

POOR LAW REFORM COMMISSION (IRELAND).

REPORT

OF THE

VICE-REGAL COMMISSION

ON

POOR LAW REFORM IN IRELAND.

VOLUME I.

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



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DUBLIN CASTLE,

10th October, 1906.

SIR,

I am directed by the Lords Justices to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of to-day's date forwarding the Report of the Vice-Regal Commission on Poor Law Reform in Ireland.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. B. DOUGHERTY.

The Secretary,

Poor Law Reform Commission (Ireland),

18, Lower Baggot Street,

Dublin.

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* Mr. Murnaghan, M.P., dissents from this recommendation.

COMMISSION.

BY THE LORD LIEUTENANT GENERAL AND GENERAL GOVERNOR
OF IRELAND.

DUDLEY.

WHEREAS it appears unto Us expedient that an Inquiry should be held into the provision now existing for the relief of the various classes of the destitute, the sick and lunatic poor in Workhouses, Infirmaries, Hospitals and otherwise; and that it should be ascertained whether any changes are necessary or desirable with the object of reducing or adjusting local taxation without impairing efficiency in administration:

NOW WE, WILLIAM HUMBLE, EARL OF DUDLEY, Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland, do hereby nominate and appoint you,

WILLIAM LAWSON MICKS, one of the Commissioners on the Local Government Board for Ireland (Chairman).

GEORGE MURNAGHAN, Member of Parliament,

and

E. COBY BIGGER, one of the Medical Inspectors of the Local Government Board for Ireland,

or any one or more of you to proceed with the utmost despatch, to inquire into, and investigate and report on the following subjects:—

- I.—Whether any Poor Law Unions could be dissolved with advantage to the ratepayers, and without hardship to the sick and destitute poor; and if any such dissolution be deemed desirable, what arrangements by amalgamation of Unions or otherwise should be substituted therefor.
- II.—Whether, in the event of any Unions being amalgamated and the Workhouses thereof being no longer required for Poor Law purposes, such Workhouses could with advantage be taken over by County Councils for auxiliary lunatic asylums under Section 76 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, or could be otherwise utilised for any public purpose.
- III.—Whether it would be possible, either by an arrangement for the maintenance of paupers in adjoining workhouses, or by combining a number of Unions for the purposes of indoor relief, to make better provision for the classification and treatment of the inmates, specially the aged and infirm, sick, lunatics, and children chargeable to the said Unions, and whether any changes in the law and procedure as to the administration and chargeability of relief would be desirable in the event of such combination of Unions being carried out.
- IV.—Whether having regard to the number and capacity of Workhouses, Hospitals, and Infirmaries existing in any County, Union, District or locality, and to the other provisions for the relief of the sick poor, any additional accommodation is now required for the proper treatment of the sick poor, and if additional accommodation is necessary, how it might best be provided.
- V.—Generally to inquire and report whether any, and what administrative and financial changes are desirable in order to secure a more economical system for the relief of the sick, the insane, and all classes of destitute poor in Ireland, without impairing efficiency of administration.

AND WE do hereby authorise you, and every one or more of you, by all lawful and proper ways and means to make full inquiry into the matters aforesaid in such places in Ireland as to you may seem necessary or convenient. And, for the better enabling you to make the said investigation, We hereby grant unto you, or any one or more of you, full authority for all or any of the purposes aforesaid, to call and examine before you, or any one or more of you, such persons as you shall judge necessary and competent by whom you may be the better informed on the matters herein submitted for your consideration, and also to call for and examine all such books, documents, papers, and records as you shall judge likely to afford you the fullest information on the subject of this Commission, and otherwise to inquire of and concerning the premises, and every part thereof, by all reasonable ways and means.

AND WE enjoin that you, or any two of you, upon the examination of the premises, do as soon as can reasonably be, after the date of this Commission, certify and report to Us in writing, under your Hands and Seals, respectively, what you shall have done and may find concerning the premises upon such inquiry and investigation as aforesaid, together with your opinions touching and concerning the several matters hereby referred for your consideration. AND WE do hereby direct that you, or any two of you, may have liberty, from time to time, to certify your several proceedings to Us, as the same shall be respectively completed and perfected, and for so doing this shall be your warrant.

Given at His Majesty's Castle of Dublin, this 12th day of May, 1903.

J. B. DOUGHERTY.

POOR LAW REFORM COMMISSION FOR IRELAND.

REPORT.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN CAMPBELL GORDON, EARL OF
ABERDEEN, K.T., G.C.M.G.,

LORD LIEUTENANT-GENERAL AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF IRELAND.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY :—

1. In accordance with the Commission, of which a copy is printed on the opposite page, we have the honour to submit the following Report.

2. We held our first public sitting in Dublin on the 25th of June, 1903, and our last sitting at Mallow on the 29th of September, 1905, 59 days being occupied in public sittings for receiving evidence. We have also inspected, as far as we are aware, all Workhouses, County Infirmaries, Fever Hospitals, and other Hospitals in Ireland, maintained wholly or in part out of local rates. Moreover, for the purpose of reporting whether any further hospital accommodation for the sick poor is desirable, we visited and carefully inquired into the circumstances of those localities, including many islands off the sea coast, which are remote from any hospital. The number of witnesses examined by us was 743; and we submit in a separate volume as an appendix the evidence received, together with an index arranged according to subjects and also a list of the names of the witnesses.

Sittings for receiving evidence; and inspections of institutions.

3. Our usual procedure was to hold an inquiry at the Assize town of each County, but in some instances we varied this practice for public convenience. After our first few days' sittings for hearing evidence we came to the conclusion that it would be better to visit all the institutions in each County *before*, instead of *after*, receiving evidence about them; and in nearly all cases our inspection of the various institutions concerned took place before we heard the views of witnesses. In this way we were better able to understand the suggestions made, and to discuss the various local proposals with the witnesses. All County and County Borough Councils, all Rural and Urban District Councils, all Boards of Guardians, and all Public Committees connected with Workhouses, Infirmaries, or Hospitals received notice of the date and place of our sitting, and they were invited to nominate witnesses to express their opinions. A large number of members of philanthropic associations and of the general public also attended our inquiries and made many valuable suggestions to us. We also issued formal queries (a copy of which is printed in the Appendix), in order to ascertain beforehand the general tendency of opinion upon the subject.

Procedure in making inquiries.

II.—OBJECTS OF INQUIRY.

4. Having carefully considered our Warrant of appointment it seemed to us that it would be our duty to ascertain how, if at all, a reduction could, without impairing efficiency, be made in the expenditure for the relief of the poor, and at the same time to show, if possible, how an improvement in the method or system of affording relief might be effected.

Objects of inquiry.

5. Various questions in detail are therefore involved, chiefly the dissolution and amalgamation of Poor Law Unions, alterations in the boundaries of various areas, the provision of auxiliary lunatic asylums, the better classification of the destitute infirm and sick, the boarding-out of children, methods for dealing with casuals and vagrants, the erection of additional

Questions involved.

hospitals in some localities, the best method of obtaining payment or contributions from such patients or their relatives as may be considered able to defray the cost of maintenance either wholly or in part, the area of charge for the cost of relief given, the distribution of Parliamentary Grants in aid of local rates, and also other important questions to which we shall subsequently refer.

III.—CONDITION OF IRELAND SEVENTY YEARS AGO, AND REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION OF 1833-1836.

Comparison
between
circumstances in
1838 and 1906.

6. Although we do not propose to review fully the history of the Irish Poor Law in detail, it seems desirable that a brief comparison should be instituted between the circumstances of the present time and the condition of the inhabitants of Ireland at the time when the first Irish Poor Law was enacted in 1838.

Condition of
Ireland in 1836
according to the
Royal
Commission.

7. The population of Ireland, according to the Census of 1841, the year in which a few of the first Workhouses were opened, was 8,175,000. The Census of 1901 showed that the population had fallen to 4,458,000, or to practically half what the estimate was for the population at the beginning of the Great Famine and epidemic of fever in the years 1846, 1847, and 1848. For many years before the passing of the Irish Poor Relief Act absolute destitution used to prevail largely in Ireland for about thirty out of the fifty-two weeks of the year. Charity or mendicancy, according to the point of view one takes, was the sole support of the aged and infirm of the poorer classes; and it was estimated that the number of people in great need of food amounted to the dismal total of 2,385,000 men, women and children. This estimate was made by the Irish Royal Commission of 1833, after three years spent in careful inquiry, but the figures were considered by many in a more or less off-hand way to be decidedly excessive. But if one tries to realize the sufferings of the destitute the total would be little less shocking if it were far below the estimate of the Commission. Even those who thought the estimate of the Royal Commission too high admit the existence of wide-spread destitution.

and in 1906.

8. While they who are well acquainted with the conditions of life in Ireland deplore that a very low standard of requirements of life exists at the present time for a large proportion of the inhabitants of the country, yet it is equally well-known that any approximation towards such shocking destitution as was prevalent before the Great Famine has in recent years been rarely met with, and only in comparatively insignificant proportions. One reason of this, in our opinion, is that the population of the country has in a great measure been reduced nearly one half by famine, sickness, eviction and emigration; and in this way most of the very poor disappeared.

English
Workhouse
system.

9. Having regard to the extent of destitution and poverty that were prevalent in Ireland owing to want of employment the Royal Commissioners in their Report of 1836 came to the conclusion that the English Workhouse system would be unsuitable for Ireland, because after unchecked demoralization by profuse out-door relief in England, the Workhouse system was devised in order to make the lazy and idle seek ordinary employment *which could be got*. The situation in Ireland was, on the contrary, one in which the able-bodied and healthy were willing and anxious to work for any wages, even for two pence a day,* but *were unable to obtain such or any employment*. The English Royal Commissioners of 1834 say with reference to pauperism in England at that time:—

"Nothing is necessary to arrest the progress of pauperism except that all who receive relief from the parish should work for the parish exclusively as hard and for less wages than independent labourers work for individual employers." . . . "Wherever inquiries have been made as to the previous condition of the able-bodied individuals who live in such numbers on the town parishes it has been found that the pauperism of the greater number has originated in indolence, improvidence, or vice and might have been averted by ordinary care and industry."

* Hansard—House of Commons Debates—13th February, 1837, Vol. xxxvi, p. 489.

10. The condition in Ireland was quite different, as the Irish Royal Commissioners reported in 1836. After comparing Ireland in 1836 with England in 1834 the Irish Commissioners say, "It thus appears that the Workhouse system in England is used as a means not so much of setting the able-bodied directly to work as of putting them upon their own resources." So great had been the abuse of out-door relief in England that in many parts of that country all agricultural labourers, and some tradesmen, were paid wholly or in part out of poor-rate. Labourers preferred to receive allowances from "the Parish"; farmers preferred to have poor-law allowances paid in aid of wages; and all such relief to the able-bodied was by means of money payments. For such a state of affairs an offer of admission to the Workhouse was a most proper test, and it operated by restoring ordinary hiring agreements between farmers and labourers; and the outrageous abuse of out-door relief ceased.

Comparison between conditions in England and Ireland.

11. But, as the Royal Commissioners remarked,

"The difficulty in Ireland is not to make the able-bodied look for employment but to find it profitably for the many who seek it. . . . Now if we thought that employment could be had, provided due efforts were made to procure it, the general repugnance to a Workhouse would be a reason for recommending that mode of relief, for assistance could be afforded through it to the few that might from time to time fall into distress, and yet no temptation be offered to idleness or improvidence; but we see that the labouring class are eager for work; that work there is not for them, and that they are therefore, and not from any fault of their own, in permanent want. . . . Our conviction is that the able-bodied in general and their families would endure any misery rather than make a Workhouse their domicile. . . . As their actual relief is required by the able-bodied in general, in Ireland the Workhouse system as applied to them, must prove illusory; and, if it were established, we are persuaded that it would be regarded by the population as a stratagem for debarring them of that right to employment and support with which the law professed to invest them. . . . We cannot therefore recommend the present Workhouse system of England as at all suited to Ireland."

English Workhouse system unsuitable to Ireland.

12. The Irish Royal Commissioners, almost all of whom were thoroughly acquainted with the condition of the inhabitants of Ireland, then proceeded to make two-fold recommendations, one set in favour of developing the resources of the country, so as to make the able-bodied independent, and of assisting those of that class to emigrate who might not be able to procure work. The other set of recommendations involved a compulsory provision for the sick, aged, infirm, lunatics and others incapable of work. The Commissioners qualify their recommendation in one respect by stating—"We must here observe that we do not look to emigration as an object to be permanently pursued upon any extended scale, nor by any means as the main relief for the evils of Ireland, but we do look to it for the present as an auxiliary essential to a commencing course of amelioration."

Two-fold recommendations of Irish Commission—Indirect and direct.

13. The recommendations made by the Irish Royal Commissioners with the object of developing the resources of the country, and of thus improving the condition of the poor, are as follows:—

Indirect recommendations. Development of resources of Ireland.

1. Reclamation of waste land.
2. The enforcement of drainage and fencing of land.
3. Increasing the funds of the Board of Works.
4. Substitution of healthy houses for unhealthy cabins.
5. Bringing agricultural instruction home to the doors of the peasantry.
6. Enlargement of leasing and charging powers to encourage land improvement.
7. Transfer of fiscal powers of Grand Juries to County Boards; and "direct labour," as it is now called.
8. Authority to Board of Works to undertake any useful public works, and to recover cost from local rates, subject to restrictions and approval of County Boards as specified.

9. It was the intention of the Royal Commissioners to inquire relative to the trade and manufactures, to the fisheries and to mining, but they were prevented on account of the short time at their disposal.

Attitude of Government towards development recommendations.

14. These recommendations were put aside by the Government and their official advisers, and only the direct recommendations of the Commissioners for dealing with poverty and destitution were considered. Yet the recommendations for the development of the resources of the country, as the best means for the relief of the poor, were based upon the evidence of residents and other persons well acquainted with the condition of the country, and most of the Commissioners themselves were men of accurate knowledge of the subject. The Commissioners were the two Archbishops of Dublin, the Reverend James Carlisle, Lord Killeen, and Messrs. F. Hort, John Corrie, J. W. L. Naper, W. B. Wrightson, A. R. Blake, and J. E. Bicheno.

Subsequent but unconscious adoption of some of these recommendations.

15. It is interesting, after the lapse of seventy years, to unearth the general recommendations above mentioned, that were placed in the forefront of the report, and to ascertain how far events have justified the opinions and suggestions of the Commissioners, then ignored and subsequently lost sight of almost altogether. As regards the reclamation of waste land, the Commissioners only followed in the footsteps of others, especially the Bog Commissioners and the authors of the 23 County Surveys, most of which were published very early in the nineteenth century by the enterprise of the Royal Dublin Society. Since 1838 the subject has been treated of by numerous writers; and the Devon and other Commissions sustained the recommendations of their predecessors of 1836. Hundreds of writers have also written on this subject from that time to the present day, so that the first suggestion of the Commissioners is, and has been, universally recognised as practicable.

Land reclamation.

Drainage.

16. The second recommendation deals with drainage, and what has just been said of reclamation applies to drainage also, but the carrying out of thorough drainage still remains an essential preliminary to agricultural development in perhaps the greater part of Ireland. Much has been done in both respects since the Commission reported in 1836; and the third recommendation, as to increasing the funds of the Board of Works, vitally affects the power to give effect to the first and second recommendations. The question of reclamation and drainage of land was subsequently legislated upon in connection with the improvement of inland navigation from 1842 to 1856, and in the formation of local Drainage Boards, by the Act of 1863 and of other Acts enabling Drainage Boards and owners and occupiers of land to borrow money for improvements from the Board of Works. There has been therefore a partial adoption, after great loss of valuable time, of what was recommended in the first three suggestions of the Commissioners.

Labourers' Cottages and allotments.

17. The fourth recommendation of the Commissioners in 1836 was again, after a great lapse of time, carried out by the Acts for the Housing of Labourers passed in the years 1860 (ineffective), 1881 (ineffective), and 1883 to 1906. It is noteworthy that allotments of land for the new cottages were suggested by the Commissioners, the rent, tenure, and conditions to be fixed by a body to be established under the title of the Board of Improvement.

Local instruction in agriculture.

18. After more than half a century, the fifth recommendation for the benefit of occupiers of land who universally tilled their holdings in a primitive and unproductive manner, was acted upon. The "bringing agricultural instruction home to their doors" might, it was pointed out, lead to a general change in habits and circumstances and essentially improve the whole of Ireland. This proposal was adopted and acted upon to a very limited extent when in 1891 and 1899 the Congested Districts Board and the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction were established.

19. The Commissioners recommended in the sixth place that the leasing and charging powers of landlords should be enlarged so that land improvement might be encouraged. It is unnecessary to point out that from Deasy's Act in 1860 to the present time land legislation has gone much further than the suggestions of the Commissioners under this head, but, considering the opinions that were prevalent in 1836, it is obvious that the recommendation as to Land Tenure made by the Commissioners were much in advance of the opinions of the day.

Land tenure.

20. The next suggestion and the ultimate fulfilment of it are still more remarkable. It was in the seventh place recommended that fiscal powers should be taken away from Grand Juries and handed over to "County Boards, the members of which should be chosen by those whom they shall be authorised to tax." In 1898 the Local Government (Ireland) Act (*unconsciously*, one may perhaps affirm) carried out this suggestion, with an important variation as to the qualification for electors, and it is curious that what is now known as "direct labour" seems to have been contemplated by the Commissioners, the allusion being "that, by a better arrangement, profitable labour could be found for many of the unemployed at those periods of the year when there is the greatest destitution." Such a "better arrangement" would hardly have been possible upon road work, which was referred to, under the *contract* system.

County Boards and "Direct labour."

21. In the eighth place it was suggested that the Board of Works should be given authority to undertake any useful public work and to recover the cost from local rates, subject to restrictions and to approval of the County Boards. The course indicated in this recommendation is one that has been followed as regards some undertakings, especially marine works and railway construction.

Powers of Board of Works.

22. In the last place the Commissioners state that it had been their intention to report upon the possible development of trade, manufactures, fisheries, and mining. They were, however, obliged to abandon this branch of their inquiry owing to the want of time at their disposal. From the trend of their opinions and from their knowledge of the state of the country and the condition of the people, it is extremely probable that the Commissioners would have suggested effective improvement schemes for the development of Ireland, and have anticipated subsequent experimental measures taken long afterwards by Government and by commercial philanthropic bodies and associations. But the time had not then arrived when such advice as to preventive measures for fighting destitution would be even listened to; and the attention of Government was bestowed altogether upon the direct measures recommended for alleviating destitution and suffering *after they had arisen*.

Development of Trade, Manufactures, Fisheries, and Mining.

23. A short paragraph in the Report of the Commissioners summarizes their *direct* recommendations, and it is as follows:—

Direct recommendations.

"Upon the best consideration which we have been able to give to the whole subject we think that a legal provision should be made, and rates levied as hereinafter mentioned for the relief and support of incurable as well as curable lunatics, of idiots, epileptic persons, cripples, deaf and dumb, and blind poor, and all who labour under permanent bodily infirmities—such relief and support to be afforded within the walls of public institutions, also for the relief of the sick poor in hospitals, infirmaries, and convalescent establishments, or by extern attendance and a supply of food as well as medicine, where the persons to be relieved are not in a state to be removed from home; also for the purpose of emigration, for the support of penitentiaries to which vagrants may be sent, and for the maintenance of deserted children; also towards the relief of aged and infirm persons, of orphans, of helpless widows with young children, of the families of sick persons, and of casual destitution."

Classes to be relieved.

Methods for affording relief.

24. For the purpose of carrying out these proposals the Commissioners recommended that Ireland should be divided into relief districts and that there should be a Board of Guardians for each district—there being a Poor Law Commission as in England, with Assistant Commissioners, to supervise the local Boards. Some details were also suggested as to the administration and management of the various institutions that would be necessary.

Mode of administration.

Summary of
recommendations
indirect and
direct.

Emigration.

Vagrancy.

Some causes of
poverty, and
further recom-
mendations.

General review of
recommendations
of Irish Royal
Commissioners of
1836.

25. Speaking generally the sick, infirm, and lunatic were to be supported in institutions; and employment was as far as possible to be provided for the able-bodied, while those for whom no work could be got were to be given the means of emigrating. It was proposed that half the cost of emigration should be borne by the State and the other half partly by landlords who had within twelve months evicted the emigrants from farms, and partly by a national rate. As regard town tenants the owner of a house from which emigrants had been evicted would not be required to contribute.

26. It was also suggested that vagrancy should be strongly and firmly dealt with. The establishment of penitentiaries was recommended, to which vagrants might be remitted, and any suitable cases might be sent abroad as free labourers to a non-penal colony. Here again the Irish Royal Commissioners were very much in advance of their times.

27. The recognition of some voluntary associations was also suggested for the encouragement of charitable assistance to the poor; and some causes of poverty and destitution were then referred to. Excessive drinking was the first cause specified and the Commissioners recommend the closing of public houses on Sunday, a step that was taken to some extent in 1878. It was also stated that mischief resulted from combining the two licences of grocer and publican, and a change in the law was indicated as being desirable. Some other general reforms were advised as of indirect assistance to the direct legislation proposed.

28. The Report of 1836, made just seventy years ago must be read with great surprise when one carefully notes the recommendations made then, and at the same time observes how almost all of the suggestions were, as time passed on, unconsciously acted upon. This shows how well and truly the Commissioners understood the requirements of the country. It will probably surprise most of those who study the condition of Ireland and who have considered how to improve it to find that a Commission that sat seventy years ago recommended land drainage and reclamation on modern lines, the provision of labourers' cottages and allotments, the bringing of agricultural instruction to the doors of the peasant, the improvement of land tenure, the transfer of fiscal powers from Grand Juries to County Boards, the employment of direct labour on roads by such county Boards, the sending of vagrants to Colonies to be employed there or to penitentiaries in this country, the closing of public houses on Sundays and the prevention of the sale of groceries and intoxicating drink in the same house for consumption on the premises. Such were the recommendations of the Irish Royal Commission of Inquiry into the condition of the poorer classes; and we shall next state how the opinions of the Commissioners were received.

IV.—CRITICISMS ON THE REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

29. The Report of the Royal Commissioners was, as has been before stated, presented to His Majesty King William IV. in the year 1836, and on the 22nd of August of the same year Lord John Russell, the Home Secretary, addressed a letter to Mr. (subsequently Sir) George Nicholls, a member of the English Poor Law Commission, from which very important document it clearly appeared that the Government were not favourably disposed towards the expensive recommendations of the Royal Commission. The letter began by stating :—

Letter of Lord
John Russell to
Mr. George
Nicholls.

"In order to arrive at a practical conclusion with respect to any measure to be introduced into Parliament during the ensuing Session for the benefit of the poor of Ireland, it is most desirable that a person well acquainted with the operation of the past and present system of Poor Laws in England should visit that part of the United Kingdom. There is no one to whom I can entrust such a duty more able to perform it with judgment and diligence than yourself. You will therefore proceed to Ireland in the first week in September, taking with you the Report of the Commissioners of Poor Inquiry in Ireland. . . . You will carefully weigh the important question whether a rate, limited in its amount rather than its

"application to particular classes, might be usefully directed to the erection and maintenance of workhouses for all those who sought relief as paupers. . . . Supposing the workhouse system not to be advisable, you will consider in what other mode a national or local rate might be beneficially applied. . . . Your attention need not be very specially given to the plans for the general improvement of Ireland contained in the Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry; but you will generally remark upon those, or any other plans, which may lead to an increased demand for labour."

30. As Mr. Nicholls had never been in Ireland before, and as the age of guide-books and railways was in its infancy, he very prudently followed, with some short cuts, the route taken by Mr. Henry D. Inglis, the author of the most recent tour in Ireland. A reference to the maps in that book (2nd Edition, 1835) will show the itinerary of Mr. Inglis, marked in red ink; and Mr. Nicholls, in the first paragraph of his report, mentions in their order the names of the towns through which he passed. In some contemporaneous publications it appears that Mr. Nicholls at that time spent six weeks in Ireland, and his report to Lord John Russell, which is dated the 15th November, 1836, is a carefully prepared document of sixty pages in length in the octavo edition.

31. At the beginning of his report Mr. Nicholls states:—

Report of Mr.
George Nicholls.

"I have carefully considered the several Reports of Committees of Parliament on the state of Ireland, as well as the Reports of the late Commissioners of Irish Poor Inquiry, and the evidence collected by them. This evidence establishes so conclusively the existence of a state of poverty throughout Ireland, amounting in numerous cases to actual destitution, that I feel it unnecessary to exhibit any additional proof of the fact. It is enough to state as the result of my own investigations that the misery now prevalent among the labouring classes in Ireland appears to be of a nature and intensity calculated to produce great demoralization and danger."

32. When he comes to report upon the condition of Ireland after his hurried inspection in 1836 (his first visit it will be remembered) he remarks—

"It is impossible to pass through the country without being struck with the evidence of increasing wealth which is everywhere apparent, although of course it is more easily traced in towns than in the open country."

33. But in the very next paragraph there is the following statement:—

"In the country evidence of the extreme subdivision of land everywhere appears, and, as a consequence, the soil, fertile as it naturally is, becomes exhausted by continual cropping; for the cottier tenant, too often reduced to a level little above that of the mendicant, is unable to provide manure for his land, and has no other mode of restoring its vigour but by subjecting it to a long and profitless fallow."

34. He arrives at the correct conclusion that it "does not follow that there is an increase of capital or comfort in the possession of each individual or even of the majority. The reverse is unhappily the fact."

35. Having considered the condition of the country Mr. Nicholls then proceeds to discuss the introduction of a system of Poor Law into Ireland, and he assumes that the objections urged against such a law as the English Act are twofold, "first those founded on an anticipated demoralization of the Irish peasantry, and secondly those founded on the probable amount of the charge." It is true that such objections were urged against an introduction of the English system, but Mr. Nicholls ignored or failed to see that the real objection was that the widespread poverty and destitution of Ireland required such a development of the resources of the country as would ultimately provide employment in a normal way for a reasonable proportion of the population. The Workhouse could only "relieve" those who had fallen mortally wounded in a hopeless struggle. The millions of people clothed in rags, miserably underfed, and unhealthily housed, would not be affected by the *panacea* of Mr. Nicholls. Such millions of the Irish poor as were only a little above the low-water mark of utter destitution, would receive no benefits from the English Poor Law. On the contrary, their few shillings and pence would be reduced by the obligation to contribute their share according to the rate-book towards the upkeep of the

Arguments of
Mr. Nicholls in
favour of
extension of
English Work-
house system to
Ireland, and his
opinion accord-
ingly.

Workhouse. It was from this point of view that the Royal Commission and many writers who published their opinions put forward remunerative *employment* as the remedy for the able-bodied, and *institutions* for those who were physically or mentally unfit for the ordinary struggle of life. The language used by Mr. Nicholls himself, as quoted above in paragraph No. 31 (and it is admitted by all writers to be accurate) proves that workhouses could not relieve the poor, so great were their numbers, until they sank to the condition of hopeless destitution, on the very eve of actual starvation.

36. At page 16 of his report Mr. Nicholls states—

“As the general result of my inquiries I have been led to the conclusion that Poor Laws may be now established in Ireland.”

A “Transition Period” between conversion of occupiers of small holdings into labourers for daily wages.

37. Soon after he adds—

“A system of Poor Laws, however, if established in Ireland must not be expected to work miracles. It would not immediately give employment or capital; but it would, I think, serve to help the country through what may be called its *transition period*; and in time, and with the aid of other circumstances, would effect a material improvement in the condition of the Irish people. The English Poor Laws in their earlier operation contributed to the accomplishment of this object in England, and there seems nothing to prevent similar results in Ireland. Facilities now exist in Ireland for helping forward the *transition* and for shortening its duration as well as securing its benefits, which England did not possess in the time of Elizabeth, or for a century and a half afterwards. By the term ‘*transition period*,’ which I have used above, I mean to indicate that season of change from the system of small holdings, allotments, and subdivisions of land, which now prevails in Ireland, to the better practice of day-labour for wages, and to that dependence on daily labour for support which is the present condition of the English peasantry. This *transition period* is, I believe, generally beset with difficulty and suffering. It was so in England; it is and for a time will probably continue to be so in Ireland; and every aid should be afforded to shorten its duration and lessen its pressure.

“It has been considered that the existence of the con-acre system in Ireland is favourable to such a *transition*. I am disposed to concur in this view; and think that the frequent change and annual hiring of the con-acre will help to wear the Irish peasantry from their now eager desire for becoming occupiers of land and will thus lead them to become free labourers for wages.”

38. The reference to what Mr. Nicholls calls the “*transition period*” is of great interest and importance, as it appears that the bringing about of a “transition period” was the object of the principal promoters of the workhouse system for Ireland. At this stage therefore it seems desirable to ascertain the opinion as to the “transition period” of other hostile critics of the report of the Royal Commissioners. One of these was Mr. (subsequently Sir) George Cornwall Lewis, one of the Assistant Commissioners of the Royal Commission, very soon after a Poor Law Commissioner for England, and afterwards M.P. and Chancellor of the Exchequer from March, 1855, to February, 1858. In the year 1836, Mr. Lewis wrote an interesting book entitled “Local Disturbances in Ireland,” and, after referring to the deplorable condition of the Irish cottier or small land-holder, he observes:—

George Cornwall Lewis on the “Transition Period.

“The remedy wanted for this state of things is to alter the mode of subsistence of the Irish peasant: to change him from a cottier living upon land to a labourer living upon wages; to support him by employment for hire instead of by a potato-ground. This change can only be effected by consolidating the present minute holdings and creating a class of capitalist cultivators who are able to pay wages to labourers instead of tilling their own land with the assistance of the grown-up members of their family. But the landlords cannot consolidate farms because they cannot clear their estates. Consequently the first step towards this improvement cannot be made. The law alone can furnish a remedy; by its assistance alone can the *transition* of the peasant from the cottier to the labourer state be effected. What is wanted is to give the peasant some third alternative besides land and starvation, by which he may be induced to relax that desperate grasp with which he clings to his potato-ground. This alternative (as it seems to me) can alone be furnished by a LEGAL PROVISION FOR THE POOR. . . . Poor-laws are (in my opinion) imperatively needed in Ireland . . . in order to give the Irish peasant an alternative besides the possession of land and starvation, and this for the sake of facilitating the *transition* from small to large farms, from the rude to the systematic mode of cultivation. Moreover it will be observed that the very ground on which a poor-law for Ireland has been above recommended is, that it

"will ultimately lead to the introduction of a system under which there will be employment for the poor; and that a poor-law can alone lead, though indirectly, to the creation of a class of labourers independent of their potato-ground. . . . But besides this it ought not to be overlooked that the main ground on which a legal provision has been above recommended is not so much that the peasantry will be *actually* relieved as that they will feel that they *may be* relieved; that the prospect of relief will give them security, not the receipt of it save them from destitution. A poor-law in Ireland might therefore dissolve the Whiteboy spirit by opening the doors of the workhouse to all, although but a few might be admitted into it. . . . For this peculiar evil there seems to be no remedy except a legal provision for the poor, accompanied with systematic colonization, as affording the only means of passing into a state in which the agricultural population will consist of employers and labourers."

39. To paraphrase these recommendations briefly, the landlords were to be enabled to evict their small tenants by the provision of workhouses into which the evicted tenants could be received. At the risk of being tedious a good many extracts have been introduced with the object of showing clearly one of the principal objects or methods that was in the minds of the framers of the Poor Law Bill of 1838. The community of sentiment between Mr. Nicholls and Mr. Lewis is obvious, and the former was the Draughtsman of the Bill.*

40. Mr. Lewis, who in 1836 published his book above quoted from, in August of the same year furnished *confidentially* to the Chancellor of the Exchequer some criticisms upon the Report of the Royal Commissioners, and his remarks appear to have been presented to Parliament in 1837, though very strangely no reference to this report seems to have been made in the Debates. Mr. Lewis criticised some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission for dealing directly with relief of the poor, and his summing-up indicates the nature of his objections—

Criticisms of G. C. Lewis on the Report of the Irish Royal Commission.

"On the whole it appears to me that the plan of limiting the right to relief to certain classes of the population is radically unsound; that it would increase the mischiefs and curtail the advantages of a Poor Law. . . . Now it seems to me extremely dangerous and impolitic to administer relief to any class without applying the best test of the necessities of each individual which the case admits. In the administration of a Poor Law one thing at least is sure that no *inquiry* will afford protection against undue applications. Now if anything has been proved more decisively than another by the operation of the Poor Law Amendments Act in England it is that the workhouse is an all-sufficient test of destitution and that it is the only test; that it succeeds as a mode of relief, and that all other modes fail."

41. Mr. Lewis then passes on to consider the policy of excluding the able-bodied from relief, and his marginal note to this paragraph is "*Poor Law wanted in Ireland in order to detach the peasant from the soil.*" The following are some extracts from the Paragraph:—

Object of workhouse system in Ireland.

"In the first place then, it is to be observed, that what is wanted in Ireland is not merely a palliative for the distress of the widow, the sick, and the infirm through age, but a means of effecting an entire change in the condition of the peasantry. . . . This want of employment was originally the effect of the sub-division of the soil into small holdings; but it has in turn acted as a cause, and has increased the tendency to sub-divide land which operates so powerfully in Ireland. . . . The system of small holdings thus produced led by a necessary and irresistible tendency to its own development. For the small farmers were able to cultivate their holdings by their own and their sons' labour, and with little assistance from hired workmen; and hence those labourers who held no land had very precarious means of support. . . . Under these circumstances every labourer strove to cease being a labourer, knowing that he could not live by his labour alone; and sought to become a farmer, knowing that he could live by his farm. . . . and thus the sub-division of land having originally led to the want of employment, the want of employment has powerfully contributed to increase the sub-division of land. . . . This state of things has made land a necessary of life to the Irish peasant—a *sine qua non* to the maintenance of a family. From the feelings and interests thus engendered has arisen the Whiteboy system, the main object of which is to protect the peasantry in the occupation of land. . . . Now the main purpose of a Poor Law for Ireland is, by offering to the poor man a sure prospect of a maintenance in case of absolute need, to loosen his hold upon the land and thus to relieve the landlord from the *incubus* which now presses upon him. . . . The Irish landlord and tenant may be said in general to live in a constant state of *mutual fear*. The tenant fears lest he should be unable to pay his rent, and that consequently his goods should be distrained or he himself ejected. The landlord fears lest if he enforces his rights, or attempts any improvement which may infringe the Whiteboy rules, his person or property should be attacked, or his new tenant murdered. . . . A well-administered Poor Law seems to be the only means of bringing

* See paragraph No. 54 *infra*.

"about such a co-operation of the landowners as will enable them to make head against the combination of the peasantry; it would effect this object not only without resorting to harsh and hostile measures, but even by conferring on the poor the irresistible boon of a security against the miseries of hopeless indigence. . . . In the present condition of Ireland I can conceive no other means except a strongly guarded Poor Law of restoring to the landlords the power of doing what they will with their own, a power which, however liable to abuse, is essential to the advancement of agriculture and the improvement of the soil, and to, the consequence of these, an amelioration in the state both of the tenants and labourers. When the Irish peasants feel that land is no longer a necessary of life, and when the public sympathy ceases to be on the side of the Whiteboy, the Irish landlord would find, what the English landlords in the southern and eastern counties have found since the enforcement of the Poor Law Amendment Act, that they are in fact the masters of their own property."

Result of legislation so far as the "transition" was concerned.

42. In the light of what has taken place since 1838 the reading of the foregoing extracts would be amusing were it not that the prosperity, comfort, and happiness of the country were concerned. Absolute strangers to Ireland, who came equipped with learning, with scientific knowledge, with honesty of purpose, and with a hopeful confidence in their own judgment, fearlessly undertook to deal with most complicated problems in the government of a country, as to which they had no sufficient, or indeed any personal, experience to justify their hardihood. And not merely did they put their own views forward without hesitation, but they also treated lightly, if not contemptuously, the carefully considered and deliberate expressions of opinion given by the Irish Royal Commission, which was mainly composed of Irishmen, and was presided over by Dr. Whately, an English clergyman, who was Archbishop of Dublin at the time of this Commission. One, however, of its critics, Mr. Nassau W. Senior, writes fairly in the *Edinburgh Review* of October, 1846 :—

"The Report of the Commissioners contains without doubt many suggestions of great value. With a Commission containing some of the most eminent men in Ireland it could not be otherwise."

43. The fact that such a political economist as Dr. Whately was the Chairman of the Royal Commission ought to have shaken the confidence of his extern critics of that school; but their anxiety was to set up the *English* institution with a full conviction that it ought to be the best arrangement in Ireland, because it, though yet in its infancy in England, was regarded there with general approval. But England had not then enough of labourers to do its work; and Ireland had not then, *or since then*, enough of employment for its labourers. A Workhouse here and there in Ireland could not remove that want of employment and the universal poverty that graded down into the deepest destitution and starvation. Mr. Nicholls, however, said—

"I assume, as the governing principle to be observed in dealing with this portion of the subject, that the Poor Law of Ireland should assimilate in all respects as nearly as possible to the Poor Law system now established in England."

44. In his second report, dated 3rd November, 1837, Mr. Nicholls remarks, with some reference, it would appear, to the recommendations of the Irish Royal Commission—

"Many sanguine persons appear to consider it as the purpose of a Poor Law not only to relieve destitution but to eradicate poverty."

Divergence between British and Irish opinion in 1838, as to the proper steps for relieving the poor in Ireland.

45. This was undoubtedly the desire, as far as practicable, of the Irish Royal Commission, and it was the precise point of divergence between British and Irish opinion in 1838. The Irish Commission aimed at making their country gradually prosperous by providing employment through the judicious development of its resources. The British promoters of the Act of 1838, were, on the contrary, prepared to hazard the fortunes, such as they were, of the tenantry of Ireland in a "*transition period*," during which they were to be turned from small tenants into day labourers, after an interval "beset with difficulty and sufferings." The Act passed; the difficulties and sufferings arose, but the small tenants did

not turn themselves into day labourers according to the expectations and intentions of Mr. Nicholls and Mr. Lewis and their supporters. The difficulties and the sufferings continue to a large extent to the present day, and so also does the want of employment.

46. This appears to be a proper place to point out that the weight of opinion from Ireland in both Houses of Parliament was against the Bill of 1838. In the House of Commons there was (as we mention below) a dramatic concurrence of opinion between Daniel O'Connell and Viscount Castlereagh with their respective followers; and in the House of Lords the Irish Peers voted in large numbers against the Bill.

Opinion of representatives of Ireland in both Houses of Parliament.

47. On the 13th of February, 1837, Lord John Russell introduced the Bill as

"A measure of peace, enabling the country to prohibit vagrancy," the country being, His Lordship later on stated, "overrun by numbers both of marauders and mendicants having no proper means of subsistence." He also stated—"There is not a want of industry among the people, it is the country that has been allowed to be in such a state that industry cannot succeed in it."*

48. Mr. W. Smith O'Brien, though he voted for the Bill, said that—

"The system proposed by the Noble Lord did not seem to admit any of the kindlier feelings of human nature."

49. Both Mr. Shaw, Recorder of Dublin, and Mr. Denis O'Connor urged that the Bill should be accompanied by measures for the improvement of the country. Daniel O'Connell, in the course of his speech observed that what was—

"now suggested was that a country unable to give employment to its labourers should be made to feed them in idleness within the walls of a poor-house. . . . The work-house system appeared to work exceedingly well in England, but they had seen upon evidence that the work imposed under the Poor Law upon the idle population was only a kind of slave labour in order to drive them to seek employment. But see how the principle would act in Ireland. The laborious classes there were anxious to procure employment. They never refused it: they in fact worked for 2*d.* or 3*d.* a day rather than be idle. . . . There was no necessity, therefore, for poor-houses in Ireland in order to stimulate its labouring population to look for work; but there would be that necessity when once they became the only disposers of Irish charity and turned the sources of Irish benevolence into the public channel."

50. Owing to the death of King William IV. the Bill dropped and was re-introduced on the 1st December, 1837, by Lord John Russell, who then said in speaking of the Irish Royal Commission:—

"These Commissioners went with very great labour and at the expense of a considerable portion of time into the consideration of a Poor Law for Ireland. But I certainly do think that in the result of their labours on the report which they have presented to Parliament they have confounded two subjects which ought to be kept quite separate. It appears to me that they have bestowed too great a degree of consideration on the question—by what means, by what State resources, you can improve the general welfare of the country, and have not confined themselves entirely to the question as to the destitute classes, which was more particularly put into their hands. . . . I think it would be a perilous task for us as a Government to hold forth any hope that by any immediate and direct measure of ours we could improve the state of the Irish population."

Lord John Russell's opinion on developing the resources of Ireland.

51. Daniel O'Connell proposed that the Bill be committed that day six months and made a long speech in support of his proposal. Sir Charles Style also made a strong speech against the Bill as a sufficient remedy, and said that—

"Employment was the only efficient and desirable remedy. Although he advocated a Poor Law in Ireland on the most extended scale he was convinced that auxiliary measures must be put in operation at the same time. He should vote for the second reading of this Bill, and for its going into a Committee with the greatest reluctance, and only because he had no alternative."

* "Hansard" of that year, XXXVI., pp. 454, 462.

Joint action of
Daniel O'Connell
and Lord Castle-
reagh.

52. The third reading of the Bill was taken on the 30th April, 1838,* by which time eighty-six petitions with 31,221 signatures were presented against the Bill, and four petitions with 593 signatures in favour of it. Sir W. Brabazon and Sir F. Trench advocated employment for the people. Lord Castlereagh stated in the House of Commons that at a meeting in Belfast, on the Poor Law question, presided over by the Reverend Dr. Cooke, three cheers were given for Mr. O'Connell, whom his Lordship then invited to come forward and state that he did not approve of the Bill. Daniel O'Connell then rose and asked the House of Commons to consider that for the first time the Noble Lord and he fully coincided in their views and represented the almost unanimous opinion of the people of Ireland, and he appealed to the English gentlemen whether they would force on Ireland a measure that the people rejected. This was not, he said, a party question.

53. Mr. Corry, who opposed the Bill, stated that, with one exception all the Grand Juries had petitioned against the Bill; and Lord Stanley could not bring himself to vote for the third reading without guarding himself against its being supposed that he approved altogether of the principle of the Bill. He felt compelled, however reluctantly and hesitatingly, to give his support to the third reading. Other members spoke in a similar way. The votes for the Bill were 234, against 59, majority 175. The Bill passed through the House of Lords with a large majority also, though some Irish Peers criticised its provisions.

Mr. George
Nicholls drafted
the Bill.

Special claims of
Ireland for deve-
lopment of its
resources.

54. Sir George Nicholls,† fortunately, has placed on record the fact that legislation was founded on his first report, and that he "was directed to have a Bill prepared embodying all its recommendations"—that is to say, strange as it may appear, the report of one gentleman who had so far spent only six weeks in Ireland was preferred to the unanimous recommendations after a careful inquiry for three years of a Royal Commission composed of a majority of Irishmen of intelligence and knowledge, with whom were associated some Englishmen, who were specially qualified to correct any possible uneconomic views that might be supposed to be inherent in the Irish majority. The circumstances of this island and her just and irrepressible claim for development were and are quite different to those of any other country. It is a story often, but to little purpose, retold, that Ireland had prosperous industries and trade advantages, with supreme legislative power to regulate such trade and industries, most of which were actually suppressed or indirectly enfeebled in the interests of, or by the wish of the wealthy country with which she became united. And not merely this, but the taxation of the country every year has been disproportionate to her resources and requirements so that the financial drain continues, and indeed increases yearly. Poverty is therefore the natural result of the unimproved condition of the country, and of the other causes of its backward condition. In certain large districts among the numerous classes of small farmers in the western half of the island, and among the labouring population of the greater part of Ireland, there is still a painful struggle for existence except where a secondary industry, such as fishing, relieves the strain that must exist when practically all classes are striving to extract a subsistence out of the land such as it is.

Hopeless to
expect from Irish
people themselves
under present
conditions
initiative in the
form of
commercial
undertakings.

55. It is hopeless to expect much, if any, successful initiative in the greater part of Ireland from people who have not enough money for their subsistence even in a low state of comfort, not to speak of capital or savings from earnings. Mr. George Nicholls and Mr. George Cornewall Lewis wrote declaring that it would be a foolish dream to expect improvement through the agency of Government. But since then the successful work of the Congested Districts Board, with the very small revenue at its

* "Hansard," vol. 42, p. 675.

† A History of the Irish Poor Law in connection with the condition of the people, by Sir George Nicholls, K.C.B. London: John Murray, 1856—page 188.

disposal, has proved the wisdom of the Irish Royal Commissioners of 1833 to 1836, who recommended development of the kind, and has shown that the following *laissez faire* opinion of Mr. George Cornewall Lewis was not correct :—

“Government in my opinion cannot interfere more directly for the improvement of land in Ireland than by a well-guarded Poor Law. If that should be found to produce the effects which I have ventured to anticipate of it ; if, by draining off the redundant population and by offering a maintenance to the rest, it removed that desperation which gives rise to the Whiteboy system, and thus made the landlords the masters of their own property ; we might expect that the spontaneous working of private interest, now repressed by fear and insecurity, would bring about the changes which the Commissioners vainly hope to compass by the agency of boards of improvement and Government enquiries.”

56. The Reports of the Congested Districts Board tell us, or give us some idea, of the benefits derived by the inhabitants of Congested Districts in Ireland since the Board was founded in 1891. On somewhat similar lines, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, more recently established, is also engaged in developing the agricultural and rural resources of Ireland, and in providing technical instruction.

Results where assistance has been given.

57. Mr. G. C. Lewis felt sure that the English workhouse system, when introduced into Ireland, would lead to the consolidation of small holdings and to the employment of the occupiers of the same farms as day-labourers working regularly for wages. Time has shown how little he and Mr. George Nicholls and all others who were responsible in the matter knew of the country, whose life-and-death concerns they with confidence undertook to arrange.

58. As was already mentioned above, Mr. G. C. Lewis acted as Assistant Commissioner under the Royal Commission, and in that capacity he made inquiries, and furnished a report on the state of the Irish poor in Great Britain.* Mr. Lewis himself regarded the Irish migratory labourer as advantageous to the English employer and public, and he considered that Irish labour did not lower the rate of wages of the English labourer. But he mentions that the prevailing opinion in Great Britain was different. After reporting that a wish prevailed in Britain that poor laws should be introduced into Ireland, he says :—

Irish poor in Great Britain in 1835.

“This wish was principally founded on two considerations : first, that poor laws in Ireland would diminish the immigration of Irish labourers into Great Britain, and thus diminish the competition with the native labourers ; secondly, that the Irish immigrants might, when aged or unfit for work, be passed home to their parishes which would be bound to maintain them.”

59. From this we see that the one-sided and most unjust removal of the “aged and unfit for work” had been foreseen, and that a wish prevailed in towns in Great Britain in favour of the passing of an Irish Poor Law on that account. We are strongly of opinion that it would be equitable to repeal all the British Acts authorizing the removal of Irish-born destitute persons to Ireland when they had spent long years of their working life in Great Britain. It does not seem to have occurred to the legislators of the time to give to Ireland the corresponding power to send back those inhabitants of England, Wales, or Scotland who become destitute in Ireland and chargeable to the rates.

Removal of Irish destitute to Ireland from Great Britain.

60. The first Poor Law Act for Ireland was passed on the 31st July, 1838. The Poor Law Commission of England were empowered to carry out the Act in Ireland, to make general Rules, to appoint the requisite officials for the central office, to form Unions, to determine the number of guardians to be elected in the prescribed manner, and to direct the appointment of paid officers in each Union. When a workhouse was declared fit for the reception of destitute poor, the guardians, subject to the orders of the Commissioners, were to take order for relieving the destitute poor, to appoint officers subject to the approval of the Commissioners, to make and levy rates in order to raise sums necessary for relief and other expenses ; and other miscellaneous powers were entrusted to the Commission.

Machinery for carrying out Poor Relief Act of 1838.

* Appendix G, to Report, 1835, p. 48.

Qualification for obtaining relief.

61. Destitution was the only qualification necessary for a person making an application for relief, which could be given only in a workhouse. Destitute aged and infirm persons and children were to receive priority in the admission of inmates into a workhouse, and if the buildings did not provide sufficient accommodation for all applicants the applications of residents within the Union were to be considered in preference to applications from residents outside the Union. But no person, however sick, aged, or infirm, was to be afforded relief unless destitute. It is to be borne in mind that the original Poor Law for Ireland only permitted *in-door relief* within a workhouse, in the case of the destitute.

Only indoor relief in a workhouse permitted.

Out-door relief allowed in 1847 for certain classes.

62. Before the Great Famine and Fever Epidemic in 1847 had subsided, and when workhouses and buildings taken temporarily as auxiliary workhouses were no longer able to accommodate the crowds of the starving and dying who sought admission, it was found necessary to authorize guardians to give at their discretion either *out-door relief* or *in-door relief* to certain specified classes, namely—(1) destitute poor persons *permanently disabled* from labour by reason of old age, infirmity, or bodily or mental defect; (2) *temporarily disabled* destitute poor persons owing to severe illness or serious accident; and (3) destitute *poor widows having two or more legitimate children* dependent upon them.

Out-door relief in food.

Relief in cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

63. And, further, the Poor Law Commissioners were empowered, if there was no room in the workhouse, to issue an Order authorizing Boards of Guardians, from time to time, to give out-door relief to all other classes of destitute persons for any period not exceeding two calendar months, provided that all relief given out of the workhouse to able-bodied persons should be given in food only. In cases of sudden and urgent necessity, "Relieving Officers" (to be appointed under this Act) were required to give provisional, or temporary, relief pending the next meeting of the Board of Guardians, in which case the relief might be in food, lodging, medicine, or medical attendance.

Out-door relief to evicted tenants.

64. The only other case in which out-door relief was authorized was, in the year 1848, as regards tenants evicted from their holdings, and they might be relieved by the Relieving Officer, as in cases of sudden and urgent necessity. The Guardians were further empowered to give *out-door relief* to such persons for one month only from the date of the giving of temporary relief by the Relieving Officer.

65. This state of the law as regards out-door relief continues to be in force at the present time.

"Quarter-acre clause."

66. In the Extension Act of 1847, and probably with the object of shortening the "*transition period*," already referred to, it was enacted that no person in occupation of more than a quarter acre (statute) shall be eligible for relief either within or out of the workhouse. This section was repealed in 1862, and in lieu thereof it was enacted that persons in the occupation of more than a quarter of an acre, if requiring relief, should be relieved in the workhouse, and not otherwise.*

Fever Hospitals or Wards opened in 1843 to poor persons.

Ordinary sick wards similarly opened to cases of ordinary illness in 1862.

67. It has been pointed out before that *destitution* was a necessary qualification for admission into a workhouse. By the Act of 1843 Guardians were however empowered to provide for "*poor persons affected with fever or other dangerous contagious disease*." The power given by this Act was extended in 1862 to the case of any poor person requiring medical or surgical aid in hospital; but, as a matter of fact, the workhouse infirmaries had, since 1853, or even earlier, been largely used as local hospitals for the poor. If any such person repaid to the guardians the full average cost of his maintenance, he would not be subject to disfranchisement. The Guardians were also obliged to receive for medical treatment, constables or sub-constables of the Constabulary, who were liable to pay the full average cost of maintenance.

* See paragraph No. 250.

68. In these days, when one continually hears complaints made of the comfortless condition of many Irish Poor Law Infirmaries, as regards structure and fittings, it is interesting to learn from Sir George Nicholls in his history that—

"The Guardians, very generally, wished that the finishing and fittings should be more costly and complete than was the case in the English houses; and, if the prevalent desire on this point had been complied with, the workhouses in Ireland would have been finished and fitted up after the model and with all the appliances of an hospital or infirmary."

Irish opinion was in favour of the better finishing and fitting up of buildings.

69. In the closing paragraphs of his history, published in 1856, Sir George Nicholls quotes from a letter written by him, in the year 1853, to Lord John Russell, as follows:—

Retrospect by Sir George Nicholls in 1853.

"The circumstance that now first arrests attention in passing through the country is the comparatively small number of beggars. . . . The famine may have been partly the cause of this change, but another, if not the chief cause, is the workhouses, where the old, the feeble, the sick and infirm poor are now supported as the law designed and as sound policy required that they should be.* *The workhouses are entirely occupied by this description of paupers, and the very young—there are no able-bodied.* The total number of inmates of all classes is now 84,000, which is about the number I estimated† at the outset as requiring to be provided for. The cost of relief, is moreover, about the same I then estimated that it would, probably, amount to, and it is not a little gratifying to find that our calculations, in these respects, are so far verified."

70. It seems unaccountable that Sir George Nicholls should have published such a statement. Most of the beggars no doubt died of hunger during the Famine, as did thousands and thousands of the class above the beggars. Sir George Nicholls in 1853 takes credit for his correct estimate of the number (about 80,000) that would be in receipt of relief, but he overlooks the fact that the population had at a moderate estimate been reduced by one-fourth—and that the poorest portion—through famine, or fever, or emigration. He goes on to say:—

"There is still a want of certain and continuous employment in Ireland, and the people do not rely upon regular daily labour as a means of support, although they are, I think, approximating to it."

71. This is an admission that the Poor Law had so far (in 1853) failed to do what was intended by its promoters. It had not converted the small occupiers into daily-wage labourers. The "*transition period*" between 1838 and 1853 did not witness the change; and as we now know the anticipated "*transition*" never occurred—though, unhappily, the "difficulty and suffering" were without doubt produced.

Observations on the remarks of Sir George Nicholls.

72. The Irish Royal Commission on the other hand recommended the development of the resources of the country in order that undertakings might be started, which would in due course give employment to those able and willing to work; and the opinion of the Commissioners was that in this way the widespread and exceptional poverty of Ireland ought to be relieved. This is our opinion also; and we can point to the excellent results, as far as a merely experimental income permits, of the work of the Congested Districts Board in the establishment of industries and fisheries leading to an ordinary commercial trade. Good results also can be traced to the improvement of traffic facilities, especially by water, for the carriage of cattle and goods. While the improvements that have been made lessen some difficulties in the way of development, yet the falling off in population, and the fact that it is not easy at the present time to fix upon suitable centres with sufficient population for work on a large and profitable scale, increases the difficulty of starting and conducting remunerative industries. As regards fisheries much has been done, but very much more remains to be done. We believe that Ireland still requires, and is entitled to, assistance on a sufficient scale to develop its resources; and that without such help emigration must continue, without any hope of improvement or progress

View of Irish Royal Commission in 1836 as to the necessity for developing Irish resources; and

Opinion of this Commission.

* That is, the very classes for which the Irish Royal Commission recommended that provision should be made.

† Estimate made in 1836, before the reduction of population during the Famine of 1846, 1847, and 1848.

for those who remain at home. It does not seem necessary for us to offer any opinion upon the connection between Intemperance and Poverty; Want of Education and Poverty; Land Tenure and Poverty; Taxation and Poverty; and Administration and Poverty in Ireland, because these subjects are receiving close attention. We will only remark that there are large populous areas in Ireland where more is necessary for occupiers of land and other inhabitants than a satisfactory settlement of land tenure upon even the most favourable terms conceivable. While it is most desirable that agricultural methods should be further improved, it seems to us equally important that there should be industrial employment throughout Ireland, so that the struggling population in town and country should be enabled to earn wages and provide themselves with the ordinary requirements of life. We are convinced that we are not going outside our proper function in pointing out that *in our opinion the low level of subsistence and comfort throughout nearly all Ireland, with the poverty and destitution resulting therefrom, cannot be effectively relieved by any Poor Relief Law such as that of 1838*; and we therefore feel that it is our duty to submit these observations to Your Excellency.

V.—EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR INDOOR RELIEF OF POOR.

Number of Poor Law Unions in Ireland.

Number and classification of workhouse inmates.

73. Having expressed our opinion of the necessity for action in dealing with the general widespread poverty, we now proceed to describe the existing arrangements for the indoor relief of the destitute and poor in Ireland. From 1838 to 1851, one hundred and sixty-three Poor Law Unions were formed, and this number continued to exist until 1884, between which year and 1890 four Unions were dissolved, and the townlands comprised therein were amalgamated with those in other Unions. The number of Unions is at present 159, and in each Union there is a Workhouse in which all the various classes of destitute and poor persons are maintained in separate wards or in separate blocks of buildings. By an enumeration made on the 11th March, 1905, the Saturday upon which (taking the whole of Ireland), the largest number of inmates were in Workhouses during the year 1905, the total number on that day was 45,195, and in the following table we give a classification of such inmates according to sex and other conditions:—

NUMBER OF INMATES IN POOR LAW UNION WORKHOUSES AND FEVER HOSPITALS ON 11TH MARCH, 1905.

Classification.	Males.	Females.	Totals.	Class Totals.	Class.
Sick—Medical and Surgical, .	7,054	6,802	13,856	} 14,491	Sick.
Do. Fever and Infectious, .	349	286	635		
Aged and Infirm—Healthy, .	6,234	3,470	9,704	} 14,380	Aged and Infirm.
Do. Bed-ridden, .	178	312	490		
Do. Ailing and Feeble.	1,863	2,323	4,186		
Children—Illegitimate and Deserted.	1,454	1,310	2,764	} 5,900	Children, including Infants.
Do. Legitimate, .	1,716	1,420	3,136		
Insane—All kinds of, .	1,231	1,934	3,165	3,165	Insane.
Sane Epileptic, .	191	272	463	463	Epileptic (Sane).
Mothers of Illegitimate Children,	—	2,129	2,129	2,129	Unmarried Mothers.
Casuals or Ins-and-Outs, .	410	403	813	} 4,667	"Able-bodied" Paupers.
Vagrants or Tramps, .	726	152	878		
Able-bodied—All other, .	1,512	1,464	2,976		
TOTALS, :	22,918	22,277	45,195	45,195	

74. The smallest number of inmates in all the Workhouses upon any Saturday during the year ended 31st March, 1905, was 39,356 on the 16th of July, 1904, and the *mean* number between this figure and that (45,186) for the 11th March, 1905, was 43,586.

75. Upon looking at the enumeration of the 11th March, 1905, it will be seen that out of the total of 45,195, nearly one-third (14,491) were *Sick*. Nearly one-third more (14,380) were *Aged and Infirm*. About one-twelfth were insane and epileptic. About one-seventh were children. The mothers of illegitimate children number about one-twentieth of the whole. But the "able-bodied" pauper inmates (casuals, vagrants and all other "able-bodied" in the Workhouses), omitting unmarried mothers, amount to only 4,667, or between one-ninth and one-tenth of the 45,195; and looking through the description in the enumeration of the other classes of inmates there are no others *prima facie* whose admission as a class was due to destitution or to such idleness or laziness as leads to destitution.

Proportions of various classes of inmates.

76. We think that the present system of keeping so many different classes of persons in the same institution is one that ought not to be continued, and we received evidence (1) throughout all Ireland strongly in favour of changing the system in this respect, provided that the rates would not be increased.

Objectionable to keep all classes in the same institution.

VII.—AMALGAMATION OF UNIONS.

77. Ever since the year 1857 there has been an intermittent agitation among economists for the amalgamation of Unions, and for the closing of the Workhouses of the dissolved Unions. This movement was based upon the fact that originally only 130 Unions were provided for the country when the population was nearly twice as great as it is at present; and that, as a consequence of the Great Famine, the number of Unions was increased to 163. It was also contended that, as the Workhouses were built for twice the number of the present inmates, it would now be more economical to close some of the Workhouses, and put more inmates into the Workhouses that are to be kept open. Some of the advocates of such amalgamation of Unions have rather indefinite ideas about the extent of the saving that would result from closing a number of the Workhouses. It is thought in a vague way by some who have not made calculations that the ratepayers of a dissolved Union would benefit very largely by the cessation of the salaries of those whose offices would be abolished. The saving in the rates is not however very much by dissolving merely one Union here and there and closing the Workhouse; and a strong argument can always be brought against amalgamation of that kind by urging the inconvenience to the sick that would result by obliging them to travel longer distances for hospital treatment.

Mere dissolution of Unions not recommended.

78. We think it right to state, before expressing any opinion or making any suggestions to Your Excellency, that, in the early stage of our inquiry, we approached a consideration of the questions referred to us and took evidence with the intention of proposing a full and definite scheme for the amalgamation or the re-arrangement of Poor Law Unions and Workhouses upon the lines of ascertaining what improvements in the classification of inmates could be recommended that would not involve any fundamental alterations in the present system. We soon however became aware that many witnesses and others were of opinion that the Poor Law system in Ireland required drastic changes in many respects, and we satisfied ourselves that the terms of reference in the Viceregal Warrant were wide enough to authorize us to receive any evidence that might be tendered on the question of the reform of the Irish Poor Law.

Impossibility of furnishing a full and definite scheme for re-arrangement of Unions until changes in the law are made.

(1.) Miss Buchanan, 369; Lord Monteagle, 610; H. M'Grath, 12384; P. Walsh, 20365; T. Byrne, 24488, &c., &c.

79. The result has been that we have had to consider, with regard to the circumstances of the present time, practically all the questions that have arisen since the enactment and during the administration of the Poor Relief Acts for Ireland. As a result of our procedure, we find ourselves precluded from making suggestions in detail with reference to particular institutions, or to special areas, until certain broad principles are decided in one way or another; or, in other words, we were confronted with the obvious fact that we cannot recommend schemes and plans in detail for improving administration and for effecting substantial economy in expenditure until the Government and the Legislature lay down lines upon which reforms should be carried out.

Recommendations of Commission are therefore in favour of legislative changes.

80. Our recommendations therefore are mainly in the direction of placing before Your Excellency suggestions for legislation involving changes, many of them of a radical nature, in the Poor Law and in its administration. It will however be seen from our observations and from the evidence of witnesses to which we refer, that, if the recommendations we make are approved of, the preparation of consequential proposals in detail would not present any serious difficulty. A little reflection will satisfy those who are acquainted with the provisions of the Poor Law that very few and comparatively trifling reforms could be effected under existing conditions; and, having regard to the general wish for reforms, we felt it would serve no useful purpose for us to attempt to confine our recommendations mainly to changes that could be made under the existing law.

Segregation of classes is recommended instead of amalgamation of Unions.

81. Although we think that very little good could be expected from amalgamation of Unions such as has been advocated for many years, we believe that, by the segregation of Workhouse Inmates according to their condition, great economy and much greater efficiency in administration may be hoped for. The main classes in Workhouses at present are ten in number, namely :—

1. Sick;
2. Aged and Infirm;
3. Lunatics and all kinds of insane cases;
4. Sane Epileptics;
5. Unmarried Mothers;
6. Infants;
7. Children between infancy and fifteen years of age;
8. Casuals or Ins-and-outs ;
9. Vagrants or Tramps;
10. Able-bodied, other than those in classes 3 to 9 inclusive above.

We now proceed to deal with each of these classes *seriatim*.

VII.—THE SICK.

82. Following this classification, we shall now state what opinions we arrived at after hearing and considering the evidence, and after visiting and inquiring at the various institutions.

Hospitals of workhouses, to be continued in almost all cases, and some additional cottage hospitals recommended.

83. Speaking in general terms, we think that in almost every case Poor Law medical and surgical hospitals for the sick should be maintained at the 159 centres where they now are, and that a few additional cottage hospitals ought to be erected in districts very remote from hospital accommodation. For cases of fever and infectious disease of the kind the present buildings are fairly adequate on the whole, though not such as would be

constructed at the present time. Before we make any recommendations in detail it seems desirable, however, that a statement should be made as to the accommodation which now exists for the treatment of the Sick Poor in Ireland.

84. There are at present in Ireland two systems of public hospitals for the poor apart from the General Hospitals in Cities, and a very few Cottage Hospitals in the country supported by private grants and subscriptions. These may loosely be described as the "County" and the "Union" systems.

Two systems of public hospitals in Ireland—County and Union.

85. Under the County system we have 34 County Infirmaries, including the Meath Hospital, in the City of Dublin, two hospitals in the City of Cork (the North and the South Infirmaries), Barrington's Hospital, Limerick, the Galway Hospital, and the Waterford City and County Infirmary. Of these the Galway Hospital might from some points of view be classed as a Poor Law Institution, but the system of management is more nearly akin to that of the County Infirmaries. These Institutions, with three or four exceptions, are managed by Joint Committees formed under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, comprised of specified numbers of members to be appointed by the County Councils and by the old corporation of "the Governors and Governesses." They are maintained partly by grants from the County Councils, partly by voluntary subscriptions, partly by the proceeds of property held by the governors and governesses, and partly by payments from patients. There is also a Cottage Hospital on Valentia Island, County Kerry, which receives a County subscription; and a Town Hospital at Queenstown, County Cork, which receives payments from the Cork Poor Law Union.

County Infirmaries.

86. Under what we call the County system there are also fourteen Fever or Infectious Hospitals, which practically are the Fever Hospitals for the Unions in which they are situated, and they too are managed by Joint Committees formed under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, the members of which are partly appointed by the County Council and the remainder by the former governing body called "the president and assistants of the hospital."

County Fever Hospitals.

87. These Infirmaries and Fever Hospitals are the institutions that used to belong to the Grand Jury system that existed before the introduction of the Irish Poor Relief Act of 1838; and the amount of the County contributions towards their support is levied over the County-at-large in each case.

Chargeability of County Hospitals.

88. In 1833 there were 70 Fever Hospitals in Ireland; and in 1839, before the Poor Relief Act had come into operation, the number owing to the prevalence of fever had increased to 90. The County grants in 1833 amounted to £13,268, and in 1839 to £22,073. Private subscriptions in the former year reached the sums of £7,543, but in the latter year, after the passing of the Poor Relief Act in 1838, they fell to £7,168, notwithstanding the increase in the number of hospitals. During the year 1905 the County grants amounted to £4,494 and private subscriptions to £673, over and above a sum of about £2,000 raised for building and other special purposes.

Number and revenue of Fever Hospitals before Poor Relief Act, 1838.

89. The number of County Infirmaries has varied very little. In 1839 there were 8 City Infirmaries (Dublin 4, Cork 2, Limerick 1, Waterford 1); and 33 County Infirmaries. Twenty-nine counties had 1 Infirmary each; Louth and Wicklow had 2 each; while Waterford had no County Infirmary, but patients from the County Waterford used to be received into the City Infirmary ("The Leper Hospital") upon payment of 1s. 2d. per day. There are now 34 County Infirmaries, including Galway Hospital and Barrington's Hospital, Limerick, almost the same number as in 1838, but some changes took place which balance one another. Cork has now 2 Infirmaries instead of 1, and the Waterford "Leper" Hospital now serves as a County and City Infirmary under a local Act of Parliament. On the

Number of County Infirmaries.

other hand Louth and Wicklow Counties have now only one Infirmary each. The Galway Hospital is still counted by us among the County Infirmaries, though technically such classification is not accurate, for it is supported by contributions from Poor Law Unions. It is unnecessary for us to trace the history of the City Hospitals in Dublin that receive public grants, but they have developed greatly since 1838, and their arrangements do not come within the scope of our inquiry.

Number of patients, and other particulars as to County Infirmaries in 1839, and since.

90. The total number of patients in the year 1839 in the forty-one County and City Infirmaries was 18,989 and the average cost "per patient" was £2 9s. 10½d. The total number of intern patients in the year 1905 in the 34 County Infirmaries was 16,654, and the average cost per patient was £3 8s. 10d., in which expenditure is included the cost of treatment of a large number of extern patients. There are two facts in particular that still affect County Infirmaries—one, that the County Councils can only contribute fixed maximum sums towards the cost of the several County Infirmaries unless where a deficit in the funds of the Infirmary in any year is certified after official audit, in which case the Council *may* contribute the whole or part of the amount required; and the other fact is that the cost of the up-keep of the Infirmary is a County-at-large charge, although the building may be, as it sometimes is, at the outside border of a large County, or in anything but a central position, so that the residents of remote districts of the County do not under the present arrangement receive benefits in proportion to their payments. As regards the situation of a County Infirmary we recommend that the Local Government Board be authorized to hold a public inquiry to ascertain whether a County Infirmary or County Hospital is situated in an inconvenient position, and, if the evidence so warrants, to arrange for the closing of the County Infirmary and the opening of a County Hospital at a more convenient place, with power also to approve of the sale or disposal of the old County Infirmary after the opening of the County Hospital on another site. In order to remedy any inequalities that may arise from time to time in the County Hospital system, power might also be given to the Local Government Board, after public inquiry, to make such alteration in the hospital arrangements of any county as may be deemed desirable whether by the establishment of additional hospitals, the closing of such as are no longer required, or the changing from one site to another of existing institutions.

Legal limitation as to amount that can be paid to County Infirmaries.

91. Under the existing law a County Council is obliged to pay only a limited yearly amount to the County Infirmary, no matter how many sick are admitted for treatment. This arrangement is a survival of the system which was established in 1765 when an Act* of the Irish Parliament was passed under which County Infirmaries were founded in Ireland. The idea was that contributions should be made out of the County Cess as an inducement to subscribers to make up the deficiency of the amount required to maintain the hospital. If the entire system of hospital relief were being now framed for the first time an arrangement would hardly be made whereby those hospitals which aim at giving the most skilful surgical and medical assistance with trained nursing should be limited in their income, while under the Poor Law system Guardians defray any expense that is thought necessary. We consider at the same time that in the case of any County Infirmary that has derived much aid from voluntary grants or subscriptions, an arrangement should be made for encouraging private gifts by continuing to give adequate representation in respect of donations and subscriptions.

92. We are very far, however, from wishing to convey an impression that in our judgment all the County Infirmaries are on the same high level. On the contrary, some, in our opinion, are little, if at all, better than the average Union Infirmary. We observe with pleasure, however,

* "The Law relating to Local Government in Ireland," by George T. B. Vanston, M.A., LL.D., Barrister-at-Law, Legal Adviser to the Local Government Board for Ireland. Vol. II., p. 611.

that the general tendency in County Infirmaries is to rise to the level of modern and well-equipped surgical hospitals in order that patients may in their own County receive most skilful professional and nursing attention in wards and surroundings free from the dangers that still exist in many antiquated hospitals. We cannot pass from this aspect of the subject without expressing our admiration of the very great improvements recently effected in a large number of the Infirmaries including those of the counties of Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh, Antrim, Monaghan, Down, Clare, Limerick, and Cork, and to a less degree in some other County Infirmaries.

93. The "County Hospital" at Omagh, Co. Tyrone, is the only County Infirmary that is a completely new building, and we are glad to be able to refer to it as an institution in most effective working order, and as an example of what we think a County Hospital ought on the whole to be as regards structure, equipment, fittings, and nursing. The evidence on this matter of the County Surgeon, Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., at page 193 of the Volume of Evidence, is interesting and instructive. But we think that a defect at Omagh and all similar hospitals is the absence of a house surgeon; and we recommend that some newly qualified surgeons or physicians according to the wants of the Hospital, should be appointed for one year to act as House Surgeons in the Public Hospitals of Ireland, in accordance with a scheme to be subsequently framed.

Co. Tyrone
Infirmary.

Appointment of
House Surgeons.

94. With improved or improving hospitals such as Omagh, as centres in a system of County Hospitals, we would look forward to changes for the better, and, taking the county, or, perhaps in some cases, a group of counties, as the area for calculation, we should also expect economies in administration, with more favourable results. Assuming that, as a general rule, there would be an hospital wherever there now is a workhouse, we should like to see all such hospitals cut off completely from any connection or association with any Poor Law Institution, as many witnesses recommended, ⁽¹⁾ and brought into a County Hospital system, with the County Infirmary as the central Institution ⁽²⁾. It is contemplated that nurses should be trained there for the County District Hospitals (now Workhouse Infirmaries), and that sufficient nurses should be trained and kept there to supply exceptional requirements, so as to make it unnecessary for District Hospitals to procure temporary nurses at considerable expense from a distance. It also seems probable that the power to send patients to Extern General Hospitals would be little used; and, assuming a complete County Scheme to be adopted, a surgeon or physician of the County Infirmary would, on the fixing of an inclusive salary, proceed when required to a District Hospital, or *vice versa*, a District Medical Officer would similarly attend, when required for consultation or assistance without extra fee.

District Hospitals
recommended.

95. But such a scheme involves as a necessary condition that the medical practitioner appointed to the charge of an infirmary or hospital should be thoroughly qualified by hospital experience and practice to act efficiently as the Medical Officer of the institution, whether it be the County Infirmary or a District Hospital ⁽³⁾. The Medical profession will recognise that the mere possession of a diploma or degree is not a sufficient qualification for a man to be the physician in charge of a public hospital or to act

Necessity of
securing the
appointment
of specially
qualified and
experienced
Medical Officers
for Hospitals.

(1.) Dr. Joseph Smyth, 79; Dr. Laffan, 267; Dr. Warnock (Donegal Workhouse Infirmary), 1128; H. Brennan, 22520; H. M'Grath, 12367; Dr. J. M. S. Kenny, 15328; Mrs. Foran, 26517; R. Kennedy, 17543; R. Clear, 28039; Dr. J. B. Boyd, 1359B; Dr. Hall, 7424; P. Kiernan, 7532; Dr. Cullen, 8122; Lord Montague, 605; Sir W. Thornley Stoker, 622; Dr. Darling, 9245; Dr. Agnew, 9335; Dr. St. George, 10628; Dr. O'Connell (Belfast), 10756; Dr. Lyness, 11354, and very many others

(2.) Dr. Warnock (Donegal Workhouse Infirmary), 1131; Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., 5683; Dr. L. Kidd, 1759 and 6470; Dr. Sullivan, 13392; Dr. MacDowel, 22499; Dr. Faris, 24916; A. W. Shaw, 26049 and 26062-3; St. J. H. Donovan, 26610, and others.

(3.) Dr. Warnock (Donegal Workhouse Infirmary), 1137; Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., 5652-7 and 5796.

as an operating surgeon. Before he could be appointed to be County Surgeon he should be able to prove that he has had sufficient experience in surgery, and that he possesses a capacity for operating. As regards the choice of fit men for such posts we will recur to the matter later on.

Training of
Nurses for
County Service.

96. As was just now mentioned a County Hospital system like that we suggest for consideration ought to enable most counties to adopt such a scheme for the training of nurses, partly in the infirmary and partly in the District Hospitals and Fever Hospitals, as would ensure a sufficient supply of efficient nurses throughout the county. Nurses would not be attached to any particular Institution, but would be liable to be sent for service to any hospital in the county, and reciprocity as to training facilities might possibly exist between counties, especially in the case of counties of small size or with inconvenient roads of access to the principal hospital of the county. We would suggest that the District Hospital authorities, instead of appointing nurses, should nominate probationers. A probationer, on passing for her certificate, would be appointed a county nurse, but possibly with a prior agreement that she should remain in the service of the county for a stated time as nurse.

Inexcusable
variation in the
condition of
many County and
Union Hospitals.

97. With such a system we would also expect a great improvement in County Hospitals generally—a levelling up to a high standard. At present it must be admitted that some of the County and Union Hospitals are very good, some passably good, some middling, some bad, and some very bad. A minimum standard ought to exist and if a hospital were to fall below it in any respect there ought, we think, to be power to transfer the responsible officer, if he were in fault, to a less desirable and less important position.

Pauper nursing
would no longer
be possible if
workhouse system
were broken up ;

98. An obvious sequence of the complete separation of the Poor Law Hospitals from the Workhouse is that pauper nursing (†) would completely disappear and that even the discharge of menial duties by Workhouse inmates would no longer be possible. There would not be any able-bodied ward in connection with the hospitals, and therefore the sources of supply of inmate-assistants would be cut off. Those who are familiar with pauper nursing and pauper attendance will understand the benefits that would be gained by this change.

nor could con-
valescent sick
be turned into
paupers.

99. Another benefit that would follow from the establishment of District Hospitals is the impossibility of persons drifting from the sick wards of a Workhouse into the healthy wards and remaining there as ordinary Workhouse inmates. When under the existing system a sick person becomes convalescent, and when, as often happens, the sick wards are overcrowded by the sick and the feeble bed-ridden, convalescent patients are sometimes sent from the sick wards to the aged and infirm wards in the Workhouse itself until they are fit to be discharged. Such an occasion is sometimes the first introduction to the Workhouse wards of a hitherto independent person. If District Hospitals were established the sick would remain in its wards, as in the case of an ordinary general hospital, until they are fit to be sent home, or to a convalescent institution if such were established.

Sick Wards in
Workhouses are
largely occupied
by those who are
not sick, but
who only need
domestic care.

100. The complete separation of the District Hospital from the Workhouse would, we believe, lead to further great saving in expenditure. Under the present system people who are not suitable inmates for hospital wards do undoubtedly find their way there in very large numbers, and their maintenance as hospital patients costs much more than if they were inmates of the aged and infirm wards in the healthy portion of the Workhouse. It is suggested that in future only the sick in need of medical care or skilled nursing should be admitted into hospital, and in this matter we call special attention to the valuable evidence of Dr. Joseph Smyth, Medical

(†) Dr. Powell (North Dublin Union Infirmary), 17062.

Inspector, Local Government Board, at page 2 of the Volume of Evidence. What may look like laxity in admitting many cases to hospital that do not require either medical attention or skilled nursing must, however, be largely attributed to a very natural, proper, and humane feeling that, if the aged and infirm people, who are perhaps bed-ridden or very feeble, were relegated to the healthy infirm wards in many Workhouses, they would not receive such attention as would enable them to spend the end of their lives in reasonable comfort. In very few Workhouses could the feeble or bed-ridden aged and infirm receive the domestic care that is needful, unless there were a duplication of the nursing or attending staff; and this we think is often the reason why the feeble who are not sick are in some Workhouses given a refuge in the sick wards. We estimate from inquiries made by us that out of the total number (13,750) of "sick" in Workhouse Infirmarys on the 11th March 1905, not more than 6,708 were proper cases for sick wards.

101. A large number of witnesses who appeared before us gave very strong reasons for making improvements in the methods of dealing with the treatment and isolation of patients suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis or consumption. Till recently consumption was considered to be inherited, but that doctrine has been conclusively disproved, although hereditary influence may predispose and render individuals more liable to the disease. It has been proved beyond all doubt that it is an infectious, preventible, and in many cases a curable disease. The principal objects to aim at in dealing with this disease are to cure those cases that are curable and to prevent the infection spreading from those affected. In attempting the one, means can be taken to lessen or prevent the other. Practically all the witnesses who gave evidence on this subject were in favour of the establishment of Sanatoria for single counties, or groups of counties, and the urgent necessity was pointed out which exists for dealing with the disease in a thorough and effective manner. Some witnesses related most touching cases where one member after another of a family were taken away, and others laid great stress upon the awful ravages of the disease in their particular localities. We received most valuable evidence from a large number of medical men. Dr. P. J. Cremen, of Cork, gave us detailed statistics as to the prevalence of consumption in Cork. Dr. J. C. Smyth, of Altadore, County Wicklow, made suggestions as to the erection of cheap temporary structures for the treatment of cases of consumption. Dr. Colahan, of Galway, stated that consumption was increasing in and around Galway to an appalling extent, and that a number of consumptives returned from America to die. They came home in an advanced state of the disease, and after remaining two or three months at home, where they spread the disease, they usually go into hospital, where they have to lie in the general wards with other patients. Dr. Moorhead, of Cootehill, described what he had effected at Cootehill Workhouse, by setting apart some wards of an isolated hospital for the treatment of consumptives on the open air system, and in connection with which he erected wooden shelters on pivots (at a cost of about £13 per shelter holding three couches), where the patients spent the greater part of the day. The results were most encouraging and much credit is due to Dr. Moorhead and those who assisted him locally in the erection of the shelters. Dr. Moorhead was also of opinion that it was not necessary to erect costly Sanatoria, because the disease could, in his judgment, be stamped out in a short time if energetic measures were universally adopted.

Pulmonary tuberculosis or consumption.

102. The Statistics of the Registrar-General for Ireland show that the death-rate from tuberculosis is increasing in Ireland, while in England and Scotland it is decreasing. Several reasons are assigned for the increase, the principal one being that it is largely due to the fact that so little is done to prevent the disease from being communicated. This is an all-important question, and with proper precautionary methods, tuberculosis might be reduced to very small proportions, if not stamped out. By improved dwellings for the poor, more attention to general sanitary

Increase of the disease in Ireland.

conditions in and around the dwellings, the removal of patients suffering from consumption, more particularly in the advanced stages of the disease, from crowded homes where proper precautions cannot be carried out to a sanatorium or hospital, and the destruction of the infection in the homes of the sick, the spread of the disease would materially be checked.

The duty of the authorities to adopt what are considered the best remedies and precautions.

103. During the past thirty-five years the death-rate from tuberculosis in England has been reduced by exactly one-half. In Scotland the death-rate has been reduced almost to the same extent. A similar reduction in Ireland would mean a saving of about 6,000 lives per year. The number of deaths from tuberculosis in Ireland for the year 1904 was 12,694, and the average for the past ten years was 12,556. The age-period during which most deaths occur from tuberculosis is 25-35 years, the prime of life. For the year 1905 there were 8,204 patients suffering from tuberculosis treated in the Union Hospitals and County Infirmaries. It is then clear that there is no health question of greater importance to Ireland at the present time than the prevention and cure of tuberculosis. Although it may be curable it is infinitely better to prevent persons taking the disease, than to cure them after the disease has begun. A large number of eminent medical men are incessantly engaged in bacteriological research with the hope of discovering a specific remedy for this dreadful disease, much in the same way as persons are protected against small-pox, or cured by injection as in diphtheria. Pending the results of their researches it is clearly a public duty to afford the treatment that at present gives the best results, viz.:—the open air treatment by means of Sanatoria—which means essentially fresh air and abundance of suitable food. Sanatoria have been in existence in this and other countries for several years, and the results have shown that by treatment similar to what a Sanatorium affords many patients may be cured, others may be so much improved that they are able to resume their ordinary employment, while all are taught how to keep themselves from becoming a source of infection to others. Each patient passing through a Sanatorium would be a force for good in the home, and, the benefits of sunlight, air, and cleanliness being thus made known, Sanatoria would, in this way, be educative, as well as curative, and preventative.

Present conditions tend to promote the further increase of the disease.

104. It is now absolutely necessary that ample provision should be made to combat this terrible disease. It is not generally recognised that there are more deaths from consumption than from all the other infectious diseases put together, and while ample provision is made for the isolation and treatment of infectious disease, there is practically no proper provision throughout the greater part of Ireland for the treatment of cases of consumption, the only institution open to them being the Union Infirmary, and owing to workhouse associations and the want of suitable arrangements consumptives in the early stage of the disease do not care to enter it. In the majority of the Union Infirmaries there are separate wards, but with very few exceptions these are only partially isolated, the patients using the same passages, staircases, and exercise yards, while in some Infirmaries even this partial isolation has not yet been provided, although the infectivity of the disease and the necessity for isolation has been frequently pointed out. Partial isolation has been suggested as a temporary measure only. No one could consider the arrangement sufficient, as all consumptive cases are a source of great danger to the other patients in the Infirmaries, for it is admitted that all diseases, and especially all chronic ailments, tend to weaken resistance to the invasion of consumption, and it will thus be seen to what an extent danger exists from the imperfect isolation of consumptive patients in the Union Infirmaries. Such a condition of things demands an immediate remedy.

Existing Sanatoria in Ireland.

105. No doubt the best method of treatment would be to have fully equipped Sanatoria for patients in the early stage of the disease, and hospitals for the more advanced cases. In this country there are two public Sanatoria, and both have been doing good work for several years, viz., the

National Sanatorium at Newcastle, County Wicklow, and the Foster Green Sanatorium at Newtownbreda, near Belfast. Two more have been arranged for, one in Belfast and another in County Cork. There are also several private Sanatoria in different parts of the country.

106. It would, however, be less expensive to have one institution for cases of consumption in the different stages, and we believe that institutions of this kind should be provided in each large County, and one for two or three counties in which the number of patients could be treated in one building—for instance, we thought that the Corrofin (County Clare) Workhouse, which is unnecessary for Poor Law purposes, might be converted into a Sanatorium for the counties of Galway, Clare, and Limerick. In this connection the question of expense is a very important one, and it is mainly for this reason that the combined institution is suggested. There are, however, other benefits to be derived from combining the curative and apparently hopeless cases together in one institution, such as avoiding the difficulty of determining whether a patient is curable or incurable, there being no hard and fast line of demarcation; and obviating the necessity of transferring patients from such an institution when they pass from what is called the curative condition. Moreover, consumptives would more willingly enter an institution where they knew patients had recovered.

Advantages of having one institution for treatment of cases in various stages.

107. We have no hesitation in suggesting that some of the disused Workhouses⁽¹⁾ could be selected, and with a reasonable outlay might be converted into fairly efficient Sanatoria. The portion to be set apart for early cases could be adapted as far as possible on the lines of a Sanatorium, with large windows, which should be made to open freely, and with open air shelters and other requisites. The other portion would not require extensive alterations, and at a small cost could be made to afford suitable accommodation for the more advanced cases. The cost of maintaining the Sanatoria should, as is explained elsewhere in this report, be a charge on the County funds, in the same way as for the other hospitals of a County. The managing body, when it is the institution for a single county, should be the Hospital Committee, and, when for more than one County, a Committee composed of representatives from the Hospital Committees of the Counties concerned. If by a short course of treatment in a Sanatorium a patient can be restored to working efficiency the ratepayers would be relieved from the burden of supporting the patient and frequently dependents also. On this ground, apart from the duty of preventing the spread of infection, we think the County Councils would be more than justified in providing Sanatoria. We do not, however, desire to convey an impression that we consider it unnecessary that Sanatoria constructed and maintained on the most approved modern lines should be established. Where the resources of the ratepayers and other considerations permit we should like to see such Sanatoria provided, and disused workhouses used as supplemental to them in such a manner as might be found expedient in each locality.

Disused Workhouses might be used for Sanatoria when structurally adapted.

Poor Law institutions for tuberculosis might be supplementary to regular Sanatoria.

108. The question of additional hospital accommodation was frequently brought before us when holding our local inquiries, chiefly as regards poor remote districts with scattered population. In one remarkable case however in a prosperous and thickly-populated neighbourhood, it was clearly proved to us that additional hospital accommodation is badly required⁽²⁾. The thriving and improving manufacturing town of Portadown in the County Armagh with a population in 1901 of 10,092 (having increased from 8,430 in 1891) is itself without any hospital accommodation whatever, the Union Hospital being at Lurgan, a distance of five miles. Under the existing law there is not any way known to us by which a general surgical and medical hospital can be erected and maintained out of local rates levied over a large area unless the Guardians of the Lurgan Union agree to

Additional hospital accommodation in some localities.

Portadown.

(1.) Dr. E. C. Thompson, 5712; Dr. Hall, 7483; Dr. Colahan, 24545

(2.) J. Fleming, 9040; Dr. Darling, 9303; Sir J. H. Strong, 9591; W. Wilson, 9592-3; J. Acheson, 9610; J. Collen, 9614-7.

build an hospital, as an auxiliary workhouse, and to charge the cost of construction and maintenance to the Union-at-large. As it is most unlikely that such an arrangement would be supported by the great majority of the Guardians who are unconnected with the town of Portadown, it is evident that some other solution of the difficulty must be found. If an English precedent were followed a general hospital might be built and maintained under the Public Health Acts, but it would be charged on the Urban District of Portadown, which already contributes to the Lurgan Hospital and to the Armagh County Infirmary. The Poor Law Hospital for the Union is situated at Lurgan, which has a population of 11,782, the population in 1891 having been 11,570. Many accidents from machinery occur in both Lurgan and Portadown and a hospital is required for each town. Lurgan is provided for by its having been selected as the site for the workhouse, and the inhabitants of Portadown feel that they ought to have a hospital as well as Lurgan. The question has many difficulties, as the Lurgan Union is comprised of portions of the counties of Armagh, Antrim, and Down. As a matter of equitable arrangement it would, we think, be pretty generally agreed that the expense of a hospital for a town of (say) over 10,000 population should be mainly, if not altogether, borne by the inhabitants of the town and suburbs under the existing law of chargeability. But in the case of Portadown this view is disturbed by the fact that the ratepayers of Portadown contribute at exactly the same rate to the Lurgan Poor Law Hospital as the ratepayers of Lurgan do, who have the hospital at their doors. A further difficulty is that both the Portadown and the Lurgan ratepayers contribute to the upkeep of the County Infirmary which is in the city of Armagh at a distance of about 13 miles from Portadown and about 18 miles from Lurgan. ⁽¹⁾ There is also a want of hospital accommodation in the town of Arklow, County Wicklow, which is one of the principal fishing ports of Ireland, and where an extensive cordite manufactory and granite quarries are actively worked. Arklow is in the Poor Law Union of Rathdrum, and is about 12 miles distant from the Union Infirmary. One of the old County Fever Hospitals is situated on a good site, practically in the town of Arklow, but in recent years it has been very little used, and there is a desire on the part of the inhabitants that it should be improved, and converted into a general hospital of the cottage type. We most strongly recommend that this course should be adopted.

Arklow

Additional
Cottage Hospitals
in the western
half of Ireland;
and the
Countess of
Dudley's
Nursing System

109. In remote districts in the north-west, west, and south-west of Ireland, there are populous places that are at virtually prohibitive distances from hospital accommodation, and the establishment of small cottage hospitals there seems to us to be requisite ⁽²⁾. We have in view an hospital of the simplest and least expensive kind which would be attended by the Dispensary Doctor, with a fully trained nurse, of the Jubilee class, who could, when necessary, be temporarily reinforced by another nurse. We think it essential that a nurse of the first rank should be sent to such remote places in sole charge; and, in our opinion the remarkable and unquestionable success of the Countess of Dudley's Nursing System in the western parts of Ireland is due very largely to her wisdom in selecting highly qualified nurses of experience and aptitude, with character and resource that enable them to discharge their lonely and laborious duty efficiently and with general satisfaction. The frequent and encouraging inspections of the Nurses and their work by Lady Dudley and other members of the Committee, particularly Mr. W. J. D. Walker of the Congested Districts Board, must also have had an important effect upon the success of this most valuable project. These nurses have, we believe, gained the affection and respect of those they attend; and, apart from the actual good they do to patients

(1.) No suggestion is offered above as to a method for solving the difficulty at Portadown, but the recommendations we make in paragraph No. 266 (Mr. Murnaghan, M.P., dissenting) as to the chargeability of hospitals would meet any cases of the kind.

(2.) Dr. O'Connell, 10782-3; P. O'Hara, 24206; P. J. O'Malley, 24239; P. J. Hogan, 24689; Rev. M. M'Hugh, 24300-1; Rev. R. M'Hugh, 24224; Rev. J. Healy, 24310; Rev. J. Flatley, 24328-32; Rev. M. Farraher, 24654-68; M. J. Flavin, M.P., 26332-7; Mrs. Foran, 26520.

under the direction of the Dispensary Doctor, they are most useful advocates for sanitary conditions in the houses and surroundings of those with whom they come in contact. Lady Dudley's nurses are resident at some of the places at which Cottage Hospitals might with advantage be built, and we consider that it would be wise and economical for the local bodies to secure the services of these nurses, if Lady Dudley's Committee were willing to guarantee a considerable portion of a nurse's salary on condition that the Nurses should always be Jubilee Nurses, or others possessing such other high qualifications as the Committee might agree to. There would be a double advantage in such an arrangement. The best kind of nurses would be secured for the Cottage Hospital, and, as their salary would be partly paid out of the rates, Lady Dudley's Committee would be able to engage more nurses out of the money saved.

110. Such a project opens up the wider anticipation that eventually the poor in every district throughout Ireland may possess the aid of a District Nurse⁽¹⁾ who could in serious cases ensure that the directions of the doctor are carried out, and arrange that the best possible steps are taken when patients are not removed from their homes to hospital. In philanthropic matters our elected public bodies in the economical discharge of responsible duties have to proceed far more slowly and cautiously than private persons or associations that are moved or impelled by charitable enthusiasm. Many, if not most, of our social and charitable improvements are suggested and initiated by such private efforts; and, when their value has been tested and acknowledged, public bodies, whose members are responsible for the economy with which they discharge their duties, are in a position to decide upon the value of any experiment or suggestion that may be made by private individuals. Over and above the devoted labours of religious communities the nursing of the sick poor in their homes has, of recent years, been very widely attempted by persons and associations from a charitable motive in this country and in Great Britain; and it is likely that there will always be a great deal of such good work done in this way. There are, however, many districts, as in the west of Ireland, where, owing to their poverty, sufficient voluntary efforts are not likely to be made locally. Owing to the good work done elsewhere by voluntary Nursing Associations, it will become a question how far public bodies, with perhaps some State assistance in very poor districts, should undertake the duty of providing for the nursing in their own homes of such sick persons as cannot, or need not, be removed to hospital. At all events, it is now generally admitted that no Dispensary District ought to be left without competent midwifery attendance in addition to that of the Dispensary Medical Doctor. Apart, however, from a provision for such midwifery duty District Nurses have not been appointed by local bodies, with the exception of an experiment in the Derry Poor Law Union, where midwives were engaged to do District Nursing, but these midwives had not been trained in medical and surgical nursing. In both Lady Dudley's and the Jubilee Nursing Scheme the same woman is trained nurse and midwife, and this plurality of qualifications in one person seems to be the proper and economical method of arranging for District Nursing, even though there are sometimes occasions when a nurse would be disqualified from attending a maternity case owing to the septic character of another case that she might be in attendance upon. Those who are seriously sick among the poor in small or overcrowded houses or rooms should for many reasons be removed to hospital when possible, but there will always be cases of more or less serious illness that must be treated in the homes of the sick poor; and the question is now coming forward as to how far it is the duty of public bodies to supply nursing attendance for such cases.

Possibility of a general extension of District Nursing.

Suggestion that the same woman should be both District Nurse and Midwife.

(1.) Lord Monteagle, 610; J. Gregg, 1250-9; W. Browne, 1674-6; Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., 5741; Dr. Hall, 7427-9; J. Dolan, 12578; Colonel Everard, 13073-4; F. Sheridan, 13528; Dr. J. M. S. Kenny, 15353; Dr. G. A. Moorhead, 15757-8; Lord Stopford, 19854; P. J. Hogan, 24808-9; Dr. Faris, 24994; Dr. Molony, 27484-95.

Localities
suggested for
new Cottage
Hospitals.

111. The following Table sets out the places where, in our opinion, it would be desirable that Cottage Hospitals should be maintained by the local authority. The number of miles in the fifth column of the Table does not indicate the greatest distance that a patient at present has to be taken for admission into hospital; it frequently is 10 or 12 miles more.

No.	Locality suggested for a Cottage Hospital.	County.	Union.	Distance of suggested site from the nearest Hospital.	Observations.
1	Cushendall,	Antrim,	Ballycastle,	20	An existing hospital owned by a lady who would hand it over with Endowment.
2	Gweedore,	Donegal,	Dunfanaghy,	20	
3	Dunglow,	do.,	Glenties,	15	Killala Workhouse to be closed altogether.
4	Carrick,	do.,	do.,	23	
5	Ballycastle,	Mayo,	Killala,	19	
6	Achill Sound,	do.,	Westport,	25	
7	Louisburgh,	do.,	do.,	12	By sea.
8	Carna,	Galway,	Clifden,	22	
9	Bealadangan,	do.,	Oughterard,	27	
10	Kilronan, Aran Island.	do.,	Galway,	30	
11	Carrigaholt,	Clare,	Kilrush,	16	Tulla Workhouse to be closed altogether.
12	Tulla,	do.,	Tulla,	—	
13	Glin or Tarbert,	Limerick or Kerry.	Rathkeale or Listowel.	13	Close Cahirciveen Workhouse altogether; using old Fever Hospital in Cahirciveen as a general hospital.
14	Cahirciveen,	Kerry,	Cahirciveen,	—	
15	Sneem,	do.,	Kenmare,	15	

Hospitals that
might be closed
if not restored
and refitted.

112. There are also in some Counties in the south-east of Ireland, some Poor Law Hospitals that long ago were used as County Fever Hospitals. Most of these buildings are now used for general hospital purposes, but only to a very limited extent. Almost all these institutions at the time of our visit were neglected and ruinous. We understood that Tullow Hospital was about to be rebuilt. They are, in most cases, quite unfit for occupation as hospitals, and unless arrangements are made for restoration or re-building, we recommend that they be closed as being unfit for use as hospitals. The following is a Table of these institutions: —

No.	Place where Hospital is situate.	County.	Union.	Distance from the nearest Hospital.	Observations.
1	Tullow,	Carlow,	Carlow,	8	From Shillelagh.
2	Freshford,	Kilkenny,	Kilkenny,	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	From Kilkenny.
3	Gowran,	do.,	do.,	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	do.
4	Newtownbarry,	Wexford,	Enniscorthy.	12	Equidistant from Shillelagh and Enniscorthy.
5	Oulart,	do.,	do.,	8	From Enniscorthy.

Bagenalstown.

113. The general and Fever Hospital at Bagenalstown, in the County and Union of Carlow, is by far the best of the Cottage Hospitals in the counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, and Wexford, and it is desirable that it should be improved and maintained.

114. In the foregoing paragraphs on the treatment of the sick in Poor Law hospitals, we referred to the necessity, if the best possible results are to be obtained, of arranging so that the medical practitioners to be placed in charge of hospitals should be possessed of such professional knowledge and experience that, at their appointment or selection, they would be fit to manage a general hospital, or to act as an operating surgeon, according as the circumstances of the particular institution might require.

Advantages of reorganizing the Medical Service.

115. We do not at all suggest corruptness in the motives that influence a local body in any county, country, or continent in the disposal of patronage. But the fact will, we think, be generally admitted that, as a rule, a local candidate all over the world gets from a local body a preference. The practical result generally is that everywhere the local candidate is almost always successful, even against a man who would be regarded as superior, having regard to qualifications, experience and recommendations. Nor should we regard the discretion of an unfettered central body as satisfactory in this matter. We consider it a vitally important matter, that the best and most suitable man should be selected by an absolutely impartial test in order that only experienced physicians and skilful surgeons should be appointed respectively to the hospitals where their services would be required. In making recommendations for the carrying out of this change, our object is to avoid, as far as possible, any suggestion that would not commend itself to the judgment of those who are simply anxious that the best arrangements possible should be made for the sick who are obliged to become inmates of rate-supported hospitals.

Considerations respecting local appointments.

116. If the Infirmary and Hospital Medical Service in Ireland were being organised anew, and indeed even as circumstances are at present, it seems that the best and most impartial test would be one that should provide for entrance into the Service by competitive examination⁽¹⁾, open to students educated in Ireland, with a representative Medical Council, to assign the successful candidates to suitable places, and to deal with all important questions of promotion, removal, censure, or dismissal, and of remuneration and superannuation, subject to Treasury approval of scales of payment. Such a system, it would appear, involves the payment by the State of the whole, instead of half, of the salaries of medical officers, as at present—or, in other words, that there should be a State Medical Service, with local bodies to assist in the administration of relief to the sick. We would not suggest this most important change unless the Government were willing to defray the whole cost of the Service in lieu of their contribution of half the cost, as at present. If a State Service of the kind were established, the Government could (subject to rights and customs affecting existing Medical Officers) require the Medical Staff, as part of their ordinary duty, to attend Constabulary, Coastguards, Soldiers, Post-Office Officials, and such other persons in the Prison or other Public Service, as now receive Medical attendance at the public expense. Doctors in the State Service would, of course, also act as Medical Officers of Health. It is, we may state, contemplated that the present privileges as to private practice should continue. In some populous districts, however, we think it would be desirable that on the occurrence of vacancies the State Medical Officers should be required to devote their whole time to their public duties.

State Medical Service.

117. We consider it proper and equitable that the proposed Irish Medical State Service, should, at all events for the present, be restricted to candidates educated in Ireland. Practically all existing Irish Poor Law Medical Officers are Irishmen; and, having regard to the very few modes of earning a livelihood in Ireland, otherwise than by agriculture, we think it would be unjust to take away these appointments from Irishmen and

(1.) Dr. Warnock (Donegal Workhouse Infirmary), 1137; Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., 5652-7 and 5796.

confer a benefit upon other countries which possess superior educational facilities. Further, it is an undoubted advantage that physicians in any country should know intimately the customs, habits, modes of expression, and general conditions of the inhabitants, especially in the case of Ireland, where the mode of life and the standard of living differ so much from those in Great Britain.

Council for
control of State
Medical Service.

118. The competitive examination for entrance into the Poor Law Hospital Service should, we think, be conducted upon similar lines to those for the Army, Navy, or Indian Medical Service. It would seem wise in our opinion that, in the circumstances of the country, the Service should in all important matters be controlled by a Council, mainly, if not altogether, composed of representative Irish Surgeons and Physicians. The composition of such a Council, if the idea were regarded as practicable, would be a matter for careful consideration, and it is not unlikely that the addition of one or two laymen to the Council might be considered desirable. We suggest a Council composed of five members—the Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board; a representative of the Royal College of Surgeons and of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland conjointly; a representative of the Irish Branch of the General Council of Medical Education and Registration of the United Kingdom; a Medical representative from the University of Dublin; and a Medical representative from the Royal University of Ireland. It is anticipated that the official and ordinary routine business would be discharged in the Medical Charities Branch of the Local Government Board; and that important, or unprecedented, questions should be dealt with at a weekly meeting of the Council. Having regard to the value of the time of the four representative Medical members of the Council it would seem right that a suitable fee should be paid to each such member for every weekly attendance; and beyond such fees there would not be any other expense connected with the Council. The inspecting and clerical staff of the Medical Charities Branch of the Local Government Board would, however, require to be reinforced; and we think that the office of Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board should always be filled by the appointment of a Medical Inspector, or of a Medical man who had served for some years in the Irish State Medical Service. Similarly, we suggest that only members of the State Medical Service should be eligible for appointment as Medical Inspectors.

Superannuation
allowances for
Medical Officers.

119. This system would give local medical men of ordinary ability a reasonable hope for promotion in their professional career. Every doctor would also have a motive for doing his best to improve his own knowledge, and for acquiring and preserving a good reputation, if prospects of promotion were to depend upon the absence of unfavourable records of importance as well as upon his professional capacity. It is difficult to see how pensions on the Civil Service scale could be withheld from the members of such a re-organized Medical Service. One must acknowledge that at present there is not any motive except the very highest to encourage a medical officer in remote districts of the country to discharge his duties zealously and conscientiously, and in a manner worthy of the traditions, character, and obligations of the profession of medicine. There are, unfortunately, in rural districts too many instances in which the need of a lower motive, accompanied by effective control, is only too notorious.

Dispensary
Medical Service
excluded from
scope of this
Commission, but
its inclusion
would facilitate
the scheme as
regards hospitals.

120. We believe that the system now suggested would ensure the supply of good men to all the rate-supported or rate-aided hospitals in Ireland. Any change in the Dispensary Medical and Public Health Service is outside the scope of this inquiry, except in so far as Dispensary Medical Officers would *ex officio* have charge of District Hospitals; but the foregoing suggestions as regards hospitals could more easily be worked into some General Scheme for the entire Irish County and Union Medical Service. The establishment of a State Medical Service in Ireland would mean a very small increase in the Parliamentary Grant in comparison with

the benefits involved. The present grant for half the salaries of all Workhouse and Dispensary Medical Officers is £63,613 per annum; and if the whole of the salaries of the Surgeons of County Infirmaries were included an annual grant of, say, £130,726, that is to say, an additional grant of £67,113, over and above the annual amount for pensions, and for salaries and pensions for Medical Officers of Health, would be necessary at the present rate of expenditure in order to establish a State-supported Medical Service both for County and District Hospitals and for Dispensaries also. Of course provisional arrangements would have to be made for the transitory period between the old and the new systems, if action were taken upon the foregoing recommendations, and also upon some other suggestions made later on. We do not go into details with reference to Dispensary and Public Health Medical expenditure, as these matters are not within our reference, though they are, we consider, sufficiently intermingled with the Hospital Medical Service to justify the observations we now make.

121. We desire to recommend very strongly that it should be legal all over Ireland for registered Medical Practitioners or Relieving Officers to give an order for the admission of the sick poor to the District Hospital nearest to the patient's residence, provided that either the Doctor in attendance upon the case or the Relieving Officer so recommends in a form to be prescribed. The cost of the maintenance of a patient from another district should, we suggest, be fixed in the case of every hospital at a rate per week and per day by the hospital authorities, with the approval of the Local Government Board, or by the Local Government Board after public inquiry, if the local bodies concerned do not agree to a rate of payment. We further discuss the question of chargeability subsequently in this report.

Power to send patient into District Hospital nearest to him.

122. We think that the managing body for each District Hospital (now the Workhouse Infirmary) should consist of (say) nine members, and that the Chairman of the Board of Guardians should be the Chairman of the District Hospital Committee. Assuming the number to be *nine*, we suggest that the Board of Guardians should select five more Guardians to be members of the Committee, and that the three remaining members should be selected or appointed by the Board of Guardians out of Local Government Electors residing in the Union. If there were more than one Hospital in a District, not including the County Infirmary, supported out of public rates, or partly out of rates and partly out of endowment, such Hospital, including a Fever Hospital, would be regarded by us as another District Hospital, to be managed by the Hospital Committee of the District.

Managing body of District Hospital.

123. If at the time of the first formation of the District Hospital Committee, referred to in the preceding paragraph, or of the County Hospital Committee in the paragraph which follows, any sufficient local representations be made to the Local Government Board as to any circumstances that seemed to make it desirable to change the number or constitution of either Committee, we think that, after public inquiry, the Board should be authorised to make such variation as might seem best in the circumstances.

Public inquiry to be held upon sufficient local representation when Committee is first formed.

124. In order to ensure uniformity as far as possible in the Hospitals of each County we think that it would be most desirable that all the members of the District Hospital Committee in a County should be the members of the Committee of Management of the County Infirmary, or "County Hospital," as we propose that it should be called. The fact that each member of the District Committee would also be a member of the County Committee would, in our opinion, tend towards promoting harmony and efficiency, as well as uniformity of administration. In addition to the several District Hospital Committees, we think that the County Council should be authorized to appoint (say) nine members either wholly from the members of the County Council or from members of the Council and Local Government Electors resident in the County as they might determine. Our view is that County Infirmaries and County Hospitals, and also District Hospitals, should in future be subject to the same laws and regulations as

Managing body of "County Hospital."

now govern Poor Law Infirmaries and Fever Hospitals, and that all rate-supported institutions for the treatment of the sick of any kind should in and for every area be under the same managing committee.*

Admission to
County Hospital.

125. We suggest that the sick poor should be admitted into the County Hospital by order of the County Hospital Committee, of the County Surgeon, or, after ascertaining by telegraph or otherwise that a vacancy existed, of any Hospital or Dispensary Medical Officer in the County.† In an emergency, the House Surgeon would of course admit.

Admission to
District Hospital.

126. The sick poor might be admitted into a District Hospital by order of the District Hospital Committee, or of any registered medical practitioner, who had been in attendance on the case, or by any Relieving Officer in the district.† The Medical Officer of the hospital would, of course, have the right to admit, and in any emergency the Nurse in charge might also admit in the absence of the Medical Officer. As regards patients other than the sick poor, we recommend that Committees of the County Hospitals or of the District Hospitals should be required, subject to the consent of the Central Authority, to make regulations for the admission and for enforcing payment for maintenance of sick persons who are considered able to defray either wholly or in part the cost of their maintenance and treatment.

Regulations as to
paying patients.

Admission to
Fever Hospital,
or Consumptive
Sanatorium.

127. Subject to due inquiry as to a vacancy, *any* patient, not merely a poor or destitute person, might, in the interest of the public health, be admitted into a District Fever Hospital or Consumptive Sanatorium on the recommendation of any registered Medical Practitioner, or Relieving Officer of the locality, where the sick person is at the time. In any emergency the Nurse in charge of a Fever Hospital might have power to admit temporarily, pending inspection by the Medical Officer.

Compulsory
removal to
Hospital or
Almshouse.

128. From time to time instances occur in which it is found impossible to induce sick or feeble old people, without any persons to take care of them, to go into the Union sick or infirm wards for treatment or care. We think it would be desirable that in such cases compulsory removal should be authorized in the same way as is provided for infected persons in Section 141 of the Public Health Ireland Act, 1878.

Removal by
Ambulance.

129. In connection with the question of the removal of patients to hospital we consider that each county should have a county ambulance system in connection with its Hospitals, Sanatoria, Lunatic Asylums, and other Institutions.

Duties of the
Medical and
Surgical Staff of
County and
District
Hospitals.

130. We think that the Surgeon of the County Hospital might, with advantage, be required to furnish half-yearly to the County Hospital Committee reports upon the condition of the District Hospitals in the County. He might also, after revision of his salary, be obliged, if required, to attend without special fee at a consultation, or at any operation in a District Hospital, if the patient could not be removed without danger to the County Hospital. We contemplate that all major operations should, when practicable, be performed at the County Hospital, and that only minor or emergency operations should be done at the District Hospitals. A very limited supply of instruments would, therefore, be kept in a District Hospital, nor would costly operation rooms and fittings be requisite except in the County Hospital.

* The question of the very few hospitals established under the Public Health Acts would require special consideration.

† Mr. Murnaghan, M.P., dissents from the recommendations as to these modes of admission, and is most strongly of opinion that each member of the County Hospital Committee, and that each member of the District Hospital Committee, should be empowered to give an order for admission into the County Hospital and the District Hospital respectively. The other two members of the Commission, on the other hand, consider that medical men only or Committees with medical men as their advisers, are competent to decide as to what hospital a patient ought to be sent—it being borne in mind that a County Hospital is intended, according to the view of the majority of the members of the Commission, for the most serious cases of disease or injury; the District Hospitals for ordinary (including midwifery) cases; and the "Almshouses" for aged or infirm persons, including any who may be suffering from chronic ailments. The question at issue between the members of the Commission is whether members of Committees *individually* should or should not have a right to give orders for admission into hospitals.

131. In some of the County Hospitals as they exist, and in others after the carrying out of improvements, it would be possible to train Nurses for service in the County and District Hospitals—such Nurses, as we mention elsewhere, to be liable for duty in any hospital in the county. After sufficient experience and instruction in the County Hospital probationer Nurses could be sent to assist in District Hospitals. Such a system of part-training and service in the Waterford County and City Infirmary with the Waterford Union Infirmary has been adopted and worked successfully, though it would go even more smoothly, it is thought, if there were an authority common to both. It is hardly necessary to say that a regular course of training should be prescribed and adhered to. The disadvantage that very few, indeed, of the County or District Hospitals are clinical hospitals for medical students involves the corresponding advantage that the nurses have an opportunity of doing much work that in clinical hospitals is done by medical students, but the presence of a Resident Surgeon, or a House Surgeon, and also of a Lady Superintendent with full nursing qualifications seems to be absolutely necessary in any hospital in which Nurses are trained.

Training of Nurses.

132. As regards the proposed transfer of the management of District Hospitals from the Guardians to a Committee of the Guardians, it may be mentioned that such a transference is not in opposition to arrangements that were made in the past. The original function of Poor Law Guardians was to relieve persons suffering from destitution, and the sick wards in the Workhouse were only provided for such inmates of the Workhouse as might become sick while they were in the Workhouse. But, as the County system of hospitals was altogether inadequate for the treatment of the sick of the County, those who were sick naturally became inmates of the Workhouse on a plea of destitution in order that they might obtain the advantages of hospital treatment.

Not intended originally that Guardians should manage hospitals.

133. Our proposals are to close the 159 Workhouses as such, but not to reduce on the whole the number of local hospitals. It is, however, obvious that it would be cheerless and dismal in most instances to arrange that the acute sick should be placed or left in a few wards of an otherwise deserted large block of Workhouse buildings. Where the Workhouse would not in any re-arrangement be required for some useful purpose, we suggest that the Workhouse and site should become the property of the Government, and be at their disposal for sale or otherwise, as might be thought fit, the Government to erect out of the general taxation of the United Kingdom, Hospitals suitable for the requirements of each District. In many instances the present Fever Hospitals could be converted into District Hospitals, if small isolated buildings for infectious cases were erected adjacent to such converted District Hospitals. The wards and arrangements existing in most Workhouses in Ireland are quite unfit for the treatment of surgical or even medical cases according to any modern standards; and, as we before mentioned in paragraph No. 68, this defect must be attributed to action taken contrary to the advice of Irish Boards of Guardians. We anticipate that the cost of such local hospitals as might be necessary would not be heavy, as the Fever Hospitals would in many places serve as General Hospitals, with wings or out-buildings for infectious cases.

159 Workhouses to be closed gradually as such.

Hospital accommodation however not to be diminished.

Suggestion that Government should take over Workhouses not wanted and build in lieu thereof suitable Cottage Hospitals.

134. Such re-arrangement for the sick would, we believe, lead to economy in expenditure. The District Hospital could be attended by the dispensary doctor instead of by a separate doctor as often happens now—the life interest of the present doctors being of course respected. The lay trained nursing staff (as distinguished from Nurses who are members of a Religious Order) would be attached to the County Hospital as headquarters, and a smaller number would therefore be necessary than if each hospital in the county had to keep up its full staff to be ready for emergencies. Besides there would no longer be any possibility of filling up, and even overcrowding, the sick wards with feeble old people who require only kindly domestic care. The District Hospital would be an hospital in which only curable

Probable economical tendency of re-arrangement of District Hospitals.

or severe cases would be eligible for admission. At present a very large number of the inmates of the sick wards are not amenable to treatment, being merely old or infirm. As regards the sick, we believe that our suggestions would lead to better treatment for the really sick, and at a smaller cost. Attached to each District Hospital there would be the dispensary doctor, the nurses, and the chaplains; but we do not think that any porter, or other male official, would be necessary in the hospital, unless it might be considered economical to employ a gardener to live in a lodge, to provide vegetables, to keep the place neat, and to make himself generally useful. The accounts of the hospital could be kept in the prescribed form, by the Clerk of the District Council and the Nun or the Lay Nurse whichever may be in charge of the hospital.

Further recommendations as to Hospitals.

135. In considering the treatment of the sick under the Poor Law we had necessarily to refer to the County Infirmaries and County Fever Hospitals. In paragraphs Nos. 85 to 93 will be found some details of these institutions; and in paragraphs Nos. 93 to 131 we make recommendations on the subject. We point out in those paragraphs the desirableness from the point of view of the majority of us of a *County* system for the care of the sick, with power for Counties to combine for such a purpose as the *training of nurses*, and indeed, we would add, for making any incidental arrangement with regard to the care and treatment of the sick, subject to the approval of the Central Authority. According to proposals already made in this report the County Infirmary or "County Hospital," as we propose that it should be called, would be the chief hospital in the County and just as accessible to the poor as the Union Infirmary is at present. As the principal hospital of the County, the County Hospital should not be obliged to curtail its advantages or be obliged to have recourse to the customary charitable expedients for raising money for the due maintenance of the hospital. But, on the other hand, we would give to the managing bodies of all County or District Hospitals power to consider how much (if anything at all) each patient, by himself or by his responsible relatives could, without hardship, afford to pay by the day or week for cost of maintenance and treatment; and we think that the managing bodies ought to be empowered to assess such sum and to recover the amount due, if necessary, in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Some County Institutions have property and annual revenue of different kinds; and we recommend that in future a rate be struck for the estimated total nett requirements of each institution, after giving credit for the amount of annual revenue that will be received during the year according to the Estimate of the Secretary or Clerk. We do not intend to suggest that this recommendation should include hospitals such as the North and South Infirmaries, Cork, the Meath Hospital, Dublin, Barrington's Hospital, Limerick, and the County and City Infirmary, Waterford, unless these institutions so desire, and unless an arrangement satisfactory to the County Councils and the Central Authority is arrived at.

Power to recover cost or part cost of treatment.

Mode of striking rate for full nett requirements of County Hospitals excepting some.

Power to County Council to contribute to any Cottage or other Hospital or similar Institution.

The Blind and other afflicted Classes.

136. It is a question whether the County Council should be empowered to contribute towards the funds of any Cottage Hospital, or other institution in the county upon such terms as might be agreed upon. We use the word "institution" with the object of including any building for the adult Blind, Deaf and Dumb, Mentally Defective, or other afflicted class. Our opinion is that it might often be most useful that a power should be possessed by the local bodies of contributing, with the sanction of the Central Authority, towards the funds of such institutions, and of defraying the cost of maintenance of afflicted persons therein.* We received evidence in favour of the establishment of a Central or State Institution for the Blind⁽¹⁾, but this question, as well as that concerning the Feeble-minded, has recently formed the subject-matter for special inquiries, and comparatively little evidence was given before us.

* As to children, see Pauper Children (Ireland) Act, 1898, sec. 3 (10).

(1.) J. Kenny, 662-3; R. H. Wilson, 11427; C. H. Peacock, 19765; J. Lane, 28704.

VIII.—INFIRM OR AGED.

137. We already have referred to the classification of Workhouse Inmates in paragraphs Nos. 73 and 81, and instead of recommending the amalgamation of Unions, accompanied by the complete closing of some Workhouses, we suggest rather the bringing together into one institution all the inmates of one class from a number of neighbouring Workhouses, and the closing of all Workhouses as such. We have explained that we do not propose that the number of local hospitals should be diminished, but we consider that the infirm or aged inmates of all the Workhouses in one or more counties, might be removed to one central building with advantage to the inmates of that class as well as to the financial gain of the ratepayers. It is necessary at this stage of our report that we should mention that we are proposing that the inmates other than those classed as "Sick" in all the Workhouses in Ireland should, with the exception of children to be boarded out, be segregated according to counties or other suitable area, and be maintained in the relatively few institutions which we hereinafter suggest in substitution of Workhouses for the accommodation of all the several classes of inmates except the sick and the boarded-out children.

Prefatory
statement.

138. The infirm or aged inmates are at present in 159 workhouses; we recommend that they shall in future be in (say) 32 "Almshouses," or such other name as may be preferred.

Number of
infirm and aged
in workhouses.

139. The largest number of aged and infirm inmates in all the workhouses in Ireland on any Saturday in 1905, was 14,868 on the 21st of January, 1905. This number would be increased by some transfers from the sick and feeble. In these new County Almshouses separate accommodation for aged married couples could be provided and the inmates could be classed according to conduct, and allowed privileges⁽¹⁾ including permission to wear their own clothes, if any special treatment were considered desirable.

140. The evidence on the whole was in favour of removing the infirm and aged to a central institution provided that no additional cost would be imposed upon the rates; but we ascertained that a feeling existed in some small towns against removing the inmates owing to the loss that local contractors would suffer in having smaller *local* consumption of food, clothes, and necessaries. This is a very natural local objection, but not one, we believe, that would be seriously considered where the change would be for the benefit of the ratepayers and of the inmates.

General opinion
favourable to
segregation of
infirm and aged
into County
institutions.

141. But a more serious objection, and one deserving most attentive consideration is the opinion that aged and infirm people who have resided at a distance from the new central "Almshouse" would feel exiled if they were obliged to leave the building in which they had been, and to go to a greater distance from their friends⁽²⁾. We felt the force of such representations, and we therefore made special inquiries on the subject at many workhouses when we visited them. We found that, while the acutely sick were visited by their friends, the infirm and aged received very few visits

Objection on
grounds of
hardship in
removing old
people to some
distance.

(1.) Rev. J. Paterson Smyth, 516-7; Major Howard, 5454; Lady Monteagle, 26128; Mrs. Foran, 26517; J. Gregg, 1263; J. G. Larkin, 3268; Dr. Warnock (Donegal Workhouse Infirmary), 4843; Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., 5738; Earl of Belmore, 6155; P. Kiernan, 7582; P. Whelan, 7750; A. Atkinson, 11702; Right Hon. T. Andrews, 12206; Mrs. Cullinane, 13697; M. Murray, 14250; M. Ginnell, 14379; Dr. J. M. S. Kenny, 15346; Mrs. M'D. Cosgrave, 16788; J. Crozier, 17158-9; R. Clear, 28064-74; Miss E. M. Brown, 28858-64.

(2.) J. E. O'Neill, 3018; J. Mooney, 15940; R. H. Prior-Wandesforde, 18261; M. Byrne, 19400; W. Thorpe, 20083; Lady Maurice Fitzgerald, 20191; D. Hyland, 20970-1; N. J. Synnott, 17640; M. O'Neill, 18605; P. O'Donoghue, 21965; J. B. Barrington, 25830; Rev. T. Lee, 27292 and 27313; W. M'Donald, 27798-808; B. Jones, 27875-6; J. O'Brien, 27945; Jos. O'Brien, 27986; R. Clear, 28064; D. D. Harrington, 28970; P. O'Mahony, 29160; J. D. O'Sullivan, 29239; J. J. Corkerry, 29247.

from friends or relatives. This, we were informed, is because large numbers of these old people are among the last remaining survivors of their generation. In other cases the old people are unmarried men and women in touch with few, if any, relatives. Again, some are fathers or mothers of children who have emigrated but have not done well. Whatever may be the reason, the fact seems to be that there are very few visitors to the infirm and aged in rural workhouses. We have learned the views of many of the old people, and in some cases they put forward their desire not to be taken away lest they should not be buried with their friends. If such representations were made to the governing body of the "Almshouse" in any case, we think that they should be empowered to incur the necessary expenditure in having the remains of the person who had expressed such wish interred in the burial ground within their county where other members of the family are buried⁽³⁾. In the instances in which workhouses have already been closed some very affecting scenes were witnessed at the removal of the inmates to the other workhouses, and there were most touching exhibitions of grief at the partings between union officers and inmates. But it happened in numerous such cases that most of the persons who grieved at the prospect of removal settled down quite comfortably in their new quarters and liked the change. This we believe would happen in the new "Almshouses," where the inmates ought to be far more comfortable than they are at present.

Objection not sufficiently strong in the opinion of Commission.

It should be carefully considered how far it would be prudent and right to relax irksome conditions.

142. But in proposing any alleviation of disagreeable conditions for even aged and "deserving" but chronic inmates of institutions supported by the public, it seems to be a matter for most earnest consideration to what extent irksome regulations ought to be relaxed by the governing bodies. The question should be faced whether any, and, if so, what class of inmates should be exempt either wholly or in part from the restrictions that are now in force in Poor Law Institutions. It has to be decided what is the general feeling and wish in the matter—whether it is considered prudent, as well as kind-hearted, to endeavour to make the condition of those who have to be supported by the community as agreeable as that of struggling men and women of independent means—and to some extent more agreeable, because they who are supported by the public are free from constant distressing anxiety as to ways and means in trying to make both ends meet out of slender and uncertain resources. Personally we are in favour of the greatest possible relaxation of irksome rules, in the case of persons of good conduct who had no legal convictions recorded against them or who had not been obliged to claim support from the poor-rate until compelled by old age or permanent failure of health. On the other hand we see the danger and perhaps unfairness to the struggling, but independent, aged members of the community if any general relaxation of irksome conditions were made.

143. As an alternative to providing for aged and infirm applicants for relief in an "Almshouse," we recommend that Boards of Guardians should be empowered to board out such persons in institutions that are maintained by religious communities such as the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the Sisters of Nazareth, or by the Trustees of numerous Almshouses that exist in various parts of Ireland. The power to exercise this alternative would be most useful in providing for respectable aged or infirm people. We would not recommend the boarding-out of this class in ordinary homes unless the area of charge were the same as we recommend for outdoor relief, but, apart from the consideration as to the area of charge, we think that old people might not always be kept in a clean or comfortable condition in such circumstances.

Cottage Homes for aged married couples.

144. We are aware, through the inspection of one member of the Commission, of the plan that has been adopted in some parts of England of acquiring cottages for aged married couples and of permitting them to remain in these cottages as long as their conduct continues satisfactory.

(3.) G. Hackett, 15700; W. McDonald, 27803; D. D. Harrington, 28935; E. Roycroft, 29010; B. Jones, 27878; T. Linehan, 28578.

Some very well managed cottages were inspected in the Hull (Anlaby Road) Union, but the initial expenditure, if not the cost of maintenance also, would, in our opinion, put the system as administered in England beyond the means of Irish Local Authorities.*

145. We suggest that the new "Almshouses" should be managed by a committee composed of members of each Board of Guardians concerned, with power to co-opt a limited number of residents in the district. Committee of Management for "Almshouses."

146. An infirm or aged person might be admitted into the County or District Almshouse by order of the Board of Guardians, or of the Relieving Officer of the locality where the person resides. Admission into Almshouse.

IX.—LUNATICS AND IDIOTS.

147. As regards the insane, we understand that it is our duty to report (1.) whether any, and, if so, what steps should be taken with respect to the lunatics and idiots who are at present in Workhouses in Ireland; and (2) whether any further extension of the *Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum* system is desirable under the 76th Section of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898. This section empowers County Councils to provide auxiliary lunatic asylums for the reception of chronic harmless cases, not requiring special care and treatment in a fully equipped lunatic asylum; and any such auxiliary asylum may be either a separate asylum or a department of the District or County Asylum for the county. County Councils are also authorized in certain circumstances to take over disused Workhouses to be used as auxiliary lunatic asylums. Two questions to be answered:—
What to do with lunatics now in Workhouses?
And whether an extension of Auxiliary Asylum system is desirable.

148. As far as we are aware, the opinion is universally held that the condition of lunatics in practically every Workhouse is unsatisfactory⁽¹⁾. They are confined generally throughout the day in a small bare comfortless ward, with an adjoining walled-in yard for exercise; and the attendants in charge are, as a rule, without any experience or training to make them suitable for taking charge of lunatics. It is not possible to provide in Workhouses, as they are, adequate or satisfactory accommodation for lunatics, because all the wards, yards, and grounds are already appropriated for the various classes of inmates—the lunatics having their share (such as it is) in accordance with the original plan of the building. Improvements have been made in some of the larger Workhouses, but not to an extent sufficient to justify us in modifying the general opinion as to the unsatisfactory condition of the insane in Workhouses. Condition of lunatics in Workhouses most unsatisfactory.

149. We may also point out that there is not any power to detain lunatics in Workhouses. A *destitute* lunatic or idiot is admitted as a matter of course into a Workhouse; and, when he has been admitted on the grounds of his destitution, he is sent to the Lunatic Ward in the Workhouse by the Medical Officer without any legal formality, but merely as a matter of classification of Workhouse inmates. We consider that all destitute insane persons ought to be sent, after due legal formalities, to a County, District, or Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum; and that in no case should the insane be confined (in Workhouses they practically are confined) until steps have been taken similar to those that are requisite in the case of committals to a recognised public or private lunatic asylum⁽²⁾. No legal power to detain lunatics in Workhouses, but they practically are confined.

150. Lunatics in Workhouses are officially inspected and reported upon by the Inspectors of Lunatics, as well as by the Inspectors of the Local Auxiliary Lunatic Asylums like

* The Commission is much indebted to Mr. Philip H. Bagenal, General Inspector of the English Local Government Board for the information given by him, and for the trouble he took in accompanying one of our number to various institutions in his district in Yorkshire. The Commission also received much useful information from Mr. Jesse Chance, Master of the Hull Workhouse.

(1.) At least seventy witnesses recommended that all lunatics should be transferred from Workhouses to Asylums, and no evidence was given in favour of a continuance of the present system. See page 1002 of the Volume of Evidence for list of names of the witnesses.

(2.) Colonel Everard, 13064.

Youghal infinitely preferable to Workhouses for lunatics.

There are large numbers of chronic and harmless lunatics in County and District Asylums.

Ought additions to be made to existing Asylums, or ought Auxiliary Asylums to be provided?

Youghal Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum—Condition, &c.

The question of a Resident Medical Officer in an Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum.

Government Board, so that the Lunacy Department in Ireland is in a position to concur in or dissent from our opinion, which is that Auxiliary Asylums, such as Youghal, would be infinitely preferable to Workhouses for the accommodation of chronic harmless lunatics. On the 11th March, 1905, lunatics and idiots to the number of 3,165 were inmates of Workhouses, and the greater number of them, it may be assumed, are chronic or harmless, though some are excitable and troublesome. Others again are in need of special skilled care owing to filthy or degraded habits. We believe it is also a recognised fact, upon which the legislation of 1898 before alluded to was based, that there are also in County and District Lunatic Asylums large numbers of chronic and harmless lunatics who might be remitted to Auxiliary Asylums if suitable arrangements for such institutions could be made. The only two Resident Medical Superintendents of Asylums who gave evidence to the Commission were, however, opposed to placing lunatics in any except a fully equipped Lunatic Asylum ⁽¹⁾.

151. Owing to the overcrowded condition of most Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, we have been informed that it is not now possible in many counties to admit any additional cases. The difficulty therefore as to how further accommodation should be provided has arisen in a practical form and presses for immediate solution. The question is *whether Auxiliary Lunatic Asylums should be provided on a cheaper scale*, as contemplated by the 76th Section of the Local Government Act of 1898; or *whether the accommodation of County and District Asylums should be increased* by the erection of additional buildings as augmentations or as departments of the existing asylums. The question of the boarding-out of lunatics was also brought before us, but not to an extent that would enable us to offer an opinion upon such a mode of dealing with harmless lunatics.

152. We received most able and clear evidence about Youghal Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum ⁽²⁾, and we made a careful inspection of that institution. We were most favourably impressed on the whole with what we saw. It seemed to us, however, that a larger capital expenditure in building and improvements, including lighting by electricity generated on the premises had been incurred than we should have supposed to be necessary for an Asylum of the kind. The clothing was suitable, and the general health of the inmates would have been good, but for the large number affected by pulmonary tuberculosis, which is more prevalent in the County Cork than in any other county in Ireland. It occurred to us that it would be well if in all such institutions as many as possible of the inmates, especially the males, were employed under due supervision in out-door occupations in the grounds or on the farm. Naturally, supervision is easier and cheaper when the inmates are exercised in the yards, but occupation which would interest the inmates is better for them both physically and mentally than moving about in a crowded enclosed space. The exercise-enclosures at Youghal are on the top of a high hill and quite open to the sea breezes, but occupation would be more healthful than walking about in a circumscribed area without any object. A considerable number of inmates were engaged in out-door occupations, but we saw many others who, so far as mere observation would enable us to judge, might with advantage have been put to work. One could not compare favourably with the Youghal Auxiliary Asylum, even the best or rather the least objectionable, of lunatic wards in Workhouses, and the insane inmates of Workhouses would undoubtedly gain immensely by a transfer to such an institution as Youghal.

153. There has been some friction between the local committee and the Inspectors of Lunatics about the appointment of a medical officer to take charge of the lunatics. A detached house was built for a resident doctor, but the committee, as we understand, objected to appoint a doctor with previous experience in the lunacy service on the grounds that his natural

⁽¹⁾ Dr. M. J. Nolan, 16076 and 16081; Dr. Connolly Norman, 16129-35.

⁽²⁾ The Most Rev. Dr. Kelly, 28441-28542; Thomas Linehan, 28543.

tendency would be to raise expenditure to the same level as exists in the County and District Asylums, and thus to defeat the only object, save classification, for the establishment of auxiliary asylums. On the other hand, it would appear that the Lunacy Department either felt under a legal obligation to require that the appointment should be made from the ranks of the Lunacy Medical Service, or else the Department considered in the exercise of its discretion that previous special experience of lunacy is necessary, even though the lunatics are incurable and harmless. The question has not yet been settled, as far as we are aware, and meanwhile a general medical practitioner who resides in the town of Youghal attends daily for some hours in the forenoon and also at any time when summoned by telephone. It is presumed that this arrangement can be regarded as only a temporary expedient, as the presence of a resident medical officer (whether with special lunacy experience or not) and also that of at least one fully qualified medical and surgical nurse seems to be desirable in such an institution. For the reasons stated fully and clearly by Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Ross,* we do not think there would be any advantage in recommending a grant in aid of 4s. instead of 2s. weekly for each inmate in an Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum.

154. As regards the removal of lunatics from workhouses into County or District Lunatic Asylums we think it would be unnecessary and wasteful to incur heavy expenditure for additional buildings and for up-keep and maintenance, if disused workhouses can be placed at the disposal of the County Councils. For the adaptation of any of these buildings we certainly should not contemplate any structural changes of a kind that would involve costly alterations and additions like those at Youghal. Admission into an Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum should be according to the manner prescribed by law for admission into Lunatic Asylums, assuming such mode to be satisfactory, as to which we have not received any evidence.

Commission think that harmless and chronic lunatics should be detained in Auxiliary Asylums, adapted and maintained in an economical manner.

155. In this matter we desire to report, as regards the two questions set out in paragraph No. 147, and having regard to the terms of reference in our Commission; that in our opinion it is desirable (1) that all lunatics, idiots, and other cases of mental disease in Irish Workhouses should be removed therefrom; and (2) that the *Auxiliary* Lunatic Asylum system should be extended for the reception of all chronic and harmless lunatics who are now in Workhouses. A sufficient number of disused Workhouses will now be available for this purpose if our report be acted upon.

Recommendations as to lunatics in Workhouses.

156. It will, we presume, be a question for the Government and the several Committees of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland to determine in each case, having regard to the distance of the disused Workhouse from the Asylum, the extent of the grounds, the nature of the Workhouse buildings, and the cost of structural and other changes, whether it would be advantageous to take over the disused buildings or to extend the accommodation of the Asylum.

157. The overcrowded condition of the County Clare Asylum at Ennis was specially referred to us since the issue of the Lord Lieutenant's Warrant, and we consider that the Tulla Workhouse might be converted into an Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum if a Cottage Hospital were erected at Tulla for the sick of that district. The other inmates of the Workhouse would be dealt with in accordance with the general scheme, which we summarize in paragraph No. 238.

County Clare Lunatic Asylum.

158. Having regard to the large number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis in lunatic asylums, we suggest that it might be considered whether for the purpose of isolation and treatment, it would be possible to remove many or most cases of consumption from lunatic asylums in Ireland into two disused workhouses to be used as asylums—the inmates to remain under the supervision of the Inspectors of Lunatics.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis or Consumption in Lunatic Asylums.

* Notes of evidence No. 28536. See also No. 22525-7 (Mr. P. Maguire.)

Relative Cost
of Asylums and
Workhouses.

159. When considering, with regard to the circumstances of the country, what kind of treatment lunatics should receive, it is obviously proper to examine into the manner in which other public institutions are maintained. The daily average number of the insane in County and District Lunatic Asylums for the year 1904 was 18,220, and the total expenditure in respect of them was £544,157. The daily average number of inmates in workhouses for the year 1904 was 42,156, and the total expenditure in respect of them was £829,905. Of the number in workhouses, 14,491 were in the sick wards and 3,165 in the lunatic wards.

Work done by
Workhouse
Hospitals.

160. It is seldom remembered by those who urge the claims of Lunatics for generous treatment that from thirteen to sixteen thousand people will be found in Poor Law Hospitals throughout the country on any day in the winter or spring months of the year; and that there are as many as 111,898 patients treated in these hospitals, apart from County Infirmaries, during a period of twelve months. The ratio between the number of inmates upon one day (14,491) and the number of admissions during a year shows that the Workhouse Hospitals, outside the reach of city hospitals, are not filled merely with the chronic ailments of old age and infirmity. In rural districts the Workhouse Hospitals are the District Hospitals, and, with the exception of the County Infirmaries, they are practically the only hospitals for receiving the sick poor of the entire country outside the cities of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Limerick. The great majority of those who are treated in these Workhouse Hospitals are no more *paupers* in the ordinary sense of the word than the tradesmen or other independent but humble earners who are afforded gratuitously in cities the great advantages bestowed by those hospitals which are maintained to a large extent by voluntary contributions.

Great inferiority
of Workhouse
Hospitals to
Lunatic Asylums,
and probable
reasons therefor.

161. We lay stress on the extent of assistance afforded to the sick poor in Workhouse Hospitals, and to the fact that the class relieved is largely composed of farmers, labourers, and tradesmen, or their families—that is to say, of those whose health and strength is of great importance to many. The reason why we emphasize these facts is that the accommodation and everything connected with these hospitals is far inferior to the Asylums for the insane poor, and to the manner in which they are maintained. The arrangements of the Asylums are in a most creditable condition, but the system was one that contributed largely to the result. Apart from the operations of the Board of Control, the buildings were erected and the institutions were managed by one set of people out of money supplied by another set of people—that is to say, the funds were supplied by the occupiers of land who had no representation on the governing body, while the management was practically in the hands of land-owners, who paid County Cess only on the lands in their own occupation. But the Boards of Guardians which administered the Poor Law were, until the Local Government Act of 1898, composed of substantial payers of Poor-rate, out of which fund the Workhouse Hospitals were maintained; and at least half of the guardians were elected by the ratepayers. Another reason of the superiority of asylums is of course that in the case of asylums a capitation grant of 4s. a week was paid for each inmate.

Relative
condition of
Asylums and
Poor Law
Hospitals.

162. The more glaring defects of Poor Law Infirmaries have been removed in most cases, but it probably will be found that the least ornate of the lunatic asylums is superior in appearance, fittings, and arrangements, to the most highly improved Poor Law Infirmary. If the two kinds of institutions, with inmates drawn from practically the same classes, had been under the same management and system, it is inconceivable that the sick, whether destitute or of independent means, who were capable of appreciating attention and comfort, should have been provided with the roughest beds, in unplastered and unceiled rooms, and attended upon by degraded unpaid inmates as nurses.

Claims of sane
sick, are no less
urgent than those
of the insane.

163. While we heartily admire and sympathise with the enthusiastic efforts of the Inspectors of Lunatics and of the Resident Medical Superintendents of Asylums to arouse a most proper sympathy for the afflicted class

in their charge, yet we believe that the sane sick in Poor Law Hospitals, and in the majority of County Infirmaries, will be found to be in a condition with no less, if not even more, urgent claims upon the practical sympathy of the ratepayers.

X.—SANE EPILEPTICS.

164. There were 463 sane epileptic inmates in workhouses on the 11th March, 1905 (191 males and 272 females). Of this number 54 males and 77 females or 131 in all were in lunatic wards, and 137 males and 195 females or 332 in all were not kept in lunatic wards. In a great many workhouses with only a very few (often only one) of such inmates it has been found impossible to keep these inmates anywhere but in the lunatic ward, unless a separate officer were appointed to take charge. In our opinion this class of inmates ought, as many witnesses ⁽¹⁾ suggest, to be kept by themselves in separate institutions, and we recommend for this purpose that two disused workhouses be reserved—the cost of maintenance being a *per capita* charge for each inmate sent by a Board of Guardians with a small fixed annual payment, to be assessed by Order, to cover establishment and other general charges. We recommend that a weekly payment of 2s. for each inmate be paid from a Parliamentary Grant, as is done in the case of inmates in an Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum.

Number of sane Epileptics.

Recommendations as to Sane Epileptics.

165. The Countess of Meath, who takes a deep practical interest in the efforts to improve the condition of sane epileptics, caused an announcement to be made to us that she would be glad to give financial assistance towards making suitable provision for sane epileptics.

Offer of the Countess of Meath.

166. It would seem to us that the contributory bodies, whether County Councils or Boards of Guardians, should nominate the committee or managing body in some proportion to be settled by Order; and we think that the elected members of the committee should be empowered to co-opt a limited proportion (say not exceeding one-third) of the number appointed by the contributory bodies. These co-opted members might be selected from benefactors of the institutions or from philanthropic persons taking an interest in the management of the sane epileptics. It seems to be a matter for further inquiry and determination how the sane epileptics should be divided between the two institutions, whether by sex or religion. We did not receive any evidence to guide us in forming an opinion in this matter. As regards the mode of admitting inmates, the Committee of Sane Epileptic Institutions should be applied to for an order of admission by the Medical Officer of the district in which the patient resides, such application to be forwarded to the committee through the Board of Guardians of the district in which the patient resides. We consider that these institutions should be supervised by the Inspectors of Lunatics, as epilepsy is a disease of the brain; and that the management of the institutions should be similar to that of Lunatic Asylums.

Management of Institutions for Sane Epileptics.

XI.—MOTHERS OF ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

167. There is not any matter connected with our inquiry upon which we have formed a more definite opinion than we hold as to the unfitness of a workhouse as a refuge or asylum for mothers of illegitimate children. In a large number of workhouses can be found in the same ward young girls awaiting the birth of their first baby, unmarried mothers with an infant or a child under two years of age, and unmarried mothers with two or more illegitimate children. These girls and women are also employed throughout the workhouse as scrubbers, attendants, and laundresses, and

Mothers of illegitimate children ought not to be inmates of institutions like Workhouses.

(1.) Miss Buchanan, 371; Mrs. McD. Cosgrove, 437; Lord Montague, 600; Sir W. Thornley Stoker, 654; Dr. L. Kidd, 1775, 6471; Dr. McLeish, 11389; W. Adams, 15430; D. Sheil, 15553; J. Crozier, 17169; W. C. Crimmins, 17254; N. J. Synnott, 17664; B. H. Prior Wandersford, 18276; W. C. Coghlan, 20589; F. Heffernan, 21380; Miss R. Grubb, 21584; Mrs. Foran, 26511.

continually have opportunities for conversation with one another and with other female inmates. The result is that in most cases girls lose a sense of shame and become more and more degraded. In only the Limerick Workhouse, as far as we know, has there been any attempt on systematic lines to reclaim unmarried girls on the occasion of their first lapse; and an effort of the kind is only possible under the existing system in a large workhouse, where a separate ward can be got in a suitable position to place such girls and their infants.

Workhouse life tends to debase all unmarried mothers.

168. We have frequently found in the workhouse an illegitimate baby, its mother, and its grandmother; and in one case we were shown in the same workhouse a baby, its mother, its grandmother, and its greatgrandmother, or four illegitimate generations in the female line. The lapsing into confirmed immorality seems to be a tendency in Irish workhouses, because when a girl falls from virtue she is rarely able in Ireland to return to her home owing to the sentiment of aversion from immorality which is too strong in most parts of the country to permit her to face that feeling and to return with her baby to her relatives, even if they would receive her. We believe that in the enormous majority of cases a workhouse life debases such girls, who get used to their companions and surroundings; and they leave and return to the workhouse as necessity compels or as their own blunted feeling inclines them.

Girls after first lapse should be sent to institutions under religious or philanthropic management.

169. We, therefore, think it of the greatest importance that all girls, on the occasion of their first lapse, should, prior to their confinement, be sent to a special institution of one or other of two kinds, (a.) owned or managed by religious communities or philanthropic persons; and, (b.) where no such institution already exists, to a disused workhouse, managed by a Committee of contributory Boards of Guardians, with a staff of special officers, similar to those in charge of the religious or philanthropic institutions. In this way there would be a hope that the life of the girl would not be wrecked owing to her fall, but that she might, as far as practicable, be restored to the possibility of living a good and useful life⁽¹⁾. When the time for the girl's confinement arrives we contemplate that she should be sent to the nearest District or other Hospital, from which she would return with her baby to the special institution after the usual period for remaining in a lying-in hospital.* We would rely upon kind and prudent treatment of the girls individually, and to the placing of each of them as far as possible in suitable situations after they had spent a year or thereabouts nursing their babies, and after spending such additional time, if any, as the managers of the institution might think necessary for the strengthening of their character. As soon as such a girl-mother could be provided with a situation, and the sooner the better we think after the nursing period, we suggest that her child should be boarded out unless it should be kept for medical reasons in the institution a little longer. We would make such institutions open, as regards adults, only to girls after their first fall.

Women after subsequent lapse.

170. As regards more depraved cases, there are already excellent institutions for Catholics under the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Limerick, Cork, Waterford, and Belfast; and for girls of other religious denominations, we believe that there would not be any difficulty in making arrangements. We recommend that local bodies be authorised to board out such cases in these religious houses if considered preferable to institutions, which are referred to below in paragraph No. 215. In Belfast we visited the Maternity Homes for first cases, which appear to be excellently managed by Miss Blackburn, under an influential committee of ladies and gentlemen, with Dr. Elizabeth Bell as honorary physician.⁽²⁾ We should however state, with reference to the more depraved cases, that, as we do not recommend the separation of any mother and infant until the child is weaned, we

(1.) Rev. J. Paterson Smyth, 518; and eighty-five subsequent witnesses in favour of this proposal. *Contra*—J. Boyd, 10275-80; Miss Hamilton, 10339-43; J. Hore, 20272. See page 1001 Index to Evidence for names of witnesses.

* The procedure as regards lying-in would be similar for the more depraved cases.

(2.) Dr. Elizabeth Bell, 10682-4.

suggest that one disused workhouse in the neighbourhood of Dublin should be set apart as an institution in which such mothers and infants from all parts of Ireland could be kept until their children are weaned. We contemplate that then the mothers should go to the religious institutions referred to, or to one of the institutions mentioned in paragraph No. 215. The infants would be boarded out. We have discussed the whole subject of girl-mothers in workhouses outside our formal inquiries with many who take a deep interest in it, and further details could be supplied if our general suggestions in this matter were approved either for first offenders or for subsequent cases.

171. As regards the financial aspects of the question, at present the guardians are at the expense of maintaining these girls or women and their children; and the fact is, according to our view, that workhouses in Ireland have been the means of keeping up the numbers of this most undesirable special class of women, and also of developing the tendency that exists for the continuation and multiplication of the class from hardened mother to shameless daughter, owing to the unnatural and unhealthy environment in which they are placed—for the poor creatures can seldom exercise any choice between staying in a workhouse and wandering about homeless. The cost to the guardians is very great. There are 2,129 unmarried mothers and 2,764 (1,454 boys and 1,310 girls) illegitimate *and deserted* children—that is a total of 4,893 persons. The number of deserted children which are illegitimate cannot be ascertained. On the other hand some unmarried mothers now in workhouses are aged, and their children are no longer inmates of the workhouse. We hope that, if first cases be sent to special institutions, as recommended, it will not be necessary to support girl-mothers for more than from one to two years; and from experience in Limerick and in the Belfast Maternity Homes, we believe that very few girls would fall a second time. At present the Guardians support these girls and their children practically for life.

Number of
unmarried
mothers and of
illegitimate and
deserted children.

172. It is, however, only just to say that many of these women in workhouses seem to lead penitent and respectable lives, especially in those workhouses where there are nuns. We already alluded to the Limerick Workhouse, owing to the special system that was adopted there many years ago by the venerable Sister of Mercy who is still in charge of the nursing arrangements of the Workhouse Hospital. With the cordial assistance of the Resident Medical Officer and of the Workhouse Master it was arranged by the Sister in charge that all unmarried girls who enter the workhouse to become mothers for the first time should be sent direct to her in the Hospital and not to the ordinary ward in the healthy portion of the workhouse. They remain in a special ward adjacent to, but detached from, the Hospital until it is necessary for them to go to the Maternity Ward. After the birth of the child the mother and baby return to the special ward, and these girl-mothers are employed throughout the day in various menial duties in connection with the Hospital, visiting their babies during the day to feed them, and sleeping with them at night. The vast majority of such girls are placed in situations (as to whom the reports are most favourable), and the Sister of Mercy, who has had the girls in her charge since the system was started, is convinced that the softening and the subsequent strengthening of these girls comes mainly in a human sense from their love for their children. We have received independent and most valuable evidence to the same effect, and one lady who gave such evidence, though a guardian of the neighbouring Union of Rathkeale, was not aware of what had been done in the case referred to, and of the view, which coincided with her own, as to the wisest and most successful method of influencing such girls for good. Her evidence was based upon much personal study of the question and of very widely-made inquiries, the results of which, we feel sure, would be available if required (†).

System adopted
in Limerick by
the Sisters of
Mercy.

Bastardy Laws
of Ireland.

173. We omitted to say that in the special case in Limerick the babies, when weaned, are boarded out by the Sisters of Mercy, at the expense of the father if possible, but otherwise of the mother. We hope that such a plan might be feasible if our suggestion of sending children to special institutions were adopted. In order to compel fathers to contribute to the support of their children, a great many witnesses recommended that the Bastardy Law of Ireland should be assimilated to that of England, and that mothers might, accordingly, be enabled to take proceedings at law in their own name⁽¹⁾. We do not see any objection to such a change in the law, but we do not like to make any direct recommendation in favour of it, as we feel that there may be considerations in opposition to such a proposal, though we are not aware of them. We merely refer to the evidence we have received, and state that, as far as we can see, the *object* of the witnesses in endeavouring to enforce payment from the father is one that altogether meets with our approval.

XII.—INFANTS.

Various classes
of infants in
workhouses.

174. The infants received into Workhouses may be classed as follows:—

1. Illegitimate first-born infants.
2. Illegitimate infants other than first-born.
3. Deserted infants.
4. Orphan infants.
5. Legitimate infants of ill-conducted parents.
6. Legitimate infants of respectable parents.

Illegitimate
first-born infants
to remain for a
year with their
mothers.

175. As regards the *first* class above, we already explained that our recommendation was that a first-born illegitimate infant should be nursed by its mother for about a year or so in the institution for first cases, each child, as soon after being weaned as the doctor would permit, being boarded-out. We will refer in detail to *boarding-out* when we are dealing with children over one or two years of age.

Second or
subsequent
illegitimate
infants when
weaned to be
separated from
their mothers.

176. Before making any suggestion as to what should be done with regard to the second or any subsequent illegitimate child of a woman, it is necessary to determine whether such a mother can be regarded as a fit custodian for a child. In our opinion no child which has to be supported out of the rates, ought to be allowed to remain with a woman who is the mother of two or more illegitimate children after such period as the Medical Officer in charge of the case shall consider desirable for nursing purposes in the interest of the health of the mother and infant. We should therefore propose that it should be obligatory on the local Poor-Law authority to place itself *in loco parentis*, and to board out the child after having been kept until a year or so old either in one disused Workhouse set apart for all the women in Ireland of this class, where they might nurse their infants for such period as the Medical Officer fixes, or, if in any case it be considered that owing to her state of health the mother ought not to nurse her infant, in the institution in which the mothers of first-born illegitimate children are kept with their infants. We recommend the earliest possible compulsory separation of infants from the mothers of two or more illegitimate children, if support is sought from the poor-rate, and subsequently in paragraph No. 200 we make a suggestion as to the mothers. We believe that such mothers would be a rapidly diminishing class in Ireland if girls after their first lapse were dealt with as suggested⁽²⁾.

(1.) Lord Monteagle, 617; W. Rodden, 10847; W. Walker, 11035; D. MacArthur, 11201-3; W. O'Hare, 11268; The Rt. Hon. T. Andrews, 12266-7; C. Eason, 16442-3; T. W. Dinnage, 16507; J. Murphy, 20968-9; Miss Rebecca Grubb, 21596; D. Burke, 28812; D. L. O'Gorman, 29114; P. A. Meehan, *M.P.*, 18032.

(2.) The names of about fifty witnesses are given on page 996, Index to Evidence, in favour of separating children from objectionable parents.

177. The children of the 3rd and 4th class, that is Deserted and Orphan infants, we think ought, like the infants of the 2nd class, be placed in the institution for girls after their first lapse; and we would deal with destitute ill-conducted mothers and their legitimate infants in the same way and in the same institutions as the destitute mothers of two or more illegitimate children referred to in the preceding paragraph, the local Poor-Law Authority necessarily becoming in such cases *in loco parentis*, and separating the children from the ill-conducted parents as soon as possible.

Deserted and Orphan Infants also to be placed in County or District Nursery. So also with legitimate infants of ill-conducted parents who claim relief.

178. It is difficult to make any single or simple suggestion with reference to the 6th class, that is, the infants of respectable married women. It will, we think, be readily admitted that this must be a very small class indeed. It might be supposed that respectable married women and their infants could with safety be placed in the institution for girl-mothers with their first babies, but such married women might reasonably enough object to this; and besides we do not think it would be advantageous for the unmarried mothers with their first babies to meet as fellow inmates any other class of women whether married or unmarried. The presence in the same institution of any variation in the moral scale would most probably interfere continually with the efforts to soften the heart and to strengthen the resolution and character of girls after their first lapse; and we therefore think it necessary that such girls should be the only adult inmates in the institution.

The legitimate infants of well-conducted parents rarely become a charge on the Poor-Rate.

179. Respectable married women, with infants, are rarely obliged to look to the Poor-Law for support. One helpless member of this class is a widow, with one legitimate child only, and she as such is not eligible for outdoor relief. We do not understand why a widow, with only one legitimate child, was excluded from the class of those eligible for outdoor relief; and we now recommend, in accordance with the suggestions⁽¹⁾ of many witnesses, that any respectable widow with one legitimate child should be eligible for outdoor relief. If this suggestion were adopted, any such cases could be relieved; so, also, would, under the existing law, any parent permanently or temporarily disabled. There would be very few respectable parents with infants outside the classes that would in these ways be eligible for outdoor relief, and it is a question whether it is necessary or desirable that deserving respectable people, with infant child or children, should be further provided for, or whether they might not be safely left to the care of the Relieving Officer in any sudden and urgent necessity, or to charitable organisations or charitable individuals who knew them. We consider that instead of trying what additional class can be drawn into a state of dependence, the effort should rather be to try what class can, without hardship, be excluded from pauperism. We consider that it is not incumbent on the ratepayers to provide a suitable niche for every person who may become disposed to claim relief when administered agreeably. The respectable who may be sick, infirm, aged, and permanently or temporarily disabled are provided for, and, as regards healthy respectable people who may become destitute, they could, in their extremity, obtain relief in the manner indicated in paragraphs No. 227 and 234 below.

Widows with only one legitimate child should be eligible for out-door relief.

180. To sum up our recommendations about infants until they reach the age of (say) one year, or whatever further age may be considered necessary by medical officers in particular cases, we suggest that girls of previous good moral character, with their first illegitimate infants, should be placed with their babies in a religious or philanthropic institution, or in an institution to be called the County or District Nursery, or such other name as may be approved; that in such Nursery should be placed other illegitimate infants separated from their mothers by the direction of the Medical Officer, together with orphan and deserted infants, and legitimate infants of ill-conducted parents who have been separated by medical directions. There

Summary of recommendations about Infants.

(1.) P. J. O'Neill, 15822-3; R. Rooney, 16300; T. Clarke, 16314; J. M'Donnell, 16949; D. Condon, 19369; E. J. Byrne, 19425; P. Short, 19440; M. J. Whelan, 20030; Lady Maurice Fitzgerald, 20249; D. K. Lydon, 24629; T. Hurley, 25591; Miss Barrington, 26194A; J. Costello, 27276-9; J. O'Connor, 27752; T. Linehan, 28630.

would be one class of mothers and five classes of babies in the Nursery, which would be provided for a county, or such other area as might be determined. There would also be one institution for all Ireland in which depraved mothers and their infants should be kept together until the infants are weaned.

County or District Nurseries might be managed in two ways.

Necessity for trained Supervision of Infants.

181. The institutions for infants would be of two kinds—one owned by religious or philanthropic bodies, at which a rate *per capita* would be paid for the infants; or disused workhouses, also managed by religious or philanthropic bodies, but owned and controlled by committees selected by the Boards of Guardians concerned. As we have stated, we contemplate that all children receiving indoor relief should be kept during infancy in institutions, if possible under religious or philanthropic management; but also, we must add, with a sufficient number of women trained in the nursing and rearing of infants—say one for each ward by day and another by night. By such means we would hope that the terrible mortality among institution-reared infants, especially of the orphan or deserted class, might be reduced to ordinary limits. On the other hand the rate of mortality is, so far as inquiries have gone, even greater in the case of very young deserted infants who are boarded-out and bottle-fed.

182. We think that, in the case of such institutions owned by a Religious Community or by Philanthropic Associations, the Board of Guardians would be the best body to authorize admissions. It would appear right that the payments should be in accordance with a graduated scale, the cost per head being greater with few than many inmates.

Management of Nurseries administered by Local Bodies.

183. As regards the other class of Nurseries, the Institution (most probably a disused workhouse) would be public property, and should, we suggest, be administered by a Joint Committee of Boards of Guardians established by Order in each case. It might also be desirable to authorize the Joint Committees to co-opt a certain proportion of members to assist in the management. The method of admission should, we think, be through the Board of Guardians, as in the case of an institution owned by a Religious or Philanthropic body. The single institution for depraved mothers and their infants might perhaps be owned and managed by a Joint Committee of the Poor Law Authorities of the County and City of Dublin, who could charge a *per capita* rate for persons admitted from other parts of Ireland.

XIII.—CHILDREN BETWEEN INFANCY AND MAXIMUM LIMIT OF AGE.

Age at which a child might leave the County or District Nursery.

Maximum limit for classing boy or girl as a child.

184. The age at which a child might leave the County or District Nursery would vary according to the strength and health of each child, but we think that removal ought to take place as soon as the infant is strong enough and can enjoy health on ordinary diet for the young. For the year 1904 there were 2,207 children boarded-out in Ireland; this figure being the average daily number of boarded-out children. As regards the maximum age at which a boy or a girl may be classed as a *child* we think that the present limit of fifteen years might be retained with a power of extension with the consent of the central authority, a restriction which would probably ensure careful local examination into the case.

Evidence in favour of boarding out all children above period of Infancy.

185. As regards children to be supported out of the poor-rate, we have received evidence ⁽¹⁾ almost universally in favour of empowering the Local Poor Law Authority to *board-out* all children above the age of infancy, or even during infancy in special cases. These expressions of opinion rather startle those who have been accustomed all their lives to see children supported in large institutions, and we confess that we scrutinized such evidence very closely and considered it most carefully. But we have come to the conclusion that practically all rate-supported children can be

(1.) On pages 994, 995, and 996 (Index to Evidence), will be found the names of more than one hundred witnesses in favour of boarding-out children. *Contra*—Dr. L. Kidd, 6473; Dr. Tierney, 7043-9; J. Smyth, 7169; A. Gogarty, 13479; F. Sherdian, 13529; Dr. Hennessy, 21426; J. Daly, 23872.

boarded-out with advantage to the children themselves, to the community at large, to the persons who would receive such children, and to the rate-payers. At first we thought that it might be necessary to keep an institution here and there for delicate children, but we believe, after full consideration, that such a provision would be unnecessary. Ordinary children, when ill, are looked after at home or else sent to an hospital, and there does not appear to be any reason why children maintained under the Poor Law should be treated differently. There will, however, be rare cases of children who, for one reason or another (for instance, grown-up children on first application for relief) cannot be boarded-out immediately, and we suggest that any such cases be paid for at Industrial, or Certified Schools pending arrangements for boarding-out. But whether such children would, or would not, be received at such Schools we think that neither in these or in any other circumstances should children of any age above infancy be kept for any length of time in a Poor Law institution. In addition to the boarding-out of children by Poor Law Guardians, we may mention that Cardinal Logue, Archbishop of Armagh, has, out of charitable funds belonging to the Diocese of Armagh, instituted a system of boarding out orphans, managed by a Committee which meets monthly, with the Cardinal as Chairman. The children are visited and reported upon by a lady, who is the salaried officer of the Committee. We were glad to learn that the results of this undertaking have been most satisfactory.

Commission agrees with this opinion.

Exceptional cases that cannot be boarded out immediately might be placed in Industrial, or Certified Schools.

186. We visited the Poor Law District Schools of Glin and Trim, and our opinion is unfavourable to the continuance of any institutional schools, even such as those at Glin and Trim, for Poor Law children. As regards the bringing up of children the weight of evidence was in favour of boarding-out as distinguished from institutional life ⁽¹⁾. We would recommend that the buildings and fittings at Glin and Trim should be placed, free of charge, at the disposal of the Communities engaged in conducting the two schools at present, in case it may be possible that they could be utilized in future in some satisfactory way outside Poor Law administration.

Discontinuance of Glin and Trim Schools recommended.

187. As regards compensation for any officials dispensed with, we refer to this question subsequently in paragraph Nos. 286 to 293. These two Joint Schools of Glin and Trim are the only institutions of the kind in Ireland; and while they are a very great improvement on Workhouse Schools, such as are general in the rest of Ireland, they are, in our opinion, decidedly inferior to the natural home life provided under the boarding-out system.

Compensation for Officials of these Schools.

188. The considerations in favour of boarding-out children are:—

(a.) The wish of the majority, as indicated by the weight of evidence, is strongly in favour of it. ⁽²⁾

Reasons in favour of boarding out children.

(b.) The general opinion is that institution-reared children, when put out in the world to work for themselves, are not *handy*, as they have been too much used to having things done for them, and owing to the natural division of labour in a large institution, they have had experience of only certain portions of work.

(c.) Not being used to small houses and to common-place life, but to clock-work arrangements and to spacious rooms with suitable furniture and fittings, institution-reared children are found to be awkward and out of their element when placed among ordinary surroundings in the houses of the poor.

(d.) Children reared in institutions are thought to be not as tough or hardy as children brought up in ordinary houses in the country.

(1.) Colonel Everard, 13098; C. Owens, 13354; Mrs. Cullinane, 13661-4; T. Hewitt, 13788; P. J. O'Neill, 15831; J. Crozier, 17161; P. Walsh, 20378; Mrs. Foran, 26511; Rev. T. Lee, 27339; Mrs. Egan, 17174; P. A. Meehan, M.P., 18017; R. H. Prior Wandesforde, 18295; M. Healy, 20756-7; J. Hogan, 25405; Mrs. Hartigan, 25684; J. M'Inerney, 25907, and others. *Contra*—J. Clarke, 13466; A. Gogarty, 13479; T. Carpenter, 13492; F. Sheridan, 13530; Dr. Sullivan, 13404; St. J. H. Donovan, 26562; W. C. Coghlan, 20549; T. Byrne, 24480; T. O'Flaherty, 26480; Dr. Tierney, 7051.

(2.) Index to Evidence on pages 994, 995, 996 and 997.

(e.) Children in workhouses are frequently contaminated and debased by their parents and by their association with disreputable inmates.

(f.) There is a growing dearth of agricultural labourers, and if the Poor Law children are boarded-out in the country, the probability is that they will become agricultural labourers, and, to the extent of their numbers, go to supply the existing want.

Comparative Statement as to cost of a child under different systems.

Estimated saving by boarding out children.

General observations on boarding-out of children.

(g.) Boarding-out is, in our opinion, by far the best, and it is also the cheapest, mode of rearing children. During the financial year upon which we base our calculations, a workhouse child costs about £18 9s. 4d. a year; a Glin School child about £16 10s. 8½d. a year; a Trim School child about £24 17s. 11d. a year; an Industrial School child about £18 0s. 1d. a year; a Reformatory School child about £22 1s. 6¼d. a year; while a boarded-out child only costs on an average £8 10s. a year in some good Unions, including an average allowance of £1 10s. yearly for clothing. This is the total amount approximately in many Unions, but, if a strict average be taken, the cost per child for all Ireland is only £7 8s. 1d., including clothing. We think that, allowing for desirable improvements in the system, the cost of a boarded-out child might be put down at £10 a year, including clothing. There are at present in Workhouses (excluding inmates of Sick Wards) and District Schools, 5,357 children above the age of infancy, and the saving under this head, calculating the expenditure at the estimated increased rate of £10 a child per annum, would, on the average cost given above, amount to £45,867 per annum. On the question of the saving that would result from the substitution of the boarding-out system, we may point out that the sum of £9,108 is paid out of a Parliamentary Grant for the salaries of Workhouse Teachers. This sum would be available for other Irish purposes if these Teachers were no longer required.

189. Our opinion is that there will not in most parts of the country be any difficulty in finding suitable foster parents for all the children to be boarded-out. Many people have, however, expressed to us their fear that the want of suitable homes will be a fatal objection to a great extension of boarding-out in Ireland. Those who are apprehensive in this way have, we think, an unnecessarily high standard for the homes that would be fit for boarding-out. We should like to see Irish homes and their circumstances made much better, and we have no doubt improvements can and will be effected by kind and wise suggestions and action on the part of those who in the discharge of their duty visit the homes. For the good bringing up of children a home would, in our opinion, have to be really bad, and not merely faulty, to make it inferior to what would be considered a well managed, effective institution. Ratepayers might be satisfied, we think, if boarded-out children are as well treated as the foster-parent's own children; though, as has been just said, efforts ought to be made to improve the conditions all round. We believe that those who visit the children as a matter of duty should exercise, with tact and courtesy, their powers of inquiry and observation in order to ascertain the main fact, which is whether the boarded-out child is fairly, honestly, and kindly treated by the foster-parent. If there be no reason for doubt on the main question it would, we think, be unwise, particularly at first, to publish instances of neglect of the untidy, and perhaps not scrupulously clean, foster-parent, from whom the child receives substantial justice, or at all events treatment no worse than the foster-parent's own child receives.

Method of inspection.

190. Similarly, we should regret to see a boarding-out system in Ireland associated with such a method of inspection as has been adopted in England, obviously from the best motives. There the inspection is what is called "*thorough*"—that is to say, *every* boy and girl at the time of inspection is undressed sufficiently for ascertaining whether the child's body and feet are clean, and whether it is free from bruises of ill-treatment.* The fact that a child may be seen "with a clean, tidy outside," with "a rosy,

* Transactions of the Fourth International Home Relief Congress, Edinburgh, 1904, pp. 72 and 73.

smiling face," with a "nice frock or suit," and "boarded-out with a well-known and trusted neighbour," would not, it is authoritatively stated, be sufficient grounds for dispensing with a "*thorough*" inspection. Indeed, it appears that "over and over again" in such cases in England has been found "a skin incrustated with dirt of months, or even years' standing," or "beaten black and blue"; and we are told that the worst cases are "those where the foster-parents deceive by a plausible exterior and behaviour." We consider however that in Ireland Inspectors may safely be guided, as a rule, by the appearance and surroundings; and that any approach to delicacy at inspection might safely be omitted, except in rare but conceivable cases that may arise. It must not be assumed from this that we do not approve of female inspection. On the contrary, we would strongly approve of it if it were not conducted in accordance with the English method. The two ladies who act as Inspectors in Ireland have, as far as we know, done excellent service both in assisting in the organization of the arrangements at starting and in making inspections of the children when boarded-out. If our recommendations are adopted it would be necessary to appoint some more ladies to act as Inspectors.

191. In Scotland there appears to be a strong objection to a system of inspection such as the English. ⁽¹⁾ Boarding-out was practised in Scotland long prior to the year 1845, when the present Poor Law administration started. The view in Scotland, as declared by Mr. Patten MacDougall, the Vice-President of the Local Government Board, is that—

Boarding out in Scotland.

"The care and welfare of these children is a local rather than an imperial duty ;"

and he adds

"Scotland is proud of her system of boarding-out. It is an inward growth, in its origin certainly spontaneous, and in its development unfettered, I think, by the restraints of official orders or the aggressive interference of centralized authority."

192. It is also pointed out by the same authority that the schoolmaster, the minister, the neighbour, the parish councillors and their officials, and if need be the Crown officials, feel it their duty to give information if the child is not sufficiently cared for. The statistics about Poor Law children in Scotland are most remarkable. In 1903 there were 7,110 children in receipt of relief, of which number 6,195 (or 87 per cent.) were boarded-out—1,800 with relatives and 4,395 with strangers. The balance of 915 were mainly in the poorhouses, some sick and infirm, and others waiting to be boarded out. We had arrived at our view in favour of boarding children out as far as possible before we saw these figures from Scotland, but we have felt much strengthened in our opinion by what exists there. The system of boarding-out in Scotland is similar in its plan and management to that adopted in Ireland by the Protestant Orphan Society, and the reports of that Society are most favourable as regards the condition of the children.

193. We did not arrive at a decision in favour of boarding-out until we made inquiries as to the various kinds of Cottage Homes and Scattered Homes that exist in England. The management there seems to be most kindly, but the system is so expensive that it would be quite beyond our resources in Ireland. Apart from expense, however, we prefer boarding-out to any institution, either large or small; and we regard these so-called Homes, not really as *homes*, but as small institutions—though, no doubt, a great improvement on a "barrack" school. No place is a *home* which is under the control of an external authority and where the question of ways and means has not to be considered, owing to the fact that a certain or uncertain amount of money is received weekly or periodically, and determines the rate of expenditure, thus giving the inmates of the home some knowledge of living according to their means. In the English Poor Law

Cottage Homes, Scattered Homes, &c., in England.

(1.) Transactions of the Fourth International Home Relief Congress, Edinburgh, 1904, p. 50.

"Homes," however, the meat-safe, the larder, the cupboard, and the coal-cellar are never empty; nor, owing to a most liberal dieting scale, have restrictions to be placed by any in the Home on their appetites or on their domestic comforts. There is always enough and to spare; and there is besides a villa residence in a suburban or country neighbourhood, whether this be wise or unwise in the circumstances. Such a system is, of course, far beyond the resources of Irish Poor Law Administration. Boys in the English "Homes" are taught trades, and as to such advancement in life in Ireland we received strong and reasonable evidence against spending money to give Poor Law children such a start in life as would be beyond the means of great numbers, perhaps the majority, of Irish ratepayers.⁽¹⁾ We thought this view fair as regards Ireland, and we think that the honourable, healthy, and much-needed calling of an agricultural labourer (whether male or female) is the natural and proper provision for Poor Law children in Ireland.

Age for boarding-out.

194. It is of the greatest importance that boarded-out children should be placed at a very early age with their foster-parents, as they in this way grow up almost as members of the family, and the attachment between the children and the foster-parents is much strengthened. Some unfavourable instances of the boarding-out system mentioned to us were of children who were boarded-out at an advanced age—at say 12 years old.

Separation of parent and child.

195. It will have been observed perhaps that we do not suggest any arrangements by which parents, or even mothers, receiving *indoor* relief should remain with their children, except in the case of infants until they are weaned. We are convinced that keeping chronic, or in-and-out paupers in the same institution with their children tends to make the children paupers, and, even if the children escape pauperism afterwards, they are turned out clumsy and unfitted for ordinary home life. We think that the usefulness and happiness of the children would be sacrificed to a natural but not serviceable sentiment if, owing to a feeling of unwillingness to separate parent and child, children were kept in the same institution with their parent or parents, if vicious or worthless.

196. We might again mention the kinds of mothers who enter work-houses :—

1. Mothers of first-born illegitimate children;
2. Mothers of two or more illegitimate children;
3. Ill-conducted mothers of legitimate children; and
4. Respectable mothers of legitimate children.

197. We have already stated that we recommend that women of the first class should stay with their children until the child is weaned. If the mother could satisfy the local body managing the institution of which she is an inmate that she could properly maintain herself and her child we think she might be permitted to take her child with her on her discharge. Otherwise we think that the child ought to be boarded out, but that the mother should have no right to resume possession of the child until she could satisfy the local body in charge of the child that she was in a position to support it, and that her conduct since the birth of the child had been good.

198. With reference to the second class we think that the State would be quite justified in removing a child when weaned from a mother having two or more illegitimate children. In our opinion such separation ought as a rule to be final, leaving it open to a mother to show that her character and resources are such as would justify the local authority in restoring her child to her; and we think that it might be considered whether such a woman could be detained in an institution referred to subsequently in

(1.) J. M'Carthy, 13026; M. Healy, 20757; E. Fitzgerald, 29433, and others.

paragraph No. 215 under the order of a Court of Justice as long as it was necessary to support any of her children at the public cost.

Separation of
parent and child
—continued.

199. As regards the third class, that of ill-conducted mothers of legitimate children, and they are reported by many workhouse masters of experience to be some of the most troublesome inmates of workhouses, we hesitate to suggest such a very serious proposal as that which we put forward respecting the mothers of two or more illegitimate children. And yet the class is just as hopeless from the point of view of the proper bringing up of children. Many of these women were workhouse inmates for one reason or another long before they got married, and some are married to male chronic paupers. In workhouses the female classification of *married* is by no means synonymous with *respectable*, in fact the most violent, abusive, and quarrelsome women are often to be found in the married class. Besides, many of them had one or even more illegitimate children before marriage, and the moral character of many is reputed to be bad after marriage. In our opinion the test for permitting such a woman to remain in charge of her children should be a formal determination by the local authority in each case whether she is fit to have charge of children. If it be decided that she is not fit, we think she might be dealt with like the mothers of two or more illegitimate children, but in any case of separation of parent and child we think a parent should have the right to appeal to some court of justice ⁽¹⁾, clear indication being given by statute as to the grounds upon which separation between parent and child might be enforced. At paragraphs No. 215 and 226 will be found our proposal as to the institution in which such women should be placed.

200. If ill-conducted parents are not bad enough to be considered unfit to have charge of children we think an offer might be made to them to board out their children, without permission to visit, while the parents might get the option of going as voluntary inmates of the institution referred to in paragraph No. 227, or maintaining themselves by their own exertions. It is presumed that such parents would be entitled to get their children back, but the relief in such cases ought to be declared to be by way of loan and the fathers and mothers called upon to pay back such relief. The payment, part-payment, or non-payment in such cases would be a test, as far as it goes, of feelings and honesty; and it would also operate as a measure of their success in life and ability to support their children. If parents were to make a practice of placing their children in charge of the Guardians we think that inquiries should be made with the object of ascertaining whether such parents were proper custodians of their children, so that an order might be made assuming the position *in loco parentis*, if the facts appeared to justify such action.

201. The fourth class, that of well-behaved mothers of legitimate children might, as we have before stated, be dealt with if possible by means of outdoor relief, failing which the children could be temporarily boarded out, or dealt with in the manner indicated* in paragraph No. 185. and the parents, if in need of relief themselves and not eligible for outdoor relief, might enter voluntarily the Labour-House referred to in paragraph No. 227. But we believe that really well-behaved parents and children reduced to a state of destitution by unfortunate circumstances will probably be assisted by charitable people or societies. At the worst, however, the very few respectable people that might seek relief would meet with no worse associates in a Labour-house than in a Workhouse of the present day.

202. In any case the workhouse, as it exists at present, must be a place of torture for respectable married women with young children. They are very rarely indeed to be met there, and the abolition of the present kind of workhouse need not, we feel sure, be deplored for this class; and it is perhaps the only class for which we find it difficult to make a definite suggestion under our scheme.

(1.) P. J. O'Neill, 15837.

* In Reformatory, Industrial, or Certified Schools.

XIV.—CASUALS OR INS-AND-OUTS;

and

VAGRANTS OR TRAMPS OR NIGHT-LODGERS.

Casuals
and Vagrants.

203. It is right that we should state what distinction we draw between the words "Casuals" and "Vagrants" for the purpose of this Report.

204. By *Casuals* we mean persons frequently in receipt of indoor relief in the same workhouse, who have usually or for a considerable time resided within the Poor Law Union. A *Vagrant*, on the other hand, according to our view, is a person who wanders about from Union to Union, very frequently obtaining in a workhouse a bed for the night and a meal or two before resuming his journey. These wanderers, as they make their journeys on foot, are very generally known as *Tramps* or *Night Lodgers*. The term *Casual* is sometimes applied to them, but we restrict the use of that term in this Report to one who is frequently in and out of the same workhouse, and who may, in a general way, be called a resident within a particular Union. The name *Vagrant* or *Tramp* or *Night Lodger*, however, implies a homeless person. Although this distinction is clear enough between the two classes so far as definition goes, yet we find it impossible to make a distinction between them when we come to make recommendations about the treatment of the two classes.

Statutory
Provisions as
regards
Vagrancy.

205. The clauses on the subject of vagrancy included in the Poor Relief Bill of 1837 were withdrawn pending the formation of unions and establishment of workhouses, and it was not until 1847 that Parliament dealt with the question of vagrancy in Ireland. The statutory provisions as regards vagrancy will be found as an appendix.

Mode of
Admission to
Workhouse.

206. In Workhouses in Ireland Vagrants are admitted by the order of the Relieving Officer, or by the Workhouse Master as cases of "sudden and urgent necessity." They enter as ordinary workhouse inmates, but no person of perception could mistake Tramps for anything but what they are, so they are not sent to the ordinary Workhouse wards, but are kept in a "Probationary," or admission ward at the Gate Lodge.

Characteristics
of the Class.

207. All old countries have a considerable percentage of ne'er-do-wells among their inhabitants. The chief immediate causes of these failures are drunkenness (most of all) and other vicious habits, idleness, and physical or mental inability to do a satisfactory day's work. These bad habits and defects have a tendency to divert men and women from earning their own subsistence by honest labour, and they readily become dependent either upon private charity or upon public rates, unless indeed they turn thieves, robbers, or swindlers. The members of this ne'er-do-well class become casual paupers, vagrants, chronic paupers, or criminals, and we now have to consider what is the best course to recommend in the interest of the failures themselves as well as of society at large. Even up to twenty years ago, and indeed much later, it would have been useless to propose such a change in the law as would involve deprivation of liberty for those who did not possess, or could not make, a livelihood by honest means. But in recent years the dependent class has increased enormously in some countries though nothing like so much in this country, for the poverty that accompanies or follows progress exists in very few places in Ireland. We have, however, a substantial number of able-bodied persons who habitually use the Poor Law, because for some reason or another they have not themselves money to obtain food, clothing, and shelter.

208. The following Table gives some information which we have obtained about the number of the Casual or In-and-Out Poor in Ireland :—

Statistics as to
Casuals or
Ins-and-Outs.

Union.	No. of Casuals or Ins-and-Outs in Workhouses on 11th March, 1905.	Estimated No. of other Casuals or Ins-and-Outs resident within the Union, but not in the Work- house, on the 11th March, 1905.	Total.	Observations.
Dublin, North,	11	Cannot be accurately estimated.	—	No returns can be obtained for the Dublin Unions, as the casual poor (the numbers of which are very large) are chiefly supported by various charitable organisa- tions.
Dublin, South,	13	do.	—	
Belfast,	99	350	449	
Cork,	234	60	294	
Waterford,	30	60	90	
Limerick,	7	15	22	
All other Unions,*	419	2,740	3,159	
Totals,	813	3,225†	—	

* Londonderry, though a County Borough, is included with ordinary Unions because there is very little destitution in the city.

† Ins-and-Outs in Dublin not included, but it is thought that they must be three times as numerous as in Belfast—which would bring up the total of Casuals to (say) 4,000 in Ireland.

209. As regards Vagrants or Tramps the following Table shows the number in Workhouses on the 11th of March, 1905, and also on the 11th of February, 1905, the latter date being that upon which the largest number of Vagrants were admitted into Workhouses during the year 1905 :—

Statistics as to
Vagrants or
Tramps.

Unions.	Number of Va- grants or Tramps admitted into Workhouses on 11th March, 1905.	Number of Va- grants or Tramps admitted into Workhouses on 11th Feb., 1905.	Number of admissions during the year 1905.	Observations.
Dublin, North,	—	5	500	Of course it is understood that the number of ad- missions is no indication of the number of <i>different</i> persons admitted during the year. The same person might be admitted 365 times during a year.
Dublin, South,	5	—	260	
Belfast,	7	6	160	
Cork,	4	23	936	
Waterford,	32	12	1,600	
Limerick,	10	5	520	
All other Unions,	820	906	194,081	
Totals,	878	957	198,057	

210. Casuals or Ins-and-Outs are generally to be found in cities, while the Vagrants or Tramps enter City Workhouses in comparative small numbers. There is no doubt, however, that many Vagrants do spend a good deal of time in cities, but they spend their nights either in common lodging-houses or in Night Refuges or Shelters. Even if there were only 878 Vagrants in Ireland on the 11th March, 1905, that number is capable of making a surprisingly large total for statistical purposes if we count the number of *admissions* throughout a year without any effort to exclude from our reckoning, if it were possible, the counting of the same individual more than once. If we assume that each of the 878 Vagrants in the Return sleeps every night in a Workhouse, and never in the same Workhouse on two consecutive nights, the total number of admissions of Vagrants into Workhouses would on this basis amount to the enormous total of 320,470, although the number of separate individuals was only 878. In order to calculate the greatest possible number of admissions on the figures before us one of course multiplies 878 by 365—the number of days in the year. Any statistics that could be collected about Vagrants would show clearly how apposite is the comparison of the Vagrant class in Ireland to a *stage army* that passes and repasses the line of vision in such a way as to convey the idea of multitudes far in excess of the actual number concerned.

Estimate of
Number of
Tramps.

211. The admissions to the Probationary or Vagrant Ward of a particular Workhouse for the night are far more numerous on the eve or on the night of general popular assemblages, whether cattle-fair, market, races, or athletic sports, etc. The practice as regards the imposition of labour-tasks on vagrants varies. In numerous Workhouses no tasks are given, in others the allotted work is light, and in a few a proper amount of work has to be done. But in our opinion vagrancy would still go on, even if severe tasks and thorough ablutions were required in every Workhouse. At present, where no tasks are given in some Workhouses, and only very little in others, and where no visitor's discretion is interfered with in the matter of soap and water, tramps naturally arrange their circuits so as to avoid the houses of entertainment where they have to fall in with what, from their point of view, are objectionable or superfluous customs—just as men of business when travelling settle as far as possible their engagements so as to hit off good hotels, with well-aired beds and good food, without any of the various drawbacks that are to be found in many stopping places. But, in our opinion, if all the houses of accommodation were bad in a district or country both business men and tramps would still make their journeys.

212. The number of vagrants in Workhouses on any one night in the year cannot, of course, be taken as the number of all vagrants at large in the whole of Ireland on that night. Many of those *on tramp* sleep in out-houses, hay-barns, or even in the open when the weather is fine. The poor householders in country districts will not refuse a night's shelter to a wayfarer when asked *for charity*, or, as the wanderers in Ireland say in making their appeals, "for the love of God." In towns and villages, too, vagrants, when they have any money, or where the workhouse management is rigorous, stay in a lodging-house. It is impossible to estimate the number of tramps in Ireland, but we suggest 2,000 as a figure that seems not improbable to us, and the official estimate is that there are four or five males for every female.

213. There appears to be the greatest difference between Great Britain and Ireland as regards vagrancy. In England and Scotland there are large centres of manufacture and labour, and this fact causes some difficulty in discriminating between idle vagrants on the one hand and tradesmen or labourers on the other who are honestly looking for work. Throughout nearly all Ireland there is very little employment, and vagrants who sometimes earn wages are generally builders' labourers or tailors and shoe-makers; but such workmen or tradesmen are few in comparison with the habitual tramps, and they often sink to that level eventually.

214. The difficulty in dealing with vagrants in Ireland is therefore not as complex as in Great Britain. In visiting the workhouses in Ireland and in driving from one to the other we have met hundreds of tramps (men, women and children), and have entered into conversation with many of them. They spend their lives in trudging along by daylight without any definite purpose or business to influence their movements, except that the greatest number keep to the direct roads between workhouses. Some vagrants frequent one area or group of counties and become familiar with their district and its possibilities for gifts or black-mail. All the evidence we received is most hostile to tramps. Witnesses, almost without exception, were in favour of depriving this class of their liberty to march round the country terrorizing women while men are in the fields, and collecting food and money to enable them to shirk work and to escape any regular exertion for self-support.⁽¹⁾ It seems to us as irrational to talk of interfering with the liberty of people of such habits and practices as it

(1.) Dr. J. Macintosh, 11185; D. MacArthur, 11205; R. H. Wilson, 11421; T. Hewitt, 13796; M. Murray, 14277; M. Ginnell, 14404; P. J. O'Neill, 15856; A. K. O'Farrell, 16329; J. Field, 16658; S. J. Brown, 17487; J. Sunderland, 17586; J. S. O'Grady, 17736; J. M'Mahon, 17952; P. A. Meehan, M.P., 18026; N. J. Murphy, 18564; M. O'Neill, 18636; A. Kavanagh, 18747; P. Hanlon, 18854; D. J. Cogan, M.P., 19342; M. A. Ennis, 19573; J. D. Doyle, 19917, and many others (see page 1008, Index to Evidence).

would be to object to the imprisonment of thieves, swindlers, and robbers. The offence of being a tramp would nearly always be more apparent, even without any legal procedure, than that of the thief very often is, even after the decision of Court. We would not, however, suggest *punishment* for the vagrant for his culpable conduct, but restraint and education for his own good—with the hope that all the young children of this class might be reclaimed, and also many of the adults who “took to the road” at the time of some temporary pressure. It is obvious that these vagrants are homeless wanderers who need kind, firm, wise treatment, and it would seem to us to be a sacrifice of public duty to formalism if practically impossible conditions of proof were required in proceedings against vagrants.

215. Our opinion agrees with that of the majority of witnesses examined before us that people who are travelling about the country without employment, without any means of their own, and who have to support themselves by mendicancy or recourse to the Poor Law, or by sleeping out, should be brought by the Police before a Court of Justice. If they could not then, or through the Police or other Agency after remand, give satisfactory evidence (documentary or other) to the Court of their being habitually hard-working and self-supporting* there should, we suggest, be power conferred upon a Court of Summary Jurisdiction to direct them to be sent for a term of from one to three years to a *Labour-House* in which the inmates should, as is said to be the case in Belgian establishments, be required to make or produce as far as possible the food, clothing and necessaries for such an institution. We think that at all events to begin with, four such Labour-Houses might be established for Ireland, and that four disused workhouses might be set apart for the purpose.

Suggestions as to procedure towards Ins-and-Outs and Vagrants

Power to send to Labour-House by Court of Summary Jurisdiction.

216. As regards labour-houses we should be sorry to see in them any thing suggestive of more comfort than can be derived from very hard work, enough of simple food, clean healthy buildings, fittings and surroundings, but everything of the plainest roughest kind. After the first starting and equipment of the labour-house we think that the inmates, all of whom would be able-bodied, ought to be obliged to rely as far as possible on their own labour for their support; and as a stimulus they should be individually made to feel the necessity for personal exertion.

Description of Labour-House.

217. We think it would be right to have the Labour-House authorities in constant communication with the police or other existing officials appointed to collect information as to work and employment. And, if such institutions were established, we think it would be proper to authorize the managing staff, with the consent of the central authority, to issue a permission to any inmate to go out on probation before the expiration of the time mentioned in the order of the Court dealing with the person in question—such permission to be revocable if the person was unsatisfactory in employment or returned to his or her former mode of life.

Permission to go out on probation.

218. We know it may be said that we propose that the *onus* of disproof shall be placed upon the person charged with an offence, but this is really not altogether so. The fact that he is a vagrant without visible means of subsistence is obvious—and that is the offence; but, before sending him to a labour-house, an opportunity would be afforded, so that it may be shown if possible, that he was industrious and likely to get employment, and we think it should be the duty of the police to make any *bona fide* inquiries suggested by the person charged.

Steps to be taken to guard against unjust remission to Labour-Houses.

219. But supplementary to the procedure recommended in the foregoing paragraphs we recommend that, upon satisfactory *prima facie* evidence that in the case of a genuine working-man seeking assistance with a reasonable prospect of getting employment at any place in Ireland, the relieving

Genuine working men seeking employment.

* See Clause 6 of House of Commons Bill No. 98, ordered to be printed 25th February, 1904, entitled a “Bill to provide for the further protection of the Children of Vagrants.”

officer should be authorized to give him a permission, in a prescribed form, which would entitle the holder to food and lodging in lodging-houses from all relieving officers living along the route between the starting point and the destination. The rate of payment by the relieving officer for such subsistence and lodging should be fixed by the Board of Guardians with the approval of the central authority, and the method of accounting for expenditure should be prescribed by the central authority.

220. Such cases ought to be very rare in Ireland, and great care in administration should be taken, especially in the beginning. Inquiries should be made before the issue of the prescribed permission so as to exclude, as far as possible, those persons whose intention is to reach some port in Ireland for the purpose of migration to Great Britain or of emigration abroad.

Classes who
should be sent to
Labour Houses.

221. The people that we suggest should be placed in labour-houses are the various classes of the community who have no subsistence of their own, and who attempt to earn little or nothing except as a sort of preliminary or introduction to mendicancy; and who, living an idle life, make a livelihood by importunity or deception. A great advantage also is that the seclusion of such persons for the purpose of reformation would probably, in our opinion, amount to an indirect withdrawal from their fields of operation of most of the ordinary criminals of the country.

Soldiers,
ex-soldiers, and
militiamen.

222. There is another rather numerous class of able-bodied men who frequent workhouses, many of whom stay therein for the greater part of the year, while others are vagrants during the fine weather, and in some cases all the year round. We refer to soldiers and ex-soldiers, including militia men. We have got some returns, but it is not possible to get complete information, partly because, as we are informed by some Workhouse Masters, there is an unwillingness on the part of inmates in Ireland to admit that they were soldiers, and they describe themselves as labourers or tradesmen. We got a careful return from the Belfast Workhouse, and during the month of January, 1906, there were in that institution (second or subsequent admission of the same man not counted) 89 pensioners (charged part of cost of maintenance), 74 ex-soldiers or reservists, and 38 militiamen—that is 201 military or ex-military men. Some of the men of this class form a large proportion of the last class in our return "*Able-bodied—all other*" on page 16.

223. If these men are to continue to obtain their support wholly or in part out of local rates for the greater portion of the year, as they now do, we do not see what institution they could be placed in except a labour-house. In any case a very large number of military men, if no other provision be made for them, would go to the labour-houses, because they are vagrants during a great part of the year. But we would suggest that one or two disused workhouses might be handed over to the War Office for such soldiers and ex-soldiers, to be maintained as a kind of barracks, out of the Parliamentary Vote for the War Office. As far as we can judge the short service system appears to throw additional expense upon local rates in Ireland. We ourselves noticed the military and drilled appearance of many men in workhouses and along the roads on tramp. As an instance we happen to know that on the 1st December, 1905, about twenty soldiers took their discharge from Kilkenny Workhouse in order to draw some allowance to which they were entitled, none of which goes to the guardians in repayment of the relief afforded. It is understood that in this and in a vast number of similar cases soldiers, as a rule, spend their money quickly, and with very little delay return to the workhouse, where they are re-admitted on the grounds of destitution. This appears to be a condition of affairs that needs alteration.

224. The following is a table, filled by workhouse masters, showing the number of soldiers and ex-soldiers and militiamen admitted to the following workhouses during the month of January, 1906:—

Table showing number of military or ex-military men admitted into certain workhouses during January, 1906

UNION.	Pensioners.	Reservists and Ex-Soldiers.	Militiamen.	Total.
Athlone,	5	8	5	18
Ballinasloe,	5	10	9	24
Ballyshannon,	3	4	40	47
Belfast,	89	74	38	201
Birr,	15	—	1	16
Carlow,	8	—	49	57
Cashel,	4	13	5	22
Clonmel,	4	16	13	33
Cork,	8	85	7	100
Croom,	1	23	1	25
Downpatrick,	14	—	—	14
Dublin, North,	20	—	—	20
Dublin, South,	13	12	33	58
Dundalk,	—	80	120	200
Dungannon,	—	17	10	27
Dungarvan,	2	24	62	88
Dunshaughlin,	1	70	144	215
Ennis,	3	2	8	13
Enniscorthy,	3	7	11	21
Enniskillen,	2	31	3	36
Ennistymon,	—	7	8	15
Fermoy,	3	6	4	13
Galway,	7	26	20	53
Kenmare,	3	19	1	23
Kilmallock,	6	10	4	20
Kilrush,	3	5	6	14
Limerick,	21	23	6	50
Lisburn,	5	35	87	127
Longford,	1	10	4	15
Loughrea,	2	56	31	89
Mullingar,	5	3	7	15
Nenagh,	5	9	8	22
Oidcastle,	7	129	56	192
Rathkeale,	2	16	8	26
Shillelagh,	1	9	3	13
Sligo,	8	7	20	35
Waterford,	7	4	15	26
	286	750	847	1,883

225. It appears by this list that there were 1,883 admissions of soldiers during the month of January, 1906, into the 37 union workhouses named, out of the 159 unions into which Ireland is divided. This does not mean that there were 1,883 different men admitted, because, no doubt, some men were admitted into more than one workhouse during the month, but we think we may assume that this return represents a very large number of soldiers or ex-soldiers. On the other hand, a large number of vagrants who have been soldiers, are unwilling to declare themselves such, but describe themselves as labourers and tradesmen, and, therefore, are not counted as military or ex-military men. From most of the remaining 122 Workhouses we got no information about the number of vagrants who were soldiers, though in many instances the Masters mentioned the fact that a great many ex-military men visited the Workhouses as vagrants. Our object in mentioning the figures in the list is to show that a considerable proportion of the able-bodied male population of Workhouses in Ireland consists of men who have been soldiers, and of whom many are liable to serve again when called out. We believe it is true, as many Workhouse masters have stated to us, that a very large percentage (the estimates varying from one-third to two-thirds) of the vagrants have been military men.

Summary of
Classes that
might be sent to
a Labour-House.

226. The following six classes might, in our opinion, be sent by a Court of Justice to be detained in a labour-house :—⁽¹⁾

1. Rural Vagrants over 15 years of age;
2. Urban Loafers over 15 years of age;
3. Mothers of two or more illegitimate children, except when nursing infants;
4. All parents who are unfit to be entrusted with the charge of their children, except mothers nursing infants;
5. Any able-bodied soldiers or ex-soldiers who are not self supporting or are not supported by the Military Authorities;
6. Any able-bodied adult persons who may, at the instance of the police or of the Local Poor Law Authority, be considered by a Court of Justice as proper cases owing to their failure to support themselves.

227. Further, the managers of Labour-houses might be authorized to receive any destitute able-bodied adults who may voluntarily desire to be admitted as inmates; and also any destitute able-bodied adults who may be offered an order of admission to a Labour-house by Poor Law Authorities or their officials in the prescribed manner.

Classes that
might be
exempt from
liability to be
sent to
Labour-House.

228. There are two classes of persons which, in our opinion, having regard to the circumstances and feelings of the country, ought not to be sent against their inclination to the Labour-house. The first class comprises old or infirm people well known in a locality who exist on the charity of friends and neighbours; ⁽²⁾ and the second class is composed of some itinerant musicians and other entertainers. We think that the second class should get registered (free of cost) and obtain an annual certificate or badge of registration. The issue and the renewal of such certificate or badge might be in the hands of the Board of Guardians, whose duties would keep them in touch with reasonable local wishes and opinions in the matter, and few in Ireland would wish to interfere with genuine ballad-singers.

(1.) See Index to Evidence on pages 1007 and 1008.

(2) Patrick O'Dowd, J.P. 23633-6.

229. We are of opinion that the Labour-house should be an Imperial or United Kingdom charge, and should be under the control of the General Prisons Board. If local bodies administering Poor Law wished to send persons there, otherwise than under a detention order of a Court of Justice, they should pay at the rate of the general average cost per inmate in the Labour-house in question.

Cost of Inmates sent to Labour-house.

230. There are many reasons why such a course should be taken.

(a.) The inmates would be detained in custody under the Order of a Court of Justice, with the exception of those who are sent for test purposes by a Board of Guardians, and possibly a few who would enter voluntarily.

Reasons why ne'er-do-well class should be placed under Prisons Board and maintained out of money voted by the House of Commons.

(b.) A large number of the persons confined in a Labour-house would have been frequently in prison for theft, drunkenness, or other offences.

(c.) It would be better that there should be only one kind of institution for such people; and that they should not be able, as now, to see-saw between compulsory detention and voluntary seclusion.

(d.) It is most objectionable that persons of the criminal classes should practically have a right to enter institutions, where classification is not according to character, but according to age, sex, and health. We fear that much harm must be done by grouping together the criminal and non-criminal classes to such an extent as is done at present in Workhouses.

(e.) The General Prisons Board could work more easily with the Police than any Local Bodies could be expected to do.

(f.) It seems unfair that Local Bodies, especially in cities and large towns, should have to bear so much of the cost of habitual criminals owing to the want of a system of reclamation as distinguished from punishment.

(g.) Similarly, from the point of view of a ratepayer, there is an injustice in permitting the circumstances to continue that cause so many soldiers and ex-soldiers to lead a wandering or a stationary life at the expense of the ratepayers and inhabitants, either in Workhouses or when they are levying charitable contributions as vagrants.

(h.) The discipline and management would be more uniform and appropriate under such a system than would be possible under existing arrangements.

XV.—OTHER ABLE-BODIED INMATES. (1).

Provincial and Urban.

231. This class included on the 11th March, 1905, a total of 2,974 persons, of whom 1,512 were males and 1,462 were females. In the cities of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, the total number of this class on the same date were 1,669, comprising 796 males and 873 females. Those in the remaining 153 Workhouses amounted to a total of 1,305, of which 716 were males, and 589 were females. Although this class is called "able bodied," there are many who are not really strong, but who are classed as such because they are on the diet-lists for the healthy.

Number of this class

232. Exclusive of the ins-and-outs, this class of *all other able-bodied* includes in *Provincial*, as distinguished from City or Urban Workhouses, labourers or servants who have lost their situations for some fault, or through ill-health, and who cannot get re-employed in the same kind of situation they had before; those who have failed in business or in some independent employment owing to drink, dishonesty, or inefficiency; and

Description of persons in this class in the Provincial Workhouses.

(1.) See Table on page 16.

men who are cripples or who have rupture or some other physical defect—all of whom are healthy in the sense that they are able to be about and to be put on the healthy diet. A good many of them might, however, be classed as infirm. Any young or middle-aged soldiers or ex-soldiers and militia men in the Workhouse are also placed in this class. The women of this class are very frequently wives of men just referred to, and have therefore been obliged to enter a Workhouse. There are also widows of good character with only one child; and widows and married and single women of indifferent character or intemperate habits are included in this class. Mothers of illegitimate children also pass into this class from the single women's nursery, or from the nursery that is common to both single and married mothers in some workhouses. Women and girls over fifteen years of age and up to the termination of middle-age, no matter whether their character and behaviour are good, indifferent, or bad, are in this class, and they live together in the same wards of the Workhouse, except when they have children with them under two years of age.

Other able-bodied inmates in Urban or City Workhouses.

233. In the large Urban or City Workhouses of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford, the same kinds of men and women are in the class of *all other able-bodied* as are described in the preceding paragraph, but the numbers are greater and the applications more frequent. In a city the casual class, or ins-and-outs, are recruited from this able-bodied class—in fact a large number of them are ins-and-outs in their first stage.

Suggestions as to this class in Provincial Workhouses.

234. This able-bodied class of which we are now treating is numerically small in *provincial* Workhouses. We have recommended that the existing law be amended so that respectable widows with only one child be eligible for out-door relief, and we consider that any men or women in this class who are disabled by physical defect, though otherwise healthy, might be removed to the County "Alms-house." All the others of the ne'er-do-well class would properly, in our opinion, be sent to the Labour-house.

Suggestions as to the same class in Urban or City Workhouses.

235. In *Urban or City* Workhouses we recommend a similar procedure; but we fear it would be necessary in Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, and possibly to a limited extent in Limerick and Waterford, to establish or continue casual wards, in which applicants for admission or discharge might be received and dealt with daily, or otherwise as might be arranged, and sent to a suitable institution, or given out-door relief, as might be thought best by the local authority. Such casual wards would not, in our opinion, be necessary in the Provinces, as the Relieving Officer could arrange for the transmission of applicants to the proper institution. If the Relieving Officer considered a case one for judicial remission to the Labour-house it should be his duty to bring the applicant under the notice of the police, so that he might be brought before a Court for remission to a Labour-house. In a case of sudden and urgent necessity the Relieving Officer under the existing law possesses power to provide a lodging for an applicant for relief.

Interference with individual liberty.

236. We are conscious that our proposals as to vagrants, ins-and-outs, and ne'er-do-wells involve very great interference with the liberty of such classes to remain at large and to support themselves either dishonestly, or as mendicants or paupers, mainly out of the earnings of the independent poor. But even one of the most strenuous advocates of individual liberty has admitted that

"As soon as any part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others society has jurisdiction over it, and the question, whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion." *

The injury done by these classes to the rest of the community, and still more to themselves, is obvious; and we recommend in their own interests, and for the good of the public and of the country, that these injurious and irresponsible members of society be taken in hand like children, and be, if possible,

* "On Liberty," by John Stuart Mill. People's Edition, Chapter IV., page 44.

educated into a capacity for leading a useful independent life. No person has a right to remain idle and to live upon the public; and, if anybody persists in such a course of life, it is thought by us that the State ought to try to teach him to become industrious, by compulsion if necessary.

237. While making these recommendations with regard to certain classes in Ireland, numerically small though they are, we have in view the possible development of the industrial, trading, and commercial interests of the country to which we referred in the earlier portion of the Report; and we anticipate that even our present small percentage of the loafing and semi-criminal classes might be reduced by wise methods of reformation, in conjunction with the provision of opportunities for employment. We do not delude ourselves with the idea that these classes could be fitted to serve in the van of industrial progress, but we believe that the execution of wise plans for giving employment would be sufficient to afford useful occupation to the present diminished and still diminishing population of the country and even to far larger numbers.

Being trained to work and being afforded opportunity for employment might rescue many ne'er-do-wells.

XVI.—GENERAL STATEMENT AS TO FUTURE MODE OF TREATMENT OF THOSE NOW RELIEVED IN INSTITUTIONS.

238. We may here briefly summarize our recommendations with reference to the future treatment of persons who are at present afforded relief in institutions:—

Summary of recommendations as to future arrangements for all who are now relieved in Poor Law institutions.

(1.) The *Sick* would be provided for in County or District Hospitals, situate as a rule in the towns and villages where the sick are now treated. Sanatoria would also be provided for the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis.

(2.) The *Aged and Infirm* of a County or Counties would be placed and classified in the most conveniently situated disused Workhouse, as a County or District "Almshouse"; or boarded out in institutions such as those maintained by the Little Sisters of the Poor or the Sisters of Nazareth; or by the trustees of ordinary almshouses.

(3.) The *Insane* of all kinds in Workhouses at present would be removed to County, District, or Auxiliary Lunatic Asylums as might be determined.

(4.) Two disused Workhouses in Ireland might be set apart for the *Sane Epileptics*, and managed like Auxiliary Lunatic Asylums under the supervision of the Inspectors of Lunatics, epilepsy being a disease of the brain.

(5.) The *mothers of illegitimate children* should never, it is suggested, be in future admitted or retained in any workhouse or institution where they would have freedom of ingress or egress, and where they could associate with other classes. Unmarried mothers should, in our opinion, be provided for in special institutions under religious or philanthropic management, *their infants being kept with them until weaned*.

(6.) We think that nearly all *children* can and ought to be boarded out from (say) one year old up to whatever age it may be thought best to fix as a maximum limit of age for boys and girls respectively. Those children, few in numbers according to our view, who, for any sufficient reason, cannot at once be boarded out, might be placed temporarily in Certified, or Industrial Schools, according to circumstances.

(7.) & (8.) For *Casuals and Vagrants* we recommend an Institution (say *four* at first for all Ireland) to be called the "Labour-House," where, if they were found begging, or if they are dependent on the public for their support, they would be detained under order of a Court of Justice for long periods (say from one to three years), for the purpose of accustoming them to habits of sobriety, regularity, and industry.

(9.) As regards "*all other able-bodied*" (see table on page 16), we suggest that the really able-bodied loafing ne'er-do-well class be put with the casuals and vagrants. Many of this miscellaneous "able-bodied" class ought, it may be borne in mind, to be classed and treated as aged or infirm. But in a very few large cities in Ireland it will be desirable, we think, to have some casual accommodation for urban poor in emergencies.

Guardians to deal with Out-door relief, Boarding-out of children, and applications of aged, infirm, and healthy for relief

239. The duties of the Guardians would be transferred to Committees of the Guardians as regards all hospitals and institutions; but the Guardians themselves would continue to administer outdoor relief, and to manage and supervise the boarding-out of children, and also to deal with applications for relief from the various classes of the infirm and healthy, arranging by themselves or through their officers for the admission of applicants into suitable institutions. Some witnesses suggested that the old Dispensary Committees should be revived for the administration of the Medical Charities Acts, and that applications for outdoor relief should be dealt with by them. We do not, however, recommend that the suggestion as to outdoor relief should be adopted, and questions as to Dispensaries do not come within the scope of this inquiry.

240. It will be seen from the foregoing summary of our recommendations that in hardly any case do we recommend the closing of existing sick wards for the poor. On the other hand, however, we propose in every instance the breaking up of the workhouse system of gathering together all the various classes of the healthy and infirm destitute poor into the same institution—the only link at present under the workhouse system between the different classes being *destitution*. In the proposed Almshouses the inmates could be classified according to *behaviour*, and old couples could be permitted to live together. We fear that in practice it would be impossible to classify according to previous *character or respectability*. The rearrangement of the infirm, aged, and other classes suggested by us would involve the keeping-up of far fewer institutions for the healthy than at present, and we anticipate considerable savings by a reduction in the number. The principal savings will be under the following heads:—

(a.) Salaries and rations of Officers, because there will be a very large reduction in the number of Officers.

(b.) Fuel, light, and some other household requisites, because there will be far fewer wards to be heated, lighted, and cleaned.

(c.) Upkeep and repair of institutions, of which the number will be greatly reduced.

(d.) Food, because the cost per head of feeding a number of people diminishes under good management according as the number of inmates increases.

(e.) As explained in paragraph No. 188, there would be an estimated saving of £45,867 a year by a general adoption of the boarding-out system for children over the age of infancy; and a sum of £9,108 now paid out of a Parliamentary Grant in respect of the salaries of Workhouse Teachers would be available for other Irish purposes.

241. The following are the various kinds of institutions that would exist if our recommendations were adopted :—

Table of various kinds of proposed Institutions

No.	Proposed Name of New Institution.	Class of Inmates to be Maintained in such Institutions.	The Place where such Inmates are now Maintained.
1	County Hospital,	Special surgical and medical cases.	County Infirmary.
2	District Hospital,	Acute or curable surgical and medical cases.	Workhouse Infirmary and small Country Hospitals.
3	District Fever Hospital,	Fever cases,	Workhouse Fever Hospital or Wards, and County Fever Hospitals.
4	County or District Consumptive Sanatorium.	Pulmonary and other tubercular diseases.	Some in Workhouse; most in own homes.
5	Almshouse,	Debilitated by infirmity or old age.	Aged and Infirm Wards, and Sick Wards in Workhouse.
6	Auxiliary Lunatic Asylum.	Chronic and harmless lunatics,	Workhouses and Lunatic Asylums.
7	Sane Epileptic Asylum, .	Sane epileptics,	Workhouse, Healthy or Lunatic Wards.
8	{ County or District Nursery. Do., }	{ Girl mothers with first child, Infants, }	Workhouse, Healthy Wards or Nursery. Workhouse Nursery.
9	General Nursery,	Mother with second or subsequent illegitimate child, with such infants.	Do.
10	Labour-House,	Vagrants, Ins-and-outs, Ne'er-do-wells.	In Workhouses, Prisons, or at large.

242. The following is our estimate of the number of all the institutions that would be necessary, exclusive of Hospitals, and that would be supported out of the poor-rate :—

Estimate of Number of Special Institutions.

Sanatoria for Consumptives (say),	12
Aged and Infirm (say),	32
Infants and some mothers (say),	17
Sane epileptics,	2
	<hr/> 63

243. We cannot estimate how many Auxiliary Lunatic Asylums would be sufficient to provide for incurable and harmless lunatics, but it is obvious that there will be far more than enough of disused workhouses for their accommodation as soon as the Lunatic Authorities decide upon the number of such cases that can be placed in Auxiliary Asylums. If the same Asylum serves for two or more Counties, we think that, as a rule, the Auxiliary Asylum should be in a County in which the District Asylum is not situate. This recommendation is based upon the feeling that exists upon the subject among ratepayers in such Counties as Leitrim, Cavan, Fermanagh, and others.

XVII.—OUTDOOR RELIEF.

244. The great majority of witnesses gave evidence on the question of Outdoor Relief, which is a branch of Poor Law administration that excites much interest. The general feeling was in favour of an extension of Outdoor, ⁽¹⁾ as contrasted with Indoor, Relief upon the grounds that it would be better for the poor and be more economical for the ratepayers, with the proviso in most instances that the area of charge should be fixed as the Electoral Division instead of the wider area of the Union.

Much evidence as to Outdoor Relief, and in favour of its extension, subject to Electoral Division area of charge.

(1.) M. Rodgers, 5867-89; P. Crumley, 8589; G. B. Wilkins, 10905; W. Walker, 11054; Dr. Elizabeth Bell, 12046; H. M'Grath, 12391; J. Dolan, 12577; M. O'Meara, p. 446; J. M'Carthy, 13020; P. J. O'Neill, 15822; T. Clarke, 16309; D. J. Cogan, M.P., 19312; M. Healy, 20746; B. Coltery, 22225; J. C. MacDonnell, 24588; D. MacArthur, 11195; J. Byrne, 16319; T. C. Harrington, 16472; Dr. M'Walter, 16738; E. M'Gough, 17137; P. O'Dowd, J.P., 23650; J. B. Barrington, 25858; J. O'Keefe, 27380; J. Murphy, 28909; J. J. Fitzgerald, 29401.

General tendency
of Outdoor relief.

245. The experience, however, of all countries in which an Outdoor system of relief has been tried is that it is only by the self-sacrificing and constant care of officials, of honorary committees, and inspectors, as at Elberfield or as in the case of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Ireland, that an Outdoor Relief system can be worked with a *minimum* of abuses and with economy. Multitudes everywhere are eager applicants for relief in their own homes, whose circumstances do not bring them at all to that state of destitution in which they would feel obliged to give up their homes and become inmates of an institution. The contraction of the area of charge might be of some efficacy in keeping down expenditure; but, even with the Electoral Division as the area, the expenditure for the year ended September, 1896, reached the amount of £185,936, the number of persons in receipt of outdoor relief being 56,619. The feeling of witnesses, and, we believe, of the country generally, from a neighbourly and kindly sentiment is in favour of extending the outdoor relief system; and it is believed by these witnesses that a restricted area of charge for every case would be a sufficient check upon profuse, or even careless, expenditure. We believe that such restriction would have a tendency towards keeping down expenditure, but we fear it would not be sufficient if applicants for relief came, as they often do now, to the Board of Guardians with representations or recommendations signed by influential persons residing within the area of charge. Under the proposed new system the alternative to giving outdoor relief would be an offer of admission to the "Alms-house" or "Labour-house," with boarding-out of children. There is no doubt that at first, at all events, the greater distance and the separation from children would make those who are offered indoor relief less anxious to accept such an offer than the offer of admission to the workhouse of the present kind, in which all the members of a family would be in the same institution, though in different wards. One might therefore fear that, owing to the change in system, Boards of Guardians might feel that it would be a hardship to ask applicants for relief to go to the "Alms-house" or to the "Labour-house"; but we believe that when the improved character of the different institutions is realised, they will be used as much as it is desirable that any institution for the indoor relief of destitution should be used. As we have already implied, we should be sorry to see the really respectable deserving poor obliged to go into any institution except to an hospital when they are sick, but if they are permanently incapacitated from work, and if the Local Authorities should be opposed to giving outdoor relief, admission to the "Alms-house," where classification would be according to conduct, or the power of defraying the cost of maintenance in extern institutions of a similar kind, would provide a more desirable refuge than a Workhouse now is for the aged or infirm.

Old age pension
scheme proposed
in 1783.

246. As a matter of merely antiquarian interest we may, perhaps, call attention to a very early proposal suggesting an old age pension scheme as a substitute for poor-law relief.* It was proposed that every male above 18 years of age should pay twopence per week to the "proper officer," and that every female above 17 years of age should similarly pay $\frac{3}{4}d.$ or 1 penny a week. Arrangements for what would now be called *relief works* are then suggested for the able-bodied, while as regards the aged it is suggested that "*every male above the age of sixty-five years, whether capable of labour or not, should be entitled to 4s. per week during life. Every female should, after the same age, be entitled to receive 2s. per week during life.*" Various other suggestions are made, and the Dublin Society (now the Royal Dublin Society) at the beginning of the nineteenth century brought forward Mr. Pew's suggestions for consideration in Ireland, but without any result as far as can be ascertained. An inability to pay the qualifying twopence or one penny a week would probably have nipped the project in the bud in Ireland.

* *Twenty Minutes Observations on a Better Mode of Providing for the Poor*, by Richard Pew, London, 1783. [*British Museum T. 116 (5)*].

247. Some witnesses, but a relatively small number, are in favour of the continuance of the Union as the area of charge for outdoor relief ⁽¹⁾; and others again suggest the Dispensary District ⁽²⁾. No larger area than the Union was suggested as the area of charge for outdoor relief, but some, in suggesting the Union, also recommended that an average annual amount should be fixed as a limit for the amount to be paid from the common fund of the Union for outdoor relief in respect of each Electoral Division, and that if any Electoral Division spent more than such fixed amount, the excess should be borne by the Electoral Division and not by the Union-at-large ⁽³⁾. This in our opinion would be a cumbrous and awkward arrangement as regards the keeping of accounts, although in practice the result might perhaps be fair and just.

Union or
Dispensary
District suggested
as area of charge
for outdoor
relief.

248. Since the year 1855 the tendency of outdoor relief has been to increase on the whole, though it has fallen in some Unions. It was expected by some that the change from the Electoral Division area of charge to that of the Union would lead to a reduction in the amount paid, as it was thought that each Guardian, being interested in every payment, would object to any application except a very strong one. But the result has been that a Guardian felt that he could not strenuously object unless he knew the facts of the case, and the matter is therefore practically in the hands of the Guardian or Guardians of the neighbourhood who know the circumstances of the applicant. Applications for outdoor relief are frequently either brought forward or supported strongly by Guardians from the locality; and Guardians from a distance do not like to take the responsibility of voting against their colleagues, who, with knowledge of the cases, recommend the giving of outdoor relief. It was also alleged by witnesses that, as ratepayers in one Division were contributing to relief to people living in other Divisions, they wished their own Division to get a share of what was going, and on that account the names of poor people were brought forward for relief. It will be seen that the change of chargeability from the Electoral Division to the Union-at-large has led to a perceptible increase in the amount of outdoor relief given. The change was made by Statute in the year 1898, and the Act came into operation on the 25th March, 1899.

Statistics as to
outdoor relief.

Manner in which
applications for
outdoor relief are
brought before
Guardians

249. The following table gives some particulars about outdoor relief for the last ten years :—

YEAR.	Daily Average Number of Persons on Outdoor Relief Lists.	Annual Amount paid.	Average Amount paid per Week.	Average Weekly Amount paid per Person.
		£	£ s. d.	s. d.
1896,	56,619	185,936	3,565 18 0	1 3
1897,	54,469	177,673	3,398 2 0	1 3
1898,	57,133	178,687	3,426 17 0	1 2
1899,	64,604	216,170	4,145 15 0	1 3
1900,	58,012	200,053	3,836 13 0	1 4
1901,	57,676	199,320	3,822 12 0	1 4
1902,	57,551	200,969	3,854 4 0	1 4
1903,	57,875	201,746	3,869 2 0	1 4
1904,	56,672	200,991	3,854 12 0	1 4
1905,	57,665	203,212	3,886 11 0	1 4

(1.) S. Lecky, 1728; M. Maguire, 4354; F. Gannon, 13556; A. Moore, 14044; P. A. Meehan, M.P., 18033; T. Bolger, 19960; J. Neary, 23060; W. Doris, 23314; A. C. Larmine, 23956; D. Shea, 27194; D. Murphy, 28119; J. E. Farrell, 28159; J. J. Fitzgerald, 29400; E. Fitzgerald, 29426.

(2.) H. de F. Montgomery, 4981 and 5024-5; J. B. Gunning Moore, 5247-9; P. A. Pope, 20166; P. Walsh, 20459-62; F. Heffernan, 21388; H. Delany, 21886; J. Shanley, 22854; B. Jones, 27915.

(3.) M. A. Ennis, 19517; P. Walsh, 20463; Lieut.-General Massy, 21339; J. J. Fitzgerald, 21374; T. Corcoran, 21808; T. Burke, 22061-74; P. Foley, 26438; T. Linehan, 28639; W. Cotter, 28758.

Repeal of
quarter-acre
clause
recommended.

250. Much evidence was given in favour of the repeal of the quarter-acre section, and some suggested that the limitation should be raised so as to include agricultural labourers in possession of cottages with one-acre allotments. It appears to us that the quarter-acre limit was established in order to oblige a destitute tenant to surrender his holding before becoming eligible for Poor-law Relief. This enactment seems to us to have been passed in furtherance of the policy before alluded to of converting small tenants into daily-wage labourers, and of bringing about the "transition period" contemplated by the framers of the Poor Relief Act of 1838. The occasion for such surrender of tenancies no longer exists, and we recommend that the section be simply repealed, leaving the granting or withholding of outdoor relief to the discretion of the Guardians—the fact of destitution being still a necessary condition as the law stands. It seems unreasonable that for the giving of outdoor relief there should be an illusory limitation as regards the agricultural classes, while no test exists, or perhaps could be devised, as regards other classes who may become destitute.

Poverty, not
destitution now
the qualification
for out-door
relief.

251. It is well known that in Ireland, and we believe in other countries also, outdoor relief is often, and we think we may say generally, given to persons who, though poor, are by no means destitute of resources and means of livelihood. The boundary line has in practice been extended from destitution to poverty, with the result that the number of possible applicants is much increased. Instead of outdoor relief being the sole support of the destitute, it has become merely an item in the receipts of the poor person. The relief is very often just enough to pay the weekly rent of a room or cabin, while support is obtained from the charity of neighbours or of the alms-giving public. In some cases relief is given to supplement small chance earnings, such as those of a charwoman, or as an addition to occasional sums of money sent by absent children. This is not at all what was intended by the Poor-law, but the system seems to be popular, and it appears to have taken root.

Recommendation
that respectable
widow with one
child be eligible
for outdoor relief.

252. In a former part of this Report we recommended that every respectable widow with one legitimate child should be entitled to obtain outdoor relief. This recommendation we repeat here, as we do not see why such a widow with only one legitimate child should not have her home preserved for her as is done for a widow with two or more legitimate children. On the 11th of March, 1905, there were only sixty respectable widows with one child in Workhouses in Ireland; but even this number may safely be taken as an indication that there are many more out of Workhouses making perhaps too hard a struggle to remain independent.⁽¹⁾

Outdoor relief in
Dublin City
Guardians
distributed in food
and fuel.

253. Both the North and the South Dublin Poor Law Guardians distribute outdoor relief in food and fuel, not in money. We think this is a very wise procedure, at all events in cities or large towns, but we do not recommend any legislation with the object of making the practice obligatory. Guardians have at present a discretionary power in this matter, and we should be disposed to leave the law as it is.

Electoral Division
recommended as
area of charge for
outdoor relief.

254. Having regard to all the evidence we received, and to our own experience, we recommend that the Electoral Division be made the area of charge for outdoor relief, the whole of an Urban District or of a Municipal Town to be regarded as one Electoral Division for the purpose ⁽²⁾. In order

(1.) P. J. O'Neill, 15822; R. Rooney, 16300; T. Clarke, 16314; J. M'Donnell, 16949; D. Condren, 19369; E. J. Byrne, 19425; P. Short, 19440; M. J. Whelan, 20030; Lady Maurice Fitzgerald, 20249; D. K. Lydon, 24629; T. Hurley, 25591; Miss Barrington, 26194A; J. Costello, 27276; J. O'Connor, 27752; T. Finnehan, 28631.

(2.) Lord Monteaigle, 620; J. Gregg, 1221; J. E. O'Neill, 3064; S. Watters, 3598; W. Doherty, 3924; M. Colgan, 4083; Viscount Corry, 6958; Dr. Ryan, 8560; B. M'Manus, 8790; S. Monaghan, 9470; J. S. F. M'Cance, 9724; A. Milliken, 10434; J. Gill, 10870; D. MacArthur, 11221; J. M. Thomson, 11523; G. B. M'Connell, 11790; J. C. Magennis, 11809; Dr. Hercules MacDonnell, 12848; T. Hewitt, 13760; M. Murray, 14250; C. Eason, 16447; M. O'Neill, 18616; M. Moylan, 18657; W. Thorpe, 20117; J. Butler, 21173; Miss R. Grubb, 21537; J. Maher, 22045; T. Burke, 22055; P. O'Dowd, J.P., 23650; M. Carr, 24374; and many more (see Index to Evidence, page 1005).

to take an undue share of the expenditure off Urban ratepayers, we think that a rate in aid should be levied with the object of continuing to such ratepayers the benefits conferred upon them by the Local Government Act of 1898. If the Electoral Division were again made the area of charge, it might be well to take as the residence for determining the area of charge the place where the applicant *bona fide* resides at the time—and define such to be the residence—not going behind such place of residence at the time when the application was dealt with.

255. The creation of so many special areas of charge in a county (that is one special area for each Electoral Division) would cause much difficulty in county book-keeping. We therefore recommend that Boards of Guardians be empowered to strike and levy a special rate for outdoor relief which would be collected by the Collector of Poor-rate, who should lodge the amounts collected to the credit of the Board of Guardians that struck the special rate. The separation of the rate for outdoor relief would also have the valuable indirect result of showing clearly every year to the ratepayers the exact amount of the expenditure under this head.

Special rate to be struck by Guardians for outdoor relief. (See also paragraph No. 264).

256. If, in the opinion of a substantial number of ratepayers, outdoor relief were to become excessive, or if any gross misuse of discretionary power should occur, it might be well to authorize the Central Authority to hold a public inquiry upon receiving a memorial in the form to be prescribed, to ascertain whether any abuses or violation of the law had taken place; and to empower the Central Authority, after such inquiry, to decide whether the relief was properly granted or refused as the case might be.

Power to direct inquiry if sufficient representation made of excessive grants of outdoor relief, etc.

XVIII.—CHARGEABILITY OF OUTDOOR AND INDOOR RELIEF EXPENDITURE.

257. We have already in the foregoing paragraphs referred fully to the evidence that has been given and have stated our opinion as regards the chargeability of Outdoor Relief.

Chargeability for Indoor Relief.

258. In considering the incidence of taxation for Indoor Relief we are, owing to the nature of our proposals, obliged to take the different classes of inmates separately—

- (a.) Sick.
- (b.) Aged and Infirm.
- (c.) Insane.
- (d.) Epileptic (sane).
- (e.) Mothers of illegitimate children.
- (f.) Infants.
- (g.) Children.
- (h.) Vagrants, Tramps, and Casuals (Ins-and-outs).
- (i.) All other able-bodied.

259. At present the area of charge for all inmates of a Workhouse is the Union-at-Large. Lunatics in County or District Lunatic Asylums, however, are charged to the County-at-Large; and so also are the patients under treatment in County Infirmaries. But neither Lunatic Asylums nor County Infirmaries are administered under the Poor Law or supervised by the Local Government Board.

Existing areas of chargeability

260. In considering the question of a *small area* of charge as against a *large area* for indoor sick, afflicted, and destitute, the question is to be considered from the point of view (a) of the danger in encouraging too much recourse to such institutions; (b) of economical intern administration of institutions; and (c) of enabling uniform treatment to be afforded to inmates without unduly burdening ratepayers of small or poor areas.

Considerations to be regarded in fixing large or small areas of charge.

Residence in an institution is to some extent a test of *bona-fides*.

261. In the administration of outdoor relief there is no test of *bona-fides* that we could suggest to aid the members of local bodies in the exercise of their discretion, and therefore we have recommended that the area of charge should be as small as is consistent with the ability of ratepayers to bear the burden. But it is different in the case of *indoor* relief. The obligation to become an inmate of an institution as a necessary condition for obtaining relief would be a valuable test, we think, to help local bodies in deciding upon applications for indoor relief; and such bodies would always have the power of discharging an inmate if additional light were thrown upon the facts of the case showing that the admission had been wrongfully made.

Objections that are raised to a large area of charge.

262. The most serious objection to a wide area of charge is the fact that the tendency in local bodies undoubtedly is that the smaller the area of charge the greater is the unwillingness to incur liability; and we believe that conversely it is true that the wider the area of charge the less is the objection of administrative bodies to incur liability for additional expenditure. But with prescribed dietaries, graded salaries, and general regulations as to the procedure of local bodies, there would not, we think, be many opportunities for serious extravagance or profusion.

Fixing an area of charge so as to enable uniform treatment to be given in poor and other districts.

263. The third consideration, referred to in paragraph No. 260, as regards the extent of an area of charge is the desirableness of enabling uniform treatment to be given to the sick, afflicted, and destitute throughout Ireland without taxing too heavily the ratepayers of small or poor districts. In a large number of the poorer Unions the valuation is very low, and it is practically impossible to maintain institutions in such localities in the roughest condition consistent with humanity, except by levying oppressive rates from the almost universally necessitous inhabitants. The poorest districts are now the most highly-rated for Poor Law purposes. We will take extreme cases to show the greatest possible discrepancy; and we append a schedule giving particulars for the various areas in Ireland. A rate of one penny in the pound sterling of Poor-Law valuation produces a sum of only £45 11s. 10d. in the altogether rural and very poor Union of Belmullet, County Mayo; a sum of £438 10s. 2d. in the altogether rural but highly valued Union of Dunshaughlin, County Meath; and a sum of £6,515 12s. 7d. in the Union of Belfast, which is mainly composed of the city and suburbs. For the year under consideration the amount necessary for all indoor maintenance, including Lunatic Asylums and County Infirmaries and Hospitals, required off non-agricultural hereditaments a rate of 2s. 3d. in the pound in Belmullet Union, of 4½d. in Dunshaughlin Union, and of 10¼d. in Belfast Union. In poor Unions such as Belmullet the most rigid economy has to be observed; and a patient in the hospitals of such Unions cannot, owing to want of funds, be treated according to what would be regarded as a *minimum* standard in an ordinary well-managed hospital. The peasant in the hospitals of very poor rural Unions necessarily receives much inferior accommodation and diet, if not treatment, to what would be possible in the wealthier parts of the country.

Children above age of infancy.

264. We recommend that children above the age of infancy should be boarded out at the cost of the Poor Law Union; and we are of opinion that the Electoral Division should be fixed as the area of charge in the very few cases in which children may be sent under the Poor Law to an Industrial or Certified School.

Vagrants, Ins-and-Outs, and ne'er-do-wells to be placed under the Prisons Board and maintained out of money voted by the House of Commons.

265. As we have already stated, we consider *Vagrants* or Tramps, and Casuals or *Ins-and-Outs*, and the able-bodied of the *ne'er-do-well* class should be placed under Magistrate's warrant, for the purpose of reformation, in what we have designated "Labour Houses," to be maintained, we suggested, by, and under the management of, the General Prisons Board. The expenditure to be provided out of money voted by the House of Commons in the same way as that for Prisons. If, however, power were given to local bodies, as we now recommend, to remit persons to these in-

stitutions "to test their destitution," we think that the Guardians should pay for such cases out of a county rate,* and also for those who enter voluntarily, the full average cost of maintenance, making provision for such payments in the annual estimates for rates.

*266. Exclusive of outdoor relief cases, boarded-out children, children between infancy and (say) fifteen years of age placed temporarily in Certified or Industrial Schools, vagrants, ins-and-outs, and ne'er-dowells, we recommend that the cost of the other six classes in the list in paragraph No. 258, that is, of all inmates of institutions under local management be defrayed out of a County-at-large Poor-rate, to be struck and levied equally over each County-at-large, including the County Boroughs of Dublin and Belfast as separate counties, but making the County Boroughs of Cork, Limerick, Londonderry and Waterford, for this purpose, to be parts of the Administrative Counties bearing their names respectively. We make this recommendation as a step towards the adoption of a National Rate, with central control by an elected body over local expenditure, as explained in paragraphs No. 272 to 277.

All resident in institutions, viz., Sick, insane, epileptic, infirm and aged, girl-mothers of one child, and infants, should be maintained by a County Rate.

*267. The majority of the members of the Commission are in favour of such an extension of the area of charge for practically all sick, afflicted, infirm or other persons who may be supported out of the Poor-rate in institutions managed by local authorities. The principal reason for the recommendation of a county-at-large rate for the indoor sick, afflicted and destitute is that it appears unjust that the poorest districts should be the most heavily-rated areas for the support of those classes who are entitled to claim maintenance under the existing law.

Reasons for recommending county as area of charge for indoor sick and destitute.

*268. The change in the area of charge now proposed by us involves fewer changes and far less serious alterations in local rates than those which were acquiesced in without serious complaint when the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, substituted a Union for an Electoral Division rate.

*269. As a rule the effect on local taxation of the change that is now recommended is negligible, but in some Unions the increase of the local rate is greater than ought, in our opinion, to be imposed upon one locality in aid of another.

*270. Such exceptional Unions would, taking the year 1904 as the period for making the calculation, have to raise between them a sum of £44,634 in excess of that which was raised for Poor Relief purposes in the year in question. Subject to careful examination of all the figures, and after comparison with the expenditure in other years, we now suggest that a sum of £45,000, or such other sum as may be ascertained after due inquiry, be set apart out of the new grant recommended by the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, and be applied towards the equalization of Poor Rate in the Unions within the several Counties of Ireland.

Grant in aid recommended towards equalizing County rate.

*271. It would be the duty of the managing body of each institution to furnish, as at present, an estimate for its annual expenditure to the County Council; but it is thought by the majority of us that the County Council should, subject to the approval of the Central Authority, be authorized to vary the estimate and to veto proposed expenditure; or conversely to increase an estimate and require necessary expenditure to be made.

Power of County Council to vary estimates for rate furnished by District Councils and by Committees.

*272. There was at first among some of the members of the Commission a disposition towards equalizing local rates by recommending the striking of a National Rate; but this project had to be abandoned owing to the great inequality of valuation in different parts of Ireland, some areas being relatively more highly valued than similar areas in other parts of Ireland.

The question of recommending a National Rate was considered.

* Mr. Murnaghan, M.P., does not concur in the recommendation in favour of a County-at-large Poor-rate; but, as explained by him at page 81, prefers the continuance of the present area of charge for all purposes, except as regards the recommendations in paragraphs No. 254, and 264, with which he concurs.

There are also numerous local discrepancies. Before a National Rate could fairly be recommended there ought, in our opinion, to be an applotment on a uniform basis of the total valuation of Ireland. In saying this we mean the valuation of Ireland as it was prior to the revaluation of Belfast. We would advocate an *applotment*, not a revaluation of Ireland, as an applotment would not involve the possibility of a general raising of the valuation and the consequent increase of Imperial taxes and duties—a result which has taken place in Belfast, notwithstanding the opinion as to the over-taxation of Ireland expressed in the Report of the Royal Commission on Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland. It would, of course, be necessary to make provision for the periodical review of such an applotment as is referred to, in order to secure the continuance of a relatively equitable basis for local taxation.

Composition of
body to strike
National Rate.

*273. If the circumstances were favourable for such a change, the majority of us think that the body to strike a National Poor Rate might be a body composed of representatives selected by the Councils of Counties and County Boroughs, consisting of (say) four members, one for each Province, with a fifth nominated by the Lord Lieutenant on account of Parliamentary Grants—these five members to be salaried officials holding office for three years, or such other term as may be fixed. Such rate might be struck on the requisitions of the local bodies managing the institutions in the same manner as County Councils now strike rates for the various bodies within the Counties, the amounts to be collected by the Poor Rate Collectors. But, having regard to the fact of the uniformity of the rate, we consider that a body empowered to strike a National Rate should have power to question, and, if necessary, to amend the estimates submitted. In the event, however, of an objection being formally made by a District Council or Committee against such amendment of an Estimate by a County Council, we think that the opinion of the Local Government Board should be taken—the question to be decided by the Board upon documentary statements placed before them and such further information as they might think it expedient to elicit otherwise.

Great authority
that such body
would possess.

*274. It is obvious that this power to question and to amend estimates would confer great authority upon the rate-fixing body, and that it would, we are inclined to think, tend to a desirable uniformity in the management of institutions and expenditure. We believe that such control would tend to the greatest economy consistent with efficiency, and it is conceivable that the system might be extended to Municipal Expenditure.

Most desirable
that local
estimates should
be closely
inspected and
questioned by a
supreme locally
elected rating
body.

*275. Hitherto from the point of view of uniformity local bodies and their officials have not been subjected to very close inquiries as to their estimates for rates or as to the necessity for or the prudence of contemplated expenditure. We think that such a relative investigation into proposed expenditure would be most useful, and that it would lead to very great economies. Representatives acting as the rate-striking body for all Ireland, could then satisfy themselves if there was any good or sufficient reason why an inmate should cost many pounds more a year in one than in another similar institution. In matters of this sort they would naturally act in concert with the Local Government Board, or get such information as would be in the possession of the Board, even though it might be considered necessary to keep both bodies apart to some extent owing to the fact that the locally elected body was a rating authority. This Rate-striking body would, with regard to the local managing bodies of institutions in Ireland, have functions similar to those of the Treasury towards the Public Departments of the State. The tendency of such a body would, it is anticipated, be to make expenditure uniform and to reduce expenditure as far as practicable having regard to efficiency.

Inequality of
expenditure at
present.

*276. We include in the Appendix to this Report returns† showing the annual amount spent for Poor Law purposes in the various unions in Ireland and the poundage requisite for the purpose. Taking into con-

* Dissented from by Mr. Murnaghan, M.P.

† See page 122 and 154 of Appendix.

sideration the number relieved, the valuation of the Union, and all other circumstances, it will be obvious that a remarkable difference exists in various Unions, somewhat similarly circumstanced, as regards expenditure on indoor and on outdoor relief; and that there is a large field of operation for such a Rate-striking Body, in which great reductions, taking the whole of Ireland as the unit, can be made in the expenditure on indoor relief without inflicting any hardship upon the inmates. Similarly, there would be an opportunity for placing outdoor relief expenditure upon a somewhat uniform basis if this were thought desirable. An inspection of the returns will show that in many parts of Ireland one Board of Guardians expends a very large amount yearly on outdoor relief, and that a neighbouring Union spends only a fractional part of what is paid under this head in the other Union—the circumstances of the poor in both Unions being similar. We consider that central control exercised by representative men would necessarily lead to great economy and also to an improvement in general efficiency.

*277. There would no doubt be a danger of friction between the National Rate-striking Body and the Local Government Board if they were altogether separate and independent departments; but, excluding the function of striking a rate, it might be possible to establish some system in which both bodies could be united in common action, with the object of promoting economy and efficiency combined. It seems clear to a majority of us, as a matter of personal observation, that comfort for the inmates and efficiency in management are not necessary sequences to a heavy expenditure; and it is our opinion that, by the changes we suggest, there would be an opportunity for effecting many useful reforms at a smaller expenditure of the rates.

XIX.—PARLIAMENTARY GRANTS IN AID OF LOCAL EXPENDITURE.

278. In justice to the very poor districts of Ireland, which are also the most highly rated for the relief of the destitute and sick, we think that there should be a re-apportionment of the grants in aid of local taxation on the basis of the recommendations made by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Lord Blair Balfour, Sir Edward W. Hamilton, K.C.B., Sir George H. Murray, K.C.B., and Judge Arthur O'Connor, a minority of the members of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, whose report † was presented to Parliament in 1902.

Re-apportionment of Parliamentary Grants recommended.

279. The following were the recommendations of the minority of the Royal Commission:—

Minority recommendations of some members of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation.

"(1.) That, when the reorganisation of Local Taxation for the United Kingdom can be taken in hand, the sum paid to the Irish Local Taxation Account should be increased to a moderate extent.

"(2.) That £150,000 should be provided for Technical and Secondary Education, of which £85,000 should be paid to the Department of Agriculture, &c., and £65,000 to the Intermediate Education Board. Out of the former sum the Department of Agriculture should provide for the continuance of the grant of £5,000 for horse and cattle breeding now paid to the Royal Dublin Society from the Local Taxation Account.

"(3.) That all other existing grants from the Local Taxation Account should, so far as concerns their present form, be abolished.

"(4.) That the occupiers of Agricultural Land should continue to enjoy the exemption conferred on them by the Local Government Act, *i.e.*, that the rate on such land should be less than the rate on other property in each area by half the amount of the 'standard rate.'

"(5.) That the whole available balance in the Local Taxation Account should be divided among the Local Authorities in Ireland on a scheme framed on the general lines of 'Necessity' and 'Ability.'"

* Dissented from by Mr. Murnaghan, M.P.

† *Report Cd. 1068 of 1902. Price 5d.*

Details of existing
Parliamentary
Grants.

280. At page 12 of the Report of Commission on Local Taxation will be found a list of the Parliamentary Grants in Aid. Excluding the "Agricultural Grant" which has so recently been assigned in a definite way, the following are the grants to be now considered :—

	£
Poor Relief,	115,530
Medical Salaries,	55,077
Medicine, &c.,	13,935
School Teachers in Workhouses,	8,995
Trained Nurses,	1,143
Lunatic Asylum Capitation Grant,	160,282
Total,	£354,962

Report of Royal
Commission on
Local Taxation.

281. The Royal Commissioners were unanimous in recommending (p. 14) that all the present grants in aid of Poor Relief expenditure should be continued; and also that sundry new grants should be made in further aid of the maintenance of the sick and infirm, the maintenance and education of Poor Law children, and the provision of Asylum accommodation for pauper lunatics and imbeciles.

Basis upon which
Parliamentary
Grants should be
apportioned.

282. A difference of opinion, however, existed among the members of the Commission as to the basis upon which the existing and the new grants should be apportioned. The opinion of the minority, with which we coincide, is that the distribution should be made with a due regard to the "necessity" for expenditure in each district, and also to the "ability" of the district to contribute towards that expenditure. It appears to us that the object aimed at in the report of the minority of the members of the Commission (to quote the following statement made by them) was "to equalise the burdens in all localities except where extravagance entails an exceptionally heavy charge; and, on the side of policy, to discourage extravagance in wealthy districts and to make possible the levelling up of administration in backward districts to a proper pitch of efficiency."

*283. It may have been gathered from what we have already stated, that a similar view prompted many of the recommendations we have made. On the other hand, we have in view a method for giving effect to such suggestions quite different to that put forward by the minority report of Lord Balfour of Burleigh and some of his colleagues. It was considered by them that the application or apportionment of the grants in aid should be vested in the Local Government Board. This course may be necessary or desirable at first, but we look forward to the ultimate adoption of a National Rate with such a rate-striking body as we already outlined, possessed of power either to discourage extravagance or to level up administration to a proper pitch of efficiency. In the carrying out of such a policy *by an elected body* the power of a periodical revision of the application of Parliamentary Grants would, in our opinion, be a most useful, potent, and justifiable means for influencing local eccentricities of method or administration.

284. While favourable to a re-arrangement of the Grants in Aid for the maintenance and care of the poor, the sick and the afflicted, we could not make definite suggestions without knowing the changes in administration that would be made. We consider, however, that the making of such suggestions might fitly be one of the duties to be assigned to a temporary Commission for certain purposes which we subsequently indicate in paragraph No. 299.

Proposal as to
Counties along
the West Coast
who cannot obtain
benefits under the
Labourers Acts.

285. It may be comparatively a small matter, but we think it right to call attention to the fact that the poorer Western districts cannot from their circumstances (especially the very small number of ordinary agricultural labourers) share in the Grant for labourers' cottages and allotments. We therefore think that their proportion of this Grant, with the accumulations, might be devoted to some kindred purpose, such as improving the sanitary condition of the dwellings of the poorer inhabitants of

* Dissented from by Mr. Murnaghan, M.P.

those districts. Such a Grant might be handed over to the Congested Districts Board to be administered under their Parish Committees, power being given to the Board in this respect to act in non-congested portions of those counties which cannot receive advantages under the Labourers Acts.

XX.—MODE OF DEALING WITH POOR LAW AND OTHER LOCAL OFFICERS.

286. It now seems necessary to consider the status and position of the officials who would in future form the staff for local administration. Before entering on the consideration of this subject we think it would, however, be convenient to discuss the position of those officials in any branch of the local public service if the changes now suggested were approved of.

Necessary to consider position of present Union Officers.

287. Without any doubt the services of a very large number of officials would have to be dispensed with, as there would be a great reduction in the number of large institutions requiring an administrative staff. A considerable number of officers have long service, while others have not served sufficiently long to entitle them to claim such a pension as would be any real compensation for loss of office. Again, out of the whole number, there are a great many whose services would be most valuable in the re-organised service. Some, on the other hand, have not been successful officials, though they have just managed to retain their situations. Although local bodies may in many instances be slow to recognise the value of their good, smoothly-working officials, yet they are frequently most tolerant to those who give endless trouble by their habits and by their want of brains or method. But, indeed, such instances are not peculiar to the Poor Law Service alone.

Some views as to such position.

288. The integrity, efficiency, and reputation of its officials are all-important to the successful working of any public department, but particularly so in the case of small local official staffs controlled by honorary and temporary chiefs, and without such daily supervision as exists in most branches of the Civil Service. It was suggested to us on behalf of the Poor Law Officers' Association for Ireland (¹) that the qualifications of candidates for admission into the Poor Law Service should be tested, and that such officers should be enabled to look forward to promotion in the service, and, in the event of old age or infirmity, be given as great a certainty of being pensioned as Civil Servants now possess. Under the existing system Poor Law officials nearly always begin and end in the same situation, and too often with practically the same salary, even after long and meritorious service—at least most additions to salary are the result of "canvassing," and are often given ungraciously and in a manner that is offensive to those who have earned the increment.

Lack of promotion and pension rights.

289. In no public department can abler and more zealous men be found than among the Poor Law officials of Ireland, and it is the lot of many such men to have ably discharged intricate and responsible duties in various Unions for long terms of years at small salaries and without any certainty of a superannuation allowance when their strength fails from ill-health or long service.

General efficiency of Poor Law officials.

290. We do not make any recommendations for the reconstitution of the Poor Law service, owing mainly to the fact that, if our suggestions as to administrative changes be given effect to, it would be quite impossible for us to anticipate what adjustments and what offices would be necessary and desirable in the new service. This matter is one that would fitly, in our judgment, be referred to the temporary Commission suggested by us in paragraph 299 below.

Impossible at this stage to make suggestions as to re-organization of Poor Law service.

¹ Denis O'Carroll, Honorary Secretary, Poor Law Officers' Association for Ireland, 18491, &c.

Recommendation
as to officers
whose services
may be dispensed
with.

291. We recommend, in the case of all local officials in County as well as Poor Law Institutions, whose services may be dispensed with, that they shall be pensioned on the most liberal scale, including *abolition of office* terms; and, so as to meet in particular the cases of those with short service, that a power be given to every superannuated official to commute, if he pleases, his pension for a lump sum on tables used for ordinary lives, without the necessity of furnishing medical evidence of health. In dealing with such officers, if an officer were to cease, by abolition of office or resignation, to hold one office (for instance, that of Clerk of Union), while another (for instance that of Clerk to District Council) would continue, the officer ought to have the option, in our opinion, of retiring from the two or more offices he holds upon the same terms for the still existing office as for the office abolished; and, apart from what may be decided as regards the reconstituted service, we recommend that superannuation rights be granted to all existing officers when the time of their retirement comes.

Efficient men
should be
guaranteed, if
they stay on,
at least as good
posts as they had.

292. As regards the filling of offices under new or re-organized local bodies, whether for indoor or outdoor officials, we think that a plan ought to be devised * by which the most efficient present officers should be retained and re-employed as a rule in more important duties. There would be little difficulty, as far as we can see, in suggesting a good working plan for selecting the officials to be retained for re-employment, which, in the case of continued officials, might be in their own locality as far as possible.

293. We think that only generous terms should be offered to those who will lose their situations. Even if full salaries were paid during the lives of the officials whose services would be dispensed with (which, of course, would not be suggested), the gain to the ratepayers from abolition of offices would be great; so that in our opinion no opposition need be raised to the granting of pensions on the most liberal scale to those deprived of their means of livelihood.

XXI.—SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

Boundaries of
Unions not to
intersect County
Boundaries.

Unions of
Cork, Limerick,
Derry, and
Waterford.

294. As a consequence of the suggestion as to the area of charge for expenditure upon the indoor sick and destitute, and of our proposal that a sick person should be admitted into the nearest District Hospital, there does not appear to be any reason why the boundaries of a Union should not always fall within those of a County.† In addition to a Rural District, a Poor Law Union might in future contain a County Borough or an Urban District, but never another District in a different County. We, therefore, recommend that a Poor Law Union should not extend beyond the boundaries of one County, except in the case of the County Boroughs of Cork, Limerick, Derry, and Waterford. In the case of Cork, we think that the Union boundaries should remain as they are. In the case of the remaining three Unions, we recommend that the Unions should be composed only of the County Borough in each case, with the Rural District in the Counties of Limerick, Derry, and Waterford respectively, leaving the Rural Districts in the Counties Clare, Donegal, and Kilkenny to form part of the neighbouring Poor Law Unions in those Counties. The majority of the Commission would not recommend this alteration in the boundaries of Unions if the change were not accompanied by the recommendation as to the enlarged area of charge. All County Districts that would be cut off from a Union according to our suggestions should, we think, form part of the Union or Unions adjacent thereto. In some instances Guardians will have to travel longer distances to attend Board Meetings, but such distances will not equal those that many Guardians

* See paragraph No. 299 (3).

† Mr. Murnaghan, M.P., is in favour of confining the boundaries of Unions to the limits of their respective counties, but sees no need to enlarge the area of charge in the case of the sick and aged any more than for children and other classes, and is of opinion that there should be a uniform area of charge for all rate-supported poor, except as recommended in paragraphs 254 and 264.

in other parts of Ireland have to travel. We are not aware that, apart from the inconvenience to comparatively few Guardians in attending meetings, there is any other objection to the adoption of the County as an inclusive area for Poor Law administration.

295. With respect to the Union of Belfast, we would not associate either the County Antrim Rural District, or the County Down Rural District, with the County Borough of Belfast under the Poor Law. We think that the County Borough should be a Poor Law Union in itself, with a Board of Guardians elected in the present manner, but with fewer Guardians, leaving the County Districts outside the County Borough to form parts of the adjoining Unions. Owing to the comparatively small general hospital accommodation for Belfast, it will be necessary that a very large number of acute cases shall be treated in the City Hospital*, as well as the very large number of chronic cases that must always exist in so large and populous a centre.

County Borough
of Belfast to be
Union of Belfast.

296. Similarly as regards Dublin, we think that the County Borough of Dublin should be formed into one Union, and that the County Districts in the present North and South Dublin Unions should be either associated with neighbouring Poor Law Unions in the County Dublin, or that those in the South Dublin Union might be formed into a new Union, the erection of a workhouse, or hospital or other institution being unnecessary according to the recommendations now made in paragraph No. 121. We recommend that the South Dublin Union Workhouse be used as a Poor Law Hospital, where there would be room for treating the sick of the new Union, mainly chronic, but with a considerable percentage of acute cases; and there would probably be a sufficient isolated accommodation on a healthy site for convalescent cases. The rights of the Workhouse Medical Officers of both the existing Unions would of course be preserved, it being a matter for arrangement in the case of each such officer whether he should continue in office or retire with a pension, and similarly as regards other officials of each Union. The buildings of the North Dublin Union Workhouse might, we suggest, be used for the Aged and Infirm of the new Union, and also for such casual cases as are constantly met with in a large city like Dublin, and that could not well be remitted either judicially or by the Guardians to a Labour-house. The class to be received into the City Casual Ward in the present North Dublin Union Workhouse would be working people out of employment, or people willing and anxious to work, who would be temporarily without resources.

Poor Law Unions
of Dublin, North
and South.

297. We think that the number of Guardians throughout all Ireland should be reduced to the number of elected Guardians prior to the year 1898. This recommendation we intend to be operative as regards all Rural Councillors, and also as regards the Urban representatives that would be associated with Rural Councillors for Poor Law purposes⁽¹⁾.

Reduction in
number of
Guardians.

298. As many institutions, such as Auxiliary Asylums, Labour-Houses, Almshouses, and Nursaries, will need land in addition to that which at present is held in connection with Workhouses, we recommend that the central body and the local bodies concerned be granted compulsory powers for the acquisition of land by means of Provisional Order or otherwise, as may be thought fit. It would also seem to us to be desirable that legislation should provide that no existing grants or leases should become invalid by reason of the buildings being used otherwise than for a workhouse.

Power to take
land compulsorily,
and suggestion as
to existing grants
or leases of land
for Poor Law
purposes.

* Now the Poor Law Union Infirmary.

(1.) W. Doherty, 3914; D. C. Pearson, 4679-90; H. R. Lindsay, 6296; E. M. Flanagan, 6634; J. Quinn, 6802; Dr. Ryan, 8560-2; J. F. Small, 9413-4; J. Gill, 10890; J. Johnston, 11654; J. Field, 18669; P. Walsh, 20493; Dr. O'Ryan, 21166; J. Butler, 21173; J. Hogan, 25424; J. B. Barrington, 25888; Lieut. General Massey, 21339; J. Daly, 23870; M. Maher, 26005; P. Foley, 26412-3; T. O'Connell, 26552; T. J. Sullivan, 27106; J. J. Sheehan, 27149; D. J. Healy, 27175; J. Shea, 27199; J. Lane, 28710; [To qualified extent, J. Jordan, M.P., 6049-51; T. McGovern, M.P., 8448; Colonel Everard, 13078; J. Mooney, 15979-81; W. Bradford, 12023; J. B. Louden, 23705.]

Temporary Commission would probably be necessary if the recommendations of this Commission were adopted to any extent.

299. We believe that a Temporary Commission, working with the Local Government Board and the Local Bodies, would be necessary for the purpose of carrying into effect the changes incidental to the recommendations made in this report, and that such a Commission, acting in subordination to the Local Government Board, might discharge the following duties :—

- (1.) Suggesting the areas which should be assigned to the various institutions other than hospitals—that is to say, Sanatoria for Consumptives, Almshouses, Nurseries, Auxiliary Lunatic Asylums, Institutions for Sane Epileptics, and Labour-houses;
- (2.) Submitting a draft scheme for the re-apportionment of Parliamentary Grants in aid of local taxation;
- (3.) Putting forward proposals for the employment of Poor Law officials whose services would be retained, and for the compensation of officials whose services would be dispensed with;
- (4.) Making a scheme for the reconstitution of the Poor Law official service;
- (5.) Carrying out the adjustment of various other matters incidental to the changes proposed.

Our view of what the procedure of the temporary Commission should be is that by public inquiries, by informal investigations and by conferences with the various bodies concerned, it should ascertain during the earlier portion of its term of office what would be the best arrangements under such new legislation as is now suggested. This portion of the work of the Commission, as far as we are able to form an opinion, ought not to occupy very much time. On the supposition that our recommendations would be adopted substantially we have (as will be seen from paragraph No. 242) already made rough outlines of a scheme of re-arrangement. While we have not gone into detail, we have nevertheless looked sufficiently closely into the subject to enable us to express an opinion without diffidence that schemes could be expeditiously prepared for the carrying out of an Act of Parliament on the lines we recommend. New areas could be proposed without delay. Draft schemes for the re-apportionment of Parliamentary Grants could be speedily framed. Proposals could be expeditiously put forward respecting the Poor Law Officials in office; and a scheme could even more quickly be suggested for the re-constitution of the Poor Law Service. A Commission for these purposes could, we feel sure, discharge in a very short time its functions under these four general heads. But it is equally clear to us that considerable time must necessarily be occupied in the adjustment of accounts, no matter what the area of charge may be; in the negotiations for the adaptation of buildings, and in the various other administrative duties incidental to the carrying out of such schemes and to the making of satisfactory arrangements for the transitory period between the two systems. As regards those portions of our Report in which we are unanimous, schemes for re-arrangement would be carried out county by county, and, for some purposes, by groups of counties. There would not, we think, be any obstacle to the simultaneous preparation of schemes in four or even more different parts of Ireland with the object of bringing the new system into operation with as little delay as possible.

XXII.—SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

300. The following is a summary of the principal recommendations made by us :—*

- i. The poverty of Ireland cannot be adequately dealt with by any Poor Relief Law such as that of 1838, but by the development of the country's resources, which is, therefore, most strongly urged. (72)
- ii. The English and Scottish Removal Acts, so far as they relate to Ireland should be repealed. (59)
- iii. The present workhouse system should be abolished. (76, 133)
- iv. The various classes of inmates, except children, should be segregated into separate institutions. (81, 137)
- †v. The existing hospitals, whether Poor Law or County, should, except in a few cases, be retained in their present localities, but all should be placed under the management of County and District Committees. (83, 94, 122-4)
- vi. Such hospitals should, as far as possible, be used only for the acute sick. (100)
- vii. A sufficient number of Consumptive Sanatoria should be established. (106, 107)
- viii. Additional cottage hospitals should be established at certain places in Ireland, and the system of home nursing for the poor extended. (110, 111)
- ix. A State Medical Service should be established, and the cost thereof defrayed out of money voted by Parliament. (114 to 120)
- x. Right of admission should be given to the district hospital nearest to a patient's residence. (121)
- xi. The "aged and infirm" of all the workhouses within a convenient area should be placed in a disused workhouse to be known as the County or District "Almshouse," in which proper classification can be carried out. (138, 139, 140)
- xii. The insane should be removed from Poor Law Institutions, and be detained in Auxiliary or other Asylums under the control of the Lunatic Asylum Authorities. (154, 155)
- xiii. Sane epileptics should be placed in separate institutions, for which purpose disused workhouses will be available. (164)
- xiv. Unmarried mothers should be sent to institutions under religious or philanthropic management, or to "labour-houses," and be kept apart from other classes. (169, 170)
- xv. The question should be considered whether a law ought not to be passed enabling mothers to proceed in their own name against the putative fathers of their children, and to obtain affiliation orders. (173)

*The numbers in the brackets in this summary refer to the paragraphs in the Report dealing with the matter.

† Dissented from by Mr. Murnaghan only as regards the mode of admission into County Hospitals.

- xvi. Infants should be placed in "Nurseries," either under religious and philanthropic management, or, when disused workhouses are used, under Poor Law control. (175, 176, 177, 180, 181)
- xvii. All children between infancy and maximum limit of age should be boarded out. Certain cases might be temporarily placed in certified, or industrial schools. (185)
- xviii. The Poor Law District Schools of Glin and Trim should be dissolved as Poor Law Schools. (186)
- xix. Casuals and vagrants should be detained for long periods under Magistrates' warrant in "labour-houses," under the control of the General Prisons Board, and be maintained out of Imperial funds. (215, 229)
- xx. Genuine workingmen about to travel to seek employment should be provided with satisfactory documentary authorization for obtaining from Relieving Officers food and lodging during their journey. (219)
- xxi. Two disused workhouses should be handed over to War Department for the accommodation of pensioners, ex-soldiers, reservists, and militiamen, who claim support owing to destitution. (223)
- xxii. Special casual wards should be established in Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, and possibly in Limerick and Waterford. (235)
- xxiii. Destitute respectable widows with only one legitimate child should be eligible for outdoor relief. (252)
- xxiv. Clause prohibiting the granting of outdoor relief to be afforded to the occupier of more than a quarter of an acre of land should be repealed. (250)
- xxv. The area of charge for outdoor relief and for children sent temporarily to industrial and certified schools should be the electoral division, with an adequate rate-in-aid as regards outdoor relief for towns. (254, 264)
- xxvi. Guardians should be empowered to strike and collect a special rate for outdoor relief. (255)
- xxvii. The cost and maintenance of boarded-out children between infancy and maximum limit of age should be a union charge. (264)
- *xxviii. The expenditure on the sick, aged, and infirm, epileptics, lunatics, infants, and unmarried mothers in institutions should be defrayed out of a county-at-large rate. (266)
- xxix. Vagrants, casuals, and other classes sent by a Court of Justice for detention in "labour-houses" should be maintained out of money voted by the House of Commons for prisons. Those remitted by Guardians for "test" purposes, or who enter voluntarily, to be paid for out of the County rate. (265)
- xxx. All existing officers should be compensated for loss of office and be entitled to receive pensions. (291)
- xxxi. The reconstitution of the Poor Law Official Service, and the conditions affecting it, should be considered by a Temporary Commission. (290, 299)
- xxxii. The grants-in-aid of local taxation should be apportioned on the basis of the recommendations of some of the members of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. (278)
- xxxiii. The Irish grants-in-aid should be increased as recommended by the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. (281)

* Dissented from by Mr. Murnaghan.

xxxiv. The accumulations of the grant for labourers' cottages and allotments and future yearly sums accruing should be given to those Districts along the whole west coast that, owing to the condition of the occupiers of land, are unable to obtain any benefits under the Labourers Acts. The grant might be applied to the improvement of the sanitary condition of the dwellings of the occupiers of land, and be administered by the Congested Districts Board through Parish Committees. (285)

xxxv. Subject to the adoption of the suggestion as to the striking of a rate for the support of institutions over the County at large, poor law union should not extend beyond the boundaries of one administrative county except in the case of the County Boroughs of Cork, Limerick, Derry, and Waterford. (294)

xxxvi. The boundaries should remain as at present in the case of Cork Union. (294)

xxxvii. Subject to the adoption of the suggestion as to the striking of a rate for the support of institutions over the County at large, the Union of Limerick should, in the opinion of the majority, comprise the County Borough of Limerick and the Rural District of Limerick No. 1. Similarly, the Union of Londonderry should comprise the County Borough of Londonderry and the Rural District of Londonderry No. 1, and the Union of Waterford should comprise the County Borough of Waterford and the Rural District of Waterford No. 1. (294)

xxxviii. The County Borough of Belfast should form the Union of Belfast. (295)

xxxix. The County Borough of Dublin should form the Union of Dublin, and the present North and South Dublin Unions should be dissolved. (296)

xl. The number of Guardians throughout Ireland should be reduced to the number of elected Guardians prior to the year 1898. (297)

xli. The Government should take over disused Workhouses not required at the time of disuse for any purpose, and build suitable hospitals in lieu thereof. (133)

xlii. Land might be taken compulsorily by Provisional Order for the purposes of public institutions. (298)

xliii. Temporary commission should be appointed to prepare for consideration schemes for carrying into effect the recommendations of this Commission should they be adopted to any material extent. (299)

301. We desire to acknowledge our very great indebtedness to the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. George A. Mahon, of the Local Government Board, whose exceptional knowledge of the law and procedure affecting local bodies in Ireland caused us throughout our Inquiry to regard him as a most valued colleague and adviser.

302. Mr. W. M. Geary, of the Local Government Board, has been a thoroughly efficient Assistant Secretary, and during the absence of the Members of the Commission and the Secretary from Dublin he was engaged in the revision of printed matter, in the preparation of indexes, and in the compilation of statistics.

303. The evidence taken by the Commission forms a printed volume of 1,009 pages, and the shorthand notes of the testimony of 743 witnesses were furnished by Mr. Charles Ryan, the official shorthand-writer, with such marvellous accuracy that in not a single instance has any mistake been observed by the members of the Commission in his transcript.

304. We received most valuable information and assistance from Major Robert Rutledge-Fair, Mr. Robert Agnew, Dr. Joseph Smyth, and Mr. Charles H. O'Connor, all Inspectors of the Local Government Board for Ireland. Mr. Henry Courtenay, I.S.O., Assistant Secretary to the Local Government Board, Mr. M. Hegarty, Mr. Herbert Jenkins, and Mr. H. S. Cavanagh, of the same Department, also assisted us most cordially in the preparation of some of the statistical tables appended to our Report. We have also to thank Mr. Joseph Flynn, Librarian, Local Government Board, for affording us much useful information. Similarly, we are under great obligations to all Clerks of Unions, Workhouse Masters, and Relieving Officers, for the accurate filling up of many returns that are given in the Appendix. The Medical Officers of all County and Union Hospitals in Ireland were also kind enough to supply us with the very valuable and interesting information which we append as to the institutions in their professional charge.

We have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's obedient Servants,

WM. L. MICKS.

GEORGE MURNAGHAN.

E. COEY BIGGER.

G. A. MAHON,

Secretary,

18, Lower Baggot-street, Dublin,

10th October, 1906.

MEMORANDUM BY MR. MURNAGHAN, M.P.

1. Differing as I do with my colleagues as to the desirability of the adoption of a County rate for the maintenance of Union hospitals and support of institutional poor, I deem it proper to append a statement of the reasons why I am unable to concur in the recommendation that commends itself to the majority of the members of the Commission.

Save upon this point, and as regards the mode of admission to County and District hospitals, I am glad to state that we find ourselves in harmony in our views upon all the matters as set out in this Report.

2. The enlargement of area of charge for Poor Law purposes to a County unit would involve a curtailment of the control of local authorities by depriving Unions of the power of regulating their own expenditure, and also, in my opinion, have the further consequence of bringing about very undesirable financial results.

3. This question of area of charge was very carefully inquired into throughout our investigations—no other topic arousing such keen interest, and the importance attached to the subject is manifested by the large share of attention devoted to its discussion. The financial effects of the various methods of rating were set forth at very considerable length, and all were afforded opportunity to give their views. Every County Council and other public authority was represented at our sittings by witnesses to express the wishes of their respective bodies, so that a full and authoritative expression of the opinion of those intimately acquainted with practical administration was elicited.

4. The great preponderance of opinion based upon both economic and administrative grounds was in favour of a continuance of the existing method, and against the suggested enlargement of area; while a County rate commended itself chiefly to the members of the Medical profession on the grounds of uniformity in hospital management, and received very little support elsewhere.

5. In face of such strong opposition, it would, it seems to me, be unwise and impolitic to adopt a system of finance disapproved of by men closely associated with local and county management, and one which all experience shows has a tendency to high expenditure beyond the means of a country so poor and of such scanty resources as ours. A county without areas of moderate size is as a farm without fields, and for the purpose of Poor Law administration, boundaries of suitable extent are just as necessary for its economical and efficient management as are medium-sized fields for the promotion of successful husbandry.

6. Only in limited areas can due supervision and proper discrimination be exercised, or sufficient attention be given to matters of detail; therefore, if County rating be adopted, I have little hope of our being able to effect any appreciable reduction in Poor Law expenditure, as I fear the economies at which we have been aiming by our recommendations in regard to other matters will be largely counterbalanced by the costly management attendant upon the wider area of charge.

7. This tendency towards extravagance on the part of the broad rating unit is illustrated in the case of county administration, where it will be seen that the amount under county-at-large charges has outdistanced in growth that under District and Union headings, and also in the case of Asylum expenditure, where the annual cost per head is fifty per cent. more than the annual cost per inmate in Poor Law Unions.

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8. Further, the adoption of a County rate would bring about the financial amalgamation of all Unions in a county, and give rise to serious difficulties as well as grave disadvantages. As the conditions vary and circumstances differ in every case, the combining and centralising of that portion of Union finance contemplated by the recommendation is likely to cause very general dissatisfaction. A Union clear of debt will object to share the responsibility of those less fortunately circumstanced. A Union with a low rate will grudgingly unite with one of a high poundage, nor will Guardians view with equanimity the loss of their separate financial existence. For what else was the opposition to amalgamation than the unwillingness of existing Poor Law Authorities to part with the management and control of their own affairs? Our people cherish the opinion that local communities are entitled to manage their own immediate concerns, and are strong in the belief that the Guardians of each Union are the proper persons to administer all Poor Law matters within their own area. Of this we had abundant evidence throughout our inquiries. Of the one hundred and fifty-nine Unions less than ten Boards of Guardians gave their assent to amalgamation, the rest strongly objecting to this method of reform as it would interfere with the control by themselves of the affairs of their own Union.

9. The remedy for the poverty-afflicted Unions of the West is, in my opinion, not to be found in amalgamating them with Unions heavily burdened with rates already, but by the State coming to the relief of necessitous districts by a grant-in-aid commensurate to their needs, so as to enable them to support their poor as comfortably as neighbouring Unions at a poundage no higher than the average of their county.

10. For these reasons I am unable to agree with the recommendation that the area of charge for hospitals and in-door poor should be enlarged, being of opinion that the Union area is by far the most suitable, and should remain undisturbed, except in the case of out-door relief, and in the case of children sent to Certified or Industrial Schools, which we agree should be made an electoral division charge.

GEORGE MURNAGHAN.

10th October, 1906.