance to the erection of new ones.

Merely to condemn the unsatisfactory dwelling, unless it is very bad, must be a serious matter, so long as the custom of unremunerative rents—in addition to keeping the competitive builder at arm's length—renders it difficult for rural authorities to exercise such powers

of making provision themselves as have been conferred upon them. In view of legislation intended to keep labour on the land, the matter has assumed an importance of the first magnitude. With this legislation we shall deal in a later chapter.¹ To the solution of the problem of rural housing many of the principles laid down as regards urban housing apply. Their application, however, is obstructed by the low customary rents. For the removal of this obstruction the editor of the *Rural World* has made a most interesting suggestion. He proposes that rents should be raised to the commercial level, that the farmer should pay the extra rent as an extra wage and deduct from the rent of his farm the aggregate of extra wages, which would be handed on as extra cottage rents to the landowner. In this way everybody could be left in the same position as before, but a way would be opened for building enterprise on the part of private persons and local authorities. Of course, there would still be the difficulty of low wages, which has been felt also in the towns. To this certain principles to be enunciated in our sixth chapter have an obvious reference. For the rural housing problem in Ireland exceptional remedies were decided upon; but, when their suitability for English conditions is being considered, it must be remembered that Irish land-tenure is peculiar, and that the State, by Land Acts, had created another distinction between Irish and English agricultural arrangements.

¹ Pages 217-32.

CHAPTER III

PHYSICAL DETERIORATION, MORTALITY, AND HEALTH

THE subject-matter of this chapter is not the perplexing population question in the form in which it was raised by Malthus, but merely that part of the broad problem of population which has appealed to this generation and relates to the wastage of life. We shall ask, first, whether there is the kind of wastage of human powers going on which is implied in physical deterioration; and, secondly, whether the wastage of life by illness and needlessly early death can be, and is being, substantially reduced.

The belief that in the United Kingdom physical deterioration has already begun is bound up, in the case of many who share it, with disquiet at the thought that nearly 80 per cent. of the population is urban, and with the fear lest it be, as some allege, that 25 per cent. of the town-dwellers are too poor to be properly nourished.¹ It is unfortunately true that the wages of not a few members of the community are excessively small, and that in the towns there exist thousands

¹ Side by side with the works of Mr. Charles Booth and Mr. Seebohm Rowntree the reader should study Mr. C. H. Loch's criticism printed as an appendix to the *Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration*, and Professor Macgregor's article on 'Poverty Statistics' in the *Highway*.

of irregularly employed people who never have enough to live upon. But wages are rising, and must rise still more if improvement in production continues : and organisation will remove much irregular employment if, as is to be hoped, the conviction gains ground that public action in this matter is essential ; and town-life, we have argued, can be made much healthier. Moreover, it must be remembered that rural labourers, as things are, though they live in purer air, are, usually, poorer than town-dwellers. So much may be said incidentally ; but the important point to insist upon now is that, according to the biological views expounded in Chapter I., the life-germ does not deteriorate in character when placed in circumstances inimical to its proper cultivation ; so that the damage done by the unhealthy conditions in towns is not likely to be a cumulative one, or even a permanent one, as regards the physical properties of the race.

That startling evidence, seemingly to the contrary, has been furnished, we all know. Attention, for instance, has been called to the high proportion of rejections of recruits on the grounds of physical unfitness. In the decade 1892-1902, the rejections here on medical inspection were nearly 35 per cent., and of those accepted nearly 1 per cent. broke down within three months, and another 2 per cent. or more within two years ; so that rejections on entry and after a short trial approximated to 40 per cent. Nor is this all. In addition, we have to allow for those refused at sight by recruiting officers, of whom no record is kept. Taking these into account, Sir Frederick Maurice estimated that only two out of every five who offered themselves as recruits were fit for service—that

is to say, that the rejections really amounted to about 60 per cent.¹ Further, it must be added, to complete the alarming side of the picture, that the percentage of rejections is undoubtedly rising, and is unquestionably much higher here than in Germany, where it seems to be about 16 per cent. These facts have a disturbing appearance and certainly require examination.

On considering them, one is struck immediately by the low percentage of failures after admission to the Army in this country, which seems to point to a very searching medical examination at entry. Still, however searching the test, if it is indeed the case that more than half the applicants are unfit, we can hardly leave it at that without anxiety. The situation must, therefore, be scrutinised with some care.

The first points to note, in any attempt to get a proper grasp of the situation, are that the British Army is based on voluntary enlistment, and that by few, who cannot enter as officers, is the profession of arms ranked at all high in the scale of occupations. A substantial proportion of the failures in the world no doubt drift at some stages in their careers—and many of them more than once—into offering themselves for military service; and the numbers in the social wreckage of the community are known to be considerable. Bearing the class of failures in mind, and the highly significant fact that some of the rejected are known to offer themselves again and again through different stations, we shall not feel that the Committee on Physical Deterioration speak altogether in terms of exaggeration when they say: ‘In short, the examination of the official representatives of the recruiting system

¹ *Contemporary Review*, January 1903.

left upon the minds of the Committee the conviction, confirmed as it was by the evidence of other witnesses, that it would be as reasonable to argue from criminal statistics to the morals of the great mass of the people as it would be to argue to their physical conditions from the feeble specimens that come under the notice of the recruiting officer.' A highly competent medical witness took the view that, 'having regard to the circumstances under which the British Army is recruited, the fact that 40 per cent. of those that present themselves to the recruiting officers become good soldiers is more to the credit of the physique of the people than the fact that under the German system of conscription only 16 per cent. of those liable to serve are rejected.' Without subscribing to the optimistic contention of this witness and finding with him cause for self-congratulation in comparative statistics, we must at least agree that the English figures are very apt to mislead and encourage an unduly pessimistic view. The recruiting fields of the British Army are anything but typical of the community as a whole, as General Maurice fully admitted. Clearly it is impossible to bring recruiting figures into any firm relation with the general state of the population, in the absence of an adequate investigation into the sources of recruits. One or two test inquiries have been made, but they are too slight to base general conclusions upon. One of these revealed that of 83 candidates for the Army and 7 for the Navy (90 in all), from Glasgow factories, as many as 85 were accepted.¹ Lest too favourable an inference should be drawn, however, it must be added that there is much evidence which points to a

¹ *Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration*, p. 6.

higher proportion of rejections among the factory population than among the rural population.

With regard to the most prevalent causes of rejections in England, the fact at once stands out that defects of physique are far greater relatively than defects of constitution, which are much more serious. And, with regard to the rise in the proportion of rejections, it must be remembered that increasing importance is being attached to good teeth, though this will not explain it away entirely. Finally, with reference to the contention that a process of degeneration must be already at work in the community as a whole, in view of the rise in the percentage of rejections, we may quote the following from the Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration: 'An independent examination of the Director-General's figures, undertaken by the authorities of the Metropolitan Police, brought them to the conclusion that "the calling of a soldier has ceased to attract the class of men who formerly enlisted, and as a consequence a large proportion of the residuum of the population come under the notice of the Army recruiting authorities." This conclusion appears borne out by the complaints of commanding-officers as to the physique of many of those enlisted, and tends to explain the drain from desertion among those who find themselves disappointed in the hopes of an easy existence. It must be understood that in so expressing themselves the Committee have in view the quality of the rejected candidates for enlistment. So far as they can judge, the efforts that are now being made to obtain a good character with every recruit are likely to result in raising the standard not merely of those actually

accepted, but even perhaps of those who actually present themselves to the recruiter.'

Any diminished attractiveness of the Army may be due, in some degree, to an insufficient response on its part to social progress. In most industries the worker has opportunities—small they may be, but still he is not debarred by convention from rising from the ranks—and the democratising of the community has been steadily razing the barriers marking class-distinctions. In the Army, on the contrary, against advance from the ranks there are high income and social obstacles, though in exceptional cases their scaling has been rendered feasible. The repulsion of the sons of better-class artisan families from the Army would therefore be comprehensible in a society no longer ostensibly organised as a hierarchy of castes. In such families the enlisting of a son is not unlikely to be regarded as an unfortunate occurrence. It is to be hoped that, in the interests of the voluntary Army system, reform will be seriously taken in hand, and that the beginnings made by the War Office in 1913 will be watched and followed up. The remarkable effects of the democratising of the French army in the revolutionary period are too well known to need mention.

The evidence of the recruiting figures has been examined at length because of the public attention attracted by it; but it forms only a small part of the case which has been put forward in support of the opinion that the race is deteriorating. Another argument that has made converts depends (1) upon the fact that the rate of increase is relatively great among people whose work calls for the least capacity

and whose earnings are low, and (2) upon the belief that on the whole these classes are of a lower stock than the classes whose rate of increase is less. The comparatively rapid rate of increase of the poorer classes is undeniable; though the death-rate among them is high, the birth-rate is so much higher that a relatively large augmentation of their numbers results. And anthropometric measurements are put forward to show that these people do not present the same excellence of physique as those above them in the social scale.¹ Moreover, the evidence of anthropometric measurements is reinforced by a plausible piece of sociological reasoning. It is suggested that the poorer classes must be on the whole of a less excellent stock since, throughout the centuries past, the stocks of the higher qualities should have raised themselves in the social scale. Hence the disquieting conclusion that inferior elements in the race are multiplying at such a rate that they will ultimately submerge the superior elements.

The case for alarm, as thus presented, has received support from men of weight in the scientific world, and it cannot, therefore, be dismissed lightly. Thus we find Professor Karl Pearson giving evidence on the lines of the beliefs here summarised to the committee on physical deterioration: 'The mentally better stock in the nation is not reproducing itself at the same rate as it did of old; the less able, and the less energetic,

¹ For example, according to the survey carried out by a committee of the British Association, boys at public schools, between the ages of 11 and 12, are only just under 55 inches in height on an average, whereas those at industrial schools barely exceeded 50 inches. See also the facts brought forward in Greenwood's *Health and Physique of Schoolchildren*.

are more fertile than the better stocks. The only remedy, if one be possible at all, is to alter the relative fertility of the good and bad stocks in the community. Let us have a census of the effective size of families among the intellectual classes now and a comparison with the effective size of families in the like classes in the first half of the last century. You will, I feel certain, find, as in the case of recent like censuses in America, that the intellectual classes are now scarcely reproducing their own numbers, and are very far from keeping pace with the total growth of the nation. Compare in another such census the fertility of the more intelligent working man with that of the uneducated hand-labourer, you will, I again feel certain, find that grave changes have taken place in relative fertility during the last forty years. We stand, I venture to think, at the commencement of an epoch which will be marked by a great dearth of ability.'¹

We are not convinced that the outlook is so disturbing as a first perusal of these forcible pleadings might induce one to suppose. Let us take the sociological argument first. Let us suppose, to begin with, that society is constituted of a variety of stocks which, like non-viscous fluids, readily find their level. Still it would not follow from the lower rate of increase of the rich that society was on the down-grade: for ascent in the social scale would not necessarily have been proportional to the social value of people under ideal conditions. We cannot be blind to the fact that the high level of a stock has corresponded to some extent with the possession of highly developed self-preservative qualities which might not be normally associated with qualities of the

¹ *Report of Committee on Physical Deterioration*, pp. 38-9.

greatest social value and might in themselves be anti-social. It is an error easily committed to skip from the Animal Kingdom to the social world with theories culled from the former and apply them to the problems of the latter, as if the two spheres were of a piece throughout. The reality of the error a moment's thought will make plain. In the Animal Kingdom the survival of the fittest means the survival of those with most surviving power, after a struggle for existence untempered by consideration for the gain or loss of the environment. But, with the evolution of the social world, the concept of the general good emerges and becomes a criterion of social fitness. By the fittest, from the social point of view, we mean those who benefit their environment (society) most. But, for the survival of this fitness, the animal law of selection by force of individual surviving power affords no surety. We can be confident only that, in the social struggle for place and power, vitality of some kind is bound to triumph. While it is true that without vitality most gifts are of little avail, there remains an uncomfortable suspicion that the more intellectual and emotional types of vitality, which are likely to have a high social value but at the same time to be devoid of self-assertiveness, may not unusually be suppressed.

We need not dwell further upon this point, but may at once pass on to another of some significance—namely, that there is little justification for reading into the comparative rates of increase to which attention has been summoned, a substantial drainage away of talent, even if success does roughly measure social value, because the members of the community are not very

mobile vertically. One of the gravest impeachment of society in the past is that innate capacity without influence has not uncommonly been kept out of its kingdom; and the same ground of impeachment holds of society to-day. The wastage of capacity, so far as it resides in the class of the lowest paid members of the community, must have been, and must be, enormous. Besides, all authorities are not yet convinced that windfalls of talent must not be allowed for. There is a passage in the evidence given by Professor Cunningham, the comparative anatomist, to the Committee on Physical Deterioration, which is so relevant to this argument that it may be quoted here: 'It should be borne in mind that it is stocks and not classes which breed men of intellect. These intellectual stocks are found in all classes, high and low. No class can claim intellect as its special perquisite. This is a fortunate circumstance, seeing that the conditions which affect the degree of fertility in the higher classes are not as a rule present in the lower classes. The conditions under which genius or outstanding ability appears are peculiar and very little understood. It likewise has a residence, I believe, in no special class, and very probably in no special stock. It is not improbable that the physical conditions upon which genius depends may not, in certain cases, be far removed from the domain of pathology.'

Finally, as to the inferences drawn from anthropometric measurements, which seem to tell against Professor Cunningham's views, it must be remembered that nourishment and surroundings do affect considerably the extent to which the potentiality

¹ *Report of Committee on Physical Deterioration*, p. 39.

of the germ is developed—similar plants may be obtained from similar seeds, but only with the aid of similar culture—so that correlation between these measurements and innate capacity is uncertain, as is also correlation between the results of psychological tests, when applied to different classes, and innate capacity. Much remains to be done yet in the collection of material, as well as in its interpretation, before sociologists can venture upon quite definite pronouncements.

On the whole, it must be taken as not proven that the stock of modern communities is appreciably, if at all, on the downgrade; though the limited increase of certain classes should be read as a caution-signal demanding continued inquiry, particularly in view of the fact that social and economic problems may be directly connected with it apart from its bearing on the supply of superior potential capacity. But more than a bare probability is established that natural physical culture, which is afforded by rural life, plays little part in town life, so that a problem of health under urban conditions is left to solve.

Apprehension about the future of the race, in respect of its physical and mental properties, has not infrequently had some connection with the phenomenon of feeble-mindedness, which was abstracted as a distinct thing from other vital defects not so many years ago. But, though of recent discovery, it is not a new visitation, and no convincing reasons can be advanced for supposing it to be on the increase. It is true that much evidence was furnished to the Royal Commission showing that when the feeble-minded had families they tended to be excessively large ones; but nothing short of a ramified genealogical inquiry could determine whether

or not, through the agency of sterility, each line of the defective strain tended eventually to disappear of itself. One thing that does appear to be beyond cavil is that inferior food, overstrain, neglect, and unhealthy surroundings do not produce feeble-mindedness. It appears to be a definite organic complaint with which some unfortunate persons are born. Moreover, a heavy balance of expert testimony points to its being hereditary. If it is—and for practical purposes we should assume it to be so—some control of the feeble-minded is demonstrably in the interests of the community. Control of a kind, the Royal Commission recommended. It was not prepared to suggest compulsory segregation, but it deemed some limitation of the freedom of the feeble-minded highly desirable, and took the view that all that was urgent could be secured by the provision of more special institutions and by the appointment of officials to find out cases, advise, and arrange for control, private or otherwise. One obstacle in the way of regular institutional maintenance is the number of the deficient; in England and Wales there are probably some 50,000 feeble-minded children of school-age alone. And one obstacle in the way of compulsory regulation is the dubious or undefined boundary line between the feeble-minded and the lowest class of the unintelligent. Fortunately, the lack of volition on the part of the feeble-minded makes them amenable to control and happy under control. One Bill before Parliament, framed generally on the proposals of the Commission, was rejected, mainly because it seemed to endanger the liberty of people by no means imbecile; but another Bill, much less open to criticism, passed in 1913.

Under this Act (the Mental Deficiency Act) of 1913, which also amends the law relating to idiots and imbeciles, any defective person, subject to medical certification, may be sent to an institution or placed under guardianship by his or her parent, if the defective is under twenty-one, or by judicial order, provided that the parent or guardian consents or that consent is unreasonably withheld. Action leading up to an order may be taken by parents, guardians, or friends of the defective person, or by any authorised officer of the local authorities contemplated by the Act, or by the Board of Control set up by the Act. Orders in the first instance expire at the end of twelve months, unless continued after the re-examination of the case, and when continued, they hold for successive periods of five years; after each period re-examination is required, and, in addition, one re-examination must be made within three months of the attainment of the age of twenty-one by the defective person. Voluntary action by parents may be annulled by them after shorter periods. The Board of Control is required to arrange for the visiting of defectives under supervision and take such steps as may be necessary for securing their suitable treatment; and the councils of counties and county boroughs are required to institute committees (containing co-opted persons and some women) for the care of defectives, and to take steps to discover what persons within their areas are defectives, and arrange, when needful, for their proper supervision and maintenance; and, as regards children, local education authorities are required to co-operate in bringing cases to light in a manner approved by the Board of Education. To secure satisfactory performance of their duties by local authorities,

powers to act in default are conferred upon the Home Office. The provision of suitable institutions by the State and local authorities, with contributions from the Treasury, is contemplated, the certification of private institutions being arranged for, and also the subsidising of societies which assist defectives. Important clauses relating to defectives who have committed criminal acts are also incorporated in the measure.

All who have given thought to the subject will agree that, in the interests of the feeble-minded, and with a view to preventing the conveyance of hereditary taints, something of the kind arranged for under this Act should be done. Special schools are no complete solution. They were sanctioned in 1899, ten years after the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb, that feeble-minded children should be separated from other scholars, which had been to some extent acted upon. The step of 1899 was taken in consequence of the Report of the Departmental Committee on Defective and Epileptic Children (1896-8). The special schools, which are few in number, have done much good in affording such education as the feeble-minded are capable of profiting from, but they cannot cure feeble-mindedness. They have also been of service in facilitating the transference of the defective to such few institutions as there are. In 1896 the National Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded was established, and in 1898 the Lancashire and Cheshire Society for the Permanent Care of the Feeble-minded, in connection with which Miss Mary Dendy has done such notable work. Taken as a whole, the movement for dealing with the problem

of feeble-mindedness is a hopeful sign in more ways than one. It exhibits a profound and widespread interest in the soundness of the race, a disposition to rely on the judgment of the expert, and, at the same time, in its recognition of a public responsibility for the helpless, a growing sense of social obligation.¹

Next to the question of the quality of the population, but only remotely akin to it, stands the question of health. The scourge of disease has been strikingly mitigated, and the rational expectation of illness has consequently been rendered materially less. Some diseases have been almost entirely eradicated, and the ravages of others have been greatly curtailed both by precautionary measures and by improved treatment. Instances are too numerous for adequate mention, but special attention may be drawn to what has been effected as regards tuberculosis, in view of the present interest in the subject.

Between 1851-5 and 1906-10, in the case of males, the general death-rate, the death-rate from phthisis, and that from other forms of tuberculosis, have fallen pretty steadily by nearly 30 per cent., more than 50 per cent. and 40 per cent. respectively; while, in the case of women, the same death-rates have fallen, over the same period, by 30 per cent., nearly 70 per cent. and 35 per cent. respectively. And this satisfactory decline notwithstanding, more strenuous action is now being taken than ever before. Notification by Poor Law medical officers of cases of pulmonary consumption under their treatment began at the end of 1908; it

¹ The literature is now considerable. Dr. C. P. Lapage's *Feeble-mindedness in Children of School Age* (with Appendix by Mary Dendy) contains a full bibliography.

was extended to voluntary hospitals at the end of 1911; and, since the beginning of 1912, notification by doctors in private practice has been compulsory. The disadvantage of the new policy of qualified publicity is that hardships may be inflicted on individuals; but every effort is made to prevent it from operating to the detriment of people's employment, though in some instances it has been found necessary to advise patients, in the interests of others, to change their occupations. This preliminary action to bring facts to light has been accompanied and followed by other governmental action of a more positive kind, which in part relieves and in part supplements volunteer philanthropy. By the finance of the National Insurance Act of 1911, more than a million pounds was granted towards the erection of sanatoria and other institutions for the treatment of tuberculosis in England, and certain annual sums were made available for the treatment of insured persons, or in certain circumstances of their dependents, in institutions or otherwise. In the way of prevention, moreover, additional steps have been taken to check expectoration in public places where it is likely to prove a source of danger. Nor is the scientific aspect of the problem neglected. As much remains to be discovered about the causes and communicability of tuberculosis, researches in the laboratory of the Local Government Board and elsewhere have been actively prosecuted, and, under the finance of the National Insurance Act, an annual sum (amounting at present to about £57,000) may be applied by the Commissioners to research.

Thus the matter stands to-day; but that activity has not yet reached its maximum seems likely in view of

the vigorous final report of the Departmental Committee on Tuberculosis, issued in March 1913. In this report we find recommended the compulsory isolation of highly infectious persons and the frequent disinfecting of houses in which there are cases ; also further precautions in regard to the milk-supply and a persistent attempt to eradicate tuberculosis from the cattle of the country ;¹ also the systematic treatment of children, for whom an extensive adoption of the open-air plan in schools and the provision of institutions at a cost of £200,000 are suggested. Moreover, great emphasis is laid on the encouragement and direction of research, both of an economic and social as well as of a medical character : for this it is proposed that an advisory council and executive committee should be instituted. Finally, there is an impressive insistence on the havoc wrought by social and economic causes, as thus : 'A healthy, sober, well-fed, well-clothed, and well-housed community is far less liable to infection from tuberculosis than one in which disease and drinking habits are prevalent, whose members are inadequately fed and clothed, and in which houses are crowded and insanitary. It may broadly be said that an advance in material prosperity of the community as a whole will be reflected in a decreased incidence of tuberculosis. . . . There is no doubt that dirty, ill-ventilated, dark, damp, and otherwise insanitary houses are provocative of the disease. . . . The Committee fully realise the difficulties surrounding the housing question, but they consider improvement in the present state of affairs both desirable and possible, and that, even amongst the poorest, an increased appreciation of the importance

¹ The question of the milk supply is discussed below (pp. 138-40).

of cleanliness and ventilation, &c. would tend to decrease the ravages of the disease. The Committee hope that much improvement may be effected by means of schemes for town-planning and garden cities.'

In the sphere of health, immense scope is left for further progress; and it is questionable whether the value to a community—the economic value alone apart from broader concepts of value—of the liberal endowment of medical research has been properly appreciated in any country. However, to the need for a grand campaign against disease, public authorities are becoming alive. It is satisfactory to note that by March 31, 1912, every county council but one had appointed a medical officer of health under Section 68 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, and that some county councils had in addition established laboratories providing facilities for bacteriological investigations. On March 31, 1912, there were as many as 198 medical officers of health not in private practice, and the percentage of the population of England and Wales (excluding London) living in districts served by whole-time medical officers was as high as 75. It is eminently desirable that the system of separating the work of the medical officer from private practice should extend, and that the duties of each medical officer should be confined to a manageable area.¹ The office was created as early as 1847, but it was not until 1872 that the appointment of properly qualified medical officers by urban and rural sanitary authorities and by port sanitary authorities was made compulsory. By the Act of 1888, the new county councils were

¹ On the above, see *Reports of the Chief Medical Officer of the Local Government Board*; also the special report on social and vital statistics.

empowered to appoint medical officers. By 1909 more than half had done so, and in that year the rest were brought into line and the public medical service was strengthened by the Housing and Town Planning Act (Part III.), which required every county council to appoint a medical officer, who was not to engage in private practice. As will become more apparent in due course, the increasing utilisation of medical and scientific knowledge for public purposes has been pronounced in recent years.

Of late the Government, by the Insurance Act of 1912, has brought expert aid more fully to bear upon illness. Under this Act, medical attendance during sickness, and support when it puts a stop to earning, are secured for the wage-earners of the community not entirely at their own cost, while maternity benefit is provided for employed women and the wives of insured persons. As a result, the assistance of the doctor will be more generally and promptly sought; and the habit thereby formed of seeking reliable advice without delay will have its influence upon the use made of qualified persons by those and for those not insured under the Act. It is undeniable that much havoc has been wrought in the past by neglect to procure competent direction in the initial stages of illness. The Insurance Act, which broadly follows German policy (outlined in our second volume), raises sociological problems of profound significance, but discussion of these may for the present be deferred.¹

Despite general improvements in health, some diseases seem actually to have become more prevalent

¹ See Chapter VII.

and minor ailments are probably more common under modern conditions than they used to be when we were some steps nearer the state of nature. Urbanisation, with its congestion of population and smoke, has doubtless reduced the physical vitality of the population; and industrialism has directly helped this retrogression by rendering nervous strain more acute and limiting the possibilities of the open-air life; but at the same time it must be granted that urbanisation, through quickening the intellectual life and creating a fuller social life, has been instrumental in raising communities to a higher plane of existence. The means of restoring physical vitality, all reformers agree, must be predominantly social in character; for the individual, being the product of the system in which he lives, is for the most part bound, or disposed, to conform to its ways. If industrialism has made life more artificial, it is necessary to restore artificially by social action the elements which have been sacrificed.

But industrialism, urban surroundings, and the attacks of disease from without, are not the sole direct causes of sickness and impaired vitality. Ignorant and careless household management is also producing its baneful consequences. Many bodily troubles at the present time are traceable to unwisdom in the selection and preparation of food. According to much expert evidence offered to the Committee on Physical Deterioration, the ingrained habit of excessive tea-drinking has caused the prevalence of many ailments, and has even resulted in addiction to alcohol, which still remains in the front rank among social evils. There appear also to be grounds for the fear that the urbanisation

of the population has been accompanied by a falling off in the character of the meals offered to the family;¹ and certainly nobody who has made a comparison between the British working-class housekeeper and her poorer German sister, in regard to the provision of wholesome meals and the maintenance of a healthy meal habit, can for a moment hesitate to give the palm to the latter. Generally speaking, bad feeding habits are connected with other evils which figure as causes or effects, and it is not always easy to determine which. There appears to be a widespread suspicion that the adulteration of food is more common than it used to be. If it is, a contributory cause may be people's indifference so long as their taste is gratified; and indifference may have grown out of regular dependence on tinned products. The Board of Agriculture, under powers conferred upon it by the Act of 1899, has fixed standards of purity for milk and butter, and it is a question whether the Local Government Board might not assume similar responsibility for purity in other foods. At present, action is taken by the public analyst, and costly and prolonged police proceedings are frequently entailed. A noteworthy example of the strengthening of the sentiment of public responsibility in a matter which used to be regarded as a purely personal one is to be found in the action of the French Government in circulating for display in schools, barracks, post-offices, and other places, a document setting forth the evils of excessive indulgence in alcohol. Some English municipal authorities have posted a similar bill in public places.

¹ Of studies of the diet of the labouring classes the most recent is Miss Lindsay's, relating to Glasgow.

Their action might with advantage be imitated; and the principle underlying it might be carried still further. Instruction in the laws of health should form a part of the training of all persons of whatever class.

Turning to mortality rates, and comparing our conditions with those abroad, we observe that mortality in England is comparatively low; and that since 1873 the rate of progress has been about the same in Prussia as in England and Wales, a little less in Belgium, and appreciably less in France, where it would seem to mark no more than a 10 per cent. reduction as against 25 per cent. at least in England and Wales. In England and Wales, in successive quinquennial periods from 1871-5 to 1906-10, the general death-rate has been 20·9, 19·8, 18·7, 18·5, 18·5, 17·6, 16·1, and 14·7.¹ Fifty years ago the general death-rate for England and Wales was in the neighbourhood of 22 per 1000, and at the end of the nineteenth century it reached a level of about 18; whereas to-day it looks as if it were oscillating about a level below 16, in which case there must have been a percentage improvement in 50 years—really in 35 years since it did not appear at once—of nearly 30 per cent. But there are certain features about mortality rates that cannot be contemplated with tranquillity. When the death-rate is broken up into its constituents, it will be found that general progress masks absence of improvement in the

¹ Expectation of life has greatly expanded over the centuries. According to Genevan records the average span of life in Geneva was 21 in the sixteenth century, 26 in the seventeenth, 34 in the eighteenth, and 40 in the nineteenth; and what holds of Geneva holds broadly of the civilised world as a whole. See Irving Fisher's *Report to the American Senate*, p. 638 *et seq.*

case of certain groups, and even retrogression. The table beneath discloses the detailed facts :—

DEATH-RATE OF MALE AND FEMALES PER 1000 IN 1841-5 AT DIFFERENT AGES, AND PERCENTAGE VARIATIONS BETWEEN 1841-5 AND 1906-10.¹

AGES	MALES		FEMALES	
	Death-rate 1841-5	Percentage de- cline (—) or advance (+) between 1841-5 and 1906-1910	Death-rate 1841-5	Percentage de- cline (—) or advance (+) between 1841-5 and 1906-10
25-35	9·2	— 42	9·9	— 55
35-45	12·2	— 22	12·2	— 40
45-55	17·2	— 3	15·1	— 15
55-65	30·3	+ 9	27·2	— 7
65-75	65·5	+ 8	59·1	— 1

Arterial decay and heart troubles appear to have been the main factors retarding improvement in the mortality of men past middle age, and one cause no doubt is the strain of modern industrialism.²

But happily there are indications of a somewhat brighter outlook in the statistics of the last twenty years : and it must be borne in mind that reducing the mortality rate for one age-group must raise it on the whole for higher age-groups—other things being equal—since everybody must die at some time. That the existing high mortality rates of men over middle life are not inevitable seems at least likely in view of

¹ The same general features are brought out by life-tables. According to Farr's, when the decade 1871-80 is compared with 1891-1900, it is found that the expectation of life among males at birth rose from 41·4 to 44·1 ; at 20, rose from 39·4 to 41·0 ; but at 60 and 80, dropped from 31·1 to 12·9 and from 4·8 to 4·6 respectively. Among females the expectation of life rose from 44·6 to 47·8 at birth, from 41·7 to 43·4 at 20 ; but declined, though very slightly, at 60 and 80—namely, from 14·2 to 14·1 at 60, and from 5·2 to 5·1 at 80.

² This is maintained in Goldmark's *Fatigue and Efficiency*.

the comparison of conditions internationally, in the case of males and females in 1900-2, made by Dr. Stevenson.¹ The countries compared with England and Wales were European Russia, Spain, Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, Prussia, Germany, Finland, Scotland, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, and New Zealand. The broad results of the comparison are set forth in the following table :—

AGES	MALES	FEMALES
	Number of countries having death-rates greater than that of England and Wales	Number of countries having death-rates greater than that of England and Wales
0- 5	10	10
5-10	12	13
10-15	15	17
15-20	17	17
20-25	17 ²	17 ²
25-35	13	18
35-45	5	10
45-55	3	5
55-65	2	7
65-75	5	10

That industrialism with its urban conditions is the main cause of our relatively high mortality rates at the higher ages will be at once suggested by these figures, for life is less urban and industrial in most of the countries compared than in England and Wales. This surmise is borne out by a comparison of urban and rural death-rates in England and Wales at different

¹ *Annual Report of Registrar-General, 1910.*

² The only countries with lower death-rates are Australia and New Zealand, and theirs are kept down to some extent by the fact that they get many emigrants who tend to be picked lives.

ages. It is possible, of course, that past tendencies and not existing tendencies may be in the main reflected in the most depressing of the relative mortality figures—namely, those of people between fifty-five and sixty-five. These people were born before social betterment, sanitary or otherwise, had become considerable, and they had therefore been exposed to deleterious influences during the formative period when a person's constitution is being built up or impaired. In this connection it is satisfactory to notice an unmistakable effect of recent efforts in the marked dip of death-rates since 1891-5. From twenty-five to thirty years ago the movement for bettering social conditions began to gather force ; but it had yet to make itself substantially effective. All economic progress is at first accompanied by waste ; and for a time this waste, or some part of it, may be unavoidable. The waste is of two kinds—waste of natural resources and waste of vital resources. Sooner or later reaction sets in, and insistence on the conservation of resources becomes a thing to be reckoned with. In America this reaction has been felt for some years, as regards natural resources ; and recently the excellent report, from which we have quoted above, setting forth the means by which the wastage of life and vital energy may be checked, has been presented to the American Senate. Something has been done in the United Kingdom to conserve vital forces, as we have observed generally, but have yet to observe so far as infants are concerned.

When the twentieth century began, infantile mortality accounted on an average for about one-quarter of the total deaths in England and Wales. Over the last half-century it has ranged between 117

and 163 per thousand births. But conditions here do not compare unfavourably with conditions abroad.¹ Not only is the infantile death-rate much higher in many other countries than in England and Wales—averaged over a short period of years it ranges in different countries from about 75 to more than 250—but the ratio of infantile death-rate to crude death-rate (that is, the death-rate of the population as a whole) is also higher. This ratio stands at about 8·5 in England and Wales and, internationally, it seems to extend from under 6 to over 10. However, it must not be imagined that a low ratio necessarily means a greater relative care of children, for climate has frequently a greater effect on a child's than an adult's prospects of life. Nor must the contrast between infant and adult mortality be taken as a proof that children are neglected. Conceivably, this measures only the relative difficulties of preserving life in infancy and afterwards. We may easily attach too much importance to the absolute magnitude, as well as to the relative magnitude, of the infantile death-rate in any country. Still, the contrast between the death-rate of infants and that of children over twelve months of age is so striking, and the reduction in the former, until quite recently, has been so inconsiderable in comparison with the reduction of the latter, that it is incumbent upon us to inquire into the special causes of infant mortality and the means adopted for counter-acting them. Moreover, there is this additional ground: that the death-rate among infants varies enormously in the same country from place to place. Recently,

¹ The reader must be warned to take the figures as subject to a high percentage of error. See, for instance, the *Report of the Committee of the Royal Statistical Society on Infantile Mortality and Still-Births*.

the extreme percentage difference has actually approached 300 as between places undistinguished by any special hygienic or social peculiarities. That the infantile death-rate is still further reducible, it is therefore, *prima facie*, reasonable to suppose.

It will be desirable to begin our detailed study of the situation by presenting figures to show how much less the degree of improvement has been in the death-rate of children in their first year than in the death-rate of children in the next few years¹ :—

ENGLAND AND WALES.—INFANT DEATH-RATES AND DEATH-RATES FOR EACH OF THE NEXT FOUR YEARS OF LIFE FROM 1871-5 TO 1906-10, ALSO RELATIVE MORTALITY FIGURES FOR THE SAME PERIODS.

Years	Average death-rates at ages per 1000 at each age					Relative mortality figures, the death-rate in 1871-5 being stated as 100				
	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5
1871-75 ² .	154	59	28	19	14	100	100	100	100	100
1876-80 .	145	58	27	17	13	94	98	96	89	93
1881-85 .	139	53	23	15	12	90	90	82	79	86
1886-90 .	144	53	22	14	10	94	90	79	74	71
1891-95 .	151	52	21	14	10	98	88	75	74	71
1896-1900	156	49	19	13	9	101	83	68	68	64
1901-5 .	138	41	16	11	8	90	69	57	58	57
1906-10 .	117	35	14	9	7	76	59	50	47	50

It may be noted, further, that mortality is heaviest in the earliest weeks of life. Broadly speaking, of the total deaths occurring under one year in England and Wales, one-half take place in the first three months,

¹ The table is quoted from the *Second Report on Infantile Mortality of the Local Government Board*, 1913, Cd. 6909.

² Registration of births only became compulsory in 1870.

one-fifth in the first week, and one-tenth in the first twenty-four hours. From the third month—as the child gains in strength—the death-rate steadily falls, and the fall continues, as we have seen, beyond the first year—until the minimum is reached between the ages of ten and fifteen. Again, it is significant that the degree of amendment has been much less in the first three months than afterwards. Details are given in the following tables, taken from the same source as the previous one :—

ENGLAND AND WALES.—INFANT DEATH-RATES PER 1000 BIRTHS, AND RELATIVE MORTALITY FIGURES, AT AGES 0-3, 3-6, AND 6-12 MONTHS, IN THE YEARS 1891-1911.

Year	Death-rates			Relative mortality figures, death-rates for 1891 being stated as 100		
	0-3 months	3-6 months	6-12 months	0-3 months	3-6 months	6-12 months
1891 . .	72·8	29·7	46·1	100	100	100
1892 . .	72·3	29·8	45·4	99	100	99
1893 . .	77·4	34·3	47·0	106	116	102
1894 . .	69·2	26·7	40·9	95	90	89
1895 . .	75·9	34·8	49·9	104	117	108
1896 . .	72·5	30·7	44·3	100	104	96
1897 . .	73·4	33·4	49·0	101	113	107
1898 . .	75·1	35·2	50·1	103	119	109
1899 . .	76·9	35·7	50·0	106	120	109
1900 . .	74·2	32·7	47·3	102	110	103
1901 . .	74·8	32·0	44·5	103	108	97
1902 . .	68·4	25·8	38·7	94	87	84
1903 . .	67·6	26·2	37·8	93	88	82
1904 . .	70·9	30·1	44·3	97	102	96
1905 . .	66·6	24·8	36·8	92	84	80
1906 . .	67·6	27·0	37·9	93	91	82
1907 . .	64·0	21·3	32·3	88	72	70
1908 . .	64·4	23·6	32·4	89	80	70
1909 . .	60·1	19·2	29·4	83	65	64
1910 . .	58·5	18·8	28·2	80	63	61
1911 . .	65·4	26·1	38·6	90	88	84

ENGLAND AND WALES.—INFANT DEATH-RATES PER 1000 BIRTHS DURING
THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF LIFE.

Year	Under 1 week	1-4 weeks	1-3 months	Entire 3 months
1905	25·2	16·6	24·8	66·6
1906	25·0	16·9	25·7	67·6
1907	24·4	16·3	23·3	64·0
1908	24·3	16·0	24·2	64·4
1909	24·7	15·0	20·4	60·1
1910	24·1	14·4	20·0	58·5
1911	24·3	16·3	24·8	65·4

The summer of 1911 was exceptionally unfavourable to infant life. That the high infantile mortality rate for that year (130 per 1000) does not mark a tendency to relapse is evinced by the fact that in the following year the rate fell beneath 100 for the first time and stood at 95. There can be no doubt that remarkable improvement has been effected since the twentieth century began. But, this improvement notwithstanding, there are striking facts to keep in mind—namely, (1) the high death-rate in the earliest weeks of life, and (2) the comparatively small percentage reduction of this early death-rate. We may now pass on to consider the specific causes of death among children with a view to accounting for the facts and determining the extent to which they are preventable.

The deaths of infants from infectious diseases are relatively few ; the chief incidence of these comes after children can run about and mix up with other children, and so multiply sporadic cases into sporadic groups of

cases. The four most deadly affections are, in order of importance : (1) wasting diseases (including premature birth, congenital defects, atrophy, debility, and marasmus); (2) diarrhoeal diseases; (3) respiratory and lung troubles; (4) convulsions and meningitis. Comparing the fourteen best counties with the fourteen worst, we get the following percentage differences between the deaths due to the chief causes in a recent year (1908), which indicate that the scope for betterment is not narrowly confined:—

Causes of death	Fourteen best counties—percentage below that for England and Wales	Fourteen worst counties—percentage above that for England and Wales	Total percentage difference between best and worst counties
Wasting diseases	23	13	36
Diarrhoeal diseases	55	8	63
Bronchitis and pneumonia	32	11	43
Convulsions	39	25	64

The scope for amendment is shown even better by taking the maxima and minima for one year. For the administrative counties of England, exclusive of Rutland, in the year mentioned, the maxima and minima per 1000 births were as follow:—

	Maxima	Minima
Diarrhoeal diseases	26·9	3·5
Wasting diseases	57·0	27·0
Convulsions	15·7	4·4
Bronchitis and pneumonia	25·3	10·9

There has been little decline of the death-rate from developmental and wasting diseases (prematurity,

congenital defects, atrophy, debility, and marasmus), and it is doubtful whether any statements can be made about the death-rate from each disease included, in view of the vagueness of some returns as to causes of death, particularly in the matter of recording still-births.¹ Unquestionably these diseases are in a high degree connected with antenatal influences, and it is significant that the death-rate due to these diseases is not much less in rural than in urban parts, though there is a wide range of difference throughout the country. It may be that no great salvage of life (or at any rate of efficient life) is possible, given the antenatal influences. These, no doubt, need study and can be modified favourably to some extent on the results of study; but in the end it will probably be found that biological accident, so to speak, which is largely beyond the sphere of social betterment, is a predominant cause.

Infantile diarrhoea has attracted a good deal of scientific attention. The belief is that it is a bacterial disease. It is peculiarly a disease of low working-class districts, which is comprehensible in view of the fact that it can be largely avoided by taking hygienic precautions. Roughly speaking, it is twice as deadly in the town as in the country; and the district range of its death-toll is enormous. Its ravages increase in hot dry summers. The bacteria seem to germinate rapidly in milk, particularly in hot weather—hence the greater immunity of breast-fed children—and it is supposed by some, after careful investigations, that the common house-fly is an agency

¹ See *Report of the Committee of the Royal Statistical Society* referred to above.

in transmitting it.¹ The dangerous period is the first twelve months of life.

The evident preventibility of a great deal of infantile diarrhoea has led to public action. In August 1911, the Local Government Board addressed sanitary authorities, pressing them to take measures to keep down mortality from this disease. They were advised to divert the sanitary inspectors from less urgent work, and instruct them to pay rapid visits in the districts affected or likely to be affected. A ready response was made, and here and there the initiative had already been taken. By some local authorities circulars have been sent out informing parents of the means of preventing infantile diarrhoea, and by some special attention has been given in the summer months to the cleansing of streets and alleys and the removal of refuse where infantile diarrhoea was likely to prevail. The year 1911, with its protracted and almost tropical heat, was the most deadly for infants since the year 1899; but it is satisfactory to record that, though the mean temperature and the mean maximum temperature in the summer of 1911 were above those for 1899, the death-rate from diarrhoea was less in 1911 than in 1899, while the general infantile mortality rate was as much as 25 per cent. less in 1911 than in 1899. One reason, no doubt, was that more active steps were taken in 1911.

With reference to the other chief causes of infantile mortality, our remarks will be of the briefest. Respiratory disorders and lung troubles, in their bearing on

¹ A great deal of research has been conducted to determine the extent to which, and the area within which, flies may be transmitters of disease. The work of Dr. Hewitt and Dr. Graham Smith may be mentioned.

infants, are closely connected with imprudent exposure and insufficient clothing. Of convulsions little is known, but the considerable district range of the death-rate due to it¹ seems to indicate that it is not finally irremovable. Meningitis, however, appears to lie, in the main, outside the present sphere of influence of social betterment.

Our examination so far will have suggested to the reader that unavoidable accidents, so to speak, resulting in disease and organic defects, are not the sole causes of infantile mortality; that intermingled with and regulating the weight of the specific dangers which medical science and its administration have not yet succeeded in conquering are environmental and personal influences. It is to improvement in the latter that the lower level of the infantile death-rate attained in recent years is to be in the main attributed, combined with a better understanding of infantile diarrhoea. They bear heavily on certain of the ailments noticed above, and play a considerable part in determining the extent of the deaths due to other circumstances. Broadly put, the general causes of infantile mortality may be classified as follows:—

1. Organic: the physique of parents and the conditions of mothers before the birth of children.

2. Physical environment: climate, hygiene of surroundings, prevalence of disease-germs, and chances of accident.

3. Economic: incomes at the disposal of families in relation to the sizes of families.

4. Intellectual: (a) defects of medical knowledge, (b) its incomplete application, and (c) ignorance of

¹ It is remarkable to find it about twice as high in Wales as in England.

many people as to the importance of suitable feeding, ventilation, and other things bearing on health.

5. Moral: the degree of care exercised as regards the state of mothers before child-birth and as regards the treatment of children.¹

These general causes are not all independent of one another. Thus the environmental affect pre-natal influences and thereby bear indirectly, as well as directly, on a child's chances of life.² Moreover, all causes are directly governed by such social facts as the ethical standards of the community, the extent of mutual helpfulness, the liveliness of the public conscience, and the strength of the public will in insisting on decency of surroundings. Finally, in view of this classification of causes, mention must be made of our incomplete understanding of causes. Thus, as regards the direct effect of the size of the family, little or nothing definite has been discovered. Of its indirect effect, of course, there can be no doubt, since the larger the family—so long as no child is earning—the harder must the mother work, and the less is the care she can take of herself and each child, and the smaller is the amount of income which can be devoted to meeting her physical needs and those of the children.

In connection with this analysis of causes the following table, prepared by Dr. Stevenson, and quoted with the explanatory comments from the Second Report on Infantile Mortality of the Local Government Board, is highly significant :—

¹ Intemperance is a serious cause, though happily a declining one, which works through neglect and poverty (see pp. 78-82 of the second *Report on Infantile Mortality of the Local Government Board*).

² But see pp. 97-102 on possibilities of physical deterioration.

ENGLAND AND WALES.—INFANT MORTALITY, 1911.

(Rates per 1000 births.)

I. Upper and middle class	. . .	77
II. Wage-earning class	. . .	133
Intermediate (partly I. and partly II.)	. . .	106
II.—(a) Skilled labour	. . .	113
(b) Unskilled labour	. . .	152
(c) Special industries—		
Agricultural labourers	. . .	97
Textile operatives	. . .	148
Miners	. . .	160

‘The data included in the first group are very incomplete, owing to the difficulty of distinguishing in the returns between middle and wage-earning classes. It includes clerks and insurance agents. The intermediate group consists of operatives such as shopkeepers and their assistants, this group including many of both the middle and the wage-earning classes. Group II. includes all in the wage-earning class, except the last named; but when split up into IIa. artisans, and IIb. labourers, many are necessarily omitted, because they comprise members of both. Miners and textile operatives, shown separately, are in group II., but not in IIa. or IIb.’ The relatively low figure for agricultural labourers, as compared with the other figures for wage-earners, points to the direct and indirect effects of urban conditions; and, as compared with the figure for the upper and middle class, to the direct and indirect effects of poverty.

Environmental causes of a high infantile death-rate, it is the province of a municipal housing and sanitary policy to remove. That these causes are weighty, the great contrast between urban and rural

infantile death-rates at once suggests. But at the same time it suggests also that the factory employment of women may be anything but a negligible influence. At this point, therefore, an attempt may be made to trace the bearing of the factory employment of women on infantile mortality.

The industrial work of women can affect the infantile death-rate either directly or indirectly. Directly, damage can be caused to the child through ante-natal influences connected with the mother's work. The mother may be over-strained or exhausted, or afflicted by an occupational disease; or, through her working too soon after the birth of a child, the chance of life of the next child may be diminished.¹ Of course, deleterious ante-natal influences may be produced apart from factory work. Women may overstrain themselves at home, and weaken themselves by bad feeding, and spoil the child's prospects of existence, or healthy existence, by excessive addiction to alcohol or poisonous drugs. Again, the purity of the air is a factor which affects the child through the mother. Indirectly, the industrial occupation of mothers affects infantile mortality through their absence from home, which must mean that young infants are bottle-fed, and frequently means that they are less carefully tended, and that the home is less cleanly. Numerous investigations have established that mortality is much higher among bottle-fed than among breast-fed children; but the difference would be greatly reduced if the former were treated with greater knowledge and care.

¹ An illuminating discussion will be found in chap. iv. of Goldmark's *Fatigue and Efficiency*, in which the dangers of standing for long periods are emphasised.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that, when women earn, there is a higher household income, which renders possible a more spacious home and better food after weaning.

Let us now ask what evidence upon this question is furnished by statistics. That it is remarkably conflicting, all authorities must admit. Infant mortality is certainly very high in many factory towns where a large proportion of the married and widowed women are occupied industrially. Merely as illustrative, the following table relating to Staffordshire may be given¹ :—

Class according to percentage of married and widowed workers to female population between 18 and 50 years	No. of towns	Total population, 1901 census	Deaths of infants under 1 year per 1000 registered births		
			1881-1890	1891-1900	1901-1908
I.—12 per cent. and over	5	132,299	195	212	187
II.—Under 12 per cent. and over 6 per cent.	13	263,868	165	175	153
III.—Under 6 per cent.	8	131,508	156	168	140

As supplementary to the evidence of these figures, the results of calculations made by Mr. Bowley from statistics relating to the same district, supplied by Dr. Reid, may be quoted. Twenty-six districts were considered, and it was found that the rate of infantile mortality tended to be somewhat higher when the percentage of married women and widows engaged in industrial work was high.² On reading these results and the table above, it must be borne in mind that,

¹ Consider also the table on p. 130 later. An impressive collection of evidence in support of the view that the factory employment of mothers causes a high infant mortality will be found in Mrs. Tennant's chapter in the volume entitled *Women in Industry*.

² When allowance was made for the size of the population in each district, the correlation coefficient was 0·57 and the probable error 0·07; when no such allowance was made, they were respectively 0·47 and 0·1. See pp. 362-3 of the *Report of the Proceedings of the British Association in 1903*.

in the towns where many married and widowed women engage in industrial work, other conditions are usually to be found which exert a baneful influence upon the mortality of infants ; and usually in such towns there is an excessively high percentage of the classes among whom the infantile death-rate is high.

Infant mortality statistics for towns where many women work in factories undoubtedly establish a probable connection between their work and a high infant mortality rate, but some peculiar features stand out which give one pause in venturing on an emphatic generalisation. 'It has been alleged,' wrote Dr. Newman, 'that the factory employment of women is the only cause of the heavy incidence of fatality from premature births. No doubt it bears a relation, but the fact is that prematurity is more a cause of infant death in districts where there are no factories than where there are. It is admitted that prematurity and immaturity are the chief causes of death in infants in the first trimester of life. Is it not, then, a strange fact that only 47·6 per cent. of the infant deaths in Lancashire occur within the first three months of life, whereas in the three counties, where there is least factory employment of women and the lowest infant mortality (Westmoreland, Dorset, and Wiltshire), the percentage of deaths in the first three months is 61 (or 34 per cent. higher) ? Or, again, in Preston and Blackburn the employment of women has been declining since the census of 1891, but the infant mortality has been increasing. Or, once more, in the Durham coalfield and in South Wales—districts in which women are not much engaged in industrial occupations—infant mortality has been increasing since the middle of last century, and now stands among the highest rates;

whereas in the West Riding of Yorkshire, where women are much employed in the mills, the infant mortality has been declining within the same period.¹ Again, consider the following table :—

Counties in order of magnitude of total infant mortality		Infant death-rates in 1908 per 1000 births			Number of married and widowed women engaged in occupations per 1000 females, aged 10 and upwards, in 1901	Number of domestic servants per 1000 females, aged 10 and upwards, in 1901
		Total under one year	Under one month	From developmental and wasting diseases		
Counties with highest total infant mortality.	Glamorgan . .	(1) 154	(2) 46	(3) 46	(4) 31	(5) 77
	Durham . . .	151	52	57	26	67
	Northumberland . .	147	53	55	31	92
	Monmouth . . .	140	40	41	38	78
	Carmarthen . . .	140	47	43	54	108
	Stafford . . .	132	47	51	65	76
	Yorks, W.R. . .	132	44	44	57	65
	Lancashire . . .	131	43	44	85	74
	Denbigh . . .	127	46	45	48	121
	Cumberland . . .	127	45	44	47	99
Average . .		138	46	47	48	86
Counties with medium total infant mortality.	Lincolnshire . . .	106	40	45	51	117
	Yorks, E.R. . . .	106	42	43	53	142
	Cornwall	103	41	38	48	95
	Norfolk	103	43	45	54	113
	Cambridge	103	43	44	65	124
	Warwick	102	34	35	68	114
	Shropshire	100	40	40	55	136
	Worcester	99	39	42	78	108
	Middlesex	95	33	35	57	134
	Northampton . . .	94	42	40	67	96
Average . .		101	40	41	60	118
Counties with lowest total infant mortality.	Oxford	73	31	30	68	125
	Hereford	76	31	33	67	141
	Berkshire	77	32	34	70	160
	Dorset	78	35	32	60	123
	Wiltshire	78	37	27	54	108
	Hertford	79	33	31	55	135
	Buckingham	79	37	32	63	111
	Surrey	79	32	31	57	187
	Sussex	80	36	36	58	173
	Gloucester	80	35	32	75	123
Average . .		78	34	32	62	139

¹ *Infant Mortality*, pp. 136-7.

It is, to say the least, astonishing that in the counties of highest infantile mortality there should be the lowest percentage of married and widowed women engaged in occupations, and in counties of lowest infantile mortality the highest percentage of married women and widows engaged in occupations. The same is true if we substitute deaths from developmental and wasting diseases, or deaths in the first month, for total infant mortality. Column 5 is inserted to show the bearing of general well-being on the mortality of infants—the use of this index of well-being was suggested by Miss Collett in an interesting article in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*. It must be remembered, of course, that when statistics relate to large areas over which as a whole the percentage of married women and widows engaged in occupations is not high, as in the above table, the effect of their occupation is very likely to be obscured by the effects of other causes; but this table, at the very least, hints at the possibility that all kinds of women's work outside their homes are not a grave source of danger to their children.

Statistics, it would seem, do not remove all doubts from the settlement of the question. We cannot, therefore, afford to ignore the opinions of experts, who have been exercised to find out the truth. Dr. Robertson, who made a special inquiry in Birmingham, declared that in his opinion great poverty had more influence in increasing infant mortality than industrial employment. Dr. Newman wrote of the causes of excessive infant mortality: 'No doubt the factory plays a part, *but the home plays a vastly greater part*, in the causation of infant mortality in the towns where women are employed at the mills. There are two

influences at work: first, the direct injury to the physique and character of the individual caused by much of the factory employment of women; and secondly, the indirect and reflex injury to the home and social life of the worker.’¹ Again, Dr. Newsholme said in the ‘Local Government Board Report on Infant and Child Mortality of 1910’: ‘It would be folly to infer (from statistics given in his report) that the industrial occupation of mothers is not a most injurious element in our social life. It may be, however, that under present conditions . . . the gain in diminution of poverty overbalances the serious injury due to the absence of the mother at work, during pregnancy and after the birth of her infant. . . . The most that can be inferred (from the figures) is that the industrial employment of married and widowed women cannot be regarded as, in itself, the chief cause of infant mortality. . . . When the statistics of large communities are considered, the evil effect of the industrial occupation of women is concealed by the preponderant action of other maleficent influences. These may be classified, not without overlapping, under one or other of the following head:—

‘1. Crowding of persons on area.

‘2. Defects of domestic and municipal sanitation.

‘3. Domestic overcrowding and allied evils of housing.

‘4. Ignorance and fecklessness of mothers resulting in lack of mothering.

‘In the communities having excessive infant mortality the first three of these, either altogether or one or more of them, affect either the entire population or

¹ *Infant Mortality*, p. 137.

a large portion of it. Industrial occupation of married women affects in most instances a smaller section of the maternal population and their infants.'

The facts and arguments so far adduced must force us at any rate to this conviction: that *two* of the outstanding causes of a high death-rate among children are (1) environmental, such as polluted air and congestion of the population, and (2) the personal factor, consisting in ignorance and carelessness. Poverty and the industrial work of women are causes, but they would not seem to account to the same extent for the differences between the death-rates of children in the town and in the country; and, as regards the industrial work of women, this probably produces its effects in bulk through failings in the matter of cleanliness, feeding, and clothing. One cogent proof that carelessness is an important factor in the wastage of infant life is to be gleaned from a comparison of the infant mortality rates of legitimate and illegitimate children, if it is a correct assumption that the latter tend to be more neglected. The infant mortality rate among illegitimate children is much higher than that among other children; and it would appear to be a correct assumption that illegitimate children are less cared for than legitimate children, since the mortality rate is the same for both in the Berlin Municipal Orphanage, where some 3000 infants are accommodated, though in Germany as a whole, as in England, the mortality rate of illegitimate children is about twice as high as that of legitimate children.

The personal factor it is more difficult for governmental agencies to deal with than the environmental

factor in the causes determining heavy infant mortality. Health visitors have been appointed to give advice to the parents of children just born, in certain places where the Notification of Births Act (1907) has been adopted and the birth-place of children is consequently known, but experience seems to teach that an over-mastering influence can only be brought to bear on a large scale through the organisation of voluntary workers. The Act referred to requires births to be notified within thirty-six hours, and by order of the Local Government Board its adoption, which is otherwise optional, may be required in any locality. By 1913 it had been adopted by 74 out of 98 large towns and 67 out of 111 small towns, and it was found on inquiry by the Local Government Board that visiting was carried out to a varying extent in 87 large towns, 67 small towns, and 27 metropolitan boroughs.¹

A most interesting piece of evidence pointing to the importance of the personal factor, and the possibility of rendering it more conducive to good results, has been furnished at Huddersfield. To every child born in the district of Longwood, Alderman Broadbent, at the time when he was mayor, promised a birthday present of £1 on its attaining the age of one year in the twelve months ending November 8, 1906. No selection of children was made. The Longwood district of Huddersfield contains a comparatively fixed native population, including neither the wealthy nor slum-dwellers, though in many parts the very poor are found. All children born in Longwood were brought under the scheme. It was an essential part of the

¹ *Second Report of the Local Government Board on Infant and Child Mortality* (1913—Cd. 6909).

scheme that the mothers should be visited and advised, and this 'interference,' far from stirring up a feeling of resentment, seems to have produced good feeling between class and class. One hundred and twelve babies received the promissory-note card; of these, 107 received the gift, four died, and one removed out of the district and could not be traced. The death-rate of the 112 was therefore at most 44 per 1000. The average death-rates of Longwood and Huddersfield were respectively 122 and 139. The experiment was repeated in another district, inferior to Longwood and containing 'slums,' but it was impossible to get exact results: for one reason, because it was an 'arbitrary' district corresponding to no statistical area, and for another that its population was highly migratory. However, Mr. Broadbent received the impression, from such results as were obtainable, that it is easier to improve a fairly good district than a bad district. The promise of the gift, Mr. Broadbent believed to have been a negligible influence in both cases. He attributed the striking results entirely to the value of the visiting. On the conclusion of the experiments, Mr. Broadbent published an address to mothers to justify the energetic measures now being taken at Huddersfield to keep down infant mortality and to win the mothers' confidence and co-operation. He wisely emphasised that there is no substitute for a mother's love and care, and that reform must aim at helping the mothers. Attention is drawn in this address to the wonderful effects wrought in the French village, Villiers le Duc, between 1854 and 1863, and again after 1884, through the practical interest taken by the public authority in infant life. Since the

Broadbent experiment, the public health union formed in Huddersfield in 1905 has vigorously carried on the policy of visiting the mothers of infants.

One other example may be given of the benefits that accrue when personal influence is brought to bear on the personal factor which lies at the root of high infantile mortality. In 1906 there were born in York 2216 children. Of these, 98 died in the first two months. Of the survivors, 558 were regularly visited through the agency of the York Health and Housing Reform Association; and the mortality of these 558, between the ages of two months and twelve months, was 47 per 1000. The mortality of the remaining 1560 survivors, after the first two months, was 97 per 1000.

The policy of working on the personal factor has been institutionalised in schools for mothers, of which the best known in England is probably that of St. Pancras, which was modelled on the similar institution at Ghent. Their aim is to get into touch with young mothers, and those expecting soon to be mothers, and prevent them from erring in the treatment of children and of themselves before child-birth and when nursing. Regular visits to the schools, for informal advice and instruction, and the inspection of babies, are encouraged; and in some cases even inexpensive meals are provided, for which a small charge is made.

A report on existing schools for mothers in the United Kingdom has recently been made by Mr. I. G. Gibbon for the National League for Physical Education. Some seventy institutions of this character were found to be at work: in Germany, within the last ten years, some

250 infant consultation centres have been opened in about 160 towns. Of the activities in the United Kingdom, Mr. Gibbon writes : ‘ “ School for mothers ” is perhaps a somewhat grandiloquent term for many of the institutions which exist. It implies a degree of systematic instruction which is not attained. But it is useful as indicating that the central idea of such institutions is the instruction of the mother how best she may perform her duties, both to herself and to her infant, for the welfare of the latter. The essential of a school for mothers is that there should be available an expert—a doctor or at least a nurse—from whom instruction and advice should be obtainable : the infant should be regularly inspected by the expert. Around this central notion many other activities may cluster—home-visiting ; classes in hygiene, cookery, and cutting-out ; provision of dinners to expectant and nursing mothers ; provident clubs, &c. The best developed “ schools,” such as St. Pancras—one of the most active pioneers—and Stepney, are busy hives of multifarious activities, and are constantly finding new openings—the openings being generally found much more plentifully than the necessary funds. The treatment of sick infants is beyond the scope of a school for mothers. When a baby is in need of medical attendance, the mother should be referred to a private doctor, dispensary, or other agency for the treatment of sickness, according to the circumstances of the case.’ It appears from the report of the Local Government Board that in 1913 there were infant consultations under municipal auspices in some twenty towns and three metropolitan boroughs.

Not the least useful office of these institutions is

to induce mothers to have recourse to the doctor as soon as is needful ; for there is a strong disposition among many of the poor to put off consulting the doctor too long, which is not altogether disconnected with the fact that in all probability about 80 per cent. of the births in England and Wales are attended only by midwives. It is a common complaint, however, that the dead weight of ignorance and custom, combined with the pressure of poverty, is too heavy to overcome in a multitude of cases where the need is greatest, and a demand has therefore appeared for the establishment of free baby clinics, which have already been tried in one or two places.¹ It is impossible to pronounce specifically as to what the future has in store, but we may at least feel assured that public authorities will eventually carry their policy of watchfulness over the next generation beyond the school period and back to the time of birth, though voluntary agencies may figure largely in what is actually done.

The new interest in the rearing of the next generation, and the growing conviction of the importance of early feeding, have drawn attention to the question of the milk-supply, particularly in urban districts. The investigation made in 1907 and 1908 as to the contamination of milk, on behalf of the county boroughs of Bradford, Hull, Leeds, Rotherham, and Sheffield, and the administrative counties of the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire, is indicative of a quickened sense of responsibility in this matter. It was found that the greatest amount of contamination occurred at the cow-shed, and was largely attributable to the dirty condition of the cows' udders and the imperfect

¹ See Supplement to the *New Statesman* of May 16, 1914.

cleansing of the cans used for the milk—the latter source of the evil being particularly pronounced in the warmer months.¹ Much contamination—most of which is avoidable—takes place during the transit of the milk, and in the course of distribution by the retailer. The Committee concluded by affirming their conviction ‘that a much cleaner and more wholesome supply of milk can be obtained without a costly outlay in premises or special apparatus.’ Important as it is that the contamination which milk too frequently suffers before it reaches the consumer should be minimised, it is even more important, perhaps, that the degree of contamination which now takes place in the majority of homes should be lessened. That the latter is of particular seriousness is suggested by the fact that infantile diarrhoea, which is undoubtedly conveyed by milk in a high percentage of cases, is much more prevalent in the poorer, dirtier, and more congested parts of towns.² Were contamination before the milk reached the consumer of greatest moment, hot, dry summers ought to have massive effects on infantile diarrhoea—as they have not, but, on the contrary, strictly local effects. There are a few—but a very few—milk depots in the country, established in the interests of children, some under municipal control and some on an entirely voluntary basis. The largest is at Liverpool, where the milk is prepared at a central station and sent to a number of distributing stations, at a cost to the rates of about £3000 in 1911.

¹ See Report. It was found by Dr. Orr that proper cleansing of the udders reduced contamination by more than 60 per cent. in the summer, when the cows were out, and by almost as much as 95 per cent. in the winter.

² Pages 122–3.

The question of the milk-supply has become even more serious since a number of investigations were made which, in the judgment of experts, seem to place it beyond doubt that tuberculosis is conveyed from cattle to human beings through the avenue of milk.¹ The Departmental Committee on Tuberculosis thinks the evidence on this point convincing.² Fortunately, in connection with this danger, and dangers from other kinds of contamination also, laboratory researches show that good results are reached, in the case of infants breast-fed for a few weeks, if they are nourished on milk sterilised by having been raised to the boiling-point.³ But, as regards tuberculous milk, the only final solution is to discover and destroy tuberculous cattle.⁴

The attainment of a pure milk-supply is all important⁵; but it must be remembered that ill-devised systems of feeding are an outstanding preventable cause of the high death-rate of infants and even of older children, particularly in association with bad ventilation, which is naturally the rule when so few seem to know the value of fresh air. The feeding of young children is quite commonly wrong in time, kind, and proportion. Mere infants are given the unsuitable food which their parents get, and few of those who do not enjoy natural feeding are provided with a sufficiency of milk.

¹ See, e.g., Dr. Délèpine's Paper to the Manchester Statistical Society in 1909, and the references made to scientific investigations in the *Report of the Medical Officer to the Local Government Board in 1912*.

² Report 1913.

³ Dr. Janet Lane-Claypon's Report, published by the Local Government Board.

⁴ Dr. Délèpine's Paper, above referred to, and *Report of Committee on Tuberculosis*, 1913.

⁵ Further public control over the milk-supply is provided for in the Milk and Dairies Bill now before Parliament.

Summing up in general on the question of infant mortality, we may conclude that its substantial reduction is possible, but that it must always remain relatively high, since some children are born with incurable defects of a fundamental nature, or such feeble surviving power, as one might say, that they are doomed to die young; and it appears to be a part of nature's economy, as will appear later in this chapter, to provide that those who are doomed by their constitutions to die young shall not linger for long. Public interest in the question of infant mortality insures improvement, where improvement is possible, and public interest is now so widespread that international congresses for the study and prevention of infant mortality have been organised. The maternity benefit provided under the Insurance Act will certainly aid in preserving infant life, and there are clauses in the Children Act (see page 200) that will be productive of benefit.

But is it worth while to attempt to reduce infant mortality still farther? or, indeed—to put the objection more strongly—may not a saving of more infant lives per year prove damaging to the community in the long run? This question must be faced, because some people have surmised that this salvage relates, generally speaking, to weaklings who cannot live for long; and some people have even argued further that it is not good for the race, in view of the facts of heredity, that the preservation of weaklings should be so anxiously sought. The latter position appeals to a generation instructed in the doctrine of evolution. Do we not see, in the relatively high infant mortality rate, nature protecting the race in the most economical way by

eliminating weaklings at the earliest opportunity? Would not a seemingly philanthropic intervention be in reality uneconomical, cruel, and ultimately hurtful to posterity?

Confronted with these doubts or assertions, we are bound to inquire specifically in what degree a survival of the fittest is taking place among infants, though some general conclusions have already been laid down upon this question. And, first, reference must be made again to an error into which there is an imminent danger of slipping through an incautious use of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. 'Fittest' is an ambiguous term: the fittest to survive in a struggle for existence are those possessed of the greatest surviving power, or, as we may say with sufficient accuracy for our purpose, the 'physically fittest'; but the physically fittest are not necessarily the fittest intellectually, or the fittest socially or spiritually. If we are justified in viewing a social struggle for existence with equanimity, we must at least be sure that the survivors are those who will serve society best; and among those who serve society best the mentally gifted, and persons endowed with the social qualities which weld society together, must be given a high place, though they be physically weak. No State can afford to risk losing individuals possessed of valuable powers which are comparatively rare; and it may conceivably be that these powers are commonly associated with physical vigour below rather than above the ordinary. These considerations cast some doubt on the validity of the practical proposition with which this discussion began; and, in addition, it may be pointed out that there is evidence,

both in the broad showing of statistics and in investigations into the causes of infant deaths, to make it highly probable at least that the struggle for existence among children results in the survival of the physically fittest only to a limited extent.

If it is always the physically weakest who are lost by early deaths, a high infantile mortality ought to have some effect on mortality in later years, particularly in the years immediately after infancy; for the high infantile mortality should raise the average physical fitness of the survivors. Consequently, something relevant to the discussion may be gathered by taking similar places and picking out from them two groups, the one with a high rate of infant mortality and the other with a low one, and considering the children's death-rates (as we shall now term the death-rate among those between the ages of one year and five years) in relation to the infantile death-rates. As it is impossible to get places exactly similar, and some of the causes of the high infantile death-rate are sure to be causes of the children's death-rate also, note should be taken mainly of the ratio of the children's death-rate to the infantile death-rate. Now, the Local Government Board has recently (1910) made a report on infant and child mortality, in which a table is put forward giving for 1908 the death-rates in infancy and from one year to five years of age for the counties of England and Wales, distinguishing between urban and rural districts. If we take counties in groups of ten, according to the extent of infant mortality, and distinguish between urban and rural districts, we get the following :—

Counties	Average mortality Urban districts		Ratio of col. 1 to col. 2	Average mortality Rural districts		Ratio of col. 1 to col. 2
	0-1	1-5		0-1	1-5	
Ten counties with highest rate of in- fantile mortality	(1) 138·4	(2) 68·9	(3) 2·0	(4) 133·1	(5) 53·5	(6) 2·5
Next ten counties	125·5	57·4	2·2	101·9	39·9	2·5
Next ten counties	113·1	51·5	2·2	95·6	34·3	2·8
Next ten counties	92·8	40·3	2·3	88·4	35·7	2·5
Ten counties with lowest rate of in- fantile mortality	84·0	37·4	2·3	71·3	29·3	2·5

We notice that the figures in column 6, relating to rural districts, do not increase as we read from the bottom upwards; and that the numbers decrease as we read up column 3 relating to urban districts. Again, if we compare for each set of counties urban districts with rural districts, the former of which invariably have the greater death-rates, we discover that every number in column 3 is less than the number corresponding to it in column 6. Although the higher the infantile death-rate the higher should be the average surviving power of the survivors, we find that a high infantile death-rate is accompanied on the whole by a low ratio of infantile to children's death-rate instead of a high ratio.

Astonishing as this result may seem, there were reasons for expecting it. Very many early deaths must occur whatever precautions mothers take before and after the birth of the child. These deaths form a substantial proportion of the deaths commonly classed as due to wasting diseases. Moreover, of the rest, those who die youngest may tend to be the

weakest, and therefore the hardest to save. Hence, if mortality is not appreciably selective of the weaker lives, the variable causes of death are not unlikely to have larger relative effects on the death-rate of children between one to five than on the infantile death-rate.¹ But we must allow that there may be tendencies operating to bring about the opposite result. As the surviving power of a child increases with its age, it is possible that circumstances which reduce the general causes of death, in their bearing on infants and children, may have a greater percentage effect, the younger the children. A mother's enlightened care, in particular, may have effects inversely proportional to the children's age; and it is unquestionable that quite different standards of motherly knowledge and care prevail, and are more or less fixed by custom, in different parts of the country.

In view of the number of counteracting influences of unknown weight at work, it is clear that the comparison instituted in the table above cannot yield a definite result; but at least we may conclude that the selective bearing of the high infantile death-rate is not considerable enough to counteract any consequences in the opposite direction which result from the circumstances already explained. And there are reasons why it should not be so considerable. Climate and town

¹ Thus, to take a simple imaginary case, let death-rates in a district be 100 infantile and 50 for children (excluding infants), and let 75 per cent. of the infantile death-rate and all the children's death-rate be affected by these variable causes. Now let the strength of the variable causes increase in the district. Then, if the children's death-rate advances to 60 the infantile should advance to $25 + 75 \times \frac{60}{50} = 115$; and $\frac{60}{50}$ is greater than $\frac{115}{100}$.

smoke are no doubt selective causes, over the districts to which they attach, in bearing upon all in such districts; but it is probable that a large part of the excess of infantile mortality over the average, in certain places, is traceable to unhealthy housing conditions here and there, and to ignorance and carelessness, resulting in the bad feeding and imprudent exposure of children, and even to injury before birth. Here are irregularly dispersed causes which cannot be appreciably selective among the whole body of children. They create additional dangers to which only some children are subjected, and the children thus placed at a disadvantage are not necessarily the weakest—that is to say, causes which are sporadically dispersed, and which are therefore taking their toll of strong as well as weak, have been making high death-rates. But it is not denied, of course, that of those cast in the way of these exceptional dangers, the strongest survive.

There is a way of evading the difficulties met with in the inquiry under discussion, namely, to compare infant mortality with the mortality of survivors over a period for the same place. This has been done by Mr. Udny Yule for the Local Government Board, and the results are published in the 'Report on Infant and Child Mortality' (1910), already mentioned. A table was prepared, covering the period 1855 up to the present time, showing the rates at which the children born in each year died off in the first year of life, the second, the third, the fourth, and the fifth. Thus, taking one line of the table—that, say, containing the infantile death-rate for 1870—the first column contains the infantile death-rate for 1870, the second column the death-rate between one and two for 1871, the third column

the death-rate between two and three for 1872, the fourth column the death-rate between three and four for 1873, and the fifth column the death-rate between four and five for 1874. The variations in the columns were then compared, and the result was reached that only the figures in column 2 were appreciably affected by those in column 1. Given the soundness of its method, the investigation demonstrated that for each generation a high infantile death-rate meant a death-rate for children between one and two somewhat less than it would have been otherwise, but no appreciable alteration in death-rates at higher ages.¹ However, in this result there remains a trace of error, which may be serious; and it must not, therefore, be inferred straight away that a high infantile death depresses the death-rate among the survivors through eliminating a higher percentage of weaklings. As Mr. Udny Yule points out, annual death-rates vary with changes in climatic conditions from year to year, and any given figure in column 2 is determined by a set of climatic conditions which came a year after those which determined the corresponding figure in column 1.

¹ The correlation of columns 1 and 2 produced a coefficient of correlation nearly five times the probable error. The connection was found to be negative—that is to say, the figures in column 1 tended to increase when those in column 2 tended to decrease. The correlation coefficients and corresponding probable errors discovered were :—

Columns	Coefficient of correlation	Probable error
Cols. 1 and 2 .	— 0·41	0·078
„ 1 and 3 .	+ 0·014	0·094
„ 1 and 4 .	+ 0·031	0·095
„ 1 and 5 .	+ 0·15	0·095

Consequently, the oscillations in the two sets of figures due to climate do not correspond. In view of this lack of correspondence, some degree of connection, like that established between the two sets of figures, might exist even if infantile mortality had no influence upon the mortality of the survivors in the second year of life.

Mr. Udny Yule has circumvented the difficulty described by an ingenious device ; but, as there are no perfect methods of eliminating error in complex cases such as this, it cannot be maintained that his final results are more than probable. The final results are as follows. There are evidences that the infantile mortality rate is selective, since, on the whole, the higher this rate the lower to a slight extent does the death-rate of the survivors between the ages of one and two tend to be, even with constancy in seasonal conditions. A rise of about 10 units in the infant mortality rate causes a fall of 1·5 units at the most in the mortality of the second year of life. But this is not all. An unsuspected conclusion seems to come out of the investigations in addition. It is found that a high infant mortality rate tends to be followed by a high mortality rate among survivors in their fourth year, the connection being about as strongly marked as that between first-year and second-year mortality. Mr. Udny Yule puts and explains this curious circumstance as follows : ‘ The figures suggest that, after the third year of life, the weakening influences of the conditions that cause a high infantile mortality preponderate over the selective influence. The result seems a perfectly possible one if the mortality of infancy is selective only as regards the special dangers of infancy,

and its influence scarcely extends beyond the second year of life, whilst the weakening effect of a sickly infancy is of greater duration. But the statistical basis is too slight, and the case too complex to enable one to put forward such a conclusion, on the basis of these figures alone, as anything but a very tentative hypothesis.¹

¹ The results stated in the text are reached as follows. Mr. Udny Yule tries to eliminate the disturbing effects of climatic oscillations by assuming that the effect of climate on the death-rate at any age varies as the death-rates for the same years of those (a) just younger, or (b) just older. Thus, by a mathematical method, he, in effect, corrects column 2 by allowing for climatic effects as measured (a) by infantile death-rates for the years to which the mortality represented by figures in column 1 relate, or (b) by death-rates in the third year of life for the years to which the mortality represented by figures in column 1 relate. Correlations reached, after the elimination in this way of disturbing causes, are called 'partial correlations.' These are the results attained when (a) and (b) respectively are used as indices of the disturbing effects of climate :—

Columns	Partial correlation coefficient	Probable error
Cols. 1 and 2 with (a) as index . . .	—0·046	0·093
„ „ „ (b) „ . . .	—0·39	0·080
Cols. 1 and 3 with (a) as index . . .	—0·20	0·091
„ „ „ (b) „ . . .	+0·43	0·078
Cols. 1 and 4 with (a) as index . . .	+0·37	0·082
„ „ „ (b) „ . . .	+0·42	0·079
Cols. 1 and 5 with (a) as index . . .	+0·21	0·092

The results, it will be seen, differ a good deal according as (a) or (b) is taken as the index for eliminating the disturbing effects of climate. Mr. Udny Yule thinks (b) the better index; but it is not transparently so much the better that the results reached by employing (a) may be ignored. As both partial correlation coefficients for columns 1 and 2 are negative, and one is about five times the probable error, we may suppose that a negative connection is likely; as one is negative and one positive for columns 1 and 3, we may suppose no connection; as both are positive

The practical bearing on efforts to reduce infantile mortality of the conclusions of the lengthy argument now completed are of importance. It is plain from the quantitative results just given that only a small fraction of the life saved by reducing infantile death-rate is lost at later ages. Social amelioration largely means the salvage of lives which cannot be on an average physically weaker to a non-negligible degree than those which would be preserved in any event; and, if they were, it would not follow that they were the lives which could be dispensed with most conveniently. The same may be said of advance in medical science. It does not mean exclusively, or even chiefly, the preservation of the weakest who used to die, since the dispersion of children's diseases as a whole is largely casual dispersion over weak and strong alike.

for columns 1 and 4, and both are in the neighbourhood of five times the corresponding probable error, we may assume positive connection; and lastly, as the one partial correlation coefficient is positive for columns 1 and 5 and is more than twice its probable error, we may at least suppose that there is no negative connection.

CHAPTER IV

TRAINING AND BOY AND GIRL LABOUR

EDUCATIONAL systems and policy appeared to be settled for a long time to come till of late they began to be subjected to searching re-examination. Two movements may be contrasted: the one relating to system and the other to the function of the State; and the latter has already brought about such an extension of the community's educational activities that they overlap public aid on one side, public health on another side, and provisions for drawing together the demand for and supply of labour on yet another side. Problems of education unite with those of public aid in the matter of the feeding of schoolchildren, and those of public health in the functions of the school medical officer, and with those of trade in the policy embodied in the institution of juvenile labour exchanges. The present chapter will start with a discussion of the educational question most intimately connected with the contents of the previous chapter—that is, the question of the public feeding of schoolchildren.

It cannot be held that society is free from responsibility as regards any social evil, but its responsibility is certainly greatest in all that appertains to the young. And,

from the question of the feeding of necessitous school-children, a community which has already assumed the obligation to provide education cannot hold itself aloof. Adequate feeding is a condition precedent to the successful pursuit of an adequate educational policy. But the question raises an awkward problem, in view of the operation of subtle social reactions which, though they leave a trail as little defined as that of a flying bird, may produce maleficent consequences of some proportion. On the one side is the need of maintaining parental responsibility; on the other, the desire to minimise suffering and prevent young lives from being wholly spoilt by early neglect. As Canon Barnett put it: 'Because family life is not dead, because its influence is necessary in the city of our vision, it is very important to discover how the children may be fed, and family life be strengthened for its development in the future.'

Very many children now attending school are habitually underfed; and hungry children cannot learn, and habitually ill-nourished children cannot be expected to grow up efficient citizens. But reformers differ in their recommendations. The more drastic urge that the provision of meals for all schoolchildren who care to partake of them should be made a duty of the State. Their idea is to feed the ill-nourished without conveying the pauper taint; escape the difficulty of drawing the line between the most neglected and the rest; insure that the next generation shall have, at least in their school-days, a minimum of wholesome food (which creates the energy needed to profit from education); and secure an additional gain in the good meal-habits acquired by feeding at public

tables under proper control.¹ That the meal-habits of many of the poorer classes, particularly children, are frequently bad must be conceded. Children too often get their food at irregular times, and take their meals in scraps, standing or running about, while in addition much that they eat and drink is unsuitable. Moreover, it has been pointed out that many children in the rural parts have to bring food to school, because they live far away, and that frequently ill-health results. Mr. Williams, in his report on Anglesea children, commenting on the remarkable fact that malnutrition is worse in the rural than in the urban parts of Anglesea, suggests as the cause that children who bring their midday meal to school feed hurriedly and scrappily. Other school medical officers have also noted the harmful effects of the make-shift meal taken anyhow at school—more particularly when it is not supervised, as it is in some places.

The objections advanced to an extensive system of public meals with the charge on the public purse are mainly two. On the one hand, the cost is complained of²; and, on the other hand, unfortunate social reactions are feared. No writer has more persuasively insisted upon the second objection than Mrs. Bosanquet

¹ Even when a few children only are fed good habits may spread. Evidence given to the Interdepartmental Committee on Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children showed that in one case, at any rate, the use of porridge at the public meals was followed by the increased use of porridge in the district (quoted from Miss Winder's *Public Feeding of Elementary Schoolchildren in Birmingham*). The great value of porridge as a food for children is brought out by an investigation made at Sheffield, the results of which (taken from the *Report of the School Medical Officer for 1910*) are given by Miss Winder on p. 65 of her book.

² It amounted to £157,000 for England and Wales in 1911-2 (under the Act to be dealt with later), and of this more than £151,000 fell on the rates.

in her two works, 'The Strength of the People' and 'The Family.' Society is now organised on the basis of families, and is healthy and vigorous as families are responsible. The feeling of responsibility is at once a regulator of the growth of population and the motive power whereby individuals in the rising generation are placed at their several tasks in the world. If carelessness and a dependent disposition are fostered in parents and those who may soon become parents, inert masses of unadaptable labour may be found encumbering the next generation. Thought for the morrow, and the initiative born of it, are the main-springs of society as at present constituted.¹

Against these possibilities of social damage there is the fact of widespread malnutrition. If the latter can be corrected, and the chance of injurious reaction be escaped, the problem is solved. Hungry scholars must be fed; but it is urged by the more cautious reformers that each case of malnutrition should be followed up and dealt with in such a way as to stop it at the source. In a word, an individualising treatment is proposed. According to this view, where the cause of the evil is carelessness, the cost should be recoverable from the parents; and in very bad cases, where carelessness has become callousness, parents should be proceeded against for cruelty. It is, moreover, maintained that, when distress lies at the root of the trouble, the individualising method has the additional advantage of bringing hidden suffering to light. In circumstances of really acute poverty cost is not recoverable; but this is a matter of little

¹ For developments of these arguments, and objections to them, see Chapter VII.

moment, since it is not economy, but an arrangement to prevent parents from letting slip their obligations, which is declared to be the essential thing. The objection that the funds for free meals have to be provided from public sources can hardly be regarded as weighty in itself. Of course, if and wherever charity is adequate and sufficiently well organised for the task, there are strong reasons against substituting for it complete State responsibility; but experience had shown that the flaw in any system depending on private initiative is the latter's irregularity and constant local inadequacy, united with the fact that the supplementing of voluntarily contributed funds out of the proceeds of taxation causes a cumulative shrinkage of the former.¹ Moreover, account must be taken of the inequitable distribution of burdens when contributions are on a voluntary basis; and, in any event, public machinery is requisite in order to make it reasonably secure that provision shall neither fail nor be excessive in any district. In all matters of this kind it is well to avoid abstract discussion as to whether it is the function of the State to assume responsibility. The functions of the State can only be very roughly defined on *a priori* lines; in actual affairs each *prima facie* case for State action must be considered on its merits. And, in considering each case, the distinction between normal phenomena and pathological phenomena should be recognised. Its clear recognition would

¹ Only an insignificant part of the expense of the public feeding of schoolchildren sanctioned by the Act of 1906 (referred to below) is now borne voluntarily. Out of a total expenditure of £157,000 for England and Wales in 1911-12, little more than £3000 was contributed voluntarily, while parents' contributions did not amount to as much as £1600.

obviate much objection to official action in disputed territory. The problem of the feeding of ill-nourished schoolchildren is a problem of social pathology. A part of the problem is to keep normal such children as are in danger of being permanently hurt by abnormal family conditions, without encouraging—or, if possible, whilst helping to remove—these abnormal conditions.

The Government has acted upon the lines of the recommendations made by the Committee on Physical Deterioration. A permissive measure was passed in 1906—the Education (Provision of Meals) Act—and this measure was almost immediately followed by another rendering the appointment of school medical officers compulsory (1907).¹ Education authorities may take such steps as they think requisite for the feeding of neglected children attending public elementary schools, but they are not compelled to take action. They are empowered to work with voluntary committees (school canteen committees), and defray the expenses, apart from those for food, incurred by such committees; but they may not place the burden of providing food upon the rates without the sanction of the Board of Education, which may authorise an outlay to the extent of the proceeds of a halfpenny rate. The cost of the meals is to be recovered from parents who are in a position to pay.

In 1910 a report was published on the working of the Act up to the end of March 1908, in which much evidence is brought forward to show that its effects are beneficial. One of the useful by-products of the Act of 1906, and

¹ By this Act—the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act—local education authorities may also provide vacation schools and classes, play centres, or other means of recreation in the holidays.

of the medical provisions of the Act of 1907, it is pointed out, is the stimulus given to the formation of local 'Children's Care Committees' and similar voluntary agencies. 'Even if the voluntary contribution of funds has been diminished by the operation of those Acts, the demands and opportunities for the voluntary contribution of effective personal service have been greatly increased, and it is not too much to hope that the workers so enlisted in the service of the children may through them obtain influence in the homes, and thus carry on an effective warfare against ignorance and carelessness.' In some cases the School Canteen Committee has consisted entirely of members of the Education Committee, but as a rule the Committee has contained other suitable persons, such as members of boards of guardians, charity organisation societies, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or local societies for promoting the welfare of children. School attendance officers, relieving officers, and representatives of the teachers have also served, and in some cases the medical officer is a member of the Canteen Committee. For care committees voluntary workers are urgently needed. London has been as successful, perhaps, as any place in using them : in London, in 1910, there were some 5000 visitors for about 900,000 children.¹

¹ The functions of the care committees, which in London are organised in relation to a central care committee, are thus summarised by Miss M. F. Davies (*Progress*, July 1910) :—

'(a) To determine which children shall be fed, and determine the parents' ability to pay. Various rules and an elaborate system of forms are provided for dealing with and recording this work.

'(b) To visit children's homes in order to discover and remedy real causes of distress, and to call in the aid of various official and voluntary agencies where desirable.

Returning to the provision of food at school, we observe that a midday dinner seems to be generally regarded by local authorities as the most useful meal. Expert evidence given to the Committee on Physical Deterioration showed that an inadequate breakfast was not very serious if followed by mental and not physical work. The meals provided have usually cost from 1*d.* to 2*d.* per head for food, but the actual range in 1912 was from $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* to 3*d.* Where the meal provided is breakfast, the lowest costs are, of course, met with. The total cost of meals per head ranges from $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* to 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*, but in very few cases is it less than 1*d.* or more than 3*d.*¹

It is affirmed that a large proportion of the badly nourished children suffer from unsuitable food rather than from lack of food. 'It is probably no exaggeration to say that the improvement which could be effected in the physique of elementary

'(c) To endeavour, after medical inspection, to induce parents to obtain the advice and treatment recommended by the school doctor.

'(d) To assess and to require from parents either whole payment or such part (calculated on a graduated fixed scale) as the family income allows, for any treatment received by their children at hospitals or elsewhere.

'(e) To assist in the carrying out of cleansing schemes for verminous children by visits and advice to parents (arranged for under the Children Act of 1908).

'(f) To obtain, by means of voluntary gifts or grants, boots and clothing for such children as need them, and to run boot clubs.

'(g) To advise and help parents in connection with the after-employment of children, putting them in touch with suitable agencies, and furnishing information as to scholarships, trade and technical schools, evening classes, &c.

'(h) To interest themselves in the general welfare of the children, to encourage thrift, institute clubs, and arrange for recreation out of school hours.'

See also *Children's Care Committees*, by Margaret Frere.

¹ See Appendix to *Report of Chief Medical Officer for Schools in 1912*.

schoolchildren in the poor parts of our large towns, if their parents could be taught or persuaded to spend the same amount of money as they now spend on their children's food in a more enlightened and sensible manner, is greater than any improvement which could be effected by feeding them intermittently at the cost of the rates.' Further, it may be added, that want of sleep, through overcrowding and ill-regulated family life, is another potent cause of malnutrition; while insanitary conditions and disease play their baneful parts. For dealing with wilful neglect of children of a grave nature an effective instrument is furnished in section 12 of the Children Act of 1908.

Teachers in their notes furnished to the Board of Education on the educational effects of the feeding vary a good deal in their testimony, but on the whole they report favourably. As to the physiological effects of the feeding of schoolchildren, one of the least assailable and most definite pieces of evidence that we have met with is that tendered in a Bradford report by Dr. Crowley. About forty children at Bradford were provided with breakfast and dinner for five days a week, and their weights were compared weekly with those of certain other children (called the 'control children'), similar to those fed, who did not receive these free meals. The gain in weight of the children fed was more than 47 ounces between March 12 and July 25, as compared with less than 20 ounces in the case of the control children, despite the fact that throughout the Whitsuntide holidays the former lost 15 ounces. During the summer holidays—which were three times as long as the Whitsuntide holidays—the children fed during school-time lost about 16 ounces, which, as it is much

less in proportion than the loss during the Whitsuntide holidays, seems to indicate that there is a marked cumulative gain from continuous feeding. Another investigation may be quoted, in which a comparison was instituted between the children provided with free meals and children normally fed at home.¹ At Northampton, 'arrangements were made for the weekly weighing of forty-four children who received these meals, and similar records were kept of forty children of a similar social class who did not receive the meals. At the beginning the average weight of the fed children was 1·71 kilogrammes less than that of the others. In the second week of the experiment the average gain in weight of the fed children had been much greater than that of the other children. The average then fluctuated in both cases; during the Easter holidays of ten days, during which no meals were supplied, there was a loss in the case of the fed children and a gain in the case of others. At the close of the experiment the average weight of the fed children was only 1·02 kilogrammes less than that of the others.'² The fact that the effect of the feeding is a cumulative one and that much of it is dissipated during holidays, combined with the fact that many teachers are only sure that substantial benefit is reaped educationally after children have been consistently dealt with for some time, led to the introduction of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act Amendment Bill in 1912 authorising the continuation of the meals during holidays.

¹ See Report of 1910 referred to above. Other statistics bearing on the question under discussion will be found in Greenwood's *Health and Physique of Schoolchildren* (published under the Ratan Tata Foundation, University of London).

² 1 kilogramme = 35 ounces.

In 1908 by forty-two authorities meals were provided at each school where they were needed, by eighty authorities they were provided at centres—school-buildings sometimes being the places selected—and by forty-four at local restaurants. The last plan was emphatically condemned in the report of 1912 on the ground that it usually meant complete neglect of the educational and refining side of the work, and equally neglect of dietary considerations, which are so important when malnutrition is the evil to be combated. Occasionally, authorities combined two of the arrangements mentioned, or even all three. In one or two cases food was supplied at the children's homes, or money was given to the parents; but in these cases no authority was obtained for expenditure out of the rates. As the service of meals in classrooms at schools is open to the objection that in the short midday interval it may be difficult to set out and clear away the meals, and properly ventilate the rooms used, the Board of Education has discouraged this arrangement. It is significant of the trend of the times that 'in a few cases authorities in planning a new school have suggested the provision of a separate dining-room, and arrangements have been proposed under which a single room is to serve the double purpose of a dining-room and a room for medical inspection.'

Various methods have been adopted for the recommendation and final selection of the children to receive meals. Recommendations were originally made by the teachers, as a rule, but the school medical officers, the school nurses, and the attendance officers also called attention to cases which came under their observation. In very few instances was application made

direct by the parents, according to the returns ; but probably many applications made by parents through teachers have been attributed to the teachers. 'The ultimate selection of the children appears to have been left largely in the hands of the Canteen Committee or a sub-committee ; but in some cases it was determined by the teachers or the school attendance officers.' The number of local educational authorities who declared in 1908 that they left the final selection to the school medical officer, or acted exclusively upon his recommendation, or required every application to be endorsed by him, was less than a dozen. In this period, no doubt, many local authorities had not completed their arrangements for medical inspection, and the school medical officers were busily engaged in organising and getting through routine inspections ; but the Board of Education, in its report of 1910, comments with a note of surprise, which is equivalent to a remonstrance, upon the fact 'that the opportunity of co-ordinating two functions which are so intimately related was not taken in more cases.' 'It is tolerably clear,' the report continues, 'that in some cases educational and medical considerations had little to do with the selection of the children, and that the condition and circumstances of the applicants were not submitted to any methodical scrutiny ; . . . some authorities made elaborate inquiries into the economic if not into the medical circumstances of each case, and before a child was admitted to take the meals they investigated the income of the parents, the size of the family, the general circumstances of the home, and the causes to which the poverty, if it existed, might be attributed.' As to methods of selection, the chief medical officer of

the Board of Education is not yet satisfied. In his report for 1912, he still maintains that sufficient use is not made of the school medical officer, and points out that the full intention of the Act is not being carried out. Exclusive reliance on a poverty test makes the School-feeding Act merely an adjunct of the Poor Law, whereas the essential idea of the Act is that the physical and mental well-being of children should be the principal object kept in view—an object which cannot be completely attained if medical opinion is dispensed with. Malnutrition, for instance, and even under-feeding, may take place quite apart from poverty.¹

The ideal arrangement would seem to be that teachers, attendance officers, district visitors of any institution, or in fact any persons, should feel it incumbent upon them to notify the school medical officer of any case of malnutrition brought to their notice; that the medical officer should thereupon be required to examine the child; and that upon his report, together with any representations which other persons might feel called upon to make, the decision of the authority responsible for the meals should be based. Under-feeding having been established, the home should be visited and inquiries made with a view to the discovery of the cause. If it is poverty, no further steps can be taken by the education authority beyond feeding the child, but the case should be at once referred to the public aid authority. If it is sheer carelessness, the parents should be and are required to pay the cost of the meals. If payment is not made, or if children are withdrawn from the meals,

¹ Miss Winder also, in her *Public Feeding of Elementary Schoolchildren*, makes this point.

and the under-feeding continues, parents should be, and may be, prosecuted; but, hitherto, authorities have shown themselves most reluctant to resort to extreme measures, and the amounts recovered from parents have been insignificant. It appears that not a few habitually under-nourished children are withdrawn from the meals, or are not admitted to the meals, because their parents have failed to respond when notified, while, nevertheless, their under-feeding continues. It is urgent that such miscarriages of the intention of the Act should not be suffered to continue. A case of malnutrition once discovered should be instantly dealt with, and never lost sight of until it is evident that the causes have been actually removed, and not merely held in check temporarily. Persistent visiting under the direction of some authority is the sole guarantee that full value will be got out of the Act.

The public feeding of schoolchildren has followed the not unusual course of new social departures in this country, from a beginning in unorganised private endeavour to organised voluntary action after interest had been aroused by the Press, and finally, as things are, to permissive official responsibility. The ultimate step of rendering official responsibility obligatory remains to be taken. In 1874 Mrs. Burgwin began at the Orange Street Board School, Hackney; and, shortly after, she received assistance through the agency of a fund started by the *Referee* newspaper. Numerous associations for the provision of meals were eventually organised, and in 1900 the London School Board made an attempt to systematise their work in London by the institution of a joint committee on underfed children. By 1904 many provincial towns were doing

something, and in not a few cases their efforts had started many years before. A new turn was given to affairs after the matter had been inquired into by the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) and the Inter-departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, which reported respectively in 1903 and 1904. In view of the evidence given and the reports made, an inter-departmental committee was appointed in 1905 to inquire into the feeding of children attending public elementary schools, as well as into their medical inspection, and as a consequence of its findings and the failure of guardians and education authorities to discover another solution, the Act of 1906, already summarised, was adopted.¹

In the matter of the public feeding of elementary schoolchildren, at any rate, England did not follow the lead of any continental country. No big scheme appears to have been in existence abroad at the time when the policy was adopted in England. The most notable foreign work was that of the *Caisses des Écoles* in Paris. In 1904 they provided about 10,660,000 meals, against the cost of which they had a subsidy of no more than £40,000 from the municipality. Parents paid for about a quarter of the meals furnished: only the children of poor families obtain the canteen meals gratis. It is an admirable feature of the work of the *Caisses des Écoles* that any children may partake of the meals on paying at the rate of no more than 15 centimes (about $1\frac{1}{2}d.$) per meal.²

¹ An admirable account of the history of the movement will be found in Miss Winder's *Public Feeding of Elementary Schoolchildren* (in the 'Birmingham Studies in Social Economics'), 1913.

² See the official report (1906) on *Methods adopted in Great Continental and American Cities for dealing with Underfed Children* (Cd. 2926).

That disease is responsible for much malnutrition has been brought out with increasing definiteness in the course of inquiry. Thus of nearly 600 cases examined by the school medical officer of Middlesex in 1910, 37 per cent. were attributed to disease.¹ In view of this, the indispensableness of doctors in the administration of the School-feeding Act is abundantly manifest; and for other reasons the appointment of school medical officers was eminently to be desired. Public concern for the health of school-children has been a gradual growth. The 'eighties' saw the first practical steps taken in Germany and the beginning of their widespread imitation: at the present time in the German Empire some 350 towns and communities have assumed responsibility for the medical supervision of school life. In France, before the last decade of the nineteenth century, the medical inspection of schools was instituted in all departments.² In England, action on the part of local authorities did not begin till 1890; and by that time much had been written on the subject. In 1890 the London School Board appointed a medical officer, and thereby set an example which was followed by Bradford in 1893, the year in which the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf) Children Act was passed to render compulsory the instruction of the blind and deaf. Three years later a committee of the Education Department was appointed to inquire into existing systems for the education of feeble-minded and defective children

¹ Quoted from Miss Winder, *loc. cit.*

² *Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education for 1908*; also pamphlet of the Board of Education on *School Doctors in Germany* (1908).

who were not idiots or imbeciles ; and, a year after the appearance of its report, its recommendations, which it desired to see compulsorily put in force, were permissively enacted in the Law of 1899 relating to mentally defective and epileptic children. By that Act education authorities—with the sanction of the Education Department—might take steps to discover the existence of the classes of children to which it referred, and provide education for them on condition that the children were certified by a qualified medical practitioner approved by the Education Department. A few institutions for feeble-minded and epileptic children existed prior to the passing of this Act, but little in addition has been done since. However, the Act in question, in relating to specific complaints, can hardly be regarded as giving expression to the modern idea that the bodily state and mental activities of children must be dealt with as two sides of an organic whole. It was the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) which in effect initiated the new departure. In its report (1903) it advocated systematic medical inspection of schoolchildren, both for remedial objects and in order to furnish such information about the state of the population as Government and the public should have at their disposal. The recommendation in a modified form was endorsed a year later by the Committee on Physical Deterioration ; and within twelve months the President of the Board of Education took action by appointing a committee to find out, *inter alia*, what was being done. It transpired that in forty-eight areas some degree of medical inspection or supervision had been established, while in eighteen others it existed on a voluntary basis. Meanwhile, the

subject was being forced on the attention of the public by private inquiries¹ and the International Congress on School Hygiene of 1904.² The Education Act of 1906 contained a clause to enable effect to be given to the proposals of the committee mentioned, but, owing to the fate of this Bill, the kind of enactment which had become inevitable after protracted discussion was deferred till 1907.³

The Education (Administrative Provisions) Act of 1907, the Act referred to, places a duty upon education authorities to provide for the periodic medical inspection of children in public elementary schools and 'make such arrangements as may be sanctioned by the Board of Education for attending to the health and physical condition of the children.' The school medical officers are not only to inspect children, but in some degree keep watch over the hygiene of their school surroundings, and the character and amount of school work and its arrangement, with respect to its bearing on development, particularly through fatigue. In 1911 there were 943 school medical officers in England and Wales, of whom 74 were women. It is gratifying to learn that parents are taking an interest in the medical inspection of their children. From figures for typical places it appears that nearly 50 per cent. of the children examined in 1911 had parents or guardians present

¹ For instance, one, conducted by the Charity Organisation Society in Edinburgh, relating to 1400 schoolchildren; and others by Mr. Arkle in Liverpool.

² A second international congress was held in London in 1907.

³ The history of the movement for the medical inspection of school-children is well summarised in the *Annual Report for 1908 of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education*. The scientific side of school inspection is dealt with in *Medical Examination of Schools and Children*, edited by Dr. Kelynack.

during the examination—at Wolverhampton the percentage was as high as 89. The presence of parents affords some guarantee that any needed remedial steps will not be totally ignored. But the following up of cases is always essential. In this, school nurses (of which there were 632 in England and Wales in 1911) give assistance. They are also of use after the inspection in instructing parents how to apply remedies, and (when sanctioned) in giving simple treatment in connection with school clinics. Of the service of nurses, the chief medical officer of the Board of Education says in his report for 1911, ‘there is hardly any more economical expenditure in relation to school medical work than that laid out upon an efficient nursing staff.’

An important step was taken by the Board of Education in sanctioning school medical clinics, and even dental clinics. As many as fifty-six of one sort or the other had been sanctioned by July 1912. The first medical clinic was instituted at Bradford; the prime reason given for its institution being that the majority of children who needed treatment failed to get it. In this clinic, and others like it, only minor ailments are dealt with. The difficulty met with at Bradford, and scores of other places, in insuring that remedies should be applied when the medical officer declared them to be required, is but one fact illustrating the importance of associating children’s care committees with the new work in schools. Such committees can make it their business to see that the recommendations of the medical officer are carried out in the case of each child when there is no school clinic, and even when there is, so far as the recommendations do not

relate to work undertaken in the clinic. Moreover, they can follow up each case to the home, as need arises, provide parents with indispensable information, and give counsel in the matter of the ways and means of getting the curative treatment that is required. On children's care committees, which are organised in association with education authorities, there is immense scope for voluntary work of the utmost value.

There is another advantage that will follow the systematic medical inspection of children. Cases of disease, and of physical or mental defect or unfitness, should in future be discovered before it is too late for precautionary or remedial measures to be of much use; and the systematic marking out of those suffering from disabilities which render ordinary schools of little use to them will naturally stimulate the provision of such special schools as are needful. The most recent type of such special schools is the open-air school, of which there are some half-dozen in this country for use in the summer months. They were first tried in Germany. They are intended for those who are incapable of benefiting as they ought from the ordinary instruction in elementary schools and may profit from open-air treatment and training. Special schools for the blind and deaf have existed for some time, and a few have been provided, as we have seen, for the feeble-minded and epileptics.

Yet another beneficial consequence of the medical inspection of schoolchildren should be the restoring of physical activities to their due place. For the last few years, happily, the importance of physical training has been increasingly realised; the Board of Education has laid stress upon it in recent orders

affecting the preparation of teachers; and four inspectors of physical training (two of whom are women) have been appointed and placed under the Medical Department which was organised in connection with the Act. Of equal importance with physical training, and linked up with it in showing its *raison d'être*, is school instruction in hygiene, upon which stress is now being laid.

We should hardly be wise in attempting more than to skirt the fringe of so large a subject as education in a work which is not specifically devoted to it. To education, we must, however, refer because it is by far the most effectual reformer.

It will be generally admitted to-day by the enlightened that four objects should be aimed at by a comprehensive education policy—namely, (1) to discover the capacities of the scholars; (2) to develop them and furnish outlook, in view of the kind of work to be done and life to be lived in the world; (3) to build up character; and (4) to implant the knowledge and sentiment needed for a healthy social existence. Once enunciated, the first two of these principles—principles of individualising as they might be termed—seem so axiomatic that readers may question whether they are worth emphasising; but, though truisms to students of social science, they are not yet accepted universally as a basis for educational policy, and less than twenty years ago they would have met with widespread dissent. Indeed, they are sometimes disputed openly to-day. It is still affirmed by many that the sole justification of technical instruction classes is that operatives acquire skill more rapidly by attending

them than they would if left to pick it up in the workshop. Others, whose imagination has travelled farther, would add the supplementary advantage that the operative who is taught the underlying principles of the matters with which he deals daily is rendered more thoughtful and more interested, and hence more efficient. But to concede this is not to concede that the teacher sets out on a voyage of discovery—latent power being the object of his quest—and that, as he succeeds, education must be adapted to his discoveries with a view to furnishing subjective opportunities for the recruiting of the higher ranks in the social system. Not a few recoil from this selective theory of education, not merely through apprehension lest social order should be disturbed, but also through doubt as to whether it is really democratic in spirit; for the selective purpose of education evidently involves discrimination. But discrimination, provided that it is founded on inherent qualities, is not in conflict with a democratic conception of the body politic as organic instead of a mere congeries of units.

If it is agreed that one function of education is to elicit from each individual the powers of which he is possessed, the period of education and its character must evidently be made to correspond with differences between personal endowments. To place the question on the economic plane and draw an analogy, nobody would contend that every acre of land should be treated with an equal amount of capital; and persons differ in respect of latent talents as much as land differs in respect of latent fertility. To express social duty in this matter in terms of individual rights, the right of the individual is to have his powers developed, or,

as idealists have expressed it, to have himself realised. In our second volume, and again in the first chapter of this volume, we have envisaged the significant social amelioration which a wide recognition of this truth would effect. The English nation instituted popular instruction largely under the impulse of political requirements. A wholly illiterate electorate, not to be swayed except by word of mouth, was recognised as a public danger. It was essential that voters should be able to follow politics in the Press and express themselves on paper. Hence, in part, the demand for an educational minimum—a minimum to be observed strictly apart from differences in intelligence. The quick child might finish its training early and go to work, but the slow child was to be detained longer at school. In contrast with this, according to the principle of selective education upon which we have been insisting, the quick child, so far as his quickness means greater intelligence, should remain at school for a longer and not for a shorter period than the child less gifted. The latter ought not to receive any less education than he or she does to-day, but the former ought to receive more. There can be no doubt that the last twenty-five years have witnessed a complete reversal in educational outlook, and that the next twenty-five years will witness a practical outcome in astonishing economic reactions. Unfortunately, hitherto a large section of the population has been so obsessed by the pressing need of minima, in matters economic as well as educational, that they have been apt to overlook the importance of maxima.

It is significant of the change which our ideas have

undergone that by educationalists the elementary school system is being viewed with not a little vague dissatisfaction, in marked contrast with the public pride in it of not so long ago. The doubt is whether this gigantic and highly efficient engine, working in great educational factories, and making a school life foreign in all its content and setting to the home life, is really successful in proportion to its cost in educating capacities and personal forces and making men and women.¹ It is feared that initiative and resource are being left dormant (as they were not in the famous, ill-equipped Scotch village schools); and the conviction has, therefore, been materialising that the existing system must at least be supplemented in ways which put the individual child on his mettle. By the arrangement of playground life, garden work, and handicrafts (when the aim of the last is not speedy and unthinking performance according to prescribed rules), something of great value experimentally has already been done in several schools.² One general reform must certainly be more individual attention, and consequently smaller classes. The keynote of much betterment in all spheres of life to-day is individualising, as we have repeatedly discerned

¹ The mechanical examination test has largely disappeared. It caused the sacrifice of bright children to dull children, and encouraged the forcing of attainments, which meant little, to the neglect of mental vitality.

² See Professor Findlay's Paper to the Manchester Statistical Society in 1911 on *Recent London Experiments in the Schooling of Poor Children*; also Miss Sewell's *Open-air Life for City Children*. Already, in a small way, benefit has resulted from the *Memorandum on Manual Instruction in Public Elementary Schools*, issued by the Board of Education in 1910. Recent reaction has crystallised, in an extreme form, in the Montessori system, on which there is a pamphlet of the Board of Education (1912).

and have yet to perceive further; and it may be remarked again here that the chief problem which confronts modern society is that of achieving individualising without individualism—of individualising in such a way as to add to rather than detract from the cohesiveness and unity of social existence.

There is another educational idea which is being rapidly assimilated—namely, that of adapting education to the diverse requirements of after-life. Reformers were at first inclined to draw a firm dividing-line between education proper and technique; but to-day the admission is common that technique, broadly regarded, can be rendered educational. This subject was dealt with in a report of the London County Council, and practice has already followed counsel. Experiments are being tried also in other parts of the country. There is no desire among the best informed to substitute instruction which is merely technical for education proper. The movement is not a concession to utilitarian prejudices involving some sacrifice of ideals. On the contrary, at the back of the new departure is the belief that in this way much school work can be rendered more educational. It is true that the wage-earning classes benefit from the provision of easier avenues of approach to the skilled trades; but it is true also that for many people instruction bearing upon manual performance at a certain stage constitutes a better education than a more exclusively bookish curriculum. There is some ground for the complaint that the latter has specialised to serve mainly the requirements of the clerk. Many children need to be brought in touch with concrete applications before they can grasp abstract problems. All who

have given a lengthy trial to the experiment will agree that practical work in metal and wood, when properly united with theoretical knowledge, leads to an understanding and appreciation of the mathematical construction involved, which would not otherwise have been aroused. Even classes in handicrafts that have died or are dying out may have a wide influence in bringing into factory life an interest of which it is now devoid.

The trade school is needed as much for girls as for boys, and among the 'trades' domestic work must be increasingly included. The arts of cooking and household management may be imparted in such a way as to make them educational; and none will deny that their encouragement will result in an enormous gain on the utilitarian side. And the importance of the adaptation of means to ends in education must not be forgotten in the case of agriculture, the needs of which are so apt to slip the memory when educational advance is attributable in the main to the lively sense of public responsibility generated in large urban districts. Probably, country parts are being denuded of their population for one reason because of the character of the education there provided, which has not been designed in any substantial degree to stimulate rural tastes and have a natural outcome in rural pursuits. Certainly it ought not to be narrowly rural in its bearing, because there are born in the country many whose abilities and interests mark them out for industrial and other non-farming avocations; but the defect is that it has been narrowly urban in its bias. In country parts in particular, manual training is of the utmost importance; and, on the principle

of connecting teaching with something in the child's experience—as well as with a view to making the life of agriculturists more attractive—gardening, the keeping of bees, dairying and tillage, and the simple applications of science to agriculture should be taught, and the scholars be induced to observe the animate and inanimate life of the country-side.¹ Finally, in connection with training for particular economic ends, we must not overlook those trade schools of Germany of which the avowed purpose is to keep alive certain handicrafts that are tending to disappear under the one-sided impulse of the factory system.²

Even those who are most clamorous for educational improvement will readily admit that vast strides have been taken since 1870. Teaching is better, classes are smaller, and the cost of education to parents has been considerably reduced. In the year 1891 all public elementary education was made free; and secondary education has been rendered far more accessible to the masses through the agency of scholarships, of which more will be needed to link together grade and grade as education becomes more individualised. Again, the institution and spread of public free libraries have been of incalculable value from the broad educational point of view.

Education has not only been enriched in content

¹ The remarks on pp. 713–4 of Sadler's *Continuation Schools* may be read with profit. See also reports of the Rural Education Conference, 1910–3, and the following pamphlets of the Education Department: *Report on Farm and Agricultural Schools and Colleges in France, Germany, and Belgium* (1912), and *The Problem of Rural Schools and Teachers in North America* (1908).

² See Miss Edlmann's report to the Board of Education on *Education and Peasant Industry*, 1912.

of late, but it has also been applied to an extended span of life. The importance of continuation work is being emphasised; and its emphasis is the more urgent now that the decay of apprenticeship has left a gap in the old system of preparation for skilled occupations. 'As a method of industrial training, still more as a method of moral education, apprenticeship has died out in many industries and cannot be revived except in special cases, which do not affect the majority of children leaving school.' The value of the overlap between schooling and employment is commonly admitted to-day. As things are, children have barely laid the foundations of their education when they are withdrawn from school. The fear is that their powers will cease developing in important directions, instead of blossoming for their ultimate fruition, if their further cultivation is not provided by continuation classes. Ordinary children, taught in the ordinary way, cannot be expected to feel much enthusiasm for learning just after they have been driven in herds through the somewhat dull preparatory stages. And the advantage of continuation work is not merely that general education is carried a step further, but also that instruction can be made to bear on the trades in which the young people are being initiated. Technology, broadly interpreted, is usually neglected if there is any appreciable gap between the school period and the age when technology should be begun. Every individual, in an enlightened community, on entering the ordinary business life should naturally continue his training in the evening, or in free time arranged for the purpose, and should finally, if he showed capacity, make a specialised study of subjects

related to his calling, so that the acquisition of knowledge under expert direction would really proceed until manhood was attained. It is implied, if this is to become the usual thing, that the hours of work for young persons should not be excessive. In some places in this country, employers—particularly in engineering—are giving to their young people time off on certain days in the week to enable them to attend technical classes in the mornings or afternoons. This is an excellent system, since under it over-strain is avoided and the students get to regard their work in class as an integral part of their business duties.¹

In England the continuation schools system rests wholly on a voluntary basis. It would seem, as far as comparison can be made, that a higher percentage of the population takes advantage of it in England than in any other country in which compulsion is not invoked, France standing next to England; but the proportion is lamentably small over England as a whole. As a result of an investigation of the very inadequate statistical material available, Vice-Chancellor Sadler gave it as his opinion 'that not more than one out of every three of the children in England and Wales, who might be expected to do so, regularly attend a continuation school during the years immediately following their course at the elementary day school.'²

Some towns are more successful than others, but a proportion of one out of every two children is rare, though as high a proportion as four out of five has

¹ In view of the fatigue exhibited in evening schools many hold the view that the hours of young people must be reduced if substantial profit is to be got from evening work.

² Sadler, *Continuation Schools*, p. 696.

been reached, and the broad conclusion must be that 'in the great majority of English towns the continuation schools are still in a disappointing state.'

Ought England to use compulsion to get reform in the matter of education during adolescence? ¹ The Committee on Physical Deterioration thought so, having regard chiefly to the wastage of capacity and purpose through misuse of these critical years. Not a few associations (such as chambers of commerce) and representative conferences have given expression to the same view; and that the matter is becoming one of leading interest is further evinced by the fact that several Bills dealing with the matter have been brought forward in the last dozen years. The mass of public opinion is not yet, however, enlisted in its favour. Vice-Chancellor Sadler holds that, 'in the end, some form of compulsion to attend day or evening continuation classes, between fourteen and seventeen years of age, will be found desirable—not so much in the interest of the picked individuals as in that of the rank and file'; but, at the same time, he holds 'that we in England have still much to do before we shall be ready to use the weapon of compulsion, so far as attendance at continuation schools is concerned.'²

The question of compulsion, as regards continuation work, is a difficult one. Some would argue that the enormous importance of continuation work justifies compulsion, its admitted demerits notwithstanding. At any rate, if compulsion is

¹ In Scotland, education authorities may now adopt compulsory continuation education.

² Sadler, *Continuation Schools*, pp. 747-8.

not applied, a semi-compulsion in the form of persuasion and encouragement is eminently desirable. Mere educational foundations are insufficient to create among the majority of schoolchildren any wish to continue their training. Compulsion, persuasion, or ambition, are the chief means of getting the young to attend evening schools. Few are ambitious; and persuasion means personal contact and continued influence, and even in the most favourable circumstances it will fail more frequently than it succeeds. But how great an improvement can be effected by excellence of administration and the use of adventitious inducements, the large degree of success attained in some places makes evident.

The whole question of continuation schools has been taken up recently by the consultative committee of the Board of Education. An admirable and exhaustive review is presented in its report—which is certainly one of the most coherent and finished documents ever issued as the result of a public inquiry—and definite recommendations are finally made. As the short summary of the recommendations fill nearly five pages, it is impossible to do more than indicate the gist of them. There are proposals relating to the age-limit for compulsory day education and to the system of exemptions, which will be considered later.¹ The importance of making the instruction in the day school lead up to continuation work is emphasised; and it is proposed that all education authorities should be required to provide suitable continuation classes, and be given the power to make attendance at them compulsory, up to the age of seventeen, on the part of

¹ See pp. 204–7

all who leave day schools before sixteen. Further, it is recommended that employers should be required to provide such facilities for attendance that over-strain does not result; and finally, as regards curriculum, it is laid down that it should include '*effective training for the duties of citizenship* (the italics are ours), and should have reference to the crafts and industries practised in the district—including agriculture, when practised, and the domestic arts'—prominence being given to practical and manual instruction, without disregard, however, of the claims of general education and systematic physical training.

After the foregoing, Germany's extensive recourse to compulsion, which applies more generally to boys than to girls, and is not the same in degree where it is put in operation, and does not always insure that employers shall afford to their young employees requisite facilities to attend the classes provided, is fully comprehensible. The engine of compulsion has also been tried in certain states of the United States, but so far it has had little effect. In the State of New York, the school-leaving age is fourteen, or less if a certain standard has been reached. All children below sixteen years of age, who have not passed this standard and have left school, are required by law to attend evening classes; but, actually, the law is not strictly enforced. And, taking the United States as a whole, or even the industrial centres only, it would seem that but a small fraction of the young people submit to systematic teaching after entering the ranks of labour. The most promising continuation work in America is done in the trade and technical schools, of which advantage is taken by the cleverer and more

ambitious of the rising generation. Massachusetts recently appointed a commission on industrial and technical education, and this commission has reported strongly in favour of extended efforts.

Almost as important as the extension of continuation work is its improvement in many places. The character of much continuation work needs to be leavened with the true spirit of education, so that it may conduce more inevitably not only to superior efficiency, the perfection of which is unattainable without interest, but also to better citizenship, as is emphasised in the Report of the Consultative Committee, referred to above. Much that exists to-day is purely technical and, paradoxically put, requires de-technicalising. Understanding in relation to performance, so that performance may be rendered adaptable and not a mere manual facility, should be the primary object aimed at on the technical side. If the foundation of knowledge be firmly laid in logical contact with its application, it may fairly be assumed that the faculty to perform will emerge at its best out of the active spirit which such teaching should foster. One of the most remarkable developments, conscious or unconscious, in education in the last few years has been the substitution of technology for purely technical teaching; and if there is any distinction between technical and technological instruction it consists in this, that the former relies upon scientific foundations. The link between technical training and local universities, in certain large industrial centres in the United Kingdom, has aided the elevation of the former to a higher plane, and at the same time benefited the latter in more ways than one. Even in respect

of the most manual tasks—the specifically executive operations of wood and metal working, draughtmanship and working in colours—the new spirit has effected something of a revolution. Connected with the new spirit is a new insistence (which has already wrought changes sporadically) on a proper co-ordination of subjects and continuity in place of the old scrappiness and spasmodic attendance. Of the continuation system in England at the present time, the commercial part, taken as a whole, is particularly defective. It is mechanical in character, and lacks massiveness and system. Generally speaking, it needs a core of instruction bearing on the business life, its forms, and laws and evolution. Continuation work in Germany is largely technical, but in some places it is intermingled with studies directly relating to social life. In respect of systematic completeness and educational breadth, the organisation at Munich stands out as an example. For this Dr. George Kerschensteiner is largely responsible.¹ The important truth has yet to be widely grasped that education must form an appropriate introduction to life, which implies citizenship, and embraces the arts and sciences. The gains to be effected by educating everybody suitably, it should be—though it probably is not—superfluous to enumerate. Understanding is evoked by education, and understanding creates interest and transforms dull tasks into pleasurable activities; efficiency is enhanced and wastage of

¹ His work *Staatsbürgerliche Erziehung der deutschen Jugend* (1901), which has had a large influence in Germany, may be referred to. See also the pamphlet of the Board of Education on *Compulsory Continuation Classes in Germany* (1910); and on the whole question of continuation work, in addition to authorities cited, *The Problem of the Continuation School*, by Best and Ogden.

time and effort is avoided ; prospects are opened out, and ambitions are awakened ; capacities are discovered, and, if they are directed to suitable tasks, important reactions are experienced both in the producing and sharing of wealth ; and finally there is the enlightenment which clarifies ideals, while magnifying their attractive force, and improves practical judgment, to the end that many social problems solve themselves. Among some people, we know, there is to be found a vague fear of general over-education. A glance at the Danish agriculturists should allay any such apprehension. The efficiency of Danish agriculture is proverbial ; and about a quarter of all the men and women, between twenty and fifty, engaged in Danish agriculture have passed through the People's High Schools, which take no pupils under sixteen years of age.¹

In dwelling upon the importance of carrying broadly conceived and systematic instruction into the initial stages of the working life, we must not overlook the great value of rendering higher education of some kind accessible throughout life to persons of all classes. But the extent to which it can be utilised depends, of course, upon the efficiency of elementary schools and the degree in which continuity of learning is preserved. The most remarkable thing about most social movements in England has been their educational side. Co-operators have frequently devoted a portion of their funds to the maintenance of libraries and to higher education, the provision of which has been facilitated for some decades by the University Extension Movement.

¹ Sadler, *Continuation Schools*, p. xvii. See also *Rural Denmark and its Lessons*, by H. Rider Haggard.

When we contemplate the so-called 'Popular Universities' of France, which did not appear until the end of the nineteenth century, we may recall with some self-satisfaction that the London Working Men's College was instituted as early as 1854. The first maxim laid down by the committee of this college ran: 'Our position as members of a society which affirms the operations of trade and industry to be under a moral law—a law concerning the relations of men to each other—obliges us to regard social, political, or, to use a moral general phrase, *human* studies as the primary part of our education.' To this principle the college has remained loyal. The same idea inspired the institution of Ruskin Hall (now Ruskin College) at Oxford in 1899, and the formation, a few years later, of the Workers' Educational Association. This association, which aims at securing university teaching for work-people, has been instrumental in leading many of them to more than a cursory study of social questions.

Continuation classes have the good indirect effect of making the entry to a trade, which is apt to be lightly regarded, a matter for serious deliberation. But the provision of classes is not enough. Some expert aid should be given, in addition, to youths who are making their choice of a calling. It is certain that a complete organised system of collecting and imparting information and finding openings for boys, undertaken in association with schools, would prove of the utmost value.¹ Work along these lines has

¹ A stimulating address on this subject, by J. L. Paton (Head Master of the Manchester Grammar School), is printed in the *Proceedings of the Manchester Statistical Society*, 1911-12. See also Greenwood's *Juvenile Labour Exchanges and After Care*.

already begun in the United Kingdom. Under an Act of 1910, the Education (Choice of Employment) Act, education authorities were given power 'to make arrangements, subject to the approval of the Board of Education, for giving to boys and girls under seventeen years of age assistance with respect to the choice of suitable employment, by means of the collection and the communication of information and the furnishing of advice.'¹ In accordance with this Act a number of advisory committees have been instituted. Shortly before the passage of the Act, labour exchanges began to organise juvenile departments with other advisory committees in connection with them. It seemed then as if suddenly too much were being attempted, and that overlapping and discord might be the ruin of both schemes; but almost within a month of the passage of the 1910 Education Act, a joint memorandum from the Board of Trade and the Board of Education made suggestions for bringing the schemes into harmonious relation. A distinction was drawn between two branches of the work to be undertaken. 'In the first place there is the task of giving such advice to boys and girls and their parents as will induce them to extend, where possible, the period of education and to select, when employment becomes necessary, occupations which are suited to the individual capacities of the children, and, by preference, those which afford prospects not merely of immediate wages, but also of useful training

¹ Before this, very few education committees had taken active steps, either directly or through children's care committees. Power to act in Scotland was given by the Educational Measure for Scotland of 1908, and in the same year Edinburgh exercised the power.

and permanent employment. In the second place, there is the practical task of registering the actual applications for employment and bringing the applicants into touch with employers who have notified vacancies of the kind desired.' The first task, it was proposed, should be entrusted to the education authority; and the great value of voluntary workers in connection with it was emphasised. The second task seemed to the presidents of the two boards to belong to the labour exchanges. The importance of co-operation was insisted upon, and, with a view to furthering it, the suggestion was made that the officer of the education authority and the head of the juvenile department of the Labour Exchange should have their offices in the same building, or contiguous buildings, where possible. It is too early yet to gauge the effects of these measures, but they should do much to check the undirected drift of the youth of the country, after they have passed from under the control of the schoolmaster—a drift which is so grave a source of trouble to the community.

Apart from official action, certain reforming steps have already been taken. There are handbooks of information, of which we cannot speak too highly—namely, 'Trades for London Boys and How to Enter Them,' and a similar manual for girls, both compiled by the Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment Association, together with corresponding manuals for Scotland by Mrs. Gordon and the Scottish Council for Women's Trades. It is needful, however, to arrange that the information contained in compilations such as these should be systematically transmitted to children and their parents. The Apprenticeship and Skilled Employment Association is doing good work,

through its committees in touch with various schools, both in directing adolescent labour and watching over its early years of work; but the extent of its operations is small in proportion to the magnitude of the task it has set itself. In conclusion, it remains to emphasise the need of many voluntary workers if the advising, directing, and supervising described above are not to fall sadly short of thoroughness.¹

While there can be no doubt that numerous *cul-de-sac* boy employments have a most injurious effect on the after-life of many of those who have entered them, we must not fly to the extreme of concluding that all trades which engage boy labour in a proportion greater than the proportion of boy to adult labour in the community are necessarily ill-organised from the point of view of social welfare. There are many callings in the country, demanding for their exercise a degree of strength beyond that of youths, which can be entered only by adults. There are no boy dock-labourers, porters, or warehousemen. As these occupations cannot absorb their share of boy labour, other occupations must take more than their share; and, other things being equal, it is bad economy to have a man doing a boy's work or a boy doing a man's work. In many districts, industries more or less skilled are entered by larger numbers of young people than can be permanently accommodated. Some leave through distaste for the work. Of the remainder, the most competent are retained, while the residue

¹ An essay, written in 1909, by Mr. Frederic Keeling, on the problems treated above may be specially mentioned. It contains a chapter on German Experiments and a bibliography. See also an article on the 'Apprenticeship Question,' by R. A. Bray, in the *Economic Journal* for September 1909.

drop out and recruit the ranks of the unskilled occupations when an age is reached at which it is possible to join them. It is eminently desirable that more and not fewer children should be put into a position to test their powers in the skilled industries. But the labour overflow from certain industries must be recognised as a regular thing to be systematically dealt with.¹

The grave source of social trouble to the community is not so much the employment of a disproportionate number of boys by certain trades—though there are abuses—as the employment of boys in such a fashion that their continuous application is not needed and their work has no effect in disciplining character. Numerous writers, possessed of exceptional knowledge of the question, have warned us of the sort of manhood which is begotten when youths spend their leisure in the streets and music-halls; and this misuse of leisure is not unconnected with a want of training for the serious work of life.² Boys start as newspaper boys or errand boys, drift from one job to another, and at eighteen or nineteen are too old for boy-work. They have not been drilled for regular work or instructed in a trade, and the years of divorce from any kind of school education have generally left them unfit to begin a training, and probably with an

¹ See paper by Chapman and Shimmin on 'Industrial Recruiting and the Displacement of Labour,' in the *Proceedings of the Manchester Statistical Society*, 1913-14.

² On all the above, in addition to official reports cited below, see Russell's *Manchester Boys*; Urwick's *Studies of Boy Life in our Cities*; Bray, *The Town Boy*; Spencer Gibb's *Boy Labour*; *Boy and Girl Labour*, by Adler and Tawney (published by the Women's Industrial Council); report of Cyril Jackson for the Poor Law Commission; and the work on the occupations of boys, edited by Whitehouse.

appearance of unintelligence which may be due merely to the neglect of their powers. The Chief Constable of Manchester, in a paper read in May 1906, said : 'Street-trading, of all juvenile wage-earning occupations, is productive of a greater amount of evil than any other occupation followed by children. . . . The boys develop into lazy, shiftless, and workless men, becoming for the most part race-course touts, often travelling thieves and loungers. . . . They dislike more and more honest work. They become mere creatures of chance, and sink down until they end their days either in the gaol or in the workhouse.'

There is some truth in the contention that the idle and shiftless naturally drift into street-trading, which to this extent is the effect and not the cause of the existence of undesirable characters in the community ; but, this fact notwithstanding, there can be no doubt, in view of the unanimous judgment of competent observers, that street-trading is, of all occupations which a boy can take up, perhaps the one in which honesty and application run the greatest risk of extinction. Beginning years ago, under Local Acts, the Municipal Corporation Act, or the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Acts, attempts have been made in a few places to check the evil. But in town life, taken as a whole, it was so great, and such abuses were alleged to exist in the use of children in other ways, that a departmental committee was appointed to consider the question of the employment of school-children.¹ The outcome of its Report in 1901 was the

¹ See report ; also *Employment of Children out of School Hours (Report of Inquiry by the Scottish Council for Women's Trades)*, 1901. Another Departmental Committee reported on Ireland in 1902.

Employment of Children Act of 1903. This Act contains a few binding prohibitions, and in addition confers a few optional powers on local authorities. It prohibits the employment of children (under fourteen) between nine at night and six in the morning (unless these hours are varied by by-law); street-trading by children under eleven years; the employment in any other occupation of children working half-time under the Factory and Workshop Act; the employment of a child in any occupation likely to be injurious to his health or education; and the licensing of children under ten for public entertainments.¹ It also empowers local authorities to prohibit, regulate, or licence street-trading by persons between the ages of eleven and sixteen; to fix any age up to fourteen below which employment of any sort shall be forbidden; and to determine the hours between which, and fix the daily and weekly hours beyond which, employment shall be illegal. The Act was supplemented in 1904 by the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, which, in addition to making some regulations as regards the use of children in public entertainments, confined street-trading by boys under sixteen and girls under fourteen to the hours between 6 A.M. and 9 P.M. if not extended by local by-laws.²

In order to secure uniformity in the administration

¹ In several Acts prior to 1903 the use of children in public entertainments was regulated. Under an Act of 1913, children may not be taken out of the country for this purpose without a licence.

² Reference may be made to Keeling's *Child Labour in the United Kingdom* (1914), which deals in detail with the action taken by the local authorities in administering the law relating to the employment of children, as well as with the development of the law. This elaborate and most valuable compilation and survey appeared just in time to enable us to make use of it in the correction of proofs.

of the Employment of Children Act, and perhaps to remind local authorities of their duties, the Home Office issued model forms of by-laws. But a few years' experience of the Act proved yet again that the history of laws may be in large part but the history of good intentions. The Act was widely disregarded; and, as Mr. Keeling points out, 'in many cases, by-laws allow children to be employed for four, or even five, hours, in addition to attending school full time.'¹ Consequently, a new departmental committee was appointed to report on its working in 1909. In the Majority Report of this committee, issued in 1910, it was declared that fifty out of seventy-four county boroughs in England and Wales, forty-one out of 191 smaller boroughs and smaller urban districts, and one administrative county, had issued by-laws; while in Scotland and Ireland little attempt had been made to take advantage of the Act. Moreover, it was stated that on the whole the steps taken, where by-laws had been made, had proved neither adequate nor satisfactory; and, more serious still, that the binding provisions of the Act were quite commonly neglected. Street-trading by children was thought by the majority of the committee to be still prevalent, and a serious evil.² In support of their drastic recommendations, the majority affirmed their belief, on the basis of the evidence heard, in the disastrous effects of street-trading on character and

¹ Keeling's *Child Labour in the United Kingdom* (1914), p. ix.

² See in particular the information given by Miss Constance Smith and Miss Hargreaves, which had been collected on behalf of the Committee on Wage-earning Children.

capacity for regular employment. Their chief recommendations were :—

‘1. That street-trading by boys be wholly prohibited by statute up to the age of seventeen.

‘2. That street-trading by girls be similarly prohibited up to an age not less than eighteen.

‘3. That the definition of street-trading be revised so as to make it clear that the delivery of newspapers and other goods by the employees of a tradesman to regular customers is not covered by the term.

‘4. That the functions of local education authorities should be extended so as to include the administration of the law, either through school-attendance officers or through officers specially appointed for the purpose, as well as the giving of advice and assistance to children at school, or on leaving school, in the finding of suitable employment.’

Seven of the committee signed the Majority Report. Four signed the Minority Report which, while concurring in much that had been said by the majority, submitted that the remedy proposed was too severe for sudden imposition, and defective in not allowing for local differences in conditions. So far, no further legislative steps have been taken; but as two private Bills and one Government measure have been brought forward, though not proceeded with, it is to be expected that amendment of the law will not be delayed for long. When the time comes, it will also be needful to consider the Report of the Departmental Committee on Van and Warehouse Boys, which recommended in 1913 that local authorities should be empowered to regulate the hours of van-boys under the age of eighteen. Factories, workshops, and mines have loomed so large

in the public mind that the employment of children outside them has not received its due share of attention till recent years—apart from such flagrant abuses as were found to exist in chimney-sweeping, gang-work in agriculture, and certain kinds of public entertainment—and the reformer has been confounded by the problem of securing the observance of regulations when inspection is difficult.

The method of prohibition is only one method of reform. It is, therefore, desirable here to draw attention at least to the valuable constructive work done by the many lads' clubs in the country, in the way of giving purpose to youths who would otherwise drift. Through such clubs, oversight over certain classes of boys is retained; and they can be utilised not only for the provision of healthy recreation and the imparting of the right social ideas and sentiments, but also to bring inducements to bear with a view to the further training of young people at the difficult age.

The first process in the manufacture of criminals is neglect; the second is thoughtless treatment of youthful and first offenders. Efforts are being made to put a stop to the second process as well as the first. The youthful person when arrested ran the risk of being lodged with hardened criminals before trial, and he was tried finally in the ordinary Court, which, with its associations, was exceedingly likely to impress the criminal stamp upon him. Again, early steps in delinquency were too hastily punished in the common way, with the result that the offender was rendered callous and possibly severed from honest work in the future. In the last few years it has been increasingly recognised that special places of temporary

detention, other than prisons, and special Courts, should be instituted for youthful transgressors; and that they should not be imprisoned before every effort to build up their characters—by advice and oversight after dismissal, or by training in institutions—had failed. As it has been wisely said, the problem is usually one of formation of character rather than of reformation. The Prison Commissioners in this country have repeatedly urged that more enlightened methods should be tried in handling first offenders. The Children Act provides that special places shall be found for the detention of persons under sixteen on arrest or remand. Manchester, on its own initiative, instituted this reform; for some time there, boys' and girls' refuges have been used for temporary detention in the cases in question. The City of London has also had its special remand home. The Juvenile Court Movement seems to have had its origin in a Massachusetts Act of 1863; and about thirty of the constituent states of the Union have now got their Juvenile Courts. South Australia took action in 1890, Canada in 1894, and more recently New South Wales and Victoria have followed suit. In certain places in the United Kingdom and on the Continent, separate Children's Courts have been tried experimentally.¹ In the Children Act, which came into force in January 1909, statutory expression was given to the reform. It is clear that what is needed for juvenile offenders is

¹ In places outside London, magistrates were given power by the Summary Jurisdiction Act 1879 to appoint police-stations or other places as occasional Court-houses; and, according to the Home Office White Paper on *Treatment of Youthful Offenders* (March 1907), action had been taken on this authority by magistrates attached to forty-five Petty Sessional and Borough Courts.

not trial by a judge who sits on the bench, but examination and admonition, in a room which is not a Court of Justice, by an official whose relation to the child partakes of the parental and schoolmaster's relations, followed by the provision of the requisite formative influences.

No less important than special Children's Courts, and perhaps more important, are the extended powers for probationary treatment given under the Probation of Offenders Act, which came into force on January 1, 1908, and has since been amended by the Children Act. When deemed expedient, for reasons enumerated in the Act, delinquents may be dismissed unconditionally, or discharged on their entering into recognisances for good behaviour, with or without sureties. The offender may be required to abstain from alcohol, or from frequenting undesirable places, or, in short, from any action whereby he would again be brought into touch with the source of his offending. Probationary officers may be appointed to visit, advise, assist, and, if necessary, find work for the probationers. In the Home Secretary's Memorandum great stress is laid on the importance of appointing as probation officers persons of good education who have some knowledge of industrial and social conditions in the locality, and it is recommended that the probation officers for boys of school age and women and girls should be women. It is essential that to each probation officer only a limited number of cases should be assigned, as the work must necessarily be of an individualising character. Homes must be visited, and their conditions considered, since the home influence may be harmful; lodgings may have to be found, and suitable work, and possibly

suitable interests, for the probationers.¹ In a Bill now before Parliament (the Criminal Justice Administration Bill), it is proposed to rely still further upon probation, and, in order to provide the necessary officers, to recognise and subsidise societies supplying and supervising them. The Home Secretary, in presenting the Bill on April 15, said that it was hoped in this way to establish a philanthropic network over the whole country, so that in due course every young offender discharged would have somebody whose business it would be to look after him, and, as far as was possible, to see to the redemption of his character.

The prison is an institution which hardly falls within the compass of this work; but, to complete the above, a word may be said of a recent application of good sense in adapting it to its ends, as regards methods of treating young offenders between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one whose detention is necessary. The reform consists in the adoption of what is known as the Borstal system, because it was first tried at Borstal Prison, near Rochester. It combines strict discipline with moral and religious training, and rewards for improvement in self-control and progress in handicrafts, physical exercises, and education. Many varieties of work are carried on, both outdoor and indoor. Employment is found for each person on his or her release by the Borstal Association, but oversight and such influence as can be brought to bear continue. For this difficult part of the scheme the Borstal Association makes itself

¹ On the above see Miss Adler's Report, published by the Women's Industrial Council; also Home Office Papers referred to, and *Memorandum on the Probation System in the United States* (Cd. 3401).

responsible. The Borstal plan is now in operation in several places, and in 1908 it was made an integral part of the penal system of the country by the passing of the Prevention of Crime Act of that year. Under this Act boys and girls between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one may be sent to Borstal institutions for not less than one year or more than three years, provided that there seem to be prospects of their reaping appreciable benefit. Expenditure for after-care is also authorised.¹ In the Criminal Justice Administration Bill provisions are made for an extended use of Borstal Institutions, and the minimum period of commitment is raised to two years. The period of after-care is also raised from six to twelve months, and the subsidising of societies providing after-care officers is arranged for.

The adoption of the Borstal system is but one of many examples of a new common sense, based on a belief in the effectiveness of a good environment and the value, therefore, of attempts to better it for those who touch it at its worst. It might conceivably be contended that the bad which comes out in crime was within, and will be transmitted, however perfect cures may seem to be. But the man of unchilled sympathies will hardly be prepared to accept so extravagant a judgment without clinching evidence. Unfortunately, records are so scanty, and cover so short a period, that a convincing statistical support for optimism is, like its opposite, yet to seek; but Miss Thomson's examination of the records of numbers of industrial schools, orphanages, other homes, and boarding-out experiments,

¹ See publications of the Borstal Association (15 Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C.), and of the Penal Reform League.

at least suggests that a substantial and enduring good is being effected.¹

As has already been stated, the subjects treated on the last few pages have been largely dealt with in the comprehensive piece of legislation known as the Children Act. This will, therefore, be a suitable place to summarise its main provisions, which relate also to matters discussed in an earlier part of the present chapter. In the Act in question, 'child' means a person under the age of fourteen, and 'young person' anybody between fourteen and sixteen years of age. The Act is divided into six parts. Part I. relates to infant life protection. It provides that all children under seven years, if placed out to nurse for payment for more than forty-eight hours (with others than certain relatives), must be registered, and enjoins local authorities to appoint infant protection visitors, who, under certain conditions, may be voluntary workers. If need be, a child can be removed from its foster parents. Moreover, persons receiving a child for payment are not allowed to insure it. Part II. aims at the protection of children against carelessness, and the prevention of cruelty to children and young persons. Part III. attempts to check juvenile smoking. Part IV. relates to reformatory and industrial schools. It provides that certain classes of children under fourteen shall be sent to industrialschools, from which, if they are under eight years of age, they may be boarded out in respectable families up to the age of ten or even more, but in which they may not be detained beyond sixteen. The classes of children contemplated are those found

¹ Thomson, *Environment and Efficiency*, 1912 (Birmingham Studies in Social Economics).

begging or wandering without settled home or visible means of subsistence ; children without proper guardians ; those having parents or one surviving parent in prison and being destitute ; those whose parents or guardians are of criminal or drunken habits and are unfit to take care of them ; those frequenting the company of evil persons (even though they may be the children's own parents) ; those living or lodging in a house used for evil purposes, and, in certain cases, young children convicted of serious offences ; refractory pauper children and truant children. Moreover, a child beyond the control of its parents may, at the parents' instance and at their request, be sent to an industrial school ; but, if the Court think it expedient, the child can be placed instead under the supervision of a probation officer. Further, youthful offenders may be sent to reformatory schools between the ages of twelve and sixteen ; but they must be sent for three years, and may not remain for more than five. Parents of any child dealt with under Part IV. can be ordered by the Court to pay such a sum towards the maintenance of the child as they are able to contribute. Part V. relates to juvenile offenders, and provides that children shall be tried in Juvenile Courts, placed when needful under probation officers (who may be voluntary workers), and kept in suitable 'places of detention' when held in custody. Part VI. is miscellaneous and general. It provides, *inter alia*, that no article may be taken in pawn from a child under fourteen years ; that no person may give, or cause to be given, to any child under five years of age any intoxicating liquor, except when ordered by a duly qualified medical practitioner, or in case of sickness, or apprehended

sickness, or other urgent cause ; and that the occupier of licensed premises must not suffer a child under fourteen to remain in the bar when it is not in a refreshment room. Experience has shown that some alteration of the law is desirable, and an amending Bill is now before Parliament.

For the protection of children, both before and after the recent public activity, a heavy debt is owing to the Society for the Protection of Children, founded as a national association in 1889, five years after the establishment of the London Society. The Prevention of Cruelty to Children Acts of 1889, 1894, and 1904, which it helped to procure, supplemented and facilitated its efforts ; but on these Acts, and others relating to children which do not relate to subjects outside the scope of the Children Act of 1908, the last-named marks a significant advance.

To link up the contents of this chapter with the matter of succeeding chapters, it remains to discuss the provisions in Education Acts for day-school attendance and those of Factory Acts which bear on the admission of children to work. The law of school attendance in England and Wales is highly complex. Generally speaking, it provides for compulsory education between the ages of five and fourteen, subject to partial or total exemptions at the end of the period defined by local by-laws relating to standards or attendances. We shall do wisely in basing our statement of the law on a summary made by the Board of Education. The summary is as follows :—

‘1. If the by-laws contain a special provision to this effect, children may be employed in agriculture at

the age of eleven, provided that they attend school 250 times a year up to the age of thirteen.¹

‘2. With this exception, no child subject to the by-laws can obtain either partial or total exemption under the age of twelve.

‘3. A child between twelve and thirteen, or (if the by-laws are extended) between twelve and fourteen, can only obtain total or partial exemption on the conditions prescribed by the by-laws.²

‘4. In districts where the by-laws are still restricted to children of thirteen years of age, a child between thirteen and fourteen can obtain total exemption either on passing the fourth standard or on making 350 previous attendances after five years of age in not more than two schools during each year for five years.

‘5. A child between twelve and fourteen may claim partial exemption on making 300 previous attendances (during each of five preceding years), but in the view of the Board this exemption can only be claimed in cases where the by-laws themselves contain a provision for partial exemption.’

Clauses 3 and 5 of this summary now seem to need re-stating in view of a recent decision of the Court of Appeal upholding the claim of a child for half-time exemption in the absence of a by-law providing for it. It may also be added that in 1909 there were only seven districts to which clause 4 applied.

An examination of the by-laws in force, made by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education,

¹ This arrangement was made by Robson's Act (1899). Very few children avail themselves of it—probably not more than 400 were exempted under it in 1909, according to the report of the Consultative Committee.

² As regards partial exemption, a by-law requiring the employment to be ‘beneficial’ has been widely adopted.

showed that about a quarter of the population are living in areas where full school attendance is practically obligatory up to fourteen, the standard for total exemption being fixed as high as the seventh; while more than another quarter are living in areas where no child under fourteen is wholly released from school attendance till the seventh standard is passed. However, the standard for partial exemption is usually the fourth or the fifth. The Committee estimated that there were over 200,000 children between the ages of twelve and fourteen who had left school for good—of whom, however, about one-fifth attended evening schools. Of partial exemption scholars, there would seem to be about 50,000.¹ Between 1890 and 1899 the numbers fell about 80 per cent. The drop was partly due to the raising of the exemption age from ten to eleven in 1893. In 1899 the exemption age was again raised one year by Robson's Act, exceptional arrangements being made, however, as regards agriculture. But the full effects of this Act on partial exemption were not felt immediately. Up to 1900-1 the decline continued. Since that date there has, however, been a rise, partly in consequence of the attendance qualification introduced to supplement the standard qualification.

Many reformers are now insisting that the age limit should be raised and partial exemptions be abolished. The Consultative Committee of the Board of Education recommended that whole-time or part-time exemptions under thirteen should at once be abolished, and that after a short interval the exemption age should be

¹ The Board of Education figures which show the numbers allowed partial exemption in the year are, of course, too high, as no allowance is made for those who become totally exempt during the year.

raised to fourteen, with permission in rural parts for partial attendance between thirteen and fifteen to be substituted for the last full year, which permission might be extended to urban parts if it were found to work well. Moreover, the Committee suggested that full-time attendance at school up to sixteen should be required, unless parents or guardians could show that children were, or were to be, suitably employed. We have already seen that a year later the Committee on the working of the Children Act made the same suggestion with a view to stopping street-trading and other casual work on the part of children. The Consultative Committee of the Board of Education issued its report on July 8, 1909. A fortnight later, the Inter-departmental Committee on Partial Exemption reported also and very much on the same lines. The abolition of all partial exemptions was recommended; also total exemption under thirteen, and in addition the attendance certificate. Further, it was proposed that total exemption at thirteen should only be granted for the purposes of beneficial or necessary employment, and should ordinarily be withheld in the absence of due attendance at a continuation school.

These two reports mark a trend of expert opinion which is unmistakable and unwavering. But public opinion lags behind. The cotton operatives by an overwhelming majority have voted against the abolition of partial exemptions; yet the officials of the trade unions, members of trades councils, and other leaders of working-class opinion, are on the whole in favour of abolition.¹ It is also of interest to observe that the

¹ In 1908, at a representative conference, a resolution in favour of the abolition of half-time up to thirteen was carried by 186 to 27.

Workers' Educational Association supports both the raising of the age limit and the suppression of the half-time system.

In view of this divergence of view, which is notable also among employers, some discussion of the grounds upon which the changes are recommended is certainly called for. It is alleged that the health of not a few children suffers from the half-time system; but this argument can hardly be pressed. Doubtless some unsuitable cases are passed by certifying surgeons, but happily it is impossible to-day to make out that there is any marked abuse of child labour in factories. And it appears to be a fact that most children—who generally prefer what is bad for them, as some would say—welcome the day when they give up some school attendance for the mill. Again, there is the high rate of industrial accidents suffered by children in textile factories, which is found to be nearly double that applying to adults and young persons, when allowance is made for the fact that children's hours are only about half those of adults and young persons. But the great argument is a composite educational and sociological one. The half-timers are said to get comparatively little profit from their school attendances, and their loss is becoming, it is maintained, an increasingly serious matter both to them and to the country. More education is needed under our complex economic and social conditions than was requisite many years ago, and education to-day is even more essential than it was to enable capable children to seize opportunities of exercising their powers worthily. Against these contentions, it is complained that education is too bookish for the industrial classes,

which is a just complaint of what was recently and, to a large extent, still is; but the proposal is to modify our educational system as the use to which it is put is extended. Cost, too, stands in the way of progress in this matter; cost to the State and cost to the parents in the loss of their children's wages. Of this obstacle it may be said that what could not have been afforded a generation ago is within our means to-day; and that in the long run there will probably be no extra cost either to the parents or to the community taken as a whole, providing that the supplementary training is appropriate. It will, indeed, be a remarkable thing if more education of a suitable kind does not in the long run improve efficiency enough to make up for the extra time devoted to receiving instruction. Finally, we have reason to suppose, as regards the proposal to stop partial exemptions, that not a little opposition is traceable to the belief that the gradual initiation of youth into business life is beneficial on the whole. With this opinion we should concur; but the proposal for the abolition is united with a demand for more continuation work, of a kind properly adapted to the needs of those who have begun wage-earning, and facilities to share in it; and the suggestion is made by the Consultative Committee to the Board of Education that partial employment from thirteen to fifteen might be found desirable industrially, as well as in agriculture, in certain circumstances. The latter plan could doubtless be made to fit in with a scheme of continuation classes to avoid the educational objections to the half-time system as at present worked.

It remains to say a few words of legislation relating

to the industrial employment of children. The factory and workshop laws of the United Kingdom, in their bearing on children's labour, are as follows. No child may be employed in a factory or workshop under twelve. Subject to educational requirements, half-timers, if physically fit, may begin work at twelve. Subject also to educational provisions, children of thirteen, if physically fit, may work as full-timers. Half-timers may work $55\frac{1}{2}$ hours a fortnight in textile factories, 60 hours a fortnight in non-textile factories and workshops, and $74\frac{1}{2}$ hours in domestic workshops. All night-work is prohibited. Under the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, no girls may be employed underground and no boys younger than thirteen. Employment above ground is prohibited for all under twelve. Children between twelve and thirteen, if physically fit, may work six hours a day for six days a week, or ten hours a day for three days a week, provided that the requirements of the Education Acts are met. According to the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Acts, employment below ground is interdicted in the case of all girls and of boys under thirteen. Work above ground comes under the regulations relating to factories and workshops. From certain dangerous trades children are wholly excluded. The laws also contain provisions with a view to health and safety.¹

French and German laws are pretty much on the same lines as the English; but in France and in the states of Germany some laxer regulations than ours are to be found, and others more severe than ours. In Germany there is an Imperial code of legislation;

¹ Some discussion of the problem of the State regulation of work as a whole will be found on pp. 257-84.

but the several states may impose more stringent regulations, and some of them have done so. One notable point is that in France the carrying, pushing, and hauling of weights beyond certain limits is prohibited for children. The great number of independent legislative authorities in the United States makes it very difficult to frame any general idea of the extent to which child labour is restricted. Seventeen states have adopted fourteen as the age limit for entry to factories and similar establishments, and for work of other kinds education qualifications are generally required. From certain dangerous and unhealthy callings children are rigidly excluded as a rule. Children under sixteen are not allowed in anthracite and bituminous mines in Pennsylvania, nor in any mines in Texas. Night-work for children is commonly prohibited. It is reported, however, that regulations relating to child labour are frequently evaded, and that, generally speaking, the abuse of child labour in the United States is considerable, not only in out-of-the way parts, but also in such towns as Chicago. The alien nature of much of the working-class population partly accounts for it.

CHAPTER V

CONDITIONS OF LABOUR

A VAST change has taken place in the nature of industrial work in the last half-century in consequence of the specialism connected with industrial integration, and all has not been gain, for serious loss is apt to succeed the divorce of the worker's interest from a productive process as a whole when he concentrates on some small portion of it. All schemes which restore this interest are to be welcomed as aids to social betterment. To be quite happy in functioning as a trifling part of a system, it is necessary that the worker should grasp the system and identify himself with it. Improved vocational education to give the needful understanding, and larger measures of delegation and sectionalising of responsibility to give birth to interest, or keep it alive, may meet the need in the future ; and it will be more possible to meet the need if our view is correct, that the community in years to come will have to draw increasingly upon its latent stores of intelligence.

The first type of factory organisation was that of the employer in command of a rank and file whose tasks were more or less of the same order of difficulty and importance. But this primitive type is fast undergoing a metamorphosis into a hierarchy of

functions of many sorts. As the higher type becomes more defined and common, the total separation between administrative and executive work (which is repeatedly pointed to as a source of modern labour troubles) will disappear, and the administrative work in spreading will restore the declining interest in executive performance. The new type must obviously have a greater cohesiveness and unity, and therefore a higher efficiency, than the old. Specialism has been allowed to cause disruption; but the differentiation which is inherent in productive progress, if it is to continue, must eventually be supplemented by a sufficiently strong process of integration to keep the specialised parts closely united; and, doubtless, in time it will be so supplemented by the very forces whose first effect has been dismemberment. Already we see, in the altered status of the operative in the most advanced industries, a way being prepared for the permeation of industrial systems by the interest of each constituent part—an altered status which has been brought about so gradually that the change has escaped general observation.

The transition of the wages concept, which is one index of the status of the operative, needs but to be mentioned to be apparent. The initial idea of a wage, after the industrial transformation of a century ago, was of a price strictly analogous to the price of material, machines, or other inanimate agents in production. Soon, however, this fundamental idea began to be modified through fuller and more general recognition of two facts: the one that efficiency is governed by the amount of the wages (expressed in the 'Economy of High Wages' movement),¹ and not merely for physio-

¹ See Schoenhof's work under that title.

logical reasons, but for psychological reasons also ; the other that efficiency depends likewise upon the manner in which wages are paid. As regards the second point, the workman as a factor in production being conceived as different from other factors in production, in that his value *qua* factor in production is determined by a psychological complex, the problem became to design a system of paying wages which would work upon this psychological complex in a way beneficial to the product—in other words, it was sought to give the workman a stimulus and an interest in his work which would induce and at the same time enable him to do his best. The outcome of this was gain-sharing in its various forms, from the simplest piece-rate to the most complicated premium system. Of late, advance, under the prompting of the notions just expounded, has been given a renewed impetus in the United States and a fresh direction.¹ It is now maintained that the most productive states of mind and feeling and modes of action of the workman do not come about of themselves. Consequently, it is argued that the nature of each class of work must be studied with a view to its most suitable division and arrangement, to the instruction of the workman in the most fatigue-saving and time-saving methods, and to the devising of the most appropriate method of gain-sharing.

From this culminating point in the evolution of the industrial problem on one of its sides, we may now turn back to pick out other features in the transition

¹ On this question see Münsterberg, *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency* ; Taylor, *Principles of Scientific Management* ; and Duncan, *The Principles of Industrial Management*. In this connection the teaching and practice of Robert Owen may be noted.

of the workman's status. The introduction of sliding scales was not without significance. In many places they were to prove a disappointment eventually¹; but for a time they excited widespread enthusiasm, and, doubtless, for the reason that they ostensibly substituted a proportionate sharing in the product, on the part of labour, for a market-price of labour, as the basis of wages. Into their defects we need not enter again. Suffice it to say that the sharing was not of a kind to induce any considerable psychological change in the workman, which either added to his productivity or tinged with a new interest his working life. The participation, so far as it was real, was in an industry's prosperity which was largely beyond his control. Indeed, in respect of their bearing on the wage-earner's application, group piece-rates effected more than sliding-scales; for they brought group influences into play. Man being a social animal, group influences are of far more significance as motive forces than is commonly imagined. When people are welded together in production by a common aim, the furtherance of which is to some extent within their own control, their effectiveness is largely augmented, for the inspiration of the common purpose—supplementing private incentives—exercises in potent but intangible ways a beneficent tyranny over each constituent member.

In all co-operative schemes we see these social forces in harness for the attainment of economic ends; but in production, simple working-class co-operation happened to achieve but limited successes, the chief reasons being, as is commonly supposed, the complexity and magnitude of the prevalent productive unit under

¹ See pp. 206–25 of our second volume.

modern conditions (necessitating much capital and a specialised managing and organising side), and the constant change in modern economic conditions (necessitating alertness and an unintermittent responsiveness in enterprise which co-operative labour groups have hitherto but imperfectly evolved). Put shortly, and not too exactly, the simple competitive system left social forces neglected for the purposes of production—which was peculiarly unfortunate, seeing that they were consolidating to govern the distribution of wealth—while the extreme reaction from it sacrificed the value of the effective leadership created by the rivalry of individuals. Of late, a promising union of the two schemes has appeared in what is known as labour co-partnership. This marks an experimental step in the movement whose object is to add to the productive efficiency of the business-unit by exploiting group interests. And it makes a new appeal even to the workman paid on a system of gain-sharing; for his interest in his own output is supplemented by an interest in the prosperity of the business as a whole, which he can further in countless ways by his own action and his influence over his fellows, and which he does so further not only of set purpose but also in consequence of the insensible operation on himself and his social surroundings of his mental attitude. At the same time, moreover, the union of competitive leadership and co-operation extends the movement for elevating the status of the operative by bringing it into harmony with the movement for elevating productivity. To what extent a solution has been found both for labour problems and industrial problems remains to be seen.

It may be taken as agreed on all hands—in theory, at any rate—that the vague psychical thing termed interest plays a significant part not only in governing efficiency and the enjoyment derived from work, but also in evoking the resource and originality that make for progress. Mere profit-sharing generates some motive power in the form of this interest, and probably motive power tends to be increased by a substantial percentage when labour is represented on the controlling body. Profit-sharing is to be sharply distinguished from gain-sharing, understood as referring to a division between labour and capital of the gain derived from any workman's output when it is more than normal in amount. The latter keeps the workman absorbed in his own special task; whereas the former (the sharing in the prosperity of the business as a whole) adds to the workman's private concern a diffused group concern, which is bound to evoke some of those social impulses implied in man's social nature, which are expressed in public opinion and *esprit de corps*.

Hitherto, the movement for utilising social forces through the creation of 'business' interests in the wage-earners has gone farthest in the gas industry. At the present time as many as thirty-three gas companies have adopted labour co-partnership schemes. A few firms in other industries have taken the same step. The oldest of these is William Thomson & Sons of Huddersfield, which effected the transformation more than a quarter of a century ago; and the best known is probably Messrs. Lever Brothers.¹ It is somewhat disappointing

¹ For recent and detailed information on the above, the publications of the Labour Co-partnership Association may be consulted and C. R. Fay's article in the *Economic Journal* for March 1913. In an Appendix to

to those who believe in the value of associated effort to find relatively so little done as yet by self-organised labour groups, though absolutely they have done much. The position to-day of workmen's co-partnership production in Great Britain is shown in the table below:—

Name	No. of societies	Capital share, loan, reserve	Trade	Profit	Loss	Dividend on wages
		£	£	£		£
Textile	15	251,200	562,700	33,050	..	5,808
Boots and leather .	18	109,500	306,150	8,400	..	1,900
Metal trades . . .	9	34,700	62,200	5,670	..	2,251
Building and wood	12	55,000	39,600	450	..	24
Printing, &c. . . .	14	87,000	140,900	11,250	..	1,417
Various.	11	66,000	135,400	12,300	..	920
Total(excluding agricultural societies)	79	603,400	1,246,950	71,120	1,572	12,320
Agricultural, &c. .	26	122,500	374,700	4,350	..	192
English societies .	105	725,900	1,621,650	75,400	5,060	12,512
Scottish societies .	5	1,265,600	3,059,800	146,450	..	17,335
British societies .	110	1,991,500	4,681,400	228,200	5,060	29,847

Connected with the matter of interest is the question of the existence of avenues for the more intelligent operatives to reach controlling positions in industry when they are fitted to fill them. This is a question of no trifling importance, if on no other ground than that hopefulness of outlook has a marked effect on the attitude of even the humblest workers in any calling. It is our impression that the opportunities afforded under modern conditions are greater than most imagine. But at the same time *Industrial Co-partnership* (1914), one of the publications mentioned, chronological and other notes on 300 British co-partnership schemes are furnished.

it is arguable that the provision of opportunity is not a thing which should be left entirely to accident. Broadly regarded, it touches educational questions on the one side and questions of industrial organisation on the other.

Of the opportunities which exist for ambitious workmen in the industrial sphere little is known. One tentative inquiry has been made in Lancashire which yielded some suggestive points.¹ It was shown that many small industrial businesses were to be found grouped around the larger ones; that among the employers in these a large percentage had risen from the ranks; and that, as regards the larger businesses needing much more capital, a way was provided for the born organiser without influence by progression within the business and the popularity of the joint-stock system. We have already given reasons for supposing that, taking the country as a whole, the avenues to advancement will widen, particularly those by way of progression within the business, while subjective opportunities may undoubtedly be expected to grow with a deepening belief in the social value of education.

Some striking State experiments have recently been made in England and Wales with reference to the objective opportunities of labour in rural parts. These are so significant with reference to the new departure which we seem to discern in social ideas, involving the conception of the State's duties, that we propose now to examine them at some length.

An experimental handling of the social problem

¹ *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, February 1912.

connected with agriculture was hastened by the alarming desertion of the country parts.¹ It was feared that city life reduced vitality, and consequently that the rural exodus would lower the average level of the national physique—for the time being, at any rate, if not permanently. Moreover, the influence of the exodus on the value of landed estates was bound to carry some weight. The contraction in the number of males over fifteen years of age engaged in agriculture exceeded the high figure of 9 per cent. in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The number of farmers and graziers kept up—indeed, there was a 5 per cent. increase of that class between 1891 and 1901, after stationariness for a decade, and at the same time a 24 per cent. increase of bailiffs and foremen, possibly on account of the difficulty of letting land—but the number of farm servants and agricultural labourers fell heavily in the decade ending 1891, and even more heavily in the next decade. Some recovery was revealed, however, by the census of 1911, which showed that in the previous ten years the number of males over fifteen engaged in agriculture had advanced by more than 5 per cent., though it had not advanced at nearly as high a rate as the population. An inquiry made in 1906 by the Board of Agriculture, which disclosed some slackening of the drift from the rural parts, brought out the causes of the migration. The low prices of imported produce, resulting in a shrinkage of arable land and an increase of pasture, were assigned as the chief cause. This was mentioned by thirty

¹ In the preparation of what follows on small holdings, we were given great assistance by Mr. Oscar Eckhard, to whom we desire to express our considerable obligations.

correspondents. Low prices, it was argued in addition by nineteen correspondents, had necessitated so much cutting down of labour expenses that land was not properly cleaned, hedges and ditches were allowed to fall into disrepair, and farms were in general much neglected. A dearth of habitable cottages was also mentioned by nineteen correspondents. Another reason alleged was the dullness and lack of freedom in rural life as compared with town life (mentioned by twenty-two correspondents). Complaints were made of the prevailing system of education, which was said by six to foster urban interests, and by seventeen to give no encouragement to farming. Moreover, the competition of agricultural machinery was declared by seventeen to be displacing labour. Farmers, it was stated, were themselves doing the work which was formerly done by hired labour. Eight correspondents, in addition, drew attention to the fact that labourers and farm servants had small prospects of bettering themselves. On the other hand, there were some bright spots in the reports. In some places depression had been staved off by a large substitution of so-called market produce for cereals, involving a division of holdings, with the result that not a few labourers had become small peasant-farmers.

Action by the State to put agricultural life on a more satisfactory footing began to be thought about seriously in the 'eighties.' In 1887 and 1890, Allotment Acts were placed on the Statute Book, which had as their object the supplementing of wages and widening of interests in urban as well as rural parts. But something more substantial was felt to be requisite. A tendency for small holdings to take the place of large

farms had become noticeable in the 'eighties.' The tendency, if given play, was believed to point to substantial gain, but the impression prevailed that it was being checked under the then existing conditions. Consequently, in 1892, an experimental measure to foster peasant proprietorship was passed. County councils were empowered to provide and sell small holdings when a genuine demand for them made itself felt. Four-fifths of the purchase-price was to be found by the Government. The purchaser was to pay a fifth down and the rest of the principal and interest in half-yearly instalments spread over fifty years, or, if he liked, only three-quarters of this remainder, interest on the residue being made a perpetual rent-charge. Councils might also lease small holdings provided they were of not more than 15 acres and of no higher rental value than £15.

One object of the inspirers of the Act—notably, Mr. Jesse Collings—was to exploit 'the magic of property'¹: it was with a belief or hope in the merits of possession that its form was given to the Act of 1892. But the Act was a failure. In fourteen years little use was made of it.² Whether or not the small holder has a longing to be owner and not tenant of his land, he has certainly shown that he considers ownership too

¹ Mr. Jesse Collings delivered many speeches and wrote an interesting book on the subject.

² Yet in Sweden seven-eighths of the holdings under 50 acres are farmed by the owners. The acquisition of small holdings have been encouraged since 1905, and up to 1911 over 6200 had been purchased—the bulk of them by agricultural labourers. New dwelling-houses have been erected on nearly 2000 of the small holdings established. But experience shows that small holdings are most successful when established in groups so that a co-operative centre is established (*Report of Departmental Committee on Buildings for Small Holdings*, 1913).

expensive a luxury; and not merely by his attitude to the Act of 1892, but also, as we shall see later, by his attitude to the ownership provisions of the later Act of 1907. This, however, was not the sole cause of failure. Many councils were inactive through lack of interest; others were listless or positively hostile; and, further, it was alleged that very little land came on the market, and most of the little at inflated prices. Prospective occupiers could not afford to pay down a fifth of the heavy purchase-price of the land, swollen still more by the cost of its conversion into small farms. They preferred to hire: the magic of property fifty years hence and at so heavy a price had small attractions for them. What was needed in any effective measure was to give to county councils power not only to purchase land, but to hire it on terms providing security of tenure; to make such power compulsory, with proper safeguards to insure fair terms, wherever suitable land was not forthcoming; to clothe the Board of Agriculture with authority to take the matter up itself when councils failed to meet satisfactory demands; and, finally, in addition to providing for ownership, to give the tenant such security of tenure as to yield almost the same advantages as ownership.

These things were provided in the Act of 1907, which went far beyond the Report of the Departmental Committee of the previous year; and another useful feature was added in the power given to county councils to support or create voluntary associations for the provision and encouragement of small holdings and co-operative enterprise.¹ A small holding is defined as one

¹ As regards cost, the following is laid down in the Act:—

‘A county council shall not take any proceedings under the provisions

of more than an acre and less than 50 acres, or, if more than 50 acres, of an annual value not exceeding £50. The Act also facilitates the provision of allotments.

Up to the end of 1912, county councils in England and Wales had furnished nearly 9000 individuals directly with small holdings of an average size of 14 acres, and some 970 other persons indirectly through forty-nine co-operative small-holdings associations. Of all these holdings only twenty were purchased. Further, through the instrumentality of county councils, nearly 3000 applicants had been enabled to come to terms with land-owners. The councils of county boroughs had also let land to 192 persons directly and sixty-three members of co-operative societies. In four years, therefore, through the instrumentality of the Act, more than 15,000 people were furnished with land. Moreover, there was left over of the land acquired under the Act nearly sufficient to satisfy another 2000 applicants. Nevertheless, the net gain in agricultural holdings of 1 to 50 acres over these four years was little more than 5500. One reason is that a strong drift of the population cannot be instantaneously checked; another, that many of the new holdings were acquired for existing small holders whose success was being stopped by want of more land; and another, that in the same period the cultivated area of the country had been reduced by 173,000 acres, including many small holdings near large towns.

of this Act relating to small holdings whereby the annual charge for the time being on the county fund for the purposes of those provisions and of any enactment repealed by this Act, including the annual payments in respect of loans raised for these purposes, is, in the opinion of the council, likely to exceed in any one year the amount produced by a rate of 1*d.* in the pound.²

The annual amount of land bought by councils has largely exceeded the amount leased. This is satisfactory, because 'in the case of land leased for small holdings, any expenditure on equipment and adaptation must necessarily be recouped within the term of the lease, with the result that the rents which must be charged for the holdings are considerably higher than would be required if the land had been purchased. A loan for a period of fourteen years involves annual charges for repayment at the rate of $9\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and for twenty-one years it is nearly 7 per cent.; whereas on land which has been purchased, house and building can be provided at a charge of $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the outlay.'

By the end of 1912 there had been some 39,250 applications for holdings in England, exclusive of those addressed to county boroughs and the demands of the seventy-four associations. Thus the percentage of applications satisfied by county councils was about twenty-five. This may not seem a very brilliant achievement, but a large part of the enormous demand in the first year was fictitious. Exclusive of associations, the number of applicants in that year was over 21,000, of whom nearly 40 per cent. were immediately rejected as unsuitable, and 5 per cent. only were eventually satisfied. Most of these 21,000, in all probability, would not have had the least chance of working a holding successfully. Many thoughtless people supposed that land was to be had almost for the asking, and never dreamt of weighing their qualifications for success in a technical and difficult business like agriculture. It is not surprising that by the next year the number of applications had dropped to a little

more than 3000, from which number it gradually rose above 4000 in 1912.

In many cases applicants, provisionally approved, have had to be rejected on further investigation; while a considerable number of others 'are inclined to withdraw when a definite offer of land is made to them. . . . The problem before the councils has been to fit particular men to particular land, and very few of the applicants are willing to move from their immediate neighbourhood.' Also many have withdrawn 'on realising that councils would be unable to let small quantities of accommodation land at the same rate as is paid by farmers for large farms.' Many solid men have cautiously waited to see what would come of the Act. In the 1910 Report, the Commissioners express the opinion that the 'new applicants are better men than the original ones.' There is, moreover, no cessation of demand for holdings. 'It is very largely true to say that the outstanding demand increases in proportion to the activity shown in administering the Act.' This judgment was reaffirmed in the Report for 1912.

The outstanding demand of approved applications to county councils has been moderately steady. It now stands at 8500 individuals and three associations, demanding 130,600 acres of land. The Commissioners imagine that it requires further sifting. But, even if reduced somewhat, it will not be possible to provide for the surplus in a short time. Many applicants could be satisfied if they were willing to move to other parts of the country. A great majority of the unsatisfied but provisionally approved applicants appear to be men who have already some work in the villages in which they live, and merely require accommodation

land as an adjunct to their present means of livelihood. 'Where applicants require fully equipped holdings to which they propose to devote their whole time, the problem is much simpler. Such men can reasonably be expected to move to the district in which land is available for them.' . . . 'A further class of applicants, for whom it is very difficult to provide, comprise those who are already tenants of holdings under the councils, and who, having been successful with their holdings, are now desirous of adding to them.' In response to inquiries from the Board of Agriculture, an analysis was obtained a short time ago of about half of the applications that had been received. Roughly, 40 per cent. were rejected as unsuitable, 35 per cent were provided for, and 5 per cent. refused offers. Half of the unprovided, but approved, applicants remaining—10 per cent. of the whole—were already occupying holdings of more than one acre.

One great difficulty in the way of the small agriculturist is that of obtaining a satisfactory house. Under the Small Holdings Act councils are empowered to provide houses as adjuncts to holdings, and 1700 have been so provided by county councils; but of these less than 500 had to be built by the councils. Incidentally, it may be observed that many demands have had to be set aside for the reason that applicants were trying to make use of the Act as a General Housing Act, their dominant desire being the house, though they were willing, if need be, to take a little land with it.

It is important to know (1) what classes of men are taking up holdings of different kinds, and (2) what is the proportion of holdings in the form of accommodation land. Without an exhaustive investigation,

no general statistical answer can be given to these questions; but one fact is definitely established, namely, that the Act has in no way been used to promote a 'back-to-the-land' policy, to draw an unsuitable urban population into the country, set it on the land, and persuade it that it will be able to make a living out of agriculture. It is desired that the working of the Act should stem the tide of migration to the towns; but there has been no attempt and no wish to promote an artificial flow from the town to the country. Nearly 30 per cent. of the applicants have been agricultural labourers, and of the remainder the Report for 1910 says that 'the majority are drawn from those classes of the rural population who have some small business or trade in the villages, which is not sufficient to occupy the whole of their time, and to whom the possession of a small plot of land often makes just the difference between a bare subsistence and comparative prosperity.' But, of course, circumstances vary with the locality. On an estate at West Royton, which has been leased to the Durham County Council, the occupiers of the eighty-one holdings are mostly miners; but fifty-five of them hold no more than three square chains each. In view of the fact that it is the agricultural labourer more than anyone else that the Act is intended to help, it may seem disappointing that labourers' applications for holdings have been less than 30 per cent. of the other applications; but the fact of the matter is, as stated in the 1908 Report, that the labourer on a weekly wage has 'little spare time for the cultivation of more than a small allotment, and unless he has saved enough money to be able to take a holding of 30 or 40

acres, he would not, as a rule, be justified in giving up his daily work.’¹ ‘In purely agricultural districts, where the labourers merely get a regular weekly wage of from 14s. to 18s. a week, there are few, if any, applicants who have saved money; but in other parts—particularly in some special districts of the Eastern Counties, where piece-work is readily obtainable—the savings of the applicants amount to substantial sums. If a young labourer, who lives at home and does not marry too early, determines to save money, it is not impossible for him—as is proved by several cases that have come under our notice—to accumulate £100 or £200 in ten or fifteen years, and he is then in a position to apply for a small holding with a good prospect of success.’² Many labourers, it must be hoped, may be enabled to work up to the attainment of a full holding after beginning with an allotment and passing on to an accommodation holding. It is satisfactory to observe that the percentage of agricultural labourers’ demands met would seem to be well above the same percentage for demands from other persons, and that, roughly speaking, an undoubted majority of the existing holdings in agricultural districts would appear to be occupied by those who are or were connected with agricultural work.

As regards the proportion of full to accommodation holdings, no adequate figures are given, nor are there adequate figures to show the typical size of full holdings. But, writing mainly on the latter point, the Commissioners make the following suggestive remarks

¹ The percentage of labourers’ applications in England, in different parts, ranges from under 20 to over 50.

² Report of 1910.

in the Report for 1912: 'A survey of the holdings which have been created under the Act shows that a common mistake, which has been made in dealing with the land acquired, has been to try and make it go too far, and to create a larger number of holdings than the acreage warrants. The object has been, no doubt, to provide for the largest possible number of applicants, but it is far sounder policy to place ten men on economic holdings instead of fifteen men on holdings that are too small to afford a decent living, even though the five unsatisfied applicants may have to wait a longer time for their land. With regard to self-supporting holdings, it should be remembered that, as a general rule, the equipment and stock required on a 25 to 30 acre mixed holding, if farmed in the ordinary way, is much the same as would be necessary on a similar holding of from 30 to 50 acres, and there are several cases where rents might have been reduced by from 3s. to 5s. an acre, owing to the reduced equipment required, if a smaller number of holdings had been created. . . . If applicants are only supplied with a portion of the acreage for which they apply, and have the capital to work, they will soon be clamouring for more land, and it is obvious that the councils will have much greater difficulty in satisfying their demands than would have been the case if larger areas had been allotted in the first instance.'

A striking feature in the use made of the Act is the part played by the scheme of co-operative tenancy.¹ In this the Commissioners thoroughly believe. Reporting in 1910, they say: 'The experience of the last two years has strengthened our conviction that

¹ See pp. 66-8 above.

the method of establishing small holdings with the best prospect of success is to acquire an area of land, and to let it to a properly constituted co-operative association, under Section IX. of the Act. This method relieves the Council from the whole of the work involved in the sub-division of the land and the selection and supervision of the tenants, and it secures the best possible form of local control. All the members of the association are responsible for the proper cultivation of the land and the punctual payment of rent by the tenants of the association, and as they are each of them liable for a share in any loss that may be incurred, they have the strongest possible incentive to exercise great care in the selection of the tenants.' Co-operation, too, can and should be applied at many points in the actual workings of holdings. Continental and even English experience have proved this again and again.¹ Membership of a co-operative distribution society will enable the small cultivator to buy his seed, manures, and food-stuffs at wholesale prices. The same society will market his produce for him, and obtain cheaper railway rates and higher market prices than he could secure by his own efforts. Co-operative productive societies will work up his milk for him in a highly efficient central dairy, and turn out butter and cheese of the best quality, of complete uniformity, and in a large quantity. Finally, there are agricultural credit societies. Of these, however, there are few: 45 in England and Wales, with 765 members, and loans granted in 1912 of less than £1500, though they have

¹ Fay, *Co-operation at Home and Abroad*; Pratt, *Agricultural Organisation*; Rider Haggard, *Rural Denmark and its Lessons*; and publications of Agricultural Organisation Society.

been pushed with some success in Ireland and have proved abroad a main prop of agricultural prosperity.¹

The Small Holdings Commissioners are convinced adherents of many-sided co-operation, as the following suggestive extracts from their reports demonstrate, while bringing out in addition the need of education, agricultural research, and the dissemination of the results of the latter. 'We have no hesitation in saying that one of the most important factors on which the success of the Small Holdings Movement depends is that of co-operative organisation. . . . The whole of our experience among small holders shows that the best results can only be obtained by means of some organisation which will put the small producer into such a position as to enable him to obtain a fair return for his produce and satisfy his requirements as cheaply as possible. . . . That this can be done is shown by the success of the Eastern Counties Farmers' Association, which, after less than six years' existence, has an annual turnover of approximately £250,000, and to which small local societies can be affiliated at a charge of only 1½*d.* a member. If each small holder attempts to deal as an isolated unit, not only with the productive but also with the distributive side of his business, it is certain that he cannot hope to obtain the best market prices for his produce. . . . We feel very strongly that the county councils ought to do everything in their power to assist in organising co-operative methods among the small holders they have established (1909).' Again, in the Report of 1910, we read: 'The experience of the past year has only strengthened

¹ Wolff's *People's Banks*, and *Report of the Departmental Committee on Agricultural Credit in Ireland* (1914).

the conviction to which we gave expression in our last Report that the economic success of the Small Holdings Movement depends almost entirely upon improved methods of education, more especially in the practical application of the results of scientific research and upon organisation in co-operation.' Expanding their views upon the need of instruction, the Commissioners continue: 'The small holders principally need expert advice in two directions: first, in the selection of the crops to grow and how best to grow them; second, in the methods of marketing their produce and stock to the best advantage. . . . Whereas a large farmer may be content with a profit of from £1 to £5 an acre on some of his crops, the small holder should aim at a profit of from £5 to £10 an acre and upwards, by adopting more intensive methods and devoting himself, for example, to fruit-growing, market-gardening, and poultry-rearing. It is no exaggeration to say that a considerable quantity of the soil of the country might be made to return at least twice as much as it does at present, and if the results of scientific research can be brought home to the agricultural community, there is no reason why this result should not be achieved. If such holdings, worked on business principles under the direction of the agricultural instructors of the county councils, could be established all over the country, they would provide object-lessons for all the small holders in the locality and might well effect a revolution in their present methods of cultivation.'

In connection with the points raised in these passages, it is noteworthy that the Development Commissioners are now subsidising agricultural research, and that a grant has been made by them to the Agricultural

Organisation Society, which has been strengthened with a new and more representative constitution. Its yeoman service has been in no small measure responsible for the more healthy state of the agricultural industry to-day.¹

For the above digression from the main thread of our argument no excuses are needed in view of the profound significance of the matters to which attention has been given. We now return to the industrial field. One outstanding problem in industrial organisation, which is a matter of deep concern to the workman, is that of the hours of labour. It, too, has its psychological side, and it is peculiarly bound up with general social conditions. To this problem some considerable space will now be devoted.²

We naturally inquire at the outset why the question of leisure does not assume prominence until modern industrialism has supplanted a simpler economy, and why much less is heard of it among agricultural than among industrial communities. In the hand industries of the past, the hours of labour were excessively long, in comparison with modern industrial standards, and among peasants and pioneering farmers work never wholly ceases in waking hours throughout much of the year, except for short breaks for meals; and yet little

¹ On the above the following may be referred to: *The Awakening of England*, and other books, by F. E. Green; Miss Jebb, *Small Holdings; To Colonise England*, by various writers; report of the Land Inquiry Committee, vol. i.; and Seeböhm Rowntree's *Work on Belgium*.

² Portions of what follows on the hours of labour were originally published as a presidential address to the Economics and Statistics Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. They are now reproduced with the consent of the Council of that Association and the Editor of the *Economic Journal*.

complaint would seem to have emanated from either source. The explanation may lie partly in the fact that new troubles emerge with the spread of the wages system—the problem of the working day does not present itself in quite the same light to wage-earners and to the self-employed—and partly in the fact that the aggregation of people of the same economic class for group-production creates the class idea, renders grievances articulate, and overcomes individual timidity. But probably this is not the sole explanation. Another explanation is that the character of much of the world's work has changed, while—partly in consequence—the demands made upon leisure have increased.

The road of economic advance has been largely by way of specialism, and this has meant to the labourer the partial, or occasionally complete, elimination of the short periods of leisure by which his working hours used to be broken up. In a modern workshop, noise, the necessity of discipline, or of a continuously absorbed state of the attention, have frequently reduced the possibilities of relaxation to the barest limits. Humanity has no doubt been relieved of the heaviest burden of toil by inventions relating to the mechanism of production; but their application has been accompanied on the whole by the need for a closer concentration of effort. The intensification of labour in a more confined sphere of activity may, as Professor Münsterberg argues, exercise more fully the higher human faculties and thereby bring with it a deeper interest, but it will almost certainly prove more exhausting, even apart from the elimination of change, leisure, and social intercourse. And decade by decade, with the 'speeding-up' of machinery, we should expect

to find more nervous strain accompanying the process of production.¹ That industrial functioning has become a severer tax on the energy of the workman is fully borne out by the evidence of numerous reports upon industrial conditions. As one of the most recent and authoritative, that of the American Industrial Commission may be cited. The Commissioners declare that it was brought out by the evidence 'that in nearly all occupations an increasing strain and intensity of labour is required by modern methods of production.' They argue that any attempt to check speed, or subdivision of labour, would work to the detriment of the community and therefore conclude that 'there is but one alternative if the working population is to be protected in its health and trade longevity—namely, a reduction of the hours of labour.'

The increasing nervous strain of industrial work, whether it results from the progressive specialisation of labour or not, would account sufficiently for the curious circumstance that there has been no finality hitherto about any solution of the problem of the normal working day; though it is not the sole explanation, as we have yet to see. The workman whose day has been reduced is soon repeating again his demand for shorter hours. There are pessimists who infer from this that the shorter hours attained, hitherto, have shifted the community on to a slippery inclined plane, which leads from the economic 'struggle for existence'—by which is meant the competitive striving for place, reputation, and achievement, whereby progress is naturally stimulated—to economic stagnation. They

¹ Good reasons for this view will be found in Goldmark's *Fatigue and Efficiency*.

think they discern in the present generation a disinclination to make an effort and a disposition to take the easy path. But that the truth cannot be mainly with the pessimists an examination of the effects upon output of curtailing the daily hours of labour would at least suggest. A mass of material exists in official and other reports in more than one advanced industrial country for a study of this question. Beginning with the writings of Robert Owen and Daniel le Grand¹—both of whom laid especial stress on moral and social elements—an investigation would find an almost unbroken sequence of evidence. Mr. John Rae collected a volume of facts in 1894, and these may now be supplemented by the experiences of yet another half-generation.²

Roughly generalising from the totality of evidence, we may affirm as follows. No instance appears in which an abbreviation of hours has resulted eventually in a proportionate curtailment of output, and production in the shorter hours has seldom fallen short, by any substantial amount, of production in the longer hours. In some cases the product, or the value of the product, has actually been augmented after a short time and even before machinery could be improved or speeded up. For some industries—for instance, for the Lancashire cotton industry—a series of observations reaching back about three-quarters of a century have been preserved, and it would seem from them that the beneficial effects wrought upon

¹ Bauer's article '*Die geschichtlichen Motive des Internationalen Arbeiterschutzes*,' in the first issue of *Vierteljahrsschrift für Social- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (1903).

² A mass of evidence has been collected by the American Industrial Commission.

output by the shortening of hours were substantially repeated, though, of course, in different degrees, at each successive reduction of the working day. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that not only speed of work but a rise in the quality of the output and a more careful use of machinery (materially reducing the cost of repairs and time lost in repairs) are effects to be expected ultimately from the shorter working day.

So far, attention has been directed mainly to two incidents bearing upon the hours of labour: the one, the effect of industrial development in curtailing the hours which result in the largest daily output; the other, the subjective effect of the increasing strain associated with such advance. Another problematical influence has now to be added, namely, that an increased demand for leisure may accompany a rise in wages, improved education, and social progress. Real wages in the United Kingdom are found to have doubled, approximately, between the middle of the nineteenth century and the present time, when allowance is made for the heavier recruiting of the better-paid callings, and, when no such allowance is made, to have increased by more than 50 per cent.¹ When people get richer, they usually want to buy more leisure as well as more of other things—though not always, since people who have learnt to appreciate certain material comforts may be induced to work harder to get yet an additional supply of them. Besides, it must be insisted that the value of leisure is dependent upon the goods available for enjoyment in the period of leisure; so that, when the volume of goods per head annually supplied

¹ See Professor Bowley's calculations of money-wages and Mr. Wood's and other estimates of the cost of living.

to labour is augmented, attempts are not unlikely to be made by calculating operatives, who would want to buy additional leisure even if its value remained as before, to buy yet more leisure. Moreover, there is the effect of education. As regards this, it is evident that the value of leisure varies as appreciative power which is developed by education. But it must be observed, by way of qualifying the obvious inference, that the higher appreciative power might enhance the satisfaction got directly out of the work, and that this effect might counteract the effect on the value of leisure, or even more than counteract it. This may prove an exceedingly important point; and it must be remembered that a kind of betterment in factory work which renders the daily task more inherently attractive is by no means out of the question. Finally, on the other side of the account, there are the claims outside wage-earning of a social organisation growing in complexity. 'But, unfortunately, human nature improves slowly, and in nothing more slowly than in the hard task of learning to use leisure well. In every age, in every nation, and in every rank of society, those who have known how to work well have been far more numerous than those who have known how to use leisure well. But, on the other hand, it is only through freedom to use leisure as they will that people can learn to use leisure well; and no class of manual workers who are devoid of leisure can have much self-respect and become full citizens. Some time free from the fatigue of work that tires without educating is a necessary condition of a high standard of life.'¹

The eight-hours day has been advanced by some

¹ Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, 5th ed., pp. 719-20.

social reformers as the ideal of the future. The doctrine that the workman should normally work eight hours a day has been conceived as holding at least as generally, and with as high a degree of certainty, as, say, the doctrine that the workman should normally sleep some definite proportion of the twenty-four hours. But, evidently, the problem of the length of the working day is of an order different from the problem of the time which should be devoted to sleep; for, whereas the hours which should be given to sleep depend mainly upon physiological conditions (though these physiological conditions are affected by economic and psychological conditions), the hours which it is wise to assign to labour depend upon the attitude of the workman to leisure and work, which results as much from non-physiological as from physiological influences. It has been suggested above that the value of leisure rises with progress, and that the attitude of labour to work, and the strain of work, vary with progress. Consequently, the ideal working day of the future cannot be eight hours, for it must be essentially a variable ideal, and is possibly a progressive one. As a community advances, agitation for more leisure is quite likely to keep breaking out anew, though the demands made would become less and less in amount.

The question of the hours of labour being so vital, it is important that the process whereby settlement of the working day is brought about should be understood, and that the relation should be grasped between what tends to be established and what would be ideal. We propose, therefore, to disentangle the impulses and their relations, into which the question of the determination of the working day at any one time

may be resolved, and consider the extent to which they express the public good.

The problem being elaborate, it is essential to proceed by successive steps of abstraction. In the first instance, we intend to indicate the length of working day which operatives and employers would respectively seek if they recognised their own interests and were endowed with complete foreknowledge of the effects of different hours of labour upon their interests. We shall assume—as we may legitimately for the purpose in hand in the case of ordinary factory employment—that the workman tends to get as his wage his marginal worth: that is to say, the value which would be lost by his dismissal. Let us suppose that the following table represents at a given time the value of labour of a given kind per week, in relation to the length of the working day, when all the reactions, as regards, for instance, the efficiency of labour and the provision and arrangement of other agents, have taken place :—

Hours per day						Value of labour per week in shillings
6	.	.	.	.	.	34
7	.	.	.	.	.	38
8	.	.	.	.	.	40
9	.	.	.	.	.	41
10	.	.	.	.	.	40
11	.	.	.	.	.	39
12	.	.	.	.	.	37

The fall in the value of labour, after the working day exceeds nine hours, is due to the fact that diminished weekly productivity more than counteracts the direct effect of the extension of the daily time for work. The

diminished weekly productivity may be due to impaired vitality—physical, mental, or moral—or to some extent to irregularity, where that is possible, as in the case of colliers. The damage to productivity may be inflicted directly by excessive work, or it may be indirectly consequent upon it, the prime cause consisting in the use of stimulants, or recourse to unhealthy excitement in periods of leisure, reactions which are only to be expected when work is very exhausting or very dull. The use of leisure affects, of course, mental vitality, culture and character, and it will therefore be observable as a rule that labour which has had its hours reduced will be capable after a time—when the use of leisure has been improved and the improvement has produced its effects—of managing satisfactorily more complicated machinery; and will be generally more responsible and trustworthy, and therefore less in need of continuous watching and directing.

Now, clearly, if employers are endowed with adequate foresight, and if their hours of work need not increase concurrently with a lengthening of the working day, it is, in the case supposed, to their interest collectively to come to an agreement not to employ labour more than nine hours a day. The conclusion follows from the fact that the weekly product would be augmented by a greater amount than 1s. multiplied by the number of operatives were the hours of labour increased, say, from eight to nine, because labour, as every other agent employed in production, is paid not by its aggregate but by its marginal worth to the business in which it is employed. This proposition may be made more self-evident by the following example. Were labour rendered 25 per cent. more

productive all round, the product and real wages would each be raised approximately 25 per cent., other things being equal ; but as the product must be greater than aggregate wages the addition made to the former would be greater than the addition made to aggregate wages.

Next, suppose that an agreement between employers, tacit or overt, is impossible and that each employer will make what he can when he can. What hours, then, will competition among employers tend to bring about, when humanitarian considerations and any resistance from the operatives are ruled out ? Suppose the efficiency of labour at the time is that associated with a customary working day of ten hours. The product of the tenth hour would not be zero. The ultimate effect of extending the working day beyond nine hours is loss, in the case put above, not because the product of the last fraction of the ninth hour is zero, but because the product of the last fraction of the ninth hour just equals the ultimate reduction of the product of the other hours that would be occasioned by the lengthening of the working day. Hence, on the assumption that employers are perfectly far-sighted, but that agreement between them as to working hours is lacking, the disposition on the part of each employer to reduce hours to nine would be weakened if each employer could not depend upon keeping operatives after he had brought them to the level of efficiency associated with the nine-hours day. The reforming employer would run the risk of paying the whole cost of the labour value created by shorter hours, and getting little in return ; other employers might secure and exhaust the new labour value, and no permanent good would be effected. Nor would there

be any guarantee that the nine-hours day would be retained, if universally instituted ; for an employer could always snatch a temporary advantage by extending hours and paying slightly higher weekly wages. This is a general proof that, on the assumption made as regards the intelligence and foresight of employers and in the absence of agreement between them, the hours resulting in the maximum product would not necessarily establish themselves, no pressure from the side of the workpeople being supposed operative.

We now pass on to analyse the way in which the operative's choice would be governed, in the matter of the hours of labour, assuming that his wage equals his marginal worth and that he knows it, and supposing in the first place that he is endowed with perfect prevision. Two things affect him which do not appeal to the self-interest of the employer, namely, the direct value of his (the operative's) leisure and the balance of satisfaction or dissatisfaction which his work yields of itself. Apart from these two things the operative's real income is maximised when his money-income is maximised. Hence, apart from these two things, the choice, as regards the length of the working day, of perfectly far-seeing operatives would be the choice of far-seeing employers, were the latter combined. Now let us take the value of leisure into account. Any daily duration of production being premised, if the utility derived from an incremental addition to leisure is greater than the utility of the increment of wage sacrificed by transferring an increment of time from production to consumption, the operative would gain from a contraction of the working day, other things being equal. Recurring to our earlier numerical

example, we see that, from the long-sighted point of view, the productivity of the last fraction of the nine-hours day is zero, while its value as leisure must be greater than zero. Hence the operative would choose to work less than nine hours a day, it being understood that he is paid his marginal worth and knows what that will be for different daily periods of work.

Nor would this be the sole reason for choosing the shorter day. The burden of work would furnish an additional motive. It may be granted that in the long run any lengthening of the working day beyond a certain limit diminishes the balance of satisfaction directly derived from working, or adds to the balance of dissatisfaction. Then, obviously, the far-seeing operative would choose a working day which maximised his satisfaction, when the efforts of working, as well as the value of leisure and the amount of the wage, were taken into account; and the length of the working day chosen would almost certainly be less than it would be were wages and the value of leisure the sole consideration.

So far, in weighing the workmen's interests, we have fixed our eyes on a remote perspective. We next focus attention upon immediate tendencies and suppose them not to be counteracted by forces arising out of a regard for ultimate results. In these circumstances the operative would probably be inclined to select a longer working day than that which would be continuously the most advantageous to him, because he would be blind to the reaction of the longer hours on efficiency and so on earnings and the capacity to take pleasure in work and recreation. Many people lower the general

level of their earnings in the future, and spoil their enjoyment of work and leisure in the future, by making as much as they can in the present. However, even in these circumstances, employers would not approve such long hours as employers who were short-sighted, because the latter would make no allowance for the disutility of labour to the employee or the utility to him of leisure.¹

We are assuming throughout, it must be remembered, that the wage will always be the operative's marginal worth—that is, what would be lost if he were dismissed—and that he knows it. Actually, of course, there is frequently an appreciable discrepancy between the marginal worth of labour and its wage, and the usual connection between them has not been commonly understood. It would seem, from the records of labour movements, as if the operative's fear—based as much on ignorance as on distrust—lest the longer day should mean no more pay, though the weekly product would be greater, has protected him against the injurious consequences of short-sightedness; but we are inclined to think that the dominant force in these movements has consisted in ideals of life, formed half instinctively, which are unconnected with views, fallacious or otherwise, concerning the mechanics of distribution. Bad arguments have been used to justify good ends. To these ideals of life we shall refer again.

In reality the actions of both employers and employed, in so far as they are governed by self-regarding

¹ But operatives might be willing to work the longest hours economical to the employer if they were all (or the majority of them) very anxious to get on. When there is a general striving of people against one another to get on, all may sacrifice their present to a future which only the few can grasp.

impulses, will be compromise resultants of immediate impulses and long-sighted calculations. Long-period consequences which are not very remote will usually be appreciated, and employers as well as operatives may aim at them, because the former may think the length of time an operative usually stays with one firm sufficient to justify a slight present sacrifice made with the object of securing improvement in the operative's efficiency.

The above analysis explains not only disagreements between employers and operatives as regard the normal working day, but also the friction which is constantly generated in the matter of 'overtime.' Without the admission of overtime, heavy losses might be experienced by an industry in consequence of the inelasticity of its production in face of the fluctuations in the market to which it sold; but, on the other hand, overtime sometimes tends to be worked out of proportion to the special need for it, and operatives are apt to suspect that it is being used unfairly to extend the normal day.

It would seem, therefore, that two reasons at least can be derived from economic theory for collective action, or State intervention, in the matter of the hours of labour, if it be assumed that associations or the State can discover what is best. The one is to correct the tendency of people engaged in industry to agree upon an amount of sacrifice to money-making which means a large future loss, involving the next generation, for a small present gain; the other is to fortify, if needful, the resistance of operatives to the disposition of some employers to secure a greater product at the expense of the operatives' convenience. However, the

derivation of such a conclusion from economic theory must be qualified. Economic matters are settled not merely by the self-regarding forces which we have hitherto emphasised, but also by social conceptions, embodied in public opinion and class-notions of what is right and proper, which defy expert analysis and any accurate evaluation as influences. These social conceptions are not deliberately framed on a rationalistic basis, but proceed insensibly, as it were, from the needs of human life. How far progress, which runs counter to tendencies determined solely by self-regarding forces, may be left with confidence to the operation of these incalculable motives, which sway every community, can be settled only by careful observation. It is sufficient now to recognise their existence, to note their growing strength and their effect in much social betterment, and to point to the reduction of the hours of labour in recent years.

We do not propose to consider here, in the light of the existence of these incalculable motives, the merits and demerits of the method of legal enactment for attaining the ideal in the matter of the daily duration of toil, except to observe, first, that Government interference which aimed at securing reasonable hours for adult males in all the diversified industries of a country would entail elaborate, elastic, and frequent legislation, and would no doubt be accompanied by many grave errors ; and, secondly, that a *prima facie* case can be made out for the regulation of the hours even of adult males by authoritative boards, order of the Home Office, or by statute, when labour is weakly combined and hours are evidently excessive, and evidence is forthcoming that they are detrimental to

health or vigour.¹ Nor do we propose to consider whether it might not be better to suffer for a time present ills in the hope that there would grow up in the community an adequate power of self-regulation, which would incidentally be accompanied by highly valuable social consequences that otherwise might never have been elicited. It may be that the intangible force of public opinion, directed by economic and ethical enlightenment over a field rendered yearly more co-extensive with human activities (in consequence of the growing demand for publicity and the response made to that demand by governmental authorities and the Press), will become in the future an increasingly efficacious factor in progress, apart from its expression in law. Even to-day, in view of the dependence of producers on demand, neither employers nor trade unions can brave for long public resentment, though unorganised, when it is deeply stirred; and public sentiment in the years before us may be expected to respond more sensitively to incidents in its surroundings which offend against social conceptions of what is right and proper.

There is no doubt that all advanced industrialism to-day is feeling the strain of an accumulation of forces tending to bring about an abbreviation of the working day, and that it will be subjected to the same strain, if in a less degree, in the future. In relation to this experience, it is to be noticed that a close-set limit is imposed upon reduction of hours by the heavy interest and depreciation charges with which the product is burdened when

¹ Some discussion of the legal limitation of hours will be found on pp. 257-61.

fixed capital is used for less than half the time for which interest must be paid; for, as regards depreciation, buildings deteriorate in value at least as much when shut up as when they are occupied, machinery continues to wear out—and sometimes rapidly—when it is idle, and the reserve fund necessary because the market may contract at any time, and because plant may at any time be rendered obsolete, is independent of the length of the working day. Interest and depreciation charges are to-day interdicting the application of some of those new ideas to industry which would necessitate heavier capital investment, and, in addition, preventing the ideas already applied from reducing hours so much as they otherwise would.

The weight of the discouragement, indicated above, to the shortening of the hours of labour depends, of course, upon the relation between wages and payments for capital in the expenses of a business. This relation varies with the industry. Nevertheless, a rough calculation for a particular industry of the saving in hours which might be effected by the continuous running of plant will not be altogether irrelevant, though actually any further adoption of the shift system would usually take the form of two shifts only, the works being closed for eight hours or so during the night, instead of continuous running. In the industry for which figures have been obtained, interest and depreciation would be reckoned ordinarily at 10 per cent. on the capital—about half for each—while wages would be in the neighbourhood of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Now, it being assumed provisionally that the depreciation charge varies as the hours worked,

that the rate of interest is a constant, that the equipment of the industry remains as before and labour tends neither to leave the industry nor to flood into it, and that other costs of production are not affected, we find that hours could be reduced from ten to eight without any loss of wages, were the continuous running of plant substituted for the ten-hours day.¹ Similarly, it can be shown that two shifts of little more than eight and a half hours each would yield the same wages, on the assumption stated, as the ten-hours day under the single shift system.

Actually, of course, some of the gain would be taken in the form of higher wages. Further, it must be noticed that the assumptions made do not accurately correspond with fact, though they are satisfactory enough for the purposes of a first approximation. On the one side, they lead to an over-estimate of the

¹ The calculation is as follows :—

Interest	= 5 per cent. of capital.
Depreciation	= 5 „ „
Wages	= 12½ „ „
∴ Wages + interest	= 17½ „ „

Continuous running would mean increasing the annual duration of production in the ratio, say, of $\frac{24}{10}$. Hence, with continuous running—

$$\text{Wages} + \text{interest} = 17\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{24}{10} = 42 \text{ per cent. of capital.}$$

And, as the capital remains as before—

Interest	= 5 per cent of capital.
Wages	= 37 „ „

Writing x for the daily hours worked per head, which would yield the same weekly wages as before, we have—

$$\frac{37}{24} \times x = \frac{12\frac{1}{2}}{10} \times 10.$$

$$\therefore x = \frac{300}{37} = 8 \text{ (approximately).}$$

advantages of continuous running, because twenty-four hours of work could not possibly be squeezed into a twenty-four hours day; and because the cost of artificial light is disregarded, as are also the extra costs connected with awkward points in organisation, with the sharing of responsibility for the proper treatment of machinery, and with the fact—universally experienced—that night-shifts are not so productive as day-shifts. On the other side, the assumptions above lead to an under-estimate of the advantages of shifts, because the cost of depreciation, as we have seen, is not proportional to the daily hours of work,¹ because the shorter hours would raise the efficiency of labour, and because the demand for capital would be reduced. The inevitable contraction of the demand for capital is a point to be emphasised. If working hours per day were raised from ten to twenty-four, then—the reaction on the efficiency of labour still being disregarded—the old output could be obtained with five-twelfths of the old capital; the consequence would probably be a fall in interest, and certainly an augmentation of the amount of plant per head of the people working with it at one time, and therefore an increased output per head.

In view of its great economies, the shift system calls for very careful consideration in the future. The magnitude of the advantages which the wage-earners might hope to derive from its more extensive application has been denied, on the ground both of theory and of experience in those businesses in which it has been

¹ Had the depreciation been taken as independent of the hours of work, the calculation in the previous note would have pointed to a seven-hours day instead of an eight-hours day.

tried. But theoretic objections of a fundamental nature will be found to reduce to false doctrine concerning the determination of wages; and it must be remembered that, as the benefits accruing from the comparatively few cases in which the shift system is practised are by competition spread over the whole community, the gain of any individual is cut down to a very small figure. It must not be supposed that the effect of its universal adoption would be equally inappreciable. Without a more general recourse to shift systems, there seems to be little immediate prospect of much additional leisure for the mass of the population. Shifts could be designed so that no one shift would be particularly disagreeable to work in, and, if all shifts did not offer equal advantages, operatives could be moved round, each one being assigned for so many weeks to each shift. The shifts for foremen, and the management generally—which would have to be strengthened—might be arranged to run over a portion of two operatives' shifts, so as to mortice the new work on to the old. Moreover, the connecting of the work of each shift with that of the shift which it followed could also be arranged by making the unit of labour a group of partners, with a member or members in each shift, and making it the duty of the partner or partners in the displaced shift to hand on instructions. Naturally, a shift arrangement could only be introduced gradually.

Are the objections to shifts of such gravity as to counteract their immense economies? The fact that an affirmative answer was given to this question in the past, and is usually given in the present, is no proof that the affirmative is the right answer for the future.

Conditions have been revolutionised in the last fifty years. Improvements in artificial lighting and in intra-urban transportation have alone swept away a mass of the conditions underlying the evils which used to be associated with night-work. By leaving an unfilled gap between, say, 10 P.M. and 6 A.M., arrangements could be made for all operatives to get most of their sleep in the night, if they so wished, and to enjoy most of their leisure in daylight. But it is not our intention in this chapter to make a practical proposal, or argue points of detail. We merely present certain theoretic corollaries which have incidentally been derived from our analysis of conditions determining the length of the working day. Such corollaries ought to be fully understood by those who have to make the final decision. To this matter we shall have to return again, after dealing with the hours of women's labour. For the present, we conclude by quoting Dr. Marshall's judgment: that, were shift systems more extensively adopted, 'the arts of production would progress more rapidly; the national dividend would increase; working men would be able to earn higher wages without checking the growth of capital, or tempting it to migrate to countries where wages are lower; and all classes of society would reap benefit from the change.'¹

In continuous processes, of course, shift systems are unavoidable; and the international labour association (to which full reference will be made later) is doing its utmost to get excessively long shifts shortened. In 1910, at the Lugano meeting of this association, attended by delegates from numerous

¹ *Principles of Economics*, 5th ed., p. 695.

countries, the twelve-hours shift was condemned, the eight-hours shift being recommended in its place. And the matter has not been allowed to rest since. In connection with it, the account given by M. Fromont, in one of the publications of the Solvay Institute of Sociology,¹ of experiences in substituting three eight-hours shifts for two twelve-hours shifts in a chemical works in Belgium is of peculiar interest. It was discovered, after less than six months' trial, that men could produce as much in seven and a half hours (their working time after deducting half an hour for rest) as they had previously produced in ten hours, which had been the full working time under the old arrangement. So the men got nearly three hours a day more leisure for nothing, while the cost of production was reduced, in consequence of the higher output per hour. Moreover, the clandestine use of alcoholic drinks in the works ceased of itself. But twelve-hours shifts are still common. In Germany practically all iron and steel workers toil in twelve-hours shifts, which is the more serious in that the sickness and accident rate among such workers is exceptionally high.²

We may now summarise our main conclusions, and humanise them by restoring the moral and social elements from which our premisses were to some extent abstracted. We have hitherto, in connection with the hours of labour, spoken of progress in such terms that the critic would have some excuse

¹ *Une Expérience Industrielle de Réduction de la Journée de Travail*, 1906. Quoted from *The World's Labour Laws* (issued by the British Association for Labour Legislation) for August 1912.

² On the subject of the hours of labour in continuous industries, see *Report of the Special Commission of the International Association for Labour Legislation* (1912).

for charging us with narrowness of vision. Progress is not summed up in improvements in productive methods which reduce the cost of things, nor in these improvements combined with the application to producing of ideas which render work pleasanter and more educative. Nor is it wholly, or in bulk, summed up even if we add improvements in distribution, resulting in a more satisfying sharing of wealth and a greater responsiveness of production to the needs of the community. The essentials of what most of us really understand by progress are to be found only in the world of consciousness. We mean what we cannot exactly define if we are not philosophers—and hardly then—but something implying a full living, with understanding of life and its surroundings, including its ethics, and a living with volitional powers strong enough to enable us to follow our lights. The most important aspect of the question of the length of the working day consists in its relation to these fundamental constituents of progress. Let us call progress in this inner sense ‘culture’—a term perhaps the best of the single terms available to convey our meaning. Now culture has some place even under the most primitive economic conditions. The hours of labour under such conditions may be long, but work is not so continuously absorbing that social intercourse during work is impossible; while variety of experience, contact with nature, and the calls made on initiative, afford that intimacy with life as a whole, and that evocation of moral forces, which must be obtained in later stages of civilisation largely through systematic education and books. Each step away from these primitive conditions brings more intensified specialism. Interest in work may, in consequence, be deepened

on the whole, but it is no longer diffused; the need for thought and purpose may be no less than before, but the thought and purpose are of a confined character. The intensification of economic life which is implied is in itself all to the good; but the community must lose something of culture unless, corresponding with this intensification, there is an expansion of leisure and a specialised use of leisure for the purposes of culture.

Certain expressions which have come into vogue would seem to be significant of the needs and dangers of an industrial society highly advanced on the technical side. Thus we speak of the 'cultured' classes and the 'leisured' classes. For the attainment of culture, leisure is essential to-day as it was not in the past in quite the same sense, 'culture' being broadly defined. It need not be said that a 'progress' which meant the 'specialising out' of leisure for the sole enjoyment of one class would not commend itself to any reasonable person. And we do not discern any danger of 'progress' of this sort. But there is some danger lest the growing importance of leisure generally, and of a proper use of leisure, should not be fully realised. Tangible things force themselves upon our attention as the more intangible do not, and some of us who have an economic bent of mind get into the way, in consequence, of thinking too much of the quantity of external wealth produced and too little of the balance between internal and external wealth. In ultimate terms, to those who care to put it that way, all wealth is life, as Ruskin insisted. There hardly appears to be any risk of a general underrating of external goods, but there is some risk of an underrating of the new

needs of the life lived outside the hours devoted to production—which should themselves be, not a sacrifice to real living, but a part of it—and of an underrating of the dependence even of productive advance upon the widespread enjoyment and proper use of adequate leisure and an adequate income.

The shorter day is one of the most secure advantages that labour can win. Employers never try to increase hours except when trade is good—that is, when the demand for labour is strong—whereas they naturally try to reduce wages in a falling market. Consequently, the operative has to resist the withdrawal of a rise in wages when his position is weak (because the demand for labour is weakening); but he is only called upon to resist a withdrawal of an advantage consisting in reduced hours when his position is strong—that is, in times of good trade.

As it has already been remarked, agitation for shorter hours is constantly reappearing. In the United Kingdom during the 'thirties' there was a strong ten-hours day movement in textile districts; in the 'fifties' a nine-hours day agitation, which met with little success, disturbed the building trades; and in the 'sixties' the engineers pursued a similar object, and attained it by 1872, after a series of strikes. Most trade disputes between 1870 and 1873 related to the nine-hours day. For many years the eight-hours day was one of the most prominent items in the programmes of labour movements. It had its place in the claims made during the upheavals of 1848; it figured in the objects of the International Working Men's Association; and as early as 1869 a resolution in favour of it was passed by the Trade Union Congress.

In New Zealand, the agitation was strong in the middle of the nineteenth century; and, shortly after that time, its adoption in Australia began. In the United Kingdom the 'eighties' were the years in which most was heard of it, and it became most generally popular among the working classes; and, doubtless, the attention drawn to the question of the hours of labour by the agitation at this time helped to bring about such reductions of hours (in a few cases to eight) as took place.¹

As things are now, the hours of labour in the United Kingdom compare favourably with those on the Continent and in the United States. The American Industrial Commission concluded as follows: 'At the present time the industries of the United States stand well toward the front in the movement for fewer hours, being only less advanced than Great Britain and the colonies of Australasia.'² It was pointed out by this Commission that a prevailing average of fifty-seven hours a week in the United States, outside mining, compared with about fifty-three in Great Britain; that in engineering the difference was slight, but that in textiles it ranged from five to fifteen hours a week, the larger figure representing in the main exceptional conditions in the south.³

In modern England there has been no legislation directly regulating the working hours of adult males,

¹ An excellent *résumé* of short-time agitations will be found in Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's article in Nelson's *Encyclopædia of Industrialism*. See also Rae, *The Eight-hours Day*, and Webb's *History of Trade Unionism*.

² Vol. xix. p. 774.

³ See also *Bulletin 54 of the Department of Commerce and Labour of the United States*, and the *British Abstract of Foreign Labour Statistics*, in both of which full details are given.

except in the case of the coal miners, whose Eight Hours Act was adopted in 1908.¹ It is to be found, however, in one of our colonies, New Zealand, where, however, less than 100,000 people are working in registered factories. In New Zealand the hours of labour of industrially occupied adult men are curtailed as well as those of women and youths; forty-eight hours a week and eight and three-quarters a day being the usual maxima, exclusive of meal-times. Some overtime is permitted, but extra rates of pay are prescribed for it, partly with the object of discouraging it. In France, also, the hours of men are limited. A series of Acts and decrees aim at fixing a maximum working day in all work-places. The policy was affirmed as early as 1848, but the regulation then made was never effective, and in a few years it became a dead letter. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the policy was revived in a modified form, and a maximum working day of twelve hours was laid down. In 1900 a further step was taken by the factory law of that year. Under this law a maximum working day was prescribed for all work-places where women, children, or young persons were employed as well as men. The maximum, fixed at eleven hours in the first instance, was to be reduced to ten and a half shortly after, and finally to ten, exclusive of meal-times. A very anomalous position was thereby created, in that men doing pretty much the same kind of work were legally bound to different hours, those working with women or youthful wage-earners being the more favoured. Consequently, a Bill was brought forward in

¹ But see note 1 on p. 283, and for regulations relating to shop-assistants which apply also to male adults see pp. 336-7.

1906 to restrict the hours of all adult male-workers to ten, unless limited more stringently otherwise, as the hours of miners were, under an Act of 1905, which aimed at an eventual eight-hours day to be approached by two steps—the first of which, meaning a nine-hours day, was to be taken immediately. However, the Bill of 1906 failed to become law. In the above description of legislation affecting the hours of men's labour, provisions to meet exceptions have been ignored for obvious reasons. Of European countries—besides France—Austria, Russia, and Switzerland have done something, theoretically at least, in the way of limiting the working hours of male adults.

Arrangements in the United States are complicated by the semi-independence of the several states and the limitation of their power. One difficulty has been the fear, in each reforming state, of unfair competition from states which do not reduce their hours, and doubt as to the constitutionality of a reduction of hours by statute. In some states laws reducing the hours of labour have been declared illegal, though in others they exist and are enforced. The most important reductions of hours in the United States have, however, been secured by the action of labour organisations. From about 1886, except for a short interlude, the federation of labour has continuously pressed the policy of reducing hours. But it has been estimated that only 10 to 15 per cent. of the wage-earning population are included in trade unions. Those outside are, generally speaking, the weakest labour, including most wage-earning women; and it has not proved the case that the shorter hours, won for themselves by organised labour, are as a rule secured indirectly also for the bulk

of the unorganised or feebly organised when they are not engaged in close collaboration with successful unionists. Legal enactment has been tried in a few states; but one difficulty met with, which applies also to other forms of factory legislation, has been the question of its constitutionality. In some states such legislation has been overthrown on the ground that it interferes with freedom of contract, with the free exercise by the individual of his powers, or with the free acquisition of property. Where such laws have been upheld, they have been justified on the ground of the pre-eminence of the police power of the state. Police power includes the protection of the health, safety, morals, and welfare of members of the community; but the question has arisen as to how far such protection should go. It has been generally allowed to cover protection against dangerous machinery, and the protection in other respects of women and minors. As regards women, it is urged that their health is a matter of profound concern to the state; and as regards minors, that, in view of their legal inability to enter into any contract, the state must contract on their behalf. The case of the hours of male adults presents greater difficulties; but in the instance of the Utah mining law, the constitutionality of which was sustained, the Federal Court concurred in the observation of the Supreme Court of Utah to the effect that in some unhealthy occupations, such as mining, the danger to health was less when the working hours were low, and that to protect health the state might, therefore, restrict hours; though in the analogous, but possibly weaker, case of bakeries the legal limitation of hours was declared unconstitutional.

With regard to adult males, numerous states have enacted the eight-hours day for miners, several have enforced the same for smelters, and some have adopted ten-hours laws for a few industries. Nor is this all. In addition, the Federal Government has intervened to prevent excessive hours for railway-men in the matter of inter-state transportation, thereby supplementing the action of several states, and has further required that in the carrying out of its contracts the hours of the men employed must not exceed eight. As regards this last requirement, it may be noted that on public works, state and federal, and whether contracted for or not, a short day has for years been becoming the rule. The eight-hours day for all public employment was recommended by the majority of the American Industrial Commission. The objection that adopting this recommendation means discriminating between public and private employment was recognised by the Commission ; but they argued that the objection would be 'outweighed by the demonstration of the benefits of a shorter day, which, it is hoped, will bring private employment to the same standard.'¹

The question of the working hours of women, young persons, and children is not settled when that of men is settled. It appears to be pretty generally agreed to-day that, whether the state interfere with the latter or not, it must with the former. But, before considering the action taken, a few words may be said of the industrial place of women.

¹ *American Industrial Commission*, vol. xix. p. 948. The various problems connected with industrial legislation and the administration of the law are fully treated in *The American Labor Legislation Review*, issued by the American Association for Labor Legislation.

Nobody can satisfactorily answer in the abstract the question whether women should engage in industrial work. The answer must turn (1) on the nature of the work which they are required to perform, and (2) on the conditions under which they are required to do it. Much work undertaken by women to-day is extremely unsuitable for women, but their exclusion on a large scale from many of the callings practised by them to-day might easily result in more harm than good. Great competitive pressure, as things are, might be brought about in the trades left to them, so that their earnings, already meagre in countless cases, would become more meagre still. That the earnings of women are wholly inadequate in too many cases, and that the conditions of their industrial work are out of harmony with the civilised state, must be sadly confessed after the numerous inquiries that have been made.¹ Yet there has been for years, and still is, a pronounced disinclination to enter domestic service, at which real earnings are relatively high by now in this country, and are amazingly high in the United States and our colonies, as compared with earnings in other callings. Domestic service appears to have become exceedingly unpopular among certain classes, and no doubt the cause is the curtailment of liberty associated with it and the feeling that the occupation is menial—a feeling which has been aggravated by

¹ See, for instance, *Women's Work and Wages*, by Cadbury, Matheson, and Shann; *Women in Industry*, by various writers, with a preface by D. J. Shackleton; *Board of Trade Inquiry into Earnings in the Clothing and Textile Trades*; and publications of the Women's Industrial Council. In the United States the same is found; see, for example, the *Pittsburg Survey*; *The Employment of Women in the Clothing Trade*, by Willett; and Abbott's *Women in Industry*, which gives an historical sketch.

the treatment of domestic servants in such a way as to hurt their self-respect. The existing aversion will not be overcome until the work of domestic servants has been to a larger extent professionalised and standardised. Half the trouble is caused by thoughtless and unreasonable employers and those who hold untenable views of the relations between mistress and maid. Much might be effected, in the way of professionalising the calling, by the more extensive adoption of the policy of training people as seriously for domestic work as for industrial and commercial work.¹

No doubt, industrially, the conditions of women's work can be greatly improved by the further organisation of women. But their organisation has been difficult for many reasons, of which the chief is that so many of them are looking only to temporary wage-earning. Still, by trade-unionism much has been done. In the cotton industry, where women unionists are numerically strong, the status of women workers is certainly on a high plane; in Leek, a change for the better has been wrought among the silk-workers by organised effort; and the spirited action of the London washerwomen in 1891 to bring laundries within the scope of factory legislation proves that women are far from being incapable of firm concerted action.² It augurs well for the future that 'the short-sighted policy, pursued by some men's unions, of ignoring the women workers in their industry, is happily fast dying away.'³

¹ A useful report on domestic service has been made by the Women's Industrial Council.

² See *The Case for the Factory Acts*, edited by Mrs. Sidney Webb.

³ Shackleton's introduction to *Women in Industry*, p. xii. But the policy is not yet dead. In the *Liverpool Report on Home-work* it is

Generally speaking, women are tending, but very gradually, to settle at those industrial and commercial tasks for which they are best qualified by their powers and aptitudes. Even where they seem to compete directly with men, it will be discovered on inquiry that in very many cases they are largely engaged in different branches of the trade. An investigation, undertaken by the Board of Trade for the recent Commission on the Poor Laws, showed that '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. . . . 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.' The conclusion of the Majority Report was 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.'¹ But

declared that the women vest-makers are not admitted into the union and that their technical education has been objected to; and other instances might be cited.

¹ It is contended, in addition, by Chapman and Shimmin, that the discharge of males through the competition of females cannot be proved from census figures to have been considerable—in the leading trades, at any rate (*Proceedings of Manchester Statistical Society*, 1913-4).

there remains the indirect competition; and it has been short-sightedly argued that, if women were excluded from industry, working-class families would be no worse off from a monetary point of view, because cutting off the supply of female labour would raise the demand for male labour. That men's real earnings would rise is true enough, but the conclusion drawn does not follow. Practically, the increase of men's real earnings could not possibly repair the loss represented by the sacrifice of the women's earnings. The share of labour varies as the product to be divided, and since the product would be materially less when fewer people worked, the share of the working classes would be less in the aggregate, though it might be greater per head of those working. Another variety of the argument—that the family gains little or nothing extra in earnings when women work—is sometimes met with in the form of the contention that the man's wage tends to be attracted downwards when it is supplemented by the earnings of wife or daughter, and in the degree in which it is so supplemented.¹ But for this contention there is no foundation, provided that the man does not deliberately loaf and live on his wife. Of course, this is not to argue that male labour is never paid at a low rate in some places because it is relatively in excess, owing to the fact that in these places women earn good wages. The joint income may be what attracts. However, other matters besides family earnings must be taken into account when the industrial work of women is being considered. As regards some women, infantile mortality is one of these matters—

¹ This is a variety of the argument about the effect of allowances, on which see Chap. VII. and p. 315 below.

and one of the most serious—with which we have already dealt.¹

It has been laid down already that the question whether women should work industrially depends, *inter alia*, upon the conditions under which work is offered; and there can be no question that the conditions under which much work is now offered to women does render their acceptance of it undesirable in many respects. Though women are usually weaker than men, physically, it is largely true to say that the conditions of their industrial avocations are frequently settled by the physical powers of men. Women normally ought not to work such long hours as men; nor is it desirable that the same regularity of attendance should be exacted from them. It is much to be desired that the future should see the conditions of women's employment accommodating themselves at least to the physical conditions of women, and even to the claims of the home, if industrial work and home duties are still to be combined. It should not be impossible to arrange in many trades for the employment of women in pairs or groups, so that each woman might work the half-day, or a part only of the week. Some complexity of organisation would be entailed, but this ought not to place such a scheme—or some scheme—altogether beyond the managing ability of the employer. Unfortunately, this plan would curtail women's hours more than was desirable, in many cases, when the women's day had to be fitted into the normal day for men. It may be noted, however, that, with the shift system in use for men, the difficulty becomes less. A double eight-hours shift for men, making a

¹ See pp. 127–33 above.

sixteen-hours working day, can be combined with three shifts for women of five hours and twenty minutes each. We simply put the theoretical possibility, without suggesting, by any means, that such a restriction of hours by law would be desirable. Any arrangement to get suitable hours for women working with men so that they are continuously dependent upon one another would almost necessarily put difficulties in the way of inspection, but we cannot believe that these difficulties must invariably prove insuperable. An extension of the Lancashire system of 'sick' weaving by people who go from factory to factory taking the place of absentees (like 'temporary' domestic servants) would afford some relief. It would be theoretically applicable, of course, to a scheme of periodic absences arranged as the normal thing. Another possible line of reform is to get women's work separated as far as possible from men's, so that each can be independently organised. Whatever the way out of the existing deadlock, it is certain that in the future, when the wage-earning classes as a whole are more comfortably off, work will have to be offered to women under conditions more suitable to their powers.

In the matter of the limitation of the hours of women, as well as those of young persons and children, the ideal is yet to seek in this and every other country. In Great Britain and Ireland women, and young persons up to eighteen who are not half-timers, are confined to ten hours a day, apart from meals, and five and a half on Saturdays, in textile factories; and to ten and a half hours and seven and a half on Saturdays in non-textile factories and workshops (places where no mechanical power is used). In domestic workshops

(workshops where the members of the same family who are living together are employed exclusively) women may toil any hours, but young persons are not allowed to labour for longer hours than in other workshops. Again, in laundries—the regulation of which began in 1895—the hours of women may be sixty a week under the Act of 1907. Nor have we yet completed the varied tale. In textile factories no overtime may be worked by protected persons. But in non-textile factories, and workshops where young persons or children are employed, a limited amount of overtime, varying with circumstances, is permitted in the case of women working at certain specified tasks, inelasticity in the hours devoted to which is supposed to be impossible, or at least undesirable; while in fewer cases young persons may do a little overtime, and in rare exceptions children may do a trifling amount.¹

In some industries the legislation primarily initiated to protect women and the young, since it limits equally the hours of men, has come to be diverted from its main purpose and to be regarded as legislation for adult males. The recognition of this fact in France, combined with the conviction that, where the hours of men were not *de facto* limited, the arrangements made, if they involved the relay system as they usually did, were highly undesirable from the point of view of inspection, led to the inclusion of men in the Act of 1900. Under this Act, as we have seen, a ten-hours day for all work-places, applying equally to men, was eventually to be brought about. The policy thereby adopted is known as that of the 'Unification

¹ Out-work is prohibited in the case of inside workers.

of the Working Day,' and to many reformers it appears to be peculiarly attractive. But if it is regarded as more than a temporary expedient, it obviously marks a retrograde step, since in effect it substitutes protection of men for protection of women and youthful workers, unless the hours of men are unduly limited, and if they are it is much to be regretted, inasmuch as lower wages than need be must result. At the best, from the point of view of women, the system will mean unsatisfactory compromises—men's hours being a little too short and women's and young persons' hours too long; but what is more to be expected is the sacrifice of the women and young persons. Sooner or later complexly organised communities will have to realise that simplicity in thorough-going regulation must mean Procrustean arrangements. But, other things being equal, simplicity is to be recommended; and it is arguable that much of the complexity in our factory laws is unnecessary. The straightforward and extensive reference of similar laws in our Australasian colonies may be studied with profit, though thorough-going imitation under English conditions is out of the question. Thus in New Zealand the laws apply to every building and place in which two or more persons are employed, and all buildings in which steam and mechanical power is used;¹ and in New South Wales and Victoria the laws have a similar application, except that four persons take the place of two.² To all regulated places the same rules apply, generally speaking,

¹ Also to all buildings in which Asiatics are employed; but this provision need not be regarded here as it raises issues remote from our inquiry. New South Wales has a similar clause relating to Chinese.

² The regulations of the other states of Australia, no one of which contains as many as 25,000 factory hands, need not be considered.

to all females and boys under sixteen who are legally employable. The permissible hours are forty-five a week and ninety hours overtime a year in New Zealand, and forty-eight a week in New South Wales and Victoria, with ninety hours a year overtime in the former and thirty in the latter.

A word may be said here of the system of anticipatory legislation which has become somewhat popular in France. It means decreeing a gradual approach to the desired end. It is admirable in preventing sudden shocks ; but, in looking far ahead, it runs the risk (by no means serious as yet) of lightly placing burdens on enterprises in the future which the present generation is afraid to assume. Again, it undermines the complaint that legislation never gets beyond declaring what is expedient for the time being ; but, on the other hand, it has the defect, from the point of view of the reformer who is an opportunist in carrying out his ideas, of concentrating attention on the thick end of the wedge and thereby exciting opposition. On the whole, as it has been used, its advantages seem to preponderate particularly when it is borne in mind that the Government and the public can ill afford time to go over the same ground again and again.

Factory regulations extend beyond the hours of labour, and relate also to health and safety. In the United Kingdom health regulations comprise provisions concerning cleanliness, over-crowding, ventilation (including the removal of injurious dusts), moisture, temperature, the use of poisonous substances, sanitary conveniences, and drainage. Workshops, as we have seen, fall generally into line with non-textile factories, as regards the hours of labour ; but more control

over their sanitary conditions is in the hands of local authorities under the Public Health Acts, except for the over-riding power of the Secretary of State, who, within limits, may authorise the factory inspector to take action in default of the local authority. Safety regulations cover the cleaning of machinery and its fencing, and include rules concerning specially dangerous machinery, dangerous premises, fire, and accident. Machinery is divided into (a) that by which the manufacturing is actually done, and (b) that by which power is transmitted. No machinery of any kind may be cleaned by children while it is in motion, nor may places under machinery (which is not overhead mill-gearing) while the machinery is in motion. Young persons are not permitted to clean any dangerous machinery while it is in motion. Women may clean machinery classified as (a) above (that is the manufacturing part of machinery) while it is in motion, but not active mill-gearing. No women, young persons, or children may work between the fixed and traversing parts of a self-acting machine. Men enjoy a much more limited degree of protection than women. Children receive most protection, young persons less, women still less, and adult males least of all. Protection is accorded in the degree in which it is thought that people are incapable of taking care of themselves. The character of the protection of women is also governed by the nature of their dress, which renders some kinds of work particularly dangerous, e.g. the cleaning of mill-gearing in motion. The fencing of all dangerous machinery is required, and there are special rules relating to steam-boilers. Specially dangerous machinery, or dangerous or unhealthy premises, may be prohibited by a Court of

Summary Jurisdiction on the complaint of an inspector, or alterations and repairs may be required. Precautions against dangers from fire satisfactory to the local authority are insisted upon in all factories and workshops. All accidents causing death or bodily injury must be notified forthwith to the district inspector, and a register of such accidents must be kept. In addition, special rules, formulated by the Secretary of State, attach to peculiarly dangerous trades; and in some of these no protected persons may be employed, in others no children and young persons, in others no children and female young persons, and in others no children.

Of the basis of legislation, protective of workpeople, a few words must be said. In the case of adult males, broadly speaking, the ground for State interference is that the knowledge of individuals, or their self-interest or philanthropy, cannot be relied upon to bring about such conditions as an enlightened community feels compelled to insist upon as a minimum. The workpeople in combination may not be strong enough to enforce their will, and all workpeople are not combined. The most high-minded employers are limited in their freedom by the competition of less high-minded rivals. And, finally, the knowledge and ideals of the bulk of the interested parties, even of those who are anxious to secure the best conditions of labour, may not be such as to insure that they will choose aright. In the dangerous trades the strongest case for regulation can be made out. In some of these trades certain acts may be a source of physical harm not only to the person who is responsible for them, but also to his companions—for instance, striking lights in coal-mines.

There can be no doubt that people should be protected against the possibility of an individual's acting out of foolhardiness or ignorance in a manner menacing to their lives or health. In other trades the commission or omission of certain acts are likely to prove hurtful only to the parties who perform them, or neglect to perform them. But the individual cannot be suffered to regard his health and his life as just his own property ; and the danger which has to be guarded against is frequently hidden from the less intelligent and least instructed, and even when it is explained to them they may not realise its seriousness. Convincing reasons can be adduced for protecting people against themselves ; and they are extensively protected against themselves in many countries.

The rules to which the above paragraph relates are those binding upon work-people. But in the dangerous trades, technically understood, and in other trades where work of some sorts may involve danger, safety cannot be even approximately secured unless precautionary measures are taken by the employer. Where this is so, and the danger is substantial and not remote, they are commonly insisted upon. When left free, the employer may be constrained by competition to let his workpeople take their chance, or he may not be fully alive to the risks.

The argument for such protection of labour as we have been considering is even more unassailable when the labour consists in women and children. Ordinarily, as we have seen, women cannot be so strongly organised in trade unions as men. The former are less capable, therefore, than the latter of looking after their own interests. The former also in competing with men,

who are naturally endowed with greater physical endurance and muscular power, are terribly apt to exert themselves excessively. Moreover, the vigour, physique, and general health of women, who are or may become mothers, should engage the solicitous care of the community. Upon them the future of the race is peculiarly dependent. It is, therefore, comprehensible why women are so generally excluded in modern communities from certain kinds of employment and why their work is more stringently regulated, as a rule, than that of men. Some of the special considerations which apply to women workers apply to children and young persons also, and with regard to the latter, there is this further thought to be weighed, that over-exertion is far more likely to damage the human organism in the early than in the middle period of life.

Parts of factory regulations are laid down by statute, while the remainder is based upon orders of the Home Secretary, whose powers of making orders are carefully defined. The advantages of the system of orders are that greater detail and diversity to suit different conditions are possible, while modifications can be more rapidly introduced to suit changing circumstances. Its disadvantages are the resulting complexity of the law and the fact that there is conferred on a public office a semi-legislative power which may be abused if not strictly limited.

Great steps forward have been taken in the last ten to fourteen years respecting the dangerous trades, and the procedure adopted has gradually developed into a highly efficient instrument of investigation. Indeed, this feature is probably the most pregnant

development of industrial regulation of the last fifty years, and it is significant that the most progressive state in America in labour matters—Wisconsin—has adopted a very similar plan. In the United Kingdom the original provisions relating to unsafe occupations appeared nearly a quarter of a century ago, and were probably copied from the Coal Mines Acts. They provided for the application by the Chief Inspector of Factories of ‘special rules’ for industrial factories which were specially dangerous. Model codes were drawn up for various industries—whitelead works, for instance—and they were applied to industrial factories with such modification as the respective factory owners could secure. Inasmuch as the procedure was somewhat clumsy and involved endless discussion, the Home Secretary in 1901 was empowered to issue ‘special regulations’ to apply automatically to all the processes scheduled in the regulations wherever they were carried on. Many codes of regulations have been decreed.¹ In all cases the regulations are provisionally issued for full discussion and criticism on the part of employers’ associations, trade unions, and other persons concerned, and in most cases an inquiry is held by a barrister appointed by the Home Secretary.² In some few cases—as, for example, in the matter of the recent potteries regulations—the inquiry has been purely formal because controversial issues had already been threshed out through the agency of a departmental committee and subsequent negotiations. We scarcely need point out the great value of the new procedure.

¹ A full list will be found in *Statutory Rules and Regulations (Factories)*, 1914.

² The procedure is set forth in ss. 79–86 of the 1901 Act.

It brings technical knowledge to bear, from many points of view, on the problem for solution, and results in fairly practical and definite requirements which could never be obtained by purely parliamentary methods. Any possible abuse of the Home Secretary's powers is checked by the obligation to lay the final regulations on the table of the House of Commons before they come into force. Since the report of the Accidents Committee there has been a yet further development. Several conferences of representatives of the Home Office, employers, and workmen have been held to consider industrial dangers in particular trades, and the best methods of protection. Numerous points of agreement were found and the results of the conferences have been published.¹ The agreements will ultimately be embodied in regulations, but meantime they are being acted upon. This scheme of conferences certainly marks a great advance. Finally, in connection with improvements in procedure leading up to regulations, we have to notice, in addition to the use of experts, the carrying out of experiments, under the direction of scientific men, which may be exceedingly costly—as, for instance, those that are at present being made with reference to the causes of explosions in coal-mines.

With regard to most industrial legislation, the supreme importance of administration must be urged. It is a vital matter because laws are usually so vague (for instance, all 'dangerous' machinery must be fenced and 'injurious' dust must be removed) and leave so much to be supplied either by the discretion

¹ *Minutes of Conferences on Cotton-spinning, Cotton-weaving, Woollen Manufacture, &c.*

of the inspectorate or by the issue of special regulations by the Home Office. Indeed, some authorities go so far as to maintain that the prime need in England at present is not so much for additional legislation as for organised scientific inquiry into the means of securing compliance with existing provisions. Very much has been done in this direction recently by English committees of inquiry on humidity, dust-removal, lead-poisoning, and so forth, and some of the results are recognised as of fundamental importance all over the world. England deserves commendation for this; but much more inquiry is requisite, not only into matters affecting the dangerous trades, but also into such problems as that of industrial fatigue with the intention of securing if needful the regulation of specially tiring work and conditions—like the carrying, pushing, and hauling of heavy weights (which are regulated in France for all but adult males), prolonged standing, excessive nervous tension, and bad ventilation. There are as yet no common standards for factories. Cleanliness, again, is a feature calling for consideration: the existing provisions are vague, and many factories are by no means clean in the ordinary sense of the word, though whether the kind of ‘dirt’ found is or is not injurious is usually an open question. As regards safety also, definite standards respecting such universal dangers as those connected with shafting and belting are yet to seek. Moreover, some control might be exercised over the planning of new factories and the disposition and placing of machinery.

Apart from administration and the lack of standards, there are alleged to be defects and omissions in the English scheme of regulation. It does not apply at

all to clerks, typists, type-writing agencies, restaurants, errand and van boys, and so forth, and only very partially (in respect of reporting of accidents) to warehouses, buildings in course of erection and engineering works of construction—to give some leading examples—and the present distinction between factories and workshops appears to be an anachronism. In matters of sanitation the law does not demand a supply of drinking-water and adequate lighting. The universal provision of cloak-rooms is a large order, as is also the provision of mess-rooms where accommodation for meals is lacking in the vicinity, but the Home Office might be empowered to issue orders for specific industries or factories. As regards safety, many appliances cannot be termed fencing and cannot therefore be required, nor can first-aid provision; even such a simple precaution as a handrail on stairs cannot be insisted upon. In the matter of the hours of labour, it has been suggested that the length of spell should be cut down from five to at most four and a half hours; that the question of the adequacy of intervals for the proper assimilation of food—particularly in the case of young women—should be looked into; and that overtime provisions should be re-examined as a whole and with special reference to such sweeping exemptions as those relating to fish-curing, fruit-preserving, and so forth. On the other hand, some of the inelastic rules as to changing the period of employment on certain days of the week might be relaxed. Again it has been proposed that night-work for young persons under eighteen years should be abolished and a *prima facie* case has been made out. Moreover, many people contend that the ideal has not yet been reached in the matter

of inspection. Despite the fact that the staff has been largely increased in recent years, there is still complaint that the number of inspectors is too few and that more of them should be women. It is said that many small workshops almost entirely escape notice, while others are very superficially and irregularly inspected. Unfortunately, it is unavoidable that the cost of inspection, its imperfections, and the degree of friction which an excess of it is bound to occasion, must limit to some extent the scope of the State regulation of industry.

One extension of factory legislation appears to be eminently desirable—namely, that the period after child-birth, during which employment is illegal, should be stretched beyond the month, which by most authorities is now regarded as inadequate in the majority of cases. And in connection with this, the question arises as to whether it is feasible to restrict employment immediately prior to child-birth. That it is desirable none would question, in view of the admitted fact that strain or exhaustion on the part of the mother affects not only her own chances of recovery, but also the child's health and prospects of life. Of importance also is the proposal that young persons should be more generally reinspected by surgeons. Inspectors may require reinspection of persons under sixteen, but they seldom do so; and some good might result from extending their authority in this matter over all 'young persons.' It has been recommended in addition that medical examination of young persons should be extended so as to cover their entry into coal-pits; and that certifying surgeons should be required to pass children for workshops in all cases, and not merely on

the request of the occupier or in accordance with a Home Office order. Indeed, there is much to be said for utilising school medical officers for an even more elaborate scheme of certification as regards children.¹

A word may be said here in passing as to the effect of differential legislation with reference to women on their employment and wages. Upon this matter weighty reports on the basis of detailed inquiries were made by a committee of the British Association in 1902 and 1903. The conclusions reached were that in very few cases, seemingly, had women actually been displaced by restriction (though it was agreed that the statistics were of such a nature that small changes in the demand for women's labour might easily have escaped observation); that there was no conclusive evidence that the course of either rates of wages or earnings had been affected appreciably; that there was some evidence that the regulation of hours had promoted the efficiency of women; that some inconvenience and perhaps hardship, mainly of a temporary character, might have been caused in special cases; and, finally, that the benefits conferred were in the long run out of all proportion to any inconveniences or injury caused. The findings of the committee only confirm the expectation that no class of labour can hope to profit eventually from suffering bad conditions of work and overstrain, despite the plausibility of the argument that competition with other classes of labour renders it unavoidable.

The factory and mines regulations of different

¹ Special reference may be made here to the publications of the Women's Industrial Council, and Miss B. L. Hutchin's article on 'Gaps in our Factory Legislation,' in the *Economic Journal* for June 1908.

countries are slowly assimilating under the influence of imitation, and, to some extent, of the activities of the International Association for Labour Legislation. The importance of the international movement is that it helps to destroy the argument that foreign competition prevents further advance in social betterment by State action. In 1890 a famous international congress was held on the initiative of the German Emperor. Steps to bring about such a congress had been taken by the Federal Council of Switzerland the year before; but from the Emperor's action larger results were to be expected, and the invitations to the Swiss Congress were, therefore, cancelled. At the Berlin Conference thirteen countries were represented, including, besides Germany, Great Britain, France, Austria, and Italy. No treaties were finally entered into; but, as a result of the resolutions adopted, important reforms were effected—notably the comprehensive German measure of 1891 and the French one of 1892, both of which meant generally a closer approximation of French and German to English law.

The International Labour Association was actually founded in 1900, but the preparatory steps which led to its formation were taken many years before. In 1897, at a workmen's congress held at Zurich, the proposal was made that an international association for the legal protection of labour should be formed, and in the same year belief in the value of such an association was affirmed at an international congress on social and political questions, sitting at Brussels. The final step was taken at Paris at a representative meeting summoned for the purpose in 1900. Every two years the association meets for the discussion of matters

concerning labour legislation, and an office has been opened at Basle for the collection of information and issue of reports. It was through the initiative of the association that the Swiss Federal Council invited the governments of different countries to confer in 1904. The outcome of the conference was two treaties. The one, providing for the prohibition of night-work for women in factories, and for a minimum break of two hours in the case of night-work, was signed by Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Great Britain, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland. The other, providing for the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches, was signed by Germany, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, and Switzerland, Great Britain eventually falling into line. In addition to general treaties, it must be remarked that agreements between two or more countries have been made from time to time with reference to points in labour legislation.¹ Undoubtedly, more has been made of the dangers connected with international competition than reason would justify; but, in view of the prevalent fear of them, and for more solid reasons, procedure by international agreement is by all means to be recommended. It is true that comparative costs and not absolute costs are the ruling influences in the matter of foreign competition; but it must be admitted that legislation affecting a few industries only

¹ On all the above, relating to factory legislation, in addition to authorities mentioned, see article '*Arbeiterschutzgesetzgebung*,' in *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften* of Conrad, Elster, Lexis, and Loenig; publications of the International Labour Association; Professor Francke's paper read to the British Association in 1908; factory inspectors' reports; and Hutchins and Harrison, *History of Factory Legislation*.

might upset comparative costs, though it must at the same time be borne in mind that Factory Acts have never elevated costs of production, even in the first few years, at all in the degree which alarmists have foretold.

Factory legislation was originally designed to correct the worst abuses; but legal requirements have since been made more severe, so that to some extent the attitude of the State has shifted. This is an important point to bear in mind when our factory laws are under consideration. The principle of English law, generally speaking, is to forbid; and it is not implied that the man who breaks no law is necessarily the most praiseworthy of citizens. The law, as a rule, declares that such and such at least no man shall do without incurring a public disapprobation expressed in tangible penalties imposed by the community as organised in its government. Industrial legislation was, and still largely is, of this kind. The question has been raised as to whether the State might not in more cases enforce what it approves instead of prohibiting merely what it most disapproves—in short, whether it should not more commonly compel conformity to a reasonable standard. The difficulties in the way are the possibilities of mistakes which might have serious consequences, and the complexity which would be needed to suit varieties of circumstances.¹ But there are difficulties also in the way of the alternative, which arise from the fact that,

¹ The State may exert some influence without imposing definite regulations. Thus under Section 4 of the Regulation of Railways Act of 1889 the Board of Trade has power to call for periodical returns of hours worked, by persons whose duty involves the safety of trains or passengers, in excess of a number of hours fixed from time to time by the Board of Trade; and the effect of the exercise of this power is supposed to have been material.

in the absence of concerted action, the pressure of competition is apt to forbid reform.¹

In view of the limitation of legal rules to minima requirements, so to speak, it goes without saying that an account of legal regulations gives a very imperfect picture of the real level of social conditions. Happily the law, with reference to factory work, as the law with reference to housing, has been supplemented by voluntary action. Factories have been brightened, even flowers and plants have occasionally been introduced, and here and there gardens have been added where the location of the factory renders it possible; social secretaries have been appointed to attend in particular to the interests of adolescent and women labour; and clubs and classes have now and then been instituted. In this way valuable social experiments have been made and models have been set up for imitation, while at the same time social sentiment has been trained to secure in the future, by the sanction of its approval or disapproval, conditions of work and living more fully in accord with the higher ideals of life which have emerged in the course of progress on its most vital side.²

¹ As regards all the discussion above relating to industrial legislation, we are deeply indebted to Mr. J. W. Ramsbottom (who has a special knowledge of the subject) for reading our proofs and furnishing us with valuable criticisms, suggestions, and information.

² To particularise the firms which have nobly pioneered would carry us now into a detail which must be avoided here. A work of note on the question is Budgett Meakin's *Model Factories and Villages*. Cadbury's *Experiments in Industrial Organisation* gives an account of welfare work at the Bournville factory. Numerous articles have in addition been written on the same subject and on the welfare work of the Levers, the Rowntrees, and others.

CHAPTER VI

HOME-WORKERS AND SHOP-ASSISTANTS

LESS than a hundred years ago the industrial revolution was popularly denounced for taking work from the home to the factory, where people toiled in crowds as 'slaves of the master's bell.' To-day home-work is equally denounced by not a few for turning the home into a factory and hiding work away, so that the conditions under which it is done tend to deteriorate, while reform from without is prevented. This reversal of attitude may well give pause even to those who hold the most extreme opinions.

All people are apt to get immovably fixed to the point of view of a particular age or school of thought, or at most to find themselves oscillating faintly about the position to which they have grown accustomed. The spread of the factory system has undoubtedly led many in England to think of factory-work as the right and proper thing; and the tendency to think so has been encouraged by the publicity of factory-work and the moderate degree of ease with which it can be made to conform to the ideas of the community in certain respects. But the same bias is not to be found throughout the Continent, where the factory system as a substantial thing is more recent—and its extent is still

relatively inconsiderable. In Germany, for instance, to take a comparatively industrialised country, the struggles of the old domestic trades against the factory leviathan have been watched with anxiety, and the apprehension is widespread that the former may be lost entirely, or in a degree which is not conformable to national interests. It is felt that, with the old domestic trades, types of life for which the factory life is a poor substitute will be lost, and in addition certain admirable forms of artistic expression. Consequently, it has long been the policy of government in Germany to strengthen the handicrafts against the competition of machine production. Craft guilds have been fostered, and of late years throughout Germany education has been extensively applied to keep the peasant-home industries alive and magnify their yield to the worker. Carving and other wood-work, basket-making, embroidery, lace-making, weaving, and ceramic, glass, and metal work, all come within the scope of the new educational efforts.¹ In the United Kingdom a similar interest has been awakened. Reports on our surviving domestic industries have been made,² associations have been formed to encourage them, exhibitions to create or revive demand have been held, and education has not been wholly neglected. But it cannot be said that as yet the movement to preserve them is as far advanced here as in Germany.

The industries referred to in the above paragraph exist almost entirely in rural parts or small country towns. They must be sharply distinguished from the

¹ See Report of Miss Edith Edlmann to the Board of Education on Education and Peasant Industry.

² An official one relating to Scotland is being made at the time of our writing by Dr. W. R. Scott.

bulk of the home-work to be found in urban centres. About the product of the peasant industries there is something distinctive, whereas the product of the work done at home in towns is generally of the same nature as factory-work, or exists to supplement it or finish it off. Still, in the towns even, as we shall learn, much industrial work exists which can be done as well by hand as by machinery—or it may be even better—and which, moreover, is capable of performance at home without discomfort, and is such that good pay can be obtained for it. Further, it behoves us to remember that it was, in the main, inventions relating to power production which brought about so general a system of centralised working in factories, and that other improvements relating to the same may cause a reversion to decentralisation. Thus Dr. Marshall writes: ‘The hosiery trade is being tempted back to the dwelling-house by recent improvements in hand-knitting machines; and it is possible that new methods of distributing power by gas and petroleum and electric engines may exercise a like influence on many other industries.’¹ Even as it is, the extent of home-work in the United Kingdom is greater than most people imagine. It would seem from such unavoidably imperfect evidence as is furnished by the census returns and other information that the number of home-workers in England and Wales alone cannot be much less than half a million, if, indeed, it does not substantially exceed that amount; and that in all probability far more than two-thirds of them are women.

In considering the home-work of the second class,

¹ *Principles of Economics*, 5th ed., p. 296.

our first task must be to frame exact conceptions of its character.¹ It is questionable whether exact conceptions of home-work in all its social and economic bearings have been formed by the majority of people. Some are disposed to see only its abuses, and are therefore ready to sacrifice possible future good and some present convenience to stamp them out; while others are disposed to turn their faces exclusively to its brightest side, and therefore leave untouched evils that can be remedied. What are the facts? If there are evils, how have they originated? What are the right remedies? These are the questions which we shall try to answer.

A review of earnings may be presented first. In the tables following, some typical statistical evidence, as regards wages, has been collected from investigations undertaken by the Women's Industrial Council in Liverpool in 1909; by Miss Irwin, for the Scottish Council for Women's Trades in Glasgow; by the Women's Industrial Council of London; and by Mrs. Carl Meyer and Miss Clementina Black, who made inquiries in London.

Outgoings for cotton, tram-fares, and so forth are not, as a rule, taken into account in the figures given; nor is allowance made for the cost or hire of a machine where a machine is used. In Liverpool, home-workers usually pay for their sewing-machines 1s. 6d. a week, on the hire-purchase system. The machine becomes the hirer's property when from £8 10s. to £10 10s. has been paid, according to the nature of

¹ Parts of what follow on the subject of home-work have already been published in the *Proceedings of the Manchester Statistical Society*. They are now reproduced with the permission of the council of that society.

TABULATED RESULTS, AS REGARDS EARNINGS, OF INVESTIGATION OF HOME-WORK IN LIVERPOOL

Cases examined	Estimated rate per hour after deductions for cotton, &c.				Usual weekly earnings after deductions for cotton, &c.				Possible earnings for week of 48 hours		
	Highest	Lowest	Most frequent	Number at most frequent rate	Highest	Lowest	Most frequent	Number at most frequent rate	Highest rate	Lowest rate	At most frequent rate
SECTION A.											
60 Men's upperclothing	5d.	½d.	2d. to 3d.	26	15s.	2s. 6d.	10s.	10	20s.	2s.	8s. to 12s.
SECTION B.											
37 Men's underclothing	8d.	1½d.	2½d. to 3½d.	7	15s.	3s.	6s. to 7s.	6	32s.	5s.	10s. to 14s.
SECTION C.											
32 Women and children's clothing.	8d.	1½d.	3d. to 4d.	18	18s.	4s.	7s. to 8s. 6d.	9	32s.	6s.	12s. to 16s.
42 Vest-making . .	10d.	2½d.	..	..	25s.	2s. 6d.	15s. to 20s.	8	40s.	9s.	..

Of the home-workers seen, 84 were married women, 26 having husbands in regular work, 30 in irregular work, 13 out of work, and 15 occupation not stated; 28 were widows, 12 having certainly, and others probably, children or other relatives dependent on them; 67 were single women, 12 having certainly, and others probably, relatives dependent on them; 26 were women whose civil condition was not stated; 13 were men. In only one case were children of school age employed in helping their mother.

TABULATED RESULTS, AS REGARDS WAGES, OF INVESTIGATION OF WOMEN'S WORK IN TAILORING IN GLASGOW

Cases examined	Estimated rate per hour				Usual weekly earnings				Possible earnings for week of 48 hours		
	Highest	Lowest	Most frequent	No. at most frequent rate	Highest	Lowest	Most frequent	No. at most frequent rate	At highest rate	At lowest rate	At most frequent rate
48	1s. 1½d.	¾d.	1d. to 2d.	29	£2 15s.	2s. 6d.	6s. to 8s.	16	£2 14s.	2s. 8d.	4s. to 8s.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS OF HOME INDUSTRIES OF WOMEN IN LONDON
BY THE WOMEN'S INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL, 1907

Cases examined		Average weekly earnings			No. at most frequent rate
		Highest	Lowest	Most frequent	
12	Mantle-making . . .	30s.	2s.	12s. to 16s.	7
11	Dress-making . . .	£1	5s.	16s. to 20s.	7
14	Blouses . . .	£1	4s.	12s. to 15s.	7
22	Ladies and children's underclothing.	30s.	4s.	10s. to 15s.	12
5	Corsets . . .	15s.	7s.	12s. to 15s.	4
7	Artificial flowers . . .	18s.	4s.	8s. to 10s.	4
9	Ties and belts . . .	15s.	2s. 6d.	8s. to 10s.	6
17	Glove-making . . .	18s.	2s.	10s. to 12s.	6
8	Embroidery and bead-work.	£1	5s.	10s. to 12s.	6
14	Shoes and shoe-beading .	30s.	3s.	8s. to 10s.	7
39	Trousers and coats .	£1	3s.	6s. to 9s.	21
21	Waistcoat-making . . .	Summer £2 Winter 18s.	5s.	10s. to 15s.	9
36	Shirts . . .	36s.	2s.	7s. to 12s.	15
87	Box-making . . .	15s. 9d.	1s. 9d.	7s. to 10s.	41
18	Match-boxes . . .	8s. 9d.	3s.	5s. to 7s.	8
9	Brush-making . . .	10s.	3s. 6d.	4s. to 6s.	6
15	Miscellaneous trades .	12s.	2s. 6d.	6s. to 8s.	7

TABULATED RESULTS AS REGARDS AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES OF HOME-
WORKERS IN LONDON TAILORING (INVESTIGATIONS OF MRS. CARL
MEYER AND MISS C. BLACK)

Cases examined	Highest	Lowest	Most frequent	Number at most frequent rate
19	36s.	4s. 3d.	8s. to 13s.	7

the machine ; but, in case of default in payment, the machine and the payments made are forfeited.

In these tables we present what seem to us fair samples from the mass of information that has been brought forward. In connection with the wages recorded, it should be noted that a woman cannot live decently on much less than 10s. a week in the provinces, and 11s. in London. This means that for a reasonable day's work earnings should be at

a higher rate than 2*d.* an hour in the provinces ; and undoubtedly large numbers of home-workers throughout the country are earning less than 2*d.* an hour. We must now supplement the tables with some description of the facts on the non-numerical side.

The bulk of the evidence given to the Committee on Home-work of 1907 and 1908 represented the condition of out-workers as wretchedly bad. It was declared that dirty and insanitary homes were the rule, while sometimes the character of the work (such as fur-pulling) prevented the home from being kept decent ; that the workers were ill-nourished and miserably poor, many of them being quite unable to live on their earnings alone ; that excessively long hours were common, and the barbarous over-working of young children was not infrequent. We are told of districts where, in certain trades, weekly earnings seldom reach 7*s.* a week, or even less, for almost unintermittent toil. In short, it is widely maintained that the main conclusion of the Committee of the House of Lords on Sweating (Lord Dunraven's Committee) is an unexaggerated picture of the bulk of home-work at present, and, indeed, that conditions have been getting worse since the Committee sat. The main conclusion of the Committee ran : ' The earnings of the lowest classes of workers are barely sufficient to sustain existence. The hours of labour are such as to make the lives of the workers periods of almost ceaseless toil, hard, and often unhealthy. The sanitary conditions under which the work is conducted are not only injurious to the health of the persons employed, but are dangerous to the public, especially in the case of the trades concerned in making clothes, as infectious diseases are

spread by the sale of garments made in rooms inhabited by persons suffering from smallpox and other diseases.' However, this picture is not true of all home-work.

We may take as an example of evidence as to mixed conditions that of Mr. R. E. Graves (chief factory inspector at Birmingham), tendered to the Committee on Home-work in 1907. He deposed as follows. Only the barest pittance is earned at sewing hooks and eyes on cards—4s. 3d. was the highest figure of weekly earnings discovered after a number of visits. Sewing buttons on cards is equally ill-paid, if not worse.¹ French polishing is not so badly remunerated, but this is a skilled woman's trade. The same rates are paid for in-work and out-work. Possible earnings in this trade are said to be falling. Home-work in brush-making, which is undertaken by men, is a low-paid calling. The home-workers are frequently persons who have worked in the factory, but have had to retire owing to illness or some incapacity. More is earned in the factories—about 33 per cent. more—though the same rates are paid. The difference in rates is partly due to the fact that only the lowest quality of work is given out and that organisation in the factory is an advantage. To some extent now the out-workers must compete with machinery. Factory-workers, however, have to be content with a very low wage—from 11s. to 12s. The burnishing of electro-plate, another home-industry of Birmingham, requires great skill and is not badly remunerated. The burnishers are highly respectable, and they must be trustworthy

¹ Both kinds of work are largely unnecessary. It is partly because they are unnecessary that the rates are so low, and partly because machine competition has begun.

because the material given out has a high value. They can ordinarily earn from 3*d.* to 6*d.* an hour net. Home-work on the whole appears to be decreasing in Birmingham; but not in all trades—for instance, not in French polishing.¹

By other investigators a brighter aspect is presented; and, as it is not usually met with, it will be desirable to reproduce it in some detail. Thus there are the investigators for the Women's Industrial Council of Liverpool, whose wages statistics have been given above. All of them had had previous experience of a similar kind, or had been in touch with working-class circumstances as social workers or district visitors; and Miss Rathbone's name attached to the report is alone a guarantee of its trustworthiness. The report, it is true, lays bare some miserable conditions; but on the whole it leaves the reader under the impression that in Liverpool there is no great evil to cope with. It is said that the women engaged in the trade in men's upperclothing are on the whole very poor, and that 'the older women, especially if they have not taken to the trade till late in life, are often unable to work fast enough to earn more than a wretchedly small sum'; but one woman in the trade is mentioned who enjoyed no exceptional advantages and yet earned 'usually 12*s.*, working factory hours and attending in the interval on a husband and two children.' Vest-making is 'the one section of the tailoring trade which women have succeeded in making their own, even as regards the best class of goods.

¹ On Birmingham, see also the book on *Women Workers* by Cadbury, Shann, and Matheson, in which a sad state of affairs is revealed. Miss Clementina Black's work on *Sweating* also leaves the gloomiest impression.

. . . The home-working vest-makers are for the most part capable, respectable women of the superior artisan class. They have served their apprenticeship to the trade, either in a shop or under a woman vest-maker employing two or three hands, and many of them are helped in their turn by one or two apprentices. . . . The hourly earnings, where they can be calculated, work out at a fairly high figure, 6*d.* to 7*d.* being the predominant rate, but the advantage of this is greatly discounted by the irregularity and frequent scarcity of the work. It is apt to come in great rushes, Easter to August being the busiest season. Often it has to be executed at great speed, and there were instances of very long hours among these women, many of whom looked pale and anæmic. . . . The women are . . . for the most part regular wage-earners, dependent upon their earnings.' The investigators 'found no evidence that the rates earned by the home-workers are any lower than the rates paid to indoor hands on the same class of goods. On the contrary, where any distinctions were reported . . . they were to the benefit of the home-worker, on the obviously reasonable ground that she has to provide her own workroom, machine, needles, &c. . . . this is also the conclusion of those who have investigated home-work in Glasgow and London.'

The investigators, however, felt certain that piece-rates had declined, and were still declining. 'A few of the poor women were inclined to throw the blame for this upon the competition of workers who were not dependent on their earnings, but worked to supplement the husband's wages, or to gain pocket-money. Undoubtedly there are a good many of these supplementary wage-earners among the home-workers. . . .

But of the assertion sometimes made that the supplementary earner underbids her competitors by accepting lower rates than they, we found almost no evidence. On the contrary . . . many of the best rates of pay are earned by married women and girls living in comfortable homes. Not only are these, owing to the more prosperous conditions of their lives, more efficient and quicker workers, but they are able to stand out against reductions.'

This report goes on to generalise thus: 'Taking all the classes of workers together, it must be said with emphasis that the standard of cleanliness and respectability is, upon the whole, a high one. Out of 216 homes visited only eight were noted by the investigator as dirty and twelve as only fairly clean. . . . The standard in the homes visited for this inquiry compared very favourably, and were often, indeed, in most agreeable contrast, with the other houses known to them in the same or similar streets, and they came away from the inquiry with a feeling of strong respect for the Liverpool home-workers as a body. Of the neglected homes and children, the conditions of discomfort and squalor, so often read of in discussions on sweated industries, they saw very little. . . . Very few spoke bitterly of their own employers, or seemed to look upon themselves as objects for pity or for charity.' But complaint was made by not a few of the time lost in fetching and carrying work, and some employers were said to be most inconsiderate in causing an unnecessary amount of waiting and journeying.

Those responsible for the report were evidently prepared to find it received with surprise, if not incredulity. In anticipation of criticism, a statement is made

to the effect that the investigators endeavoured to visit a fair proportion of all classes of workers ; and that if there were any selection it was certainly in favour of those living in the poorer streets and engaged in what was ascertained to be the worst-paid class of work. Noting the contrast between its results and those found in other places, the report points out that inquirers in these other places have not unusually obtained names from charitable and social workers, and have therefore been directed chiefly to the poorer class of home-workers ; whereas the investigators of the Liverpool Committee were directed from the official list of home-workers. However, it may be noted finally that the picture presented by the Liverpool Committee is not throughout rose coloured. The lowest rates look miserably small, with their yield of earnings for a full week of amounts ranging from 2s. to 9s. But it must be remembered that the lowest rates are not those at which the ordinarily efficient or properly trained work ; they are the time-rates to which the piece-rates lead for the infirm, the incapable, and the untrained. It is noticeable that only about 3 per cent. of the out-workers investigated at Liverpool earned as little as the 1*d.* or 1½*d.* an hour quoted by Miss Irwin as the usual rate of a large class of home-working shirt-finishers at Glasgow.

If the low extreme at Birmingham is common, the high extreme of Liverpool is not unique. Miss Vynne testified to the Committee on Home Work in 1908 as follows : ‘ The glove trade round Yeovil in all the districts is well paid and prosperous, according to the women’s account. . . . Some women earn 22s. a week. On account of the low house-rent and because they live in the country and have a garden where they grow

their own vegetables . . . they can live in comparative comfort. . . . According to the women there is no sweating. Some firms pay a little more than others, but there is a general feeling of contentment in Yeovil.' Again, on one point, the evidence of Miss Safford (senior woman sanitary inspector of the City of London) to the Committee in 1907 confirms the Liverpool finding. She thought that, generally, the homes in which work is done are cleaner than those in which it is not done. And on more than one point there is confirmation in the testimony of Miss Looker (secretary of the Women's Sanitary Inspectors' Association). She gave it as her opinion 'that a woman working in a factory from eight in the morning till eight at night has not the time to keep her room nearly as clean as a home-worker, and that, as a rule, the home-worker does keep her premises in better condition than a woman who is out all day long in the factory.' She declared that home-work is 'not usually done in very bad slum districts,' and that some home-workers keep servants.

One of the most cheering representations, when contemplated in the mass, is that of Miss Collett, who has had years of experience as an investigator of social conditions, first with Mr. Charles Booth and afterwards in connection with the Labour Department of the Board of Trade; but even this is marred by black and dingy patches. Miss Collett, as senior investigator to the Board of Trade for women's industries, had made a special inquiry into the conditions of home-workers in the clothing trades (exclusive of tailoring) in the north of Ireland, London, and certain provincial districts, involving personal visits to over 1700 workers. The results of this inquiry were given in

her evidence to the Committee on Home Work in 1907. In Ireland, the trades investigated were almost entirely linen-clothing, embroidery, shirts, and ladies' underclothing; in London, they were mainly the trades in the making of blouses, ties, mantles, shirts, collars, ladies' underclothing, and infants' millinery. As to earnings, evidence was given as follows: 'The average net wage of 197 Irish workers . . . was 4s. 4d. a week. Only sixty of those worked full time. The average for full time was 6s. 9d. a week, and that was raised by the high average earned by the machinists of the ladies' underclothing—the lace-work underclothing. The ordinary average would be about 6s. a week. . . . There are people who go to as high as 10s. a week, but they are really rather rare.' As regards the London workers, the average earnings of 472 working alone, including both fully and partially employed, came to 9s. 8d. per week. 'But the average of the 179 who were working full time came to 13s. 7d. a week; on blouses the full-time worker averaged 14s. 4d. a week, and the mantle-maker 14s. 7d., but the mantle-maker is only employed about half the year; the tie-makers averaged 14s. 2d. and the underclothing-workers averaged 14s. 1d.' Comparing the earnings of factory- and home-workers in the ready-made costume, blouse, and shirt trade, Miss Collett gave the following results, based, as regards the factory-workers, on 1100 cases of women over eighteen:—

Weekly wages	Factory-workers	Home-workers working full time
Under 10s. . . .	13 per cent.	13 per cent.
10s. to 20s. . . .	64 „	83 „
Over 20s. . . .	23 „	4 „

Commenting on these figures, witness said: 'I think it is much harder work in the factory. You must work your full time, and you cannot take rests. Of course, the home-worker cares very much about being able to settle her own times of work, and about being able to go out in the afternoons, for instance, and to have visitors, and there are a great many things which are very much better for the married woman at home than the continuous heavy work in the factory.'

It appeared from Miss Collett's inquiries that unmarried women gravitated to the regular trades and married women to the irregular trades, as one would expect, since those who have to support themselves need regular work and look about for it, and married women as a rule either cannot take regular work or prefer not to do so. Married women who engage in home-work generally devote half or one-third of their time to it, we are told. In the north of Ireland 66 per cent. of the home-workers were unmarried; in London only 40 per cent.; in the provinces only 21 per cent. Again, in Ireland only 27 per cent. of the home-workers were working singly, whereas in London 69 per cent. work singly. Of those working singly in London, 55 per cent.¹ were married women and 18½ per cent. were widows. Speaking of the married women, Miss Collett said: 'I consider that the majority of these home-workers are better off than the rest. They are very frequently quite

¹ Mr. Howarth (who with Miss Wilson wrote the Report on West Ham) deposed to the Committee in 1908 that in West Ham, where 1786 cases had been examined, 53 per cent. of women home-workers were supplementing the earnings of casual or irregular workers. Only 2½ per cent. were in receipt of parish relief; but Mr. Howarth found conditions generally very bad.

well-to-do people, and they will not work for the very low rates; they will not work for the low rates that you would find a widow with two or three children would accept. . . . The majority of them are in well-kept houses, and are not people who regard themselves as poor.' Continuing, Miss Collett said: 'There are certain areas in which you would find a great deal of poverty, but, on the whole, my experience is that if there is a very slummy street it will not have a home-worker in it at all. If I have got a home-worker on my list in that street, the house is nearly always better and cleaner than the rest of the street.'

Miss Collett declared that she had found pretty much the same in all her investigations of home-work in England wherever they had been made, and that she had made inquiries, directly or through assistants, in London, Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham, Leicester, Bristol, and Somersetshire at different times. One member of the Committee warned Miss Collett of the impression she was creating, and elicited an emphatic declaration that it was the impression she was anxious to convey. 'It is possible,' she added, 'that my impression is exaggerated by the fact that all these years I have felt that an untrue case has been presented; and it is possible that when I say the great majority, or a very large number of people, I may be supposed to be minimising what I consider is about, perhaps, 10 or 20 per cent.; but 10 or 20 per cent. of a large number will give you a large number of hard cases. The question is whether home-work is, on the whole, an evil or a good thing, and my opinion is that it is a good thing.'

The evidence before us, which it has been necessary

to go over in some detail because of its varied character, would seem to be irreconcilably conflicting. Miss Collett, Miss Rathbone, and others find the bulk of the home-workers to be healthy, contented, moderately well paid, and generally in easy circumstances—many of them noticeably above the level of their class in comfort and well-being—and allow but a fringe of distressing cases. On the other hand, most witnesses depose to the demoralising effects of home-work, and the miserable earnings of those who engage in it. So unfavourable a view, indeed, is taken of its conditions by some investigators that they would gladly see the whole system stamped out, despite the individual cases of hardship that would result. Doubtless, some of the testimony is unwittingly exaggerated, particularly the testimony of those who were anxious to make out a case either for State interference or for leaving things alone; but, even when the fullest allowance is made for this, the two accounts remain in marked contrast. The chief explanation is probably to be found in two facts: that the reports relate frequently to different towns, and that investigators have approached the subject from different ends. Miss Collett affirmed, as an outcome of her own experience, that a survey of slum districts will give one result, and a specific inquiry into home-work, conducted on the basis of lists of home-workers, will give another. The one thing certain is that we must not pick and choose our facts, and we are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that much home-work is suitable for the home, reasonably remunerated, and done under comfortable conditions without over-work; while much is, or from its nature must be, done under the worst conditions, sanitary and

otherwise, and is so badly paid that excessive duration of toil is the rule, and sometimes, in addition, the employment of children in a manner and to a degree which must mean heavy social and economic loss in the years to come.

We may now proceed to generalise from the facts, beginning with a classification of home-workers. The home-workers consist chiefly of women: (1) single women, widows, or deserted wives, who, being without male support, are bound to make their own livings; (2) more or less casual women-workers, who enter the labour market when the male bread-winner is temporarily incapacitated or out of work; (3) the women members of families depending mainly on male wage-earners, who do work in their homes in order to add to the family income or make something extra for themselves. There are, of course, among the home-workers many adult males, but they constitute the minority, and usually special reasons can be assigned to explain their position. The reason why there are far fewer men among the home-workers will become apparent as our analysis proceeds.

The work upon which these persons are engaged is performed at home for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons relate to the nature of the work and the state of its organisation; others to the special circumstances of many of the home-workers. We proceed now to review the first group of reasons, which are mainly contributory. A limited amount of industrial work can still be done at home at no great economic loss, and the organisation of this work is frequently undertaken by persons with little capital who could not afford to maintain factories. Again, much of the

work given out is seasonal, and, if the margin of difference between factory cost and home cost is small, it pays the employer best to maintain a factory of such a size that it can be kept working continuously—that is, of sufficient size to meet the minimum demand—and to arrange for the distribution of work over and above what the factory can do among out-workers. It is found on examination that of the work which has not yet been entirely ejected from the home far the smallest proportion is men's work. The reason is twofold. There are seldom reasons for preferring work at home in the case of men, though there are frequently, we shall perceive, in the case of women; and men's work is on the whole heavier than women's, with the result that power-driven machinery is likely to be of most value for the former. There is not, indeed, a great deal even of women's industrial work which can be done at home without much disadvantage as regards cost. Factory production gains economy through the application of machinery; and there is a value also in the discipline, direction, and arrangement connected with factory organisation and in the fact that a standard of efficiency tends to be created by group production. Only exceptional people can do as well working alone as people working in groups. In the working of a group there is not only system and the compelling influence of example, but also a rhythm which takes the place of volition and reduces the effort required to maintain a certain level of output.¹

Of chief importance in explaining the extent of home-work are the natures and special circumstances

¹ On the importance of rhythm in work both in adding to output and reducing fatigue, see Miss Goldmark's *Fatigue and Efficiency*.

of many of the home-workers. Not a few women are such in themselves, and as a result of their up-bringing, that they cannot tolerate the publicity and surroundings of life in factories. These people must not be forgotten. Though they are not in a majority, their numbers would seem to be considerable. Factory life for them would be a continual martyrdom; but they want employment, or must have it; and some work is better than no work at all for the great majority of people, quite apart from the payment they get for it. Other persons, again, would enter factories, if necessary, but prefer the home-life, even if it means lower earnings. And yet others are bound to their homes by domestic ties, though they may have leisure, and could not keep to the regular hours of factories, or could not devote the amount of time each day to industrial occupations which the factories demand. Moreover, many of the home-workers suffer from physical disabilities, which render their admission to factories impossible—they may be old, crippled, or in feeble health—and yet there may be no good ground for debarring them from industrial work altogether. Further, there is the very important class of rural home-workers. Most of this class would be compelled to go into service, or get employment in factories away from home, if home-work were not procurable. Thus there are many cogent reasons why numerous women should not be prevented from doing industrial work at home, if they do any at all, provided that serious disadvantages are not entailed.

Our next purpose must be to explain how it is that earnings are so low and conditions are so bad at the fringe, so to speak—which is probably a wide fringe—

of these modern domestic industries. To explain this, it is needful to draw upon the theory of wages.

According to the theory of wages which is generally accepted, wage-earners in any trade tend to be paid their marginal worth—that is to say, the difference that would be made in the long run to the earnings of a business by the removal of one of its employees. It is clear that they could not be paid more; for were the marginal worth of a given class of workers 20s. a week and the wage 21s., it would pay the employer to contract the employment given by him, since, by dismissing one worker, he would save his or her wage—that is, 21s. a week—and lose on the other side only the difference made to his takings by the employment of that worker—that is, 20s. a week. This contraction of demand for labour would go on at least up to the point at which the gain resulting from a further step would be no greater than the loss—that is, up to the point at which wages and the marginal worth of labour were equal. Competition between employers for labour ought to prevent the wage from dropping much below the amount which represents the marginal worth of labour. Now, using this theory as our guide, we may direct our inquiries along two lines. We may ask, first, whether there are any special reasons why a large class of home-workers should have a low marginal worth, and secondly, whether there are any special reasons why the wages of home-workers should tend to be below their marginal worth.

It is contended that a number of reasons do exist for a low marginal worth on the part of some home-workers. Much of the work done by home-workers is very unskilled, or requires only a skill which is easily

acquired by anybody at any period of life, and hence it is the common resort of persons, untrained for a trade, who suddenly find it necessary to do something at home to make money. Thus, one cause for the low value of this unskilled labour may be its excessive supply in view of the demand for it, which is not likely to be considerable, since the tasks that it can undertake, being simple, are usually capable of performance by a machine. When home-workers are competing with machinery their pay is, of course, settled by a cost of production with machinery, and their pay is naturally low in comparison with that of factory-workers, because the value of labour working with mechanical aids must be higher than that of labour working without it. Again, as the Committee on Home-work points out, much of the ill-paid out-labour can only get work by producing at a low cost articles largely made at home by consumers. The making of these at home by consumers is commonly regarded by them as an ordinary domestic duty, or even as an occupation for idle moments, which would otherwise be wasted, and is not reckoned as work.

In connection with the excessive supply of untrained persons, we may notice their immobility. The neediest of them are apt to snatch at any work that they can do at any price, and when the rates fall for the kind of work to which they are accustomed they seldom transfer their labour to another kind of work. Frequently, they do not know of the better-paid work, and if they do, habit or inertia retards change, or despair at the thought of any little training involved.

The next factor in our explanation brings us in touch with views which won widespread acceptance during the anti-sweating agitation with which Charles Kingsley

was associated. It is the cost of the organisation of work when it is scattered broadcast over many homes. Work has to be apportioned to individuals according to their powers and the time at their disposal, how exactly the work is to be done has to be explained, and when finished there is its delivery and inspection to see to. When this organisation is at all complicated, a costly system of contracting and sub-contracting becomes essential. As Kingsley put it, in 'Cheap Clothes and Nasty': 'Part of the work, if not the whole, is let out to contractors or middlemen—sweaters, as their victims significantly call them—who, in their turn, let it out again, sometimes to the workmen, sometimes to fresh middlemen; so that out of the price paid for labour on each article not only the workmen, but the sweater, and perhaps the sweater's sweater, and a third and a fourth and a fifth have to draw their profit.'

This explanation of low rates for home-work is so plausible, and has so caught the popular imagination, and is so frequently dwelt upon exclusively and twisted by its phrasing into a fallacy, that a somewhat close scrutiny of it is needful. In the first place it is to be observed that it is only one of many intermixed causes of low earnings, and that it is not even an essential one. Investigation shows that in certain cases, where sub-contracting is not the rule, very low earnings are the rule. In her evidence to the Committee on Home-work in 1907, Miss Irwin gave it as her opinion that there was not quite so much of the system of middlemen in Scotland as was commonly supposed—in most cases, she said, women out-workers worked directly for the factory—and Miss Irwin's report on home-work in Glasgow showed a very low level of earnings.

And in the second place it is to be observed that the sub-contracting is not necessarily parasitic, as those were inclined to imagine who regarded it as the prime evil and introduced the telling term 'sweating' in consequence. There are cases in which it is unavoidable, or practically so, with the result that its abolition would lower the earnings of home-workers or do away with them altogether. Frequent complaint is made of the lack of organisation, meaning the lack of an efficient system for saving the home-workers the trouble and anxiety of seeking work, fetching it, and returning it when accomplished, at great loss of time individually—that is, in short, the lack of capable sub-contracting or of a substitute for it. A large part of existing sub-contracting may be correctly regarded as one form of the elaborate detailed organisation needed for certain kinds of home-work which makes management-cost high, and therefore keeps the marginal worth of the home-workers low. However, there are unquestionably numerous cases in which sub-contracting is merely parasitic and yet survives.¹

Analysis, then, would seem to show that the marginal worth of the least capable class of home-workers must frequently be low in present circumstances. On the other hand, the saving of rent, and of the cost of light and other charges by the employer, would tend to elevate their remuneration; but this cause is, on the whole, much more than counteracted by the causes which have a depressing effect.

We now proceed to ask whether there are grounds for supposing that the rates paid to home-workers are

¹ It has been substantially reduced in lace-finishing at Nottingham since action was taken under the Trade Boards Act.

in any special degree less than the marginal work of these workers. This is a highly pertinent question, for upon the answer to it largely depends the possibility of raising home-work rates, by simply imposing minimum-wage regulations, without displacing home-workers. We incline strongly to the view that the wages of home-workers fall more easily and rise less steadily than those of most factory-workers, though it is not plausible to suppose that the sole or chief cause of the low rates paid to home-workers is a steady pressure exerted upon them, whereby, in the first place, their earnings are pressed beneath their marginal worth, and, in the second place, their marginal worth is reduced by lack of nourishment to the level of their earnings. The strategic position of the home-workers is extraordinarily weak. The poorest of them are so little in touch with one another and so ignorant that they do not know the rates generally paid. They are the victims of individual bargains, at which, in view of their circumstances, they must get the worst. Some employer or contractor pays very low rates : it may be because he is grasping, or because he fears that others are paying very low rates, or because he cannot afford to pay more. But, whatever the reason for the exceptionally low rates, once paid, their effects upon other rates are the same. Other employers, naturally, complain of unfair competition, and affirm that they cannot continue paying more than their rivals. And the home-workers are so hidden away that competition among employers is not likely to correct the depressing consequences of the individual bargain.¹

¹ One most impressive piece of evidence bearing on this point was given to the Committee on Home-work in 1907 by Miss

Moreover, no check on the tendency for rates to decline had been imposed, prior to recent action under the Trade Boards Act (to be noticed later), by organisation on the part of the home-workers. They are too scattered and fluctuating a body to organise of themselves; and many would be too timid, because of their necessities, to use the strength of combination, even if they were organised. Miss Tuckwell (Chairman of the Women's Trade Union League) declared to the Committee on Home-work in 1907 that any attempts to organise home-workers in which she had engaged had failed dismally. However, it is to be noted that in Germany a trade union of home-workers in the ready-made clothing, underwear, and allied trades has existed for twelve years with middle-class support, and to-day numbers 8000 members organised in many branches¹; and that in England, *pari passu* with

Macarthur, and the significant thing is that it does not refer to home-work. 'There was recently—last October—a dispute . . . at Edmonton. The dispute affected fifty girls. Their wages were reduced in one case—these figures can be corroborated by the Board of Trade—from £1 0s. 4d. a week to 9s. 10d. That was a reduction of more than 50 per cent. As a result of public opinion the firm agreed to arbitration; the arbitration was held with Mr. Askwith in the chair, with Mr. Isaac Mitchell, Mr. P. W. Wilson, M.P., and myself for the workers. . . . There the employers' representatives admitted that the reduction was a serious one, admitted that the reduced wages were not sufficient to live upon, but proved to the satisfaction of the arbitrator that another firm was paying rates even lower than the reduced rates they proposed to enforce, and we sat there quite powerless to do anything. The firm practically said, "Bring this other firm to this board, show them what we are paying, make them pay an equal amount, and we shall not make this reduction, because we shall be relieved from unfair competition." We were powerless to demand the attendance of that other firm. Had we been a wages board, of course, that difficulty would have been solved.'

¹ See Miss Edlmann's report to the Board of Education on German trade-schools.

action under the Trade Boards Act, the organisation of home-workers has gone on and met with success. The right conclusion would seem to be that, given the surmounting of initial difficulties and some extraneous support, trade unionism among some home-workers is at any rate possible.

On *a priori* grounds, the conclusion cannot be resisted that the bulk of home-workers are getting less than their marginal worth, and this conclusion is reinforced by the fact, brought out in much evidence tendered to the Committee on Home-work, that substantial differences between the rates paid for the same work not infrequently exist. The existence of such differences proves that some home-workers at least must be getting less than their marginal worth. Moreover, as Miss Tuckwell pointed out to the Committee on Home-work, the rates differ by a good deal more than appears on account of great diversities as regards the amount of deductions.

So far, attention has been directed mainly to the rate of remuneration, since this is the point upon which remedial proposals must be chiefly concentrated; but low rates of pay are not the only causes of the low hourly or weekly earnings which have been brought to notice. A low hourly rate may be occasioned, and frequently is occasioned, by natural inefficiency, inertia, mental or physical defects, old age, or lack of training. Again, it is evident that a low weekly rate, after apparently long hours, might accompany a possible hourly rate which was fairly high; other duties, unavoidable distractions, the powerlessness to apply themselves continuously—which is found in undisciplined persons—loss of time in preparatory

work and in carrying and fetching work are causes of low weekly earnings no less potent than those already mentioned. The irregularity of the work and the difficulty of getting full work, of which complaint is made, are also points of importance. As we have seen, in the seasonal trades there is a tendency for employers to make their output elastic mainly by varying the amount of work that they put out. And, as at times they may want many workers, some employers, it is said, try to keep a large number of out-workers on their books and give ordinarily a little employment to each, instead of adequate employment to a few.¹ And many of the home-workers have neither the knowledge nor the enterprise to enable them to find another occupation. Having their workers in this position, there may be a tendency, too, for employers to play them off against one another, and so keep rates from rising. All this could be remedied by organisation. It is the problem of casual labour again. With the system of casual labour in use, it is possible for over-supply and under-supply of labour to be experienced at the same time.

This completes our analysis of causes. We shall now enter upon a brief discussion of proposed remedies. These are as follows :—

- I. Prohibition of home-work.
- II. That home-work should be subject to the same regulations as factory-work.
- III. Organisation apart from Government action.
- IV. Licensing.
- V. Wages boards.

¹ Dr. Marshall maintains that this is likely to happen. See p. 296 of his *Principles of Economics*, 5th ed.

I. The most drastic suggestion for the cure of the evils associated with home-work is that it should be entirely prohibited. As regards this suggestion, we may note first the attitude assumed towards it by committees which have recently considered the question of home-work. Lord Dunraven's Committee was not prepared to recommend the prohibition of home-work. 'We have been urged,' the Committee reported, 'to recommend the prohibition by legislation of working at home; but we think such a measure would be arbitrary and oppressive, not sanctioned by any precedent in existing law, and impossible to be effectually enforced.' The Committee on Home-work, which reported in 1908, took the same view, and was indeed emphatic in its rejection of the proposal that home-work ought to be stamped out. 'There are a number of people who, for various reasons, cannot go to factories and workshops and undertake the continuous attendance and work which are there required. There are others to whom it would involve serious inconvenience and, indeed, hardships. They are glad to work at home. They earn an extremely welcome addition to the family income. To prevent them from so doing would be indefensible, unless it were shown that such drastic action was absolutely essential in order to secure a great public advantage. In our judgment this has not been proved. On the other hand, we are of opinion that, by means of legislation, some earnest effort should be made to remedy the evils which undoubtedly exist.'

After reviewing the whole situation, we find ourselves in agreement with these conclusions; but before dismissing the proposal to suppress home-work it will be desirable to notice more specifically the reasons for

which it has been put forward. The reasons are many and mixed, and no doubt all the advocates of suppression would not endorse the whole of them. Some reformers insist on the high proportion of cases of 'sweating,' and are willing to suffer a massacre of the innocents because of their belief that undesirable conditions are in an overwhelming proportion and because they despair of the efficacy of any other remedies. But evidence has been brought forward to show that the innocents are a relatively large body; and we shall give reasons later against being pessimistic as regards the removal of the evils suffered by the remainder. Again, not a few advocates of prohibition feel the importance of protecting the public against the spread of disease, and they think that the proper regulation of scattered home-industries is impossible. Evidence given to the Committees on home-work justifies the view that inspection and notification of disease is widely neglected; but little evidence was elicited as regards the danger to the public against which greater protection is demanded—it may be because of the difficulty of getting specific cases. The response seems adequate that inspection need not be neglected, and is not in some places,¹ and that the suggested remedy is unreasonably wasteful in view of the incidental damage that it would entail. Again, there are those who are thinking largely of child-life and of the importance of preserving all the mother's time for the care of the home and the family. But all the home-workers are not mothers; and it has not yet been proved that mothers of families should never devote any of their

¹ For instance, in Manchester. See evidence of Miss Coppock, in 1907, to the Home-work Committee.

time to industrial work at home. Whether a mother of a family should abstain entirely from home-work must depend, to some extent, on her capacity and strength, the size of the family, and the ages of the children; and there is no reason to suppose that the supplementing of earnings in such exceptional circumstances by public-aid authorities would have any depressing effect upon wages generally. The regular supplementing of the normal earnings of normal wage-earners in normal circumstances is quite another matter; but even in this case, as Professor Pigou has pointed out, it must not be inferred, from the fact that people can take work at lower pay when they are assisted, that they will be willing to do so.¹ Some advocates of the suppression of home-work have gone so far as to plead that the wage-earning classes are none the better off for it, because the competition of the home-workers brings down the rates of factory workers so that the latter lose what the former gain. For this view, neither in theory nor in fact, can any support be found.²

II. We take next the proposal that work carried on in homes should be made to line up under the regulations of the Factory Acts, since this proposal seems to be most closely related to prohibition. It was supported in a minority report of the Labour Commission, signed by Messrs. Abraham, Austin, Maudsley, and Mann, which insisted that the state of the workers in the so-called 'sweated' industries demanded the promptest attention, but did not go to the length of suggesting the prohibition of home-work. In this report we read: 'We are convinced that no important

¹ *Wealth and Welfare.*

² See pp. 264-5 above.

improvement can be made in the condition of the sweated workers until the typical regulations of the Factory Acts are rendered really effective for their protection. This can only be done by placing upon the employer in the sweated trades the same obligations as have long been fulfilled by the employer in the factory industries. If a clothing contractor, for instance, chooses to avoid the expense, publicity, and liability to inspection involved in having a factory, and prefers to use for the execution of his work the homes occupied by the operatives, he should nevertheless be held legally responsible in the same manner as a factory owner for the sanitary conditions, hours of labour, education, &c., of the persons employed for his profit. Proposals to this effect were embodied in a Bill prepared in 1891 by the present Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Sydney Buxton), and we strongly recommend that they should now be passed into law. A more drastic proposal on similar lines was pressed upon the Commission by Mr. Charles Booth. In addition to the giver-out of work, Mr. Booth recommends that the landlord of the tenements used for manufacturing purposes should be registered and made legally liable for the compliance of his tenants with all the regulations of the Factory Acts not merely in respect of sanitation, but also as regards hours of labour, age, and education of workers, &c.' However, the majority of the Labour Commissioners, while admitting the bad conditions of much home-work, came to the conclusion that they could not recommend any further regulation of domestic workshops or of out-workers.

We must be perfectly clear as to what is aimed at by the proposal to subject home-workers to the same

regulations as factory-workers. Wages have no place in factory laws, except as regards the requirement to render particulars of work to be done in certain cases (under which some home-workers get protection) and rules relating to fines. These laws refer to safety, conditions of health, and hours of labour. Consequently, the adoption of the proposal would hardly touch low earnings, and would therefore be but a nibble at the problem of home-work; and whether it could be carried into effect, if at all, without doing much harm, is more than doubtful. It would be undesirable to prevent a woman's over-work at home by declaring that her industrial work must be done within certain defined hours, in view of her home duties; and the enforcement even of such a rule would entail costly inspection. If the purpose of the extension of factory legislation to all home-workers is to stop some of the home-workers, so as to lever up the pay of the remainder, then the intention is to use factory legislation with an ulterior object, and in a way which would prove oppressive to an appreciable section of the public. To this idea of levering up the earnings of out-workers by sacrificing some of them, we shall recur again. Further, there is no reason to fear that the stringent regulations of factory-work, as contrasted with the freedom still left to home-workers, is encouraging home-work and discouraging factory-work to an extent serious enough to warrant interference. Much evidence on this point was given to the recent Committee.¹ In connection with the extended control over home-work which has been proposed, it may be

¹ Miss Squire, however, thought that the substitution was operating in some towns.

remarked that the Committee on Home Work took the gloomiest view as to the effectiveness of the then existing laws—mainly sanitary—in their bearing on different classes of home-workers, and expressed the opinion that the excellent intentions of Government departments and various local authorities in inserting ‘fair wages’ clauses in their contracts were often frustrated in practice. There are certainly strong reasons for pressing that such regulations as concern home-workers should be more stringently enforced, and particularly that a close observance of the Employment of Children Act should be secured. But all this is remote from the root-problem of wages.

III. Organisation apart from Government action covers several different schemes. There is collective bargaining; but we have already discerned that this has commonly failed among home-workers for very obvious reasons. When a start has been made to improve conditions, however, and rules are established, trade unions sufficiently strong to prevent their evasion may be maintained and may even prove more widely efficacious. There is again collective agreement among employers; but of the promise of this plan, we can hardly be hopeful in view of the fact that it has been tried but has broken down,¹ as one would have expected. Again, there are consumers’ leagues; but even given general adherence to them, which is unlikely, a vast organisation involving inspection would be needed to insure that reasonable wages were really paid on the goods not banned for conscientious people. The policy of the trade union label is simple to carry out in com-

¹ See, e.g., evidence of Miss Rose Squire to the Committee on Home Work, in 1907.

parison, but its inherent weakness has been repeatedly exposed.¹ Finally, there are schemes to bring education to bear on the home-workers to increase their efficiency and enable them to take the best-paid work of which they are capable. The intention is admirable ; putting it into practice would aid innumerable cases ; but it could not solve the whole of the problem, only one element of which is the inefficiency of workers. The plan has been tried with success by the German trade union of the women home-workers in the ready-made clothing, underwear, and allied industries, which, in addition, is making the experiment of maintaining sale-rooms to save the middleman's commission, and secure full value for hand-work, in cases where it is preferred, by removing doubts as to its genuineness.

IV. The licensing of the home-worker is the solution of the home-work problem officially supported by the Women's Industrial Council. Its ends are similar to, but more confined than, those of factory regulations, and it avoids some of the difficulties with which an extension of factory law to home-work would be confronted. There are two kinds of licensing : the licensing of premises and the licensing of persons. What is recommended in this country is the latter, though it is proposed that a licence should be refused when the premises are unsuitable, since it is the condition of life of the home-worker which is primarily in view rather than the protection of the consumer. The last Committee on Home Work heard evidence about it, and finally concluded as follows : 'It would be hard upon the occasional worker, the wife who desired to step into the breach and earn something to enable

¹ See Vol. II.

the family to keep the home together when the husband is thrown out of work. The difficulty which persons of this class would experience in communicating with the inspector, discovering his address, writing to him, or finding him, and the delay which would take place before he could be got to their home, and consequently before they could begin to earn the much-needed income, would be very serious, and in trying circumstances quite intolerable, unless there were a small army of inspectors. The difficulty and trouble would be repeated every six months.’¹ These are cogent contentions, but it should be pointed out that the proposals of those who press the policy of licensing contain a clause that inspectors should be empowered to grant provisional licences immediately on application, pending their visits. While shrinking from recommending licensing, the Committee thought that the registration of out-workers might be insisted upon, if it were recognised that certificates must be granted on demand in the first instance. It was suggested that it should be made illegal to put out work to any who could not produce certificates. In making this recommendation, the Committee laid stress on the importance of getting complete lists of out-workers, especially with a view to inspection. In order that such lists should be approximately exact, periodic registration would be essential, for otherwise many would figure on the lists who had long since ceased to work.

The licensing system must be considered apart from its effect upon wages, because, in so far as its effect upon wages was taken into account in the granting of licences, the system would bear oppressively

¹ *Report of the Select Committee on Home Work*, 1908, p. xii.

upon certain sections of the population. Some reformers would like to see licences refused to those who do not need the home-work. But even if the rest were benefited by interference with moderately well-to-do people to their detriment, interference would not be justified; and it should be noted incidentally that the community gains to no slight extent from the action of aspiring parents who have a standard of living a little in advance of the times for their class, and make extra efforts to give their children opportunities and comfortable homes. Moreover, according to much evidence given to the recent Committees on Home-work, the suppression of these home-workers would hardly improve the condition of others to any appreciable extent, since home-workers who are not very poor do not, as a rule, find it worth while to work at very low rates, and low rates, in so many cases, have been brought low not by the competition of other home-workers, but by the competition of machinery and the competition of consumers who would do the work for themselves if prices rose. Besides, whatever the effects of the suppression of some home-workers on the pay of others, it must be insisted that a country cannot hope to gain ultimately from a policy of forcing abstentions from work, which is akin to the exploded fallacy of 'making work.' If wages are low in a class because that class is relatively in excess, or because its members are inefficient, the cure is to raise the efficiency of the members, or aid and direct such of them as are capable of it to transfer themselves to occupations where remuneration is more satisfactory. The bearing of the limitation of women's work on men's earnings has already been discussed. But though

licensing may be undesirable, the keeping of accurate lists of out-workers is essential. Dr. Dudfield, Medical Officer of Health for Paddington, complained to the Committee on Home-work in 1907 that there were apparently no means of enforcing the keeping of registers of out-workers. To get a conviction it would be necessary to find a person who had received work from the recalcitrant employer and produce that person in Court. Dr. Dudfield thought that home-workers should be compelled to register themselves.

The policy of licensing, with reference to all or most kinds of home-work, has been tried in the United States by several of the industrial states. Licences must be periodically renewed, and they are refused when the home conditions are unsatisfactory, or when the applicants are ordinary factory-operatives in employment. In New York a whole building must be licensed as satisfactory before any home-work can be done in it. In other respects 'sweat-shop' legislation varies in severity. Illinois, for instance, only permits members of the family to engage in such home-work as its law refers to, and Missouri limits additional workers to three. The most extreme opponents of home-work in America would entirely prohibit tenement-house work; but a law of New York dated 1884, embodying the extreme view, was held unconstitutional in interfering with the freedom of the home. Since then, the only laws adopted have taken the form of licensing. The withdrawal of a licence is said to be more effective than a penalty. As a rule, manufacturers are required by 'sweat-shop' legislation to furnish lists of out-workers. There is a growing disposition to require, in

addition, that no goods furnished to public bodies shall have been produced in tenement houses.

V. We now reach the most popular remedy—which is wages boards. These were recommended for certain industries by the Committee on Home-work of 1908, and the Trade Boards Act, 1909, carried its recommendations tentatively into effect. This Act applies to (1) ready-made and wholesale bespoke tailoring, and any other branch of tailoring in which the Board of Trade considers that the system of manufacture is generally similar to that prevailing in the wholesale trade ; (2) the making of boxes, or parts thereof, made wholly or partially of paper, cardboard, chip, or similar material ; (3) machine-made lace and net-finishing, and mending or darning operations of lace-curtain finishing ; (4) hammered and dollied or tommied chain-making ; and (5) such other trades as may be specified by provisional orders of the Board of Trade and sanctioned by Parliament. In 1913 four other trades were added—namely, the sugar confectionery and food preserving trade, shirt-making, the making of hollow-ware (including boxes and canisters), and the linen and cotton embroidery trade ; and it has been proposed by the Board of Trade to extend the Act somewhat further.

In each trade affected, one trade board, or more than one, may be established ; and it is particularly to be noted that the boards have reference to the payment of factory-workers as well as home-workers. The dual reference was desirable because many factory-workers are miserably paid ; and really essential, in the interests of certain home-workers, since decreeing a minimum rate merely for home-workers might have robbed them of their work or simply driven them into factories to be

almost as badly paid there. The boards are to fix, from time to time, minimum time- or piece-rates, applicable universally or to particular localities. When the rates are agreed upon, the Board of Trade is to make them obligatory by order, unless it deems it inadvisable to do so, and such obligatory orders may be revoked by the Board of Trade on its own initiative. By June 1913, in all four trades originally scheduled, rates recommended by the boards have been declared obligatory; but up to that date the tailoring board for Ireland had not yet fixed rates. The only other board for Ireland at that time related to box-making, and it had decreed rates which had become compulsory. Trade boards may exempt persons affected by infirmities or physical injuries from the determined rates. The number of permits authorised up to June 1913 was two in lace-finishing, twenty-four in box-making (Great Britain), and ninety-five in tailoring (Great Britain). When rates have not been made obligatory by the Board of Trade, employers may voluntarily bind themselves to pay such rates, and they must pay such rates in the absence of written agreements with their employees. The trade boards may take proceedings under the Act on behalf of any persons paid less than the obligatory rates, if attempts to settle such cases without recourse to proceedings fail. Up to June 1913, four proceedings had been taken against employers, and in each case a conviction was obtained. The Board of Trade may issue regulations as regards the constitution of trade boards, which must represent, by nomination or election, employers and employees. A trade board may appoint district committees, consisting partly of members of the trade board, and

partly of employers and workpeople in the trade who are not on the trade board, to report and advise. Nine district committees in box-making (Great Britain), and seven in tailoring (Great Britain), had been created by June 1913. The Board of Trade may appoint persons (including women) as members of trade boards. The Board of Trade may appoint officers to investigate complaints and otherwise secure the observance of the Act, and such officers are to act under the direction of the Board of Trade, or, if the Board of Trade so determine, under the direction of the trade boards. Expenses are to be paid out of funds provided by Parliament. It is believed that about 200,000 persons, of whom about 70 per cent. are women and girls, come under the Act as limited in the first instance to four trades.¹

Some persons have put forward the view that the Victorian experiment proves that the Trade Boards Act must succeed, but this is a view which we cannot share. Of wages boards in Victoria, we have written in our second volume, and a repetition of the discussion here hardly seems needful in view of the admitted fact that in Victoria the prevention of sweating has not been the sole object of the legislation, and, to use the words of Mr. Aves in his report, 'as regards the numerical features of the problem, it has been almost as though the whole machinery of propaganda and of government were concentrated on a city something smaller than Birmingham, or, combined, on the Metropolitan boroughs of Camberwell, Lewisham, and Greenwich.'²

¹ An account of procedure up to June 1913 will be found in *Memoranda (of the Board of Trade) in reference to the Working of the Trade Boards Act issued in 1913*.

² *Report on the Wages Boards and Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts of Australia and New Zealand*, by Ernest Aves, p. 123.

The difficulties of the system of a legal minimum wage were by nobody more effectively put than by Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald,¹ and, in view of her grasp of the problems of women's work and her self-sacrificing labours on behalf of wage-earning women, special weight must attach to her opinions. She argued thus. The difficulties are of two kinds—the difficulty of fixing what the minimum rate of payment shall be, and the difficulty of enforcing the rate when fixed. In a factory or workshop, the first difficulty may be met by fixing a minimum time-rate; but where home-workers are to be reckoned with, payment must be at piece-rates. The questions raised by the Committee on Home Work have then to be faced: 'Is the piece-rate to be based upon the time in which a worker of average skill can complete the article or process in a factory, under favourable conditions, with the most modern machinery and appliances, or is it to be based upon the time actually taken by the worker in the conditions and with the appliances in and with which he actually works?' If the former, the earnings of home-workers who compete with factory-workers must remain lower than those of factory workers, and wretchedly low as a rule. If the latter, home-workers must be largely abolished. The dilemma is an awkward one. Home-workers of a certain kind, to put it paradoxically, can only be bettered by being abolished. But all home-workers are not of this kind; and, even with respect to those that are, there is usually a margin within which betterment can be effected. The horns of the dilemma are not absolutely exhaustive of all possibilities.

¹ See, in particular, her leaflet dated October 1908 and addressed to the members of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland.

As regards the second fundamental difficulty noted above, Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald wrote : ‘ An inspector can get proof of insanitary conditions, or overtime employment, without the aid of the worker concerned, but in order to convict an employer of paying under-rate wages, especially in a complicated system of piece-rates based on a minimum time-rate, the worker must be willing to give evidence to support the claim. If there was a certainty of getting higher wages by complaint to an inspector, the workers would be ready to assist in the enforcement of the Act. But the possibility of losing work altogether, unless it is taken at a low rate, is a still more important consideration to the home-worker, and the lowest paid factory-worker ; and I cannot find that the Select Committee, or the other advocates of a legal minimum wage for sweated workers, have ever faced satisfactorily the probability—I might almost say the certainty—that the workers they most wish to benefit would have justification in looking upon the law as an enemy, and therefore seeking to evade it.’ The difficulties in the way of enforcement may be admitted. But their magnitude depends largely upon whether much evasion, with collusion on the part of home-workers, will be met with. Experience alone can show : but collusion for definite breaches of the law is not common in communities which have reached a certain stage of civilisation, and a strong temptation for home-workers to offend in this way will seldom arise if the hopes of the reformers are justified.

Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald’s warnings need to be carefully borne in mind ; but, despite her conclusion, we incline to the view that trade boards in England to prevent sweating will probably prove more serviceable

than might at first be supposed. They will certainly tend to correct the weakness of disorganisation now suffered by home-workers, and, therefore, to insure that home-workers will get at least what they are worth. They may be expected also, through the publicity they give to the conditions of the out-work trade, to strengthen and direct the forces that are tending to cause a withdrawal of people from the ranks of the out-workers. Moreover, there are other possible gains. The boards may be led, little by little, into acting as councils of improvement with reference to the condition of the home-workers, and simple machines may, in consequence, be more extensively introduced. As a representative organ of thought on behalf of the trade, a trade board could be of immense value. No doubt it has been an awkward matter to get on the boards persons satisfactorily representative of so scattered a body as the out-workers of a trade, and it will be a matter of even greater difficulty for the representatives to keep in touch with their constituents. Organisation is the final solution, but organisation effected from above has usually suffered from lifelessness and instability; still, in cases such as that of home-workers, when there is no other alternative, it is better, despite its imperfections, than no organisation at all. If trade boards are to succeed, much organising and propaganda work will be needed. As the Anti-sweating League said in an appeal for funds, 'to put the Act into force without the co-operation both of the better employers and of the workers is a hopeless undertaking, and the National Anti-sweating League will need both funds and assistants to instruct its clients, the workers, in the meaning and scope of the

new trade boards.' For the worst cases of sweating, legislation alone is a barren remedy. As our interest here is mainly in out-workers, we have referred above to their case almost exclusively ; but to avoid misapprehension, the reader must be reminded again that both factory-workers and home-workers are contemplated by the Act.

It may be remarked that the four trades selected for the experiment fall into two distinct classes ; and no doubt it was intended that the first trades chosen should present widely different features, so as to secure a testing of the scheme in diverse circumstances. Two of the trades—chain-making and lace-finishing—are small, localised, and carried on in the main at home ; while the other two—tailoring and box-making—are of considerable magnitude, widely scattered and carried on in the main in factories. Moreover, in the first two trades the cost of labour makes up a very large proportion of the total cost of production.

Though it is not possible as yet to come to definite conclusions as regards the ultimate effects of the law on wages and employment, certain hopeful features which are said to be observable in the present consequences may be noted. Despite the fact that the new rates are in some cases much above the old ones, it is declared that the prices of the product have shown no disposition to rise at all commensurately,¹ while there is no apparent slackening of employment. This remarkable result is attributed to better organisation

¹ The same appears to hold of Victoria. Mr. Aves says in his report 'that in several trades in which wages have tended upwards there is much testimony to the fact that neither cost nor price have been similarly affected, and in some instances it has been admitted that they have tended in the opposite direction.'

of the work, where that is possible, including the elimination of a certain number of parasitic intermediaries (at Nottingham) ; and to the fact that the costs of the best employers have not been affected appreciably, if at all. Experience has borne out the view that much sweating is due to the absence of standard rates, combined with the presence of some employers who are incompetent, listless, or grasping ; and, unfortunately, the influence of such employers tends to spread under the impulse of competition and to undermine conditions that are tolerable to the worker. The only trade for which detailed information is available is the chain trade, upon which Mr. Tawney has made an admirable report.¹ He points out that piece-rates have been raised by percentages ranging, according to the nature of the work, from 19 to over 60, and that there has been little evasion. The increased rates have been met partly, he declares, by an advance in price, partly by an improvement in quality, partly by a reduction in profits, and ‘ partly, but only to a small extent, by the introduction of electric-welding machinery.’ He sees no reason to suppose that unemployment is being caused or that the balance between factory-work and home-work is being disturbed. The main criticism offered is that the Trade Boards Office is understaffed. One thing that appears to be certain, and not only in the chain trade, is that trade-unionism has been fostered or strengthened by the establishment of trade boards.

If the existing trade boards on the whole succeed,

¹ Number 1 of *Studies in the Minimum Wage* undertaken in connection with the Ratan Tata Foundation. We are also indebted to Mr. J. J. Mallon (Secretary of the Anti-sweating League) for information which has been used above.

economic organisation will doubtless undergo transformation in a more extended sphere.¹ It will probably be found that, outside the trades in which a pressing need for reform was universally apparent, other trades exist in a similar pathological state locally or generally. Agriculture may be a case in point.² It may be that in many parts the forces of custom and the power for good or ill of the landowner, combined with a tacit combination on the part of farmers and difficulties in the way of organisation among the labourers, are keeping agricultural wages down. Upon this question, as well as upon questions affecting other industries that might be cited, we should not be justified in pronouncing off-hand ; but we are fully prepared to find that very large issues may be involved in the success of the experiment in distribution now being tried under the Trade Boards Act.

As in so many other sorts of social betterment, the movement to improve the conditions of home-work has not been confined to a single country, and in Germany an Act came into force in April 1912 which marks a first step towards the suppression of sweating. Under this Act, trade committees, constituted of home-workers and employers, may be formed, in certain trades, to gather information and promote collective agreements. The enforcement of reasonable wages is not, however, insisted upon ; but local authorities may compel employers to improve their methods of giving out work so as to save the workers' time. Moreover,

¹ Not a little may be dependent also on the working of the Miners (Minimum Wage) Act of 1912.

² As is contended in the *Report of the Land Inquiry Committee*, vol. i.

wages-books have to be kept and lists of out-workers. To the passage of this Act, the trade union of women out-workers contributed not a little.¹

To conclude this chapter a few words may now be said of the case of shop-assistants—a long-suffering but by no means of late a dumbly suffering class ²—of whom there are about a million in the United Kingdom, a large proportion being women. Shop-assistants have been weak in their dealings with employers through lack of organisation. Organisation was retarded in part by a foolish pride which viewed trade-unionism askance as a thing peculiarly working-class; in part by the fact that there are some 460,000 shops in the United Kingdom (an enormous number, which would make the enforcement of common rules among them by concerted action exceedingly difficult); and in part by the fact that assistants who are working in shops where a few only are employed could easily be replaced if disagreement arose between them and their

¹ On the subject of sweating and means of checking it see, in addition to the works mentioned, *The Crusade*, published by the Anti-sweating League, and other publications of the same league; *Sweating*, by Cadbury and Shann; publications of the Labour Association; *Reports of International Congresses on Home Work*, 1910 and 1912; publications of the Women's Industrial Council, including *Report of a National Conference on the Employment of Women Dependent on their own Earnings, held at the Guildhall in October 1907*; *The Problem of Home-work*, by Miss Irwin; *Report of the National Conference on Sweated Industries, held at Glasgow, 1907, under the auspices of the Scottish Council for Women's Trades*, and the publications of this council; *Reports on Women's Work in Booth's Life and Labours of the People*; *Women's Work and Wages*, by Cadbury, Shann, and Matheson; *Women Workers' Quarterly Magazine*; *Progress*, the organ of the Social Service League; and *Enquête sur le travail à domicile dans l'industrie de la lingerie* (1907).

² The shop-assistants' case is well put in *The Working Life of Shop-assistants*, by Hallsworth and Davies.

employers. Nothing gives greater strength in bargaining to employees than working in large groups. Moreover, since women are notoriously harder to organise than men for many reasons, the number of women among shop-assistants prevented a closing-up of their ranks in a firm combination. Nevertheless, trade-unionism is not entirely absent. There is a shop-assistants' union, which is no more, however, than some 20,000 strong; and there is also a union of co-operative employees of more than twenty years' standing containing nearly half of the 60,000 to 70,000 employees in distributive societies. The grievances complained of are long hours, low wages in very many cases, living-in, and the lack of holidays.

The absurdly long hours afford a vivid illustration of the way in which inconvenience and suffering may be caused, without any appreciable economic gain, by the lack of general agreement or regulation. Stress of competition induces shop-keepers to keep their shops open as long each day as possible so as to avoid the risk of missing customers. Throughout the excessive daily period of employment which results, frequent intervals are no doubt interspersed; but these intervals are of little value to the shop-assistant—who must be on the premises—or to his employer. They are too short to be used for rest or recreation, and we have never heard it seriously argued that they can be economically occupied to an approximately exhaustive extent on other work in the shop. Nobody to-day would maintain, as Ure did at the time of the early factory controversy, that the real hours of work are the sum of the minutes or seconds when people are actually performing operations. At very little, if

any, inconvenience to the public, the shop-assistants' work might be concentrated, hours being shortened and intervals closed up. Railway companies have realised the value of this concentration of work on the part of those serving the public ; unless the demand at any ticket-office is fairly continuous it is opened only at times just before the departure of trains, and the public has to learn not to clamour for tickets at other times. This example is not a perfect analogy, owing to the fact that travel on the line can only take place at specified times, but it is sufficiently similar to make its citation relevant. Another bad consequence of long hours in shops is that a large section of the public gets into the bad habit of giving unnecessary trouble by buying in needlessly small quantities and therefore frequently—and all trouble must be paid for. Goods which are not rapidly perishable could be bought in larger quantities. And hand-to-mouth buying is undesirable for buyers as well as sellers, because hand-to-mouth buying usually means carelessness in thinking out expenditure. There are cases, of course, in which establishments must be kept open for long hours—for instance, restaurants ; but in these shift systems can be introduced, as they have been here and there, with the late shift worked in weekly spells.

Shop-keepers have not been blind to the evils of long shop-hours ; but it is realised that so long as competition is untrammelled they are irremovable. Competition may be over-ridden by mutual consent ; but, in the matter of shop-keeping in a fairly large town, mutual consent would mean a tremendous effort at organisation, and at any time it might break down. That practically it is impossible to secure, has been proved more than

once. Miss Irwin, for instance, in her evidence to the Select Committee of the House of Lords on early closing of shops in 1901 said, with reference to mutual agreement: 'I believe that in Glasgow there was a pretty general agreement—almost two-thirds of the shopkeepers having agreed to close early—and I understand that it was tried for a time, but that the minority spoiled the movement.' Miss Irwin was also of opinion that employers would welcome a common rule of shorter hours for all. Still speaking of Glasgow, she said that she had interviewed from 100 to 150 employers without meeting with one who really objected to legislative action with this object. It would seem that the only feasible way of escape from the enormous economic waste of many kinds entailed by the long hours is by way of State action. Regulation is easy to enforce because it is useless to keep a shop open unless the public can see that it is open; and if the fact of its being open is apparent to the public it must be apparent also to those appointed to inspect. It should be observed that the special difficulties to which attention has been drawn do not exist in the case of production, since production takes place according to anticipation of wants and not contemporaneously, to any exact extent, with the expression of wants.

An Act requiring the provision of seats for female assistants in the proportion of not less than one seat for every three assistants was passed in 1899. It was preceded by Shop Hours Acts, the first of which appeared in 1892; but none related to persons over eighteen, except as regards the early closing of shops, which was initiated in 1904 and was then left to the discretion of the local authorities, most of whom

seem to have been too discreet to take action. A consolidating Act, which meant improved conditions in some respects, was passed in 1912. It enacts that on at least one week-day in each week a shop-assistant shall not be employed about the business of a shop after half-past one o'clock in the afternoon; that local authorities may make arrangements in this matter uniform, subject to certain provisions; that proper intervals for meals shall be allowed; that persons under the age of eighteen shall not be employed more than seventy-four hours, including meal-times, in any one week; that female shop-assistants shall be supplied with seats in the proportion of at least one seat to every three such assistants in each room; that local authorities, on certain conditions and subject to confirmation by the Secretary of State, may fix the hours on the several days of the week at which all shops or shops of any class are to be closed, either throughout the areas of the local authorities or in specified parts, provided that the hour is not earlier than seven in the evening on any day of the week, apart from the day of the weekly half-holiday. Exceptional cases are allowed for: some trades being exempt from the half-holiday regulation and some trades from the provisions as regards evening closing. Subject to certain modifications, the Act applies also to Scotland and Ireland.

The existing law does little to limit the hours of those over eighteen, and so far the problems of wages and living-in have not been touched. As regards the latter, the majority of the Departmental Committee on the Truck Acts in 1906 recommended a better regulation of living-in, while the minority of two proposed its prohibition. New Zealand appears to have gone further than

any country in the way of protecting shop-assistants. Generally, fifty-two hours a week and nine hours (excluding meal times) on every day but one, when eleven are allowed, are the maxima ; and these maxima apply not only to persons under eighteen, as in the United Kingdom, but to all shop-assistants, male and female. Shops must also close at 1 P.M. one day in the week. In the case of women, employment must cease at 6 or 7 P.M. (according to the class of shop) for four days in the week, and at 9 P.M. one day in the week. Certain exceptions are allowed in the case of scheduled shops (which are mainly concerned with the sale of food). Reasonable sitting accommodation for female assistants must be provided as in the United Kingdom. Minimum wages are also laid down.

CHAPTER VII

PUBLIC AID

THIS chapter will be concerned with what may be termed the problem of pauperism for want of a better word. A state of 'pauperism' exists whenever a person needs the special help of society for his or her maintenance. This definition will serve for the present, though the problem must be taken to include those cases in which the individual is capable of supporting himself in a fashion, and perhaps desires to do so, but in a fashion which the community cannot suffer. Further, pauperism must be taken to exclude all kinds of dependence upon the public which, by custom or law, have been approved for normal cases, such as dependence upon the State for education, or a part of it, and for old-age pensions, and such as dependence upon the community at large for medical and surgical treatment in hospitals outside the control of the Poor Law Guardians. The need for these distinctions is obvious; but it is worth while stating them if only to show that the term 'pauperism' does not mark a simple contrast between dependence upon the State or the general public on the one hand and independence on the other hand. On the contrary, the condition of pauperism is rather to be defined by the decision

of society with regard to the degree and kind of independence normally required of its members.

Probably, the best course to pursue will be in the first place to outline the schemes of relief which have been tried or recommended since public aid was placed on a new basis in England in 1834, and in the second place to bring out the salient points of sociological doctrine bearing upon betterment in this matter.

It needs but a few words to define the new ideas with which a fresh start was made in 1834. The Poor Law Commissioners insisted that the recent dispensation of public aid had tempted and even encouraged people to lean on the public authorities. Not a few paupers were better off than many independent labourers, and thousands fell into the habit of taking no trouble to seek work for themselves. It fast became the normal thing to feel that no disgrace attached to the receipt of relief in any circumstances ; and equally fast it became the normal thing in many districts for employers to feel that no disgrace attached to their placing a part of the cost of their labour on the rates. Mr. Kirkman Gray says of the Commissioners of 1834, that when they abolished the allowance system, 'they thought they were "dispauperising" the labourers ; they were really dispauperising a section of the employers.'¹

'It is now our painful duty to report,' said the Commissioners, 'that in the greater part of the districts which we have been able to examine, the fund, which the 43rd of Elizabeth directed to be employed in setting to work children and persons capable of labour, but using no daily trade, and in the necessary relief of the impotent, is applied to purposes opposed to the letter,

¹ *Philanthropy and the State*, by B. Kirkman Gray, p. 96.

and still more to the spirit of that Law, and destructive to the morals of the most numerous class, and to the welfare of all.' But their recommendations went beyond the proposal to enforce strictly the 43rd of Elizabeth. Indeed, that Act left a wide scope to the judgment of local authorities—too wide a scope for a nineteenth-century English urban community, the Commissioners would seem to have imagined. Its intention that aid should be furnished in a variety of ways, adapted to the peculiarities of each case, rendered it unsuitable for circumstances in which the requisite knowledge for making the treatment fit the case was lacking. It seems to have been the common impression that this knowledge was bound to be lacking in town-parishes, and, united with this impression, there appears to have been some doubt as to whether diversity of treatment according to the character of applicants was desirable. Indeed, the report of 1834 insisted that discrimination according to merit in granting out-relief would probably lead to fraud. Diversity of treatment, too, of persons of the same class—the able-bodied for instance—seemed to offend against the dictum that 'the State should be no respecter of persons,' rigidly interpreted, and in those days there was no disposition to conceive of the State as standing *in loco parentis*. Moreover, there naturally arose concern as to the feasibility of getting appropriate differentiation of cases through the action of public officials. Among these and other considerations, the Commissioners of 1834 had no difficulty in finding sufficient reason for proposing that the same general rules should be applied throughout the country, that the Guardians (the new controlling body suggested by them) should keep the

state of able-bodied paupers inferior to that of the lowest paid of the normally employed, independent persons, and that to insure their doing so residence in a public workhouse should be required. Hence Mr. and Mrs. Webb affirm that three principles were embodied in the report of 1834—namely, (1) the principle of national uniformity; (2) the principle of less eligibility; and (3) the principle of testing by offer of the workhouse.¹ These principles were extensively applied, though the workhouse test was not universally enforced—as it could not be, owing to the inadequacy of institutional accommodation—and numerous exceptions to the reference of the principles were admitted from the first. After what must have been a very hard struggle for the masses at the bottom of the social scale, the country was eventually shaken comparatively free from dependence in normal circumstances on the poor rates, a contributory cause undoubtedly being the rising wages which followed the industrial revolution. For the antecedent conditions, the disturbances caused by the great war, the heavy taxation needed to maintain it, and the disorganisation connected with the early stages of the industrial revolution, must be held in a high degree responsible.

Though the principles of 1834 were never strictly enforced, and it was never really possible to enforce them strictly, a serious attempt was made to bring about the administration of poor relief in the spirit of these principles. This attempt was, on the whole, successful, perhaps because the spirit of these principles was in full accord with the *laissez faire* temper of the times. However, the patent differences between the

¹ See *English Poor Law Policy*, by Mr. and Mrs. Webb.

needs, deserts, and potentialities of the applicants who came before the guardians, the unassailable fact that objective causes beyond the control of the individuals affected were frequently the causes of destitution, the unpopularity of the new Poor Law with the masses, and the rebukes of philanthropists, soon brought about significant departures from the strait ways laid down for the guardians by the Poor Law Commissioners. These departures were hastened by the suspicion that harshness was demoralising society, not merely by creating among the poor a sense of unjust treatment, but also by inducing the well-to-do to give aid indiscriminately in doles of food, shelter, free breakfasts, and gifts of money. So great had modification become by the middle of the century that the doctrinaire grew alarmed lest the troubles of the first quarter of the nineteenth century should be repeated. But it was plain that undeserved and unnecessary hardships would be inflicted on many by the drastic deterrence which the Royal Commission had contemplated; that individuals ran the risk of suffering permanently through not seeking aid when the attitude of the eleemosynary authorities was unsympathetic; and lastly that the country would not suffer an unmitigated application of the principles of 1834. Hence the negative step of checking laxity in the granting of public aid was accompanied by the positive step of organising private charity. To this turning point in policy official sanction was given by the Goschen Circular of 1869. Its immediate effect was a sudden descent in the numbers normally in receipt of poor relief.

About this time, in 1869, the Charity Organisation Society was founded. It had been preceded by

the 'Society for the Relief of Distress,' established in 1860, and the 'Association for the Prevention of Pauperism and Crime,' established in 1868.¹ The public movement out of which these three societies originated was the prime cause of the Goschen Minute of 1869, which recommended mutual understanding between the boards of guardians and charitable agencies, the checking of indiscriminate charity, the concentration of private charity on non-Poor Law cases, and the avoidance of overlapping. Charity organisation societies spread throughout the country and settled down to action on a coherent policy of securing assistance for the exceptional cases which suffered needlessly, and to the national loss, under the reformed Poor Law; of supplementing and advising the charities, in order that indiscriminate almsgiving and overlapping might be prevented; of enlisting voluntary workers and trying to secure that help should always be granted on a basis of individual knowledge, obtained by personal intercourse and patient investigation, and that it should be accompanied, wherever possible, by counsel and personal influence. That the charity organisation societies deserve the gratitude of the country for voluntarily assuming the task of supplementing the functions of the guardians and conscientiously carrying through what they had undertaken, not even their keenest critics could deny.² But the arrangements thereby made were not wholly satisfactory. Far too many normal cases of distress, occasioned solely by objective causes, were left to the

¹ See Kirkman Gray's *Philanthropy and the State*, p. 120 *et seq.*

² For Mr. Kirkman Gray's criticism, see p. 373. A full account of charity organisation work will be found in the writings of Mr. C. S. Loch. See also Mrs. Bosanquet's volume (1914) giving a history of the activities of the Charity Organisation Society.

precarious sympathies of private persons of another class. Dr. Münsterberg rightly makes much of the naturalness restored to public aid by the use of the personal factor—by the *Hilfe von Mensch zu Mensch*—and the giving of help on the basis of personal knowledge;¹ but it must be pointed out that there is a vast difference between assisting people in the light of information about them already possessed (as it was in the small and stable social unit of the mediæval order) and regulating the aid given to a person in need according to information obtained by observation and inquiry after the need had arisen. One can readily understand that some people detest being investigated and tabulated on the case-paper system, and resent it the more, the more normal the circumstances which account for their distress. What the individual can suffer at the hands of officials, he cannot always bear from neighbours, or fellow-citizens—from self-constituted judges of his manner of life who presume to admonish and are transparently anxious not to demoralise him. To some the whole experience of being thus aided by organised benevolence is demoralising. The fault was not with the Charity Organisation Society as a system, but with the fact that to its proper sphere of usefulness there was added a large group of cases, more or less normal, which could not be satisfactorily left to the guardians, and which at the same time, as ‘normal,’ were not unnaturally looked at askance by the authorities of the charity organisation societies. Moreover, the systematising of private benevolence, as it was voluntary, was not exhaustive of the country, and among

¹ *Das Elberfelder System*, by Dr. Münsterberg.

the charities there was a lack of uniformity in policy and in adequacy of means. Hence one reason why help from private sources was felt to be an untrustworthy prop, and its organisation added little to the feeling of security among the masses.

It will not, of course, be imagined that from 1834 up to the present time the functions assumed by the State remained approximately the same. Through local initiative and the different points of view of the constantly changing presidents first of the Poor Law Board and then of the Local Government Board, and in consequence in some degree of varying conditions, the policy of the guardians has been altered and extended and diversified from time to time. At present there is uniformity of policy, theoretically, only in the treatment of vagrants, who are given indoor relief with deterrent features in respect of diet and tasks imposed.¹ But the system of poor relief as a whole has remained up to the present the more or less unsystematic and varied intermixture of the activities of the guardians and the activities of the charities.

Of the new movement described above, not the least important part was the enlisting of the services of voluntary workers to give to those in distress what money cannot give. Nobody has more eloquently expressed the need for their help than Canon Barnett. 'The administration of the official is apt to become rigid,' he argued; 'more and more rigid as it is strengthened to prevent possible abuses . . . the most perfect mechanism must fail to fit into human society. It would be a bad day for London if no one were interested in the poor; mistakes are often

¹ See Mr. and Mrs. Webb's *English Poor Law Policy*.

better than neglect. . . . Must the choice lie between the officialism of a central authority and the muddling of local authorities? The answer I submit is, "No" if unemployed people of goodwill be used.' And, he contended, 'People of goodwill abound. Many of them are able, experienced in administration, well educated, and familiar with affairs. . . . Many of them have leisure, and their goodwill makes them anxious to serve their generation. . . . They are unemployed. Their own sense, as well as the warnings of the wise, keeps them from trying the old ways of charity. They will not play the Lord and Lady Bountiful; they will not be irresponsible meddlers in their neighbours' affairs. . . . The administration of poor relief must be scientific, and it must be human. The end can hardly be reached unless the people of goodwill are used. To refuse their service is to miss the greatest force at Governors' disposal. To let it flow uncontrolled is to invite waste and mischief.'¹ In the same vein Mrs. Barnett has said: 'The problem before reformers is, how to control the charitable and use voluntary goodwill to help the officials. "It takes a soul to raise a soul" is still true, and the secret of the success of religious bodies is that they fearlessly use the influence of individual character on individual character.'²

To historians in the future the 'Individualising' movement, in the matter of the provision of public aid, combined with the organisation of voluntary aid in money and service, will stand out as a significant event in the evolution of public aid. And as the reform of the sixteenth century was to some extent international and not merely English, so the reform witnessed in the

¹ *Towards Social Reform*, p. 52 et seq.

² *Ibid.*, p. 172.

second half of the nineteenth century worked itself out in many countries. The famous Elberfeld system—which owed its initiation in the middle of the nineteenth century to Daniel von der Heydt of Elberfeld—is one type of the new schemes. It aims at treatment based on due discernment of the peculiarities of each case, at decentralisation of the work of poor relief, and at placing the decision as regards the treatment of cases partially with those who are engaged in their treatment. Generally speaking, it consists in dividing a district up among a number of workers arranged in groups. Each worker takes responsibility for a very limited number of cases; and for consideration of the means to be adopted in each case meetings of the workers are periodically held. The system has spread widely over Germany and into Austria and Switzerland.

In the New as in the Old World the twofold reorganisation of poor relief, which means on the one side increased stringency in the administration of public funds and on the other side the organisation of charity and voluntary work, has played a leading part on the social stage. Nowhere was reorganisation more needed than in some American cities, and nowhere were the effects more striking. One outcome of the tendency to put a check on the misuse of public funds in unwise alms-giving, is to be seen in the institution of central State authorities concerned with poor relief. Massachusetts led the way in 1863, and at the present time most of the leading States have created such authorities. Their powers and duties vary. Some simply collect information and tender advice; others exercise control and assume positive functions. The

special need in the United States for the reform that was carried through will be readily understood when the mixed population, its constant migration from place to place, the rush caused by new productive ventures, and the hasty makeshifts with which a community is apt to rest temporarily satisfied when towns are growing and change is rapid and there is little leisure for deliberation over system in local affairs, are borne in mind. It will be fully realised by those who have read Mr. W. H. Davis's 'Supertramp.'

The positive side of the rearrangement which has been taking place in the United States is to be found in the extension of private charity and the foundation of numerous institutions for the aid of the poor, particularly after 1890. Another positive feature of recent philanthropic endeavour consists in the multitude of institutions whose object is to furnish education in the exercise of charity and attract voluntary workers. For more than half a century there have been some societies for improving the position of the poor, but too many of them tended to degenerate into mere almsgiving bodies. Reform began in the late 'seventies.' The first Charity Organisation Society was set up in Buffalo in 1877, and there are now more than 200 such societies, which are known either as 'Charity Organisation Societies,' 'Associated Charities,' or 'Bureaux of Charity.' The chief objects of these societies are to guide public opinion, make investigations, awaken benevolence and direct it along proper lines, particularly with a view to securing that assistance shall suit the conditions of those in need of it, without fostering dependence, and be accompanied by personal interest and service. Naturally, they vary greatly in respect

of the purposes and methods to which they give most attention. The Boston society, one of the strongest, has an army of friendly visitors, who keep in touch with cases under the Poor Law and others. These friendly visitors neither investigate nor dispense aid. At the present time it is felt that their effectiveness would be weakened were they to perform either of these functions. The New York society does not aim at enlisting a large army of social workers. It engages in important educational activities, and publishes the well-known paper *Charity and the Commons*, the influence of which has spread over the whole Commonwealth. This society also founded a school for philanthropic work, which has served as a model for those instituted later in Boston, Chicago, and St. Louis.

The French system of poor relief is of a different order from the systems of the United Kingdom, the United States, or Germany. For in France poor relief has never been made completely obligatory, despite the law of 1793. Aid outside the institutional assistance provided by hospitals, almshouses, homes, and asylums is dispensed by charity boards (*bureaux de bienfaisance*). The funds of the charity boards, of which there are not half as many as there are communes, are derived from local subscriptions as well as from public funds; and they are distributed by paid officials in the main. An attempt to introduce the Elberfeld system into parts of Paris failed. Gide explains the situation in France with the generalisation that, in Catholic countries, public relief tends to remain optional, while in Protestant countries, through reasons connected with the reformation, it has become an obligatory State function. The optional or semi-optional system is widely defended

in France, on the ground that its opposite infringes the liberty of the poor by suppressing, or tending to suppress, begging; dissociates the assistance of the poor from the human sympathy which should be given with material help, and thereby robs the more deserving of the liberal treatment which they would otherwise receive; and, further, is apt to be abused. 'Systematic and more or less centralised charity,' says Professor Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, 'is exposed to the danger of offering to the poor a system of assistance upon which they can rely, and which, therefore, induces them to cease to make any efforts to ameliorate their condition themselves.'¹ Leroy-Beaulieu thinks that private alms will not be depended upon in quite the same way. To combat these contentions in England would be a work of supererogation, but it is of interest to note, particularly when we consider the proposals now before the country to manage and discipline still further those who chronically fail to support themselves, that many thoughtful persons who have lived where there is an easy sufferance of beggars are genuinely appalled at the severity of their treatment, or at their neglect, where the State has assumed much responsibility for those who are not self-supporting.² It is sufficient to say here that the organisation of private aid side by side with official aid, and the enlistment of voluntary workers, would meet the part of their objections to which we attach weight. Needless to say, there are others in France, and a numerous band, who,

¹ *Traité d'Économie Politique*, vol. iv. p. 492.

² Compare, for instance, the strictures passed by Mme. Th. Bentzon on the Boston system and Leroy-Beaulieu's approval expressed in his *Traité d'Économie Politique*, vol. iv. p. 491 *et seq.*

like Gide, are convinced champions of the obligatory system.¹

Naturally, it is in countries without an obligatory system that religious bodies are most active in dealing with cases of distress, but universally they perform important functions of this kind. Though the aid furnished by religious bodies is apt to suffer from bias and is in danger of becoming too indiscriminate, it is frequently dispensed in a highly efficient manner. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is active in many countries and calls for special notice, as do also the Jewish benevolent associations.

Enough has now been said to show that, if extent is any criterion of importance, an important movement for supplementing the principles enunciated in England in 1834, and so bringing them into harmony with the humanitarianism which began to glow in western civilisation in and after the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, sprang up and persisted in most of the leading industrial countries. But despite this movement, or possibly as a later phase of it, the conviction gained ground in England that the time was ripe for a thorough scrutiny of the system of poor relief by a Royal Commission. No doubt there were numerous reasons for this conviction. There had been for many years much criticism of the system in operation, and the critics could make out a strong case. The country was far wealthier per head at the beginning of the

¹ The authorities for this brief sketch of conditions abroad are too numerous to mention; but we may specially refer, in addition to works already cited, to the lengthy articles in the new edition of the *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften* of Conrad, Lexis, and others, and the writings of Professor Devine.

twentieth century than it had been when the foundations of the system of poor relief were laid; so that courses of action, originally too costly for adoption, could no longer be ruled out on the ground of expense. Moreover, to-day there is a fuller understanding of the causes of indigence, and of the bearing upon indigence of the economic system in its actual working—in short, of cause and effect in the social whole. The Poor Law was drafted in the ‘thirties,’ before the ‘industrial revolution’ was approximately complete, and hardly with a crystal clear conception of what was entailed socially by the new economic order. In the ‘thirties’ stress was laid on the subjective causes of poverty. Now for some years the opinion has been gaining ground that the objective causes—trade cycles, the seasonality of some trades, alterations in the lines of foreign trade, industrial readjustments, labour overflows from industries using many youthful hands, and the casual labour system—must be given an equally important, if not a more important, place. And besides these considerations, there is another of a less concrete kind which is vaguely admitted—namely, that society is in effect prescribing minima standards of living and efficiency, and in doing so is assuming an obligation to preserve them. Again, the development of local government renders possible to-day what was impossible even half a century ago. Also the feeling of solidarity in society, and the recognition of social obligations, have undoubtedly been growing, while democracy has been more fully realised and has brought fresh points of view.

We have now to consider in their broadest aspects the proposals made in the two main reports of the

recent Royal Commission (1905-9). The criticisms passed by both reports on present methods need not be reviewed as most persons are alive to existing defects. The questions at issue are whether, and in what way, they can be remedied. Moreover, nothing need be said of proposals relating to the means of reducing the unemployment of the fit (one of the main causes of distress), or relating to insurance against unemployment, as these matters have been dealt with at length in our second volume.

Apart from certain training establishments, the management of which it is proposed to assign to the Home Office, the Majority Report recommends that all public aid should be controlled and dispensed by *ad hoc* committees of existing local authorities, the committees to contain also co-opted members ; and that voluntary aid councils and committees should be instituted, to work side by side with the public aid bodies, in order to bring private charity into touch with public aid and insure suitable treatment for special cases. The Minority Report, on the other hand, divides those in need of public aid into classes, and assigns responsibility for the treatment of the able-bodied to a labour department, under a minister of labour, and responsibility for the treatment of the other classes to committees of local authorities as follows :—

1. Children of school age to education committees.
2. Children under school age, the sick, the infirm, and the aged, for whom institutional accommodation is provided, to health committees.
3. The aged, for whom institutional accommodation is not desirable, to pension committees.
4. The mentally defective to asylums committees.

With several independent committees sharing the work of public aid, it is evident that some co-ordination of their activities is essential. The minority, therefore, suggested in their report that each local authority should appoint a registrar of public assistance to prevent the overlapping of the aid dispensed by different committees and, when needful, to recover costs. The objection was made that the registrar would inevitably be drawn into settling fundamental questions of policy. And, no doubt in consequence of this criticism, in the Bill, privately drafted to give effect to the proposals of the minority, it is declared as follows : that all matters relating to the exercise by the council of the powers mentioned below 'shall stand referred to such committee, not being either the education, health, or the pension committee or the committee for the mentally defective, as the council may determine; and the council may for this purpose appoint a public assistance (co-ordination) committee, and may constitute such committee of members' representing the other committees as aforesaid, or in such manner as the council may determine.' The powers referred to are: '(a) To prevent any improper overlapping between the public assistance granted from different sources to the same person, or to different members of the same family; (b) to secure that all domiciliary assistance is given in accordance with the conditions prescribed by statute or regulation in pursuance of a statute or resolution of the council; (c) to provide for the recovery of the cost whenever such recovery is required by or enforceable at law; and to ensure that no person entitled to public assistance and in need of the same shall fail to obtain it.'

The registrar, or registrars, of public assistance would be the official, or officials, as the case might be, of this committee.

It would seem at first as if the disagreements between the two reports related mainly to machinery, but closer scrutiny will show that the distribution of work between different committees proposed by the minority is an outward sign of a change in principle which severs their policy from that of the majority. This will be brought out in due course.

We may now consider how the two parties would deal with those who require temporary maintenance with work or training. The Majority Report suggests that they should be given home assistance, partial home assistance, or institutional assistance, according as each was most likely to prove appropriate, accompanied by daily work in an industrial or agricultural institution or colony or otherwise, as the Public Assistance Authority might determine, within regulations laid down by the Local Government Board. Home assistance means assistance at the home, whether in money or kind, and given without requiring the recipient to live entirely in an institution. Partial home assistance means aid for the family, the applicant himself being maintained in an institution and given work. Institutional assistance means continuous maintenance of the applicant and his family in an industrial or agricultural institution or colony, without detention unless the applicant binds himself to stay for a definite period. It is suggested that the work associated with home, partial home, or institutional assistance might be carried on mainly in one institution for each county borough, containing inexpensive workshops for industrial occupations and

land for outdoor work, and that the work of each person should be adapted as nearly as possible to his previous calling.

We have next to contrast with these recommendations the recommendation of the minority. Their proposals they summarise as follows: 'That for the ultimate residuum of men in distress from want of employment . . . we recommend that maintenance should be freely provided without disfranchisement, on condition that they submit themselves to the physical and mental' (including character) 'training that they may prove to require. That it should be the function of the maintenance and training division of the Ministry of Labour to establish and maintain receiving offices in the various centres of population, at which able-bodied men in distress could apply for assistance, and at which they would be medically examined and have their faculties tested, in order to discover in what way they could be improved by training. They would then be assigned either to suitable day training depots or residential farm colonies, where their whole working time would be absorbed in such varied beneficial training of body and mind as they proved capable of; their wives and families being, meanwhile, provided with home aliment. . . . That for able-bodied women, without husband or dependent children, who may be found in distress from want of employment, there should be exactly the same sort of provision as for men.' The majority Commissioners imagine that many of the unemployed will not need training, and it is proposed that such as do not need training should be placed at work as closely suited as possible to their capabilities.

Both reports reject distress works on the ground

that they have been badly managed, and the minority on the ground also that they throw others out of work. The Minority Report holds that while the experience of the policy of the Unemployed Workmen Act has proved 'full of valuable suggestion and promise,' the works instituted under it have proved fatally attractive to men of discontinuous occupation and others on the fringe of under-employment. But if the applicants for work are carefully sifted, and continuous work is given instead of work by the half-week, or even half-day, and if the work is carefully supervised, this objection falls to the ground. Moreover, we should maintain that the institution of distress works cannot possibly throw other people out of employment—in so far as these works would not have been undertaken but for the existence of the unemployed—and that, in so far as they are not distress works proper, but represent a transference of the demand for labour from good times to bad times, their sole effect on unemployment must be to reduce it in the bad times. Cost under the Unemployed Workmen Act might certainly be reduced considerably. The high cost in the past is explained partially by causes suggested in the foregoing and partially by the absence of continuity in arrangements and of systematic organisation. It must be remembered that a large proportion of those unoccupied in times of depression, who fall most easily into distress, are capable of doing rough work and may be fit for no other. For their employment, one naturally looks to road-making, levelling, laying out parks, making lakes and boulevards, clearing sewers, adapting open spaces to recreative purposes, and so forth ; and this might be supplemented by some superior work for the more skilled hands.

Apart from afforestation, which has to be fully tested and which will hardly solve more than a fraction of the problem in the case of urban dwellers, we can think of no other tasks than those indicated above which will be of use and can be easily furnished in bulk. Whether undertakings should be directly controlled by local authorities, private contractors, or public assistance committees, is a matter which need not now be discussed. Such undertakings are in effect recommended as a transitional measure by the Majority Commissioners, some of them, however, dissenting, but payment at the market rate of wages is proposed. Trade depression means so exceptional a condition of the demand for labour, which is quite beyond the control of the workman, that we feel the necessity of making work at such times when the concentration of the public demand for labour is insufficient to absorb all who are ordinarily efficient and not unemployed because they need training.

On contrasting the two sets of recommendations discussed above as regards able-bodied wage-earners, the reader will be at once struck by their extraordinary similarity. But there are differences that lie beneath the surface. The minority declares that 'there must be no idea of preventing people from applying. It is in fact as essential for industrial well-being that every person in distress from want of employment should receive at once the public assistance appropriate to his need, as it is to public health that no sick person should go unprovided with medical assistance.' The majority neither affirm nor reject this principle, but they declare that public aid must be given only to applicants without other means of support. Their view would seem to be that the public authorities must first satisfy themselves

that help is really needed and is not obtainable from other sources. The minority, on the contrary, would make no objection on this score, but would see that any persons legally liable for the support of the persons aided were proceeded against for recovery of cost.

But it must not be supposed that the minority object to 'deterrence' in every sense of the word. There are two senses of deterrence: first, deterring people from applying for aid; secondly, making the aid of such a kind that it will not be deliberately chosen in place of regular work. For the second kind the minority seem to recognise a necessity. They point out in recommending their views that 'maintenance under training, whilst more "eligible" in every sense than starvation in idleness, is less agreeable than the ordinary industrial employment at wages in one's own occupation, with freedom to spend or mis-spend one's wages and one's leisure as is desired.' For the first kind of deterrence, however, they have not a good word to say. They think that harm is done by inducing a person to struggle on without applying for public aid once he has really reached a position in which he cannot properly support himself. The majority, on the other hand, are not prepared to make recourse to public aid of some kind the normal and natural thing as soon as a person is out of regular work, (a) because they are fearful of thereby destroying the forces by which alone self-support is insured in so many instances, and (b) because they are unwilling to atrophy the natural process of mutual support now afforded to one another by members of closely knit social groups. The person who is quite ready to lean on the State in his need is apt to lose the power of facing

a crisis by himself and providing against it, in their opinion, and to lose the sense of obligation to relatives and friends. It would be a serious matter, they hold, on the ground of expense alone, if it became the normal thing for a man whenever he fell out of work, for however short a period, to go at once to a training establishment and place the cost of his and his family's maintenance upon the State. It would be a serious matter, too, on other grounds than expense. If providence in the past were not to be taken into account in determining the treatment of those who wanted aid, a revolutionary readjustment of the balance between individual and social responsibility might be entailed. It is argued by those who fall in with the views of the Majority Report that when providence is normally expected there must be some public expression of the expectation in the mode of meeting its absence by State aid.

As we approach closer to the details of the two sets of recommendation, diversity of view as regards the need for deterrence becomes increasingly apparent. Both reports propose: (1) to maintain the home and let the man live there, attending at the training institution during the day; (2) to maintain the home for the family only; or (3) break up the home for the time being and place all its members in institutions. The pertinent question to ask is, On what principles will it be decided to break up the home or not? The answer given by the majority is broadly that the home must be broken up (*a*) if the home is not satisfactory, and (*b*) if the applicant has not got a good industrial record—that is to say, the family is to be taken as the unit. The minority, on the contrary, would decide upon the retention or destruction

of the home on the exclusive ground of the condition of the home, subject, however, to willingness on the part of the childless wife to undergo domestic training.¹ It is true that it would then become impossible to put pressure on the man through his regard for the home ; but in the other case it would be less possible to put pressure on the woman through her regard for the home. What is gained in the one way may be lost in the other. And there is the pertinent consideration of justice. It is plain that the more we cross-examine the principle of the majority on the ground of abstract equity, the more glaring become its inconsistencies. And we doubt whether anybody would seriously engage to defend it on the ground of abstract equity. Justification—if justification exist—must be sought in

¹ The recommendation runs: 'That for widows or other mothers in distress, having the care of young children, residing in homes not below the national minimum of sanitation, and being themselves not adjudged unworthy to have children entrusted to them, there should be granted adequate home aliment on condition of their devoting their whole time and energy to the care of the children. That for the childless wives of able-bodied men in attendance at a training establishment, adequate home aliment be granted, conditional on their devoting their time to such further training in domestic economy as may be prescribed for them.' Presumably, training in domestic economy would only be insisted upon when necessary ; and when it was not, it is intended, we should imagine, that the woman should do some work to support herself. Domestic training cannot go on indefinitely ; and the question arises, to take an extreme case, as to what has to be done with the model wives of husbands who keep falling out of work because they are incurable members of the least efficient fringe of industrial workers. The obvious answer appears to be that in such circumstances responsibility for a part at least of her maintenance devolves upon the wife, as it does also in a similar case where there is a family which does not absorb approximately the whole of the mother's time. In these cases, wives come into the class of wage-earners, and the same principles must be applied to them which are applied to men, regard, of course, being paid to their different capabilities and the demand of the home for some of their energy and perhaps much of their time.

long-period reactions on social functioning. The supporters of the principle are afraid to risk the effects of encouraging irresponsibility on the part of some men in respect of marriage and provision for their families after marriage. Their opponents question the magnitude of these reactions, point to immediate hardships, and dwell upon the consequences to the woman and the home of ignoring the woman's careful management when the man's record is bad.

The majority hopes that the worst cases of hardship, including no doubt such as have been indicated above, will be prevented by the co-operation of private charity with public aid authorities. This matter of the place of private charity, we desire to leave over for the present; but we may observe, first, that a covert departure from principle by the admission of a wide class of exceptions, which includes all cases of real hardship, is open to the objection that it may not wholly remove the fear of undeservedly severe treatment (which may be worse to bear than the severe treatment itself) though it does remove the bracing effect upon character which severity is sometimes alleged to have; and, secondly, that the attitude of the working-class public to receiving assistance from the charitable must not be disregarded.

It will now be well to pause for a moment to fix in our minds those implicit principles, brought out above, around which much of the present public discussion is in reality revolving. These principles we propose to call: (1) The principle of deferment, (2) the principle of less eligibility, and (3) the principle of family unity. The principle of deterrence means one or both of the first two, as has already been pointed out.

The first means that persons should be discouraged from applying for aid except as a last resource. It must not be confused with the principle, accepted by all parties, that aid at the public expense must only be provided when, and in the degree in which, self-support or support by legally responsible persons fails. The principle of less eligibility means that the state of those aided at the public expense must not be made preferable to the state of independent people. The third principle has already been expounded with sufficient fullness for present purposes. The minority accept the principle of less eligibility, repudiate the principle of deferment, and are afraid of straining the principle of family unity. In the place of the principle of deferment, they are anxious to see accepted what they call (a) the principle of curative treatment, which is intended to be anticipatory to a large extent on the ground that prevention is better than cure, and (b) the principle of compulsion.¹ The principle of curative treatment is also advocated by the majority, but they repudiate the principle of compulsion. This latter principle entails—to take one example which adequately illustrates it after what has been already said—that people should be compelled to submit to treatment by public authorities once they have shown a disposition to drop beneath accepted minima standards of living and working. It is no doubt in part because of their apprehension lest one authority should tend to treat a family as a whole that the minority recommend a number of authorities instead of one only; though it is in part also because the different sections of the problem call for distinct treatment, and a

¹ See Mr. and Mrs. Webb's *English Poor Law Policy*.

body which dealt with all sections might drift into treating them all more or less alike.

The leading ideas guiding the majority and minority Commissioners respectively are exemplified again in the proposals for dealing with others than wage-earners. The majority would take the family as a whole and only run the risk of breaking natural ties by intervening with public aid in the last resort. The minority advise giving what is seen to be needed and then recovering the cost from the persons liable.

Of others than wage-earners, children have the first claims. The minority would lay down a minimum standard of home care, and remove any children the condition of whom fell below this minimum. If the parents could pay the cost of their children's maintenance in institutions, they would be compelled to do so. The children would not be returned until the education committees were satisfied that their homes were fit to receive them. The majority, too, would not suffer the cruel neglect of children, but they would apparently recognise two standards—a higher one determining the point at which the influence of voluntary social workers would be used, and a lower one determining the point at which steps would be taken to remove the children. In the schools neglected children are easily discoverable. Each case of neglect would be followed up. The majority want to see influence brought to bear on the family and the children taken away only in the last resort; the minority want to get all neglected children at once. The supporters of the majority fear that the adoption of the proposals of the minority would mean the encouragement of a disposition to regard

families as encumbrances and to shift the burden of their support on to the shoulders of the State.¹

Workhouse schools, district schools (commonly known as barrack schools), grouped cottage homes and scattered homes, where the children are boarded, have been used at different times and in different places for children under the direct charge of the State. The district schools were started as an outcome of the condemnation of workhouse schools, but by the 'seventies' public opinion had begun to condemn the district schools also, and in 1896 a departmental committee, appointed in 1894, lent support to the objectors. The most serious part of the criticism related not to maladministration, but to defects inherent in the system. Evidence seemed to show that barrack schools tended to make children 'dull, sullen, and mechanical.' Commenting upon the report in 1897, Mrs. Barnett said truly: 'What child can be childlike who lives by rule; who obeys, not for love's sake, but for necessity's sake; who has no room for choice or for adventure, no experience for imagination?' Criticising the district schools along the same lines, another authority contended that, paradoxical as it appeared, the more faultless the management, the worse was it for the child. To the smaller schools, the objections are of course less; and in view of the alleged unsuitability of some children for boarding-out, and the opinion of some persons with experience that the small district school has its uses, it would be a mistake unreservedly to suppress

¹ An interesting account of the measures taken in Hungary with regard to children, which somewhat resemble the proposals in the Minority Report, will be found in Miss Sellar's *Foreign Solution of Poor Law Problems*, pp. 23-4.

them.¹ In both reports of the Royal Commission which terminated its labours in 1909, boarding-out is held up as the ideal. Yet at the time of issue of these reports only a small proportion of the children in the hands of the State, whether orphans or children 'relieved without parents,' were boarded out within or without the union. Boarding-out is much more common in Scotland, where there is said to be less difficulty in finding suitable homes. Inspection is a difficulty. A large staff is essential—but voluntary workers could be utilised—and it is equally essential that tact should be exercised in inspecting to the end that the foster mother's attitude to her adopted children should not be formalised.

Emigration is a course taken in starting some of the State's children in life which has aroused some bitter opposition. But in certain circumstances there can be no doubt that the interests of the children are furthered by providing for their emigration to our colonies through emigration societies, though the dangers of this method of dealing with the State's children are as obvious as the advantages. Nothing must be done to separate relatives and children when there is a reasonable expectation that the former may be in a position to be responsible for the latter, and the child's position abroad must be watched. Subject to certain safeguards, this policy has been sanctioned since 1850.

In their respective attitudes to voluntary aid, the divergence of view of the majority and the minority Commissioners comes at once to the surface. The majority propose that voluntary aid councils and

¹ On the importance of having special schools for the feeble-minded, see pp. 102-5.

committees should work side by side with the public assistance authorities and committees, and, if possible, in the same buildings. The voluntary aid councils and committees would be representative of the charities, and the public assistance authorities and committees would contain some co-opted members. Generally speaking, public assistance authorities and voluntary aid councils respectively would lay down policy and work through the local committees. In the Majority Report we read: '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. 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 aid due to non-recurrent causes will belong primarily to the sphere of voluntary aid; chronic distress or destitution to the public assistance committee.'¹

Underlying certain of these sentences, the principle

¹ *Majority Report of the Poor Law Commission*, p. 423.

of what we have called deferment may be detected. It is regarded by the signatories as a thing of importance, we may repeat, that every effort should be made to do without public aid, as the habit of dependence on the public is supposed to be easily formed owing to the impersonal relation established when public aid is given. This view has been well put in one of the reports of the public relief authority at Boston, Massachusetts, which argues that it is more difficult for families brought for the first time to a condition of indigence to recover their independence when help is obtained from public sources than when it is obtained from private sources. Help obtained from private sources, the report lays it down, is regarded as a loan to be repaid if possible, whereas recipients of public aid soon get to regard it as something which they have a right to demand and may depend upon as need arises.¹ However, it must be allowed that some people have an invincible objection to receiving any kind of charity — by ‘charity’ voluntary aid from private sources being understood. People who feel such objections are of the backbone of the county and their scruples must be respected, though, happily, they are seldom in danger of needing aid. Moreover, to fight against their healthy prejudices might have the opposite effect to that intended and create a widespread disposition to depend on private charity. It is, therefore, essential that no sort of compulsion should be put on the applicant to have his or her case considered by the voluntary aid committee.

The attitude of the Minority Commissioners to voluntary aid is opposed to that of the majority. They

¹ See also quotation from Leroy-Beaulieu on page 350 above.

would leave it severely alone, though they are anxious to use voluntary workers 'to give to the public assistance that touch of friendly sympathy which may be more helpful than mere maintenance at the public expense.' The minority would also permit the use of voluntarily contributed funds for the maintenance of special institutions, particularly those of an experimental character. But why, it might be asked, should the distinction between using private aid for institutions and directly for exceptional cases be regarded as vital? For a variety of reasons, partially connected with what has been called the principle of less eligibility, public aid authorities must be limited in respect of the expenses they incur for any one individual and the form in which they give aid; and, in consequence of this, some hard cases must be suffered, if there are no funds available which are not tied up by regulations. With the opinions of the minority as to the harm done by indiscriminate charity, most people will be in cordial agreement; but it is difficult to imagine how benefit can result from leaving it severely alone to work its harm at will. It will continue, we know. It would, therefore, seem to be the wiser course to try to control it and direct it into helpful channels. Again, there are the charitable trusts. Their funds are not always used to the greatest advantage, owing to an unavoidable want of knowledge, on the part of those dispensing them, of the field in which aid is needed. Direction would be of immense service, and would be welcomed. Nobody would gain were the leaving of money by will for charitable purposes discouraged. The adoption of the proposal to organise voluntary aid and the charitable trusts, and place them under directing

councils hand in hand with public aid authorities, would in itself mean a reform of the first order of importance. No person need have charity forced upon him; but it is worth while to stop indiscriminate charity and secure for the community special service funds and an administration by which they will be prudently directed to the right ends. The income of the endowed charities alone which come within the scope of the Majority Report is little short of £1,000,000, of which about two-thirds is applicable to the maintenance of alms-people and pensioners, and about one-third to distribution among the poor.

Of minor differences, as regards, for example, the area of administration, laws of settlement and removal (which the minority would repeal entirely), State subsidies, and the co-opting of experts on public aid bodies (which seems to us desirable and not at all undemocratic), it is not our intention to speak in this chapter, the main concern of which is policy broadly regarded; but a word must be said of disfranchisement. There is much truth in what the minority affirms, namely, that 'Evidence goes to show that, so far as disfranchisement has any effect at all, it is a "test" of the very worst kind: deterring the good and self-respecting, and in no way influencing the willing parasite.' It is a favourable augury for our political future that the disfranchisement of those in receipt of public aid has been so keenly resented. The Majority Commissioners, while holding 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,' declare that,

inasmuch as public assistance will often assume a transient form, they are 'not disposed to disfranchise wholesale and unconditionally all who receive public assistance.' They 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.'¹

Even at the cost of some repetition, it will be desirable now to sum up broadly on questions of policy with reference mainly to the sociological opinions underlying the differences between the Majority and Minority Reports of the recent Royal Commission on the Poor Laws.

The leading exponents of the two schools represented by these reports have no quarrel as to the basis of public aid. It may be taken as agreed that no system of poor relief can be justified purely as a matter of business; that every system is reared upon deep-seated feelings of kind, the moral constraint that is felt proceeding from the unity of individuals in society, of which unity this feeling is an expression. Nor is there any vital disagreement as to the ultimate end to aim at. But there is disagreement as to method, because the two schools conceive of society and social reactions in different ways. The one, on the principles of which the Majority Report has been moulded, believe in the enormous importance of individual responsibility, self-direction, and 'natural' social organisation as opposed to the organisation imposed upon the community by the Government. They think that Government could provide no efficient substitute for this natural organisation, or self-organisation, and maintain that its

¹ *Majority Report of the Poor Law Commission*, p. 433.

destruction to any substantial extent would dissipate the motive power of the community, in which alone they can find a guarantee of future progress and even of the maintenance of material welfare at its present level. They strongly incline to the view that individuals tend to slip easily into the habit of dependence, particularly upon the State, that necessity creates character, and that personal powers are apt not to miss their realisation till occasions arise to enforce their display. They therefore feel constrained to temper their attitude to poverty with the determination to prevent its treatment from counteracting the forces creative of independence. Its treatment might become a counteracting influence in two ways. First, it might undermine permanently the self-reliance of an appreciable number of the persons dealt with; and secondly, it might shake the self-reliance of others, and therefore cause people to drift into pauperism who would not otherwise have succumbed. Professor Bosanquet has put this view tersely, but with a distinct inclination to the more extreme view that every case of pauperism must be imputed to some defect in character, in the following words: 'The majority proceeds upon the principle that where there is a failure of social self-maintenance . . . there is a defect in the citizen character, or at least a grave danger to its integrity; and that, therefore, every case of this kind raises a problem which is "moral" in the sense of affecting the whole capacity of self-management, to begin with in the person who has failed, and secondarily, in the whole community so far as influenced by expectation and example.'¹

The more extreme view was attributed by Mr.

¹ *Sociological Review*, April 1909.

Kirkman Gray to the Charity Organisation Society as its official article of faith. He wrote: 'The fundamental error of the Charity Organisation Society consists in a false antithesis between character and circumstance. "There can hardly," writes Mr. Galton, "be a better evidence of a person being adapted to his circumstances than that afforded by success." That in itself seems an unexceptional statement, especially when Mr. Galton adds that "changes are necessary to adapt circumstances to race and race to circumstances"; thus leaving it undecided as regards any particular set of circumstances, whether they are such as we wish to accept or to modify. The Charity Organisation Society, however, assume throughout that the conditions of our social and industrial system are satisfactory enough, and that when failure occurs the fault is to be found not in the circumstances but in the character of the person who fails. . . . The doctrine is plausible, if not convincing, until it is analysed. A large number of those who are worsted in the struggle are found to exhibit well-marked infirmities of character. They are examined as under a powerful microscopic lens by the keen eyes of an almoner, long trained to detect imposture. One wonders whether the character of those who do not fail would come any better through such an ordeal. If a man is in want, he is judged according to whether he has saved money or spent it, and if he has spent it he is undeserving. Yet how many of those who succeed, do so, not because they practised "thrift," but because they were not afraid to spend.'¹ That the reduction of the problem of poverty to one of character is too simple

¹ *Philanthropy and the State*, by B. Kirkman Gray, pp. 115-6.

to hold of our complex social life should be obvious. But it is too simple, also, to reduce the principles of the Charity Organisation Society to the one idea brought out above, though Mr. Kirkman Gray has undoubtedly laid his finger on an early fault of this society when the bias of the community was generally on the side of the social system and against the individual who failed to fit in to his or others' satisfaction. It is possible to hold that serious reactions of a psychological kind are apt to accompany certain modes of dealing with distress without holding that every case of distress is traceable to defects of character as its first cause. Professor Devine, who, as Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society of the City of New York, stands for the principles of the school criticised by Mr. Kirkman Gray, writes of the importance, in order to avoid misapprehension, of guarding against 'creating the impression that those who are unsuccessful in the economic struggle are necessarily the most unattractive and unlovely of neighbours. It is not necessarily so. It has been pointed out that Esau had really a much more attractive personality than Jacob.'¹ Two other relevant passages may be quoted from Professor Devine. 'The relief policy should not be of a kind that will cause the general course of life to be shaped with reference to it; but if it is of such a kind as to cause a feeling of security that disasters of an unpreventable kind will call forth sympathy and practical assistance, a stimulus will result to rational living.'² 'The danger of being pauperised by relief is a real one; but it should not become so exaggerated as to blind us to other

¹ *Principles of Relief*, Devine, p. 179.

² *Ibid.*, Devine, p. 19.

dangers, nor, what is much more likely, should it lead us to underestimate the need for relief or the beneficent result which it may accomplish.'¹ Charity organisation exists now to provide a way out of an awkward dilemma which is presented to many, and is thus expressed by Schmoller: 'Make relief too easy and it is abused; make it too hard and it is still abused by the most debased, while the deserving shun it altogether, preferring unspeakable hardships.'²

It remains to outline the sociological views of those who sympathise with the minority of the recent Royal Commission. They fall into two groups. On the one hand, there are those who maintain that the reactions described already have been grossly exaggerated—as unquestionably they have been by some—and that though they exist, more harm than good is done by paying any attention to them. On the other hand, there are those who, while agreeing that these reactions are far from being negligible, await them with equanimity because they suppose that initiative and self-reliance need not be cultivated in the mass of the population. Their ideal is a society in which the few are made responsible—it may be in a democratic way—and the few exercise direction and initiative. From the masses, in economic matters, executive efficiency is all that is called for. These reformers see in an extension of governmental functions sufficient guarantee of future progress. Our dissent from these latter views will have been gathered from much that has preceded in this volume. In what follows, we shall be concerned

¹ *Principles of Relief*, Devine, p. 26.

² With regard to the disadvantages of excessive deterrence, see the article on Poor Relief in Cannan's *Economic Outlook*.

more especially with the former group, which is probably much the stronger numerically.

Disagreements as to the social reactions to be expected from the adoption of certain Poor Law policies are raised to a higher order of importance when the population question is brought into the discussion. By many sociologists it is now assumed that the rate of increase of the population is to a large extent governed by the judgments of individuals as to the responsibilities which they can assume, and should be so governed to a greater extent. Normally, it is said, a man does not, or should not, marry until he feels that he has established himself in a niche of the industrial system, or sees his way reasonably clear to a comparatively assured income. To put it in another way, society is said to be a unit constituted of smaller units, which are families, or individuals, the potential centres of families. The number and size of each of the lower group units (i.e. families) are, or should be, governed, we are told, by the ability of each adult male to maintain and control a unit consisting of more than himself and bring its members into appropriate economic co-ordination with the rest of the community, when assisted by such limited co-operation on the part of the State as the social whole may deem advisable. In so far as this happens, society is kept continuously in a state of organisation; but in so far as the sub-units transcend the limits thus laid down, society tends to become disorganised, and disorganisation means poverty and much unemployment. It is true that, as things are, population here and there runs altogether ahead of judgment, its actual determination hanging between the strength of physiological impulses and the strength of rationally

founded decisions, framed by individuals, as to the extent of the provision which they are capable of making for families. But the Majority Commissioners who recognise this, hope much from progress as they conceive it, and they are fearful lest the provision of public aid, if moulded in no degree on the principle of deferment, should result (*a*) in an increase of population out of all relation to the organising potentialities and political needs of the community, and (*b*) in further increase in particular of those elements by which it is enfeebled and its average quality is lowered—because the least desirable of the population would tend to increase fastest.

The social reformers who go with the minority of the Royal Commission are much less afraid of injurious social reactions in the matter of population than the school of the majority. Most of them trust more to stability of character on the one hand, and hope more from the effect upon it of improved social conditions on the other hand. Some even maintain that, in its bearing on population, the principle of deferment is quite ineffective at the present time; and that the rate of increase among the classes who make most use of public aid is already higher than that of any other class, and as high, probably, as it physically can be. Moreover, it has been persuasively argued that for many years the rate of increase of the population as a whole has been so slight that the stimulation of this rate is to be welcomed rather than deprecated; and as regards the obvious objection that the stimulation of the rate of increase of the particular class which is now growing fastest would be a public danger, its point is certainly blunted when those who rely upon

it are required to prove that, under modern conditions, the social class of the very poor corresponds with a biological class of inferior type. Finally, the position of those sociologists who declare that population should be governed in the manner depicted above has been assailed : and, for the position of the boldest reformers, it could be at least plausibly maintained that parentage creates the feeling of parental responsibility ; that caution about marrying and having a family springs from the wrong motives ; that the person who is not in a position to marry, after marriage is rapidly brought, by the effect of his new responsibility on his character, into the position in which he can support a wife ; and that children again create the impulses whereby the needful provision for them is secured. It may be that there is some scientific foundation for this secular form of the doctrine that when Providence sends mouths it sends food to fill them ; but, if there is not, a society which presumed that there was, and acted accordingly, might soon fall into a state of social disorganisation with its inevitable train of unemployment and poverty.

The introduction of the family into the argument brings us to another point where conflict between the two schools of social thinkers appears to be irreconcilable. The one school sees in the family the main formative influence upon character. It is almost prepared to affirm that it is better to be brought up badly in a poverty-stricken family, if it is one's own, than to be brought up in an institution, or by boarding-out, however excellent these substitutes for the family may be. The opposing school looks more unwaveringly to the tangible goods in the world. It is prepared to

sacrifice much subtle formative influence, to which it is inclined to attach little weight, for more healthy food, warmer clothing, and more baths. Indeed, it urges the community to fix a standard for these tangible realities, and find them itself when parents fail in their duties, or in their means, whatever may be the sacrifice of things that cannot be measured. On the contrary, the other school feels more confidence in a first recourse to action less curt and direct. At some temporary sacrifice of the material wants of the children, when they do not fall below a certain standard, it would aim at preserving a family intact if by any means it can be so preserved; and, at the same time, it is opposed to further appreciable encroachment of the school on the home. The rising generation may be the nation's children, but it clings to the old-fashioned view that in at least as real a sense they are their parents' children.

Our purpose in these concluding paragraphs has been to lay bare as impartially as possible the sociological beliefs, underlying existing disagreements, which are apt to be lost sight of in the heat of controversy. Many of these beliefs are still based on hypotheses. The majority think that certain massive social reactions would be set up by the adoption of certain policies of public aid, and the minority do not. Here is a question of fact to settle, but it does not seem possible to settle it in the light of existing experience. Laxity in the dispensation of public aid, we know, has been demoralising, but the minority do not recommend laxity. Again, organised private charity is said by the majority to be less demoralising than public aid. But can anybody say for certain that it is, particularly when it is so organised in relation to public aid that

it becomes semi-public? Some of the school of the minority contend that increased State activity would undo any harm which resulted from such social reactions as might follow upon their policy, but we should doubt whether they are able to establish this contention if a considerable extension of State activity were involved. Again, there are the views as to the formative influence of the family, and the necessity of self-cure of the disposition to fall into indigence, the degrees of truth of which have yet to be determined. Our general conclusion, if one may be offered, is this: that a final choice can only be exercised in the light of a knowledge of sociological laws, of which as yet we are ignorant, but that our ignorance is no ground for precluding tentative reforms, particularly in view of the fact that through experiment alone can the requisite knowledge be acquired.¹

¹ In conclusion we desire to thank Mr. G. W. Daniels most cordially for his careful reading of the whole of the proofs of this volume.