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By



Pamphlets for the People---No. 4.

A Peep Behind the Scenes on a Board of Guardians.

The Brutality of the Poor-Law System,

BY

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A Peep Behind the Scenes on a Board of Guardians.

WE know that a large proportion of our industrial population, under present circumstances, are compelled to look forward in old age to be obliged to have recourse to parish relief. There is a sentiment which is deeply engrained in the British working-classes which leads them to revolt against the pauper taint, and it is a perpetual terror to tens and I believe hundreds of thousands of decent industrious men to know that, from no fault of their own—from circumstances over which they have no control, from lack of employment, from infirmity, or perhaps through the failure of the benefit societies in which they have placed their savings—they may find themselves, in their declining years, obliged to have recourse to this form of relief. There is a tendency now-a-days to confine Poor-Law Relief to the offer of the workhouse; but there are the most serious objections to that form of relief. In the first place it involves an enormous expenditure for buildings, for administration, and for official agencies; and in the second place—and this is worst of all—it separates a man from his family, and deprives him in his old age from the solace and the sympathy which might be given to him by those who are dear to him, and which he has a right to anticipate and to expect; and there is a second point which I think is also chiefly established—that is, that Society, as a whole, owes something to those veterans of industry, and I say the State has already recognised this claim in regard to its own services. The soldier and the sailor are pensioned; but peace hath her victories as well as war, and soldiers of industry, when they have fallen out of the ranks in the great conflict of competition in which they are continually engaged, also have some claim upon the consideration and gratitude of their country.”—Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., on “Old Age Pensions,” in his annual address, Birmingham, Nov. 18th, 1891.

“The poor in our country workhouses are the aged, retired and sick labouring classes, who have no other resource but the workhouse, after a long and weary existence upon the land, with probably a large family, scanty fare, and low wage. As a rule the workhouse inmates are good, honest, upright, worn-out members of society, mixed up more or less with lunatics, feeble-minded children, and casual paupers.”—Mr. Henry Fincham, Master of Cranbrook Union, who has had forty years Poor Law experience. “Poor Law Officers Journal,” Aug. 18th, 1905.

Why the Workers are Poor in their Old Age, and who are the real “Sharers Up.”

We Socialists are often told that we want to “share up” the wealth of the country, or take from the “Haves” and give to the “Have Nots.” I am going to prove that arrangements have been made to share up the wealth of the country by Acts of Parliament before we were born. That the monopolist ancestors of the present classes, who controlled Parliament generations ago, passed laws under which our present system, enables a small section of

the community to so monopolise the land and the means of production that they are enabled to share two-thirds of the wealth produced by labour every year, for kindly allowing the workers, who produce all the wealth, to use and live on the earth. We have various reasons given why the many are poor. Some say it is because they have too large families, others say it is because we have Free Trade, or because the workers are wicked, or owing to foreign competition; but the main reason given is that the workers waste their earnings on drink. Agitations are kept going, and agitators are paid good salaries by the plutocrats, landlords, interest mongers, &c., in order to foist all these alleged causes of poverty upon the workers, to prevent them from understanding the real cause of their poverty and starvation, which is, that one-eighth of the population manage, by having control of the political and industrial power, to share two-thirds of the national yearly income in the shape of rent, interest, profit, salaries, stipends, fees, dividends, grants, pensions, &c., &c. And the workers, who form seven-eighths of the community, and who produce all the wealth, receive one-third in wages. During the last fifteen years the annual income of the country has increased by four hundred millions, and yet the workers are poorer now than they were at that time, owing to reductions in wages, increased prices of necessaries, and extra taxation. The cost in the North Bierley Workhouse for provisions, necessaries, and clothing for each inmate, leaving out the cost of officialism and the upkeep of the workhouse, has risen from 3s. 1d. per head per week in 1890 to 5s. 4½d. per head in 1904, or 2s. 3½d. per head increase, compared with fifteen years ago, so that we can safely say that although the workers are producing four hundred million pounds more wealth per annum than they did fifteen years ago, the wage-earner is actually at least from four to five shillings per week worse off—in other words, the rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer; and yet during the last five years the amount spent on drink has been getting less, having decreased from £185,929,000 in 1899 to £174,445,271 in 1903—a decrease of eleven and a half millions.

The drink bill decreasing, the wealth increasing, and the workers getting poorer; and yet we are told that drink is the cause of poverty. According to "Facts for Socialists," published by the Fabian Society in 1899, the total income of the country, according to such statisticians as Professors Leone Levi, Marshall, Mulhall, Sir R. Giffen, Bowley, &c., was £1,700,000,000. In the Fabian pamphlet published in 1890, with the same title, the same authorities give the national income to be £1,350,000,000, so that in nine years the national income had been increased £350,000,000. We can now safely say that the annual income in the country amounts to £1,800,000,000, and in order to get at the cause of poverty we have to get to know how this income is distributed amongst the population. No human being can exist without land, yet although land was sent for the benefit of all mankind, centuries ago the kings of this country shared the land up amongst their courtiers, lackeys, their mistresses, children, &c., and what was left was shared out by the ancestors of our present aristocracy, who passed laws which gave them permission to rob the workers of millions of pounds out of their earnings each year, for kindly allowing them to live on the earth. In round figures the landlords charge the workers of Great Britain £300,000,000 per year for allowing them to live in their "native land," the only part of which they will ever possess being about six feet after they are dead;

and they would rather miss any payment each week than the insurance premium which enables them to become landlords after they are buried. The classes have such a land monopoly that they would not allow the masses to use the roads, only that without free roads the workers would not be able to get to their work, and the result would be that the classes would have to start working themselves. The workers of Britain are practically aliens in the land they were born, and they are absolutely dependent upon a small section of the community for permission to live in their native land, and they cannot secure that permission without paying on the average twopence out of each shilling that they earn to keep an idle class in luxury and extravagance. If a fellow worm has a right to own the crust of the earth, the natural birthright of all, which he or his ancestors never created, then another section has a right to own the air that we breathe; and it would be just as right for an air lord to send his inspector round to every baby soon after birth, in order to place an air-meter on its windpipe, so that the air monopolist would be able to charge so much per thousand feet for the air breathed; and if this had been done for generations, the workers would allow it to still go on, and if the air monopoly was attacked they would be amongst its stoutest defenders, and they would say that meters were placed on their fathers' and grandfathers' windpipes, and it always was so, and if *they* could secure a good revenue from selling fresh air they would do so. No one has any more right to own land than they have to own fresh air.

We next come to the class who live on interest, which they receive from stocks, shares, bonds of syndicates, public companies, foreign investments, railways, &c. The capital which they have invested has mainly been taken from the workers, in previous years, and it is then re-invested and used to extract a further income from the earnings of the wealth producer. It can safely be said that £1,260,000,000 has been re-invested by British capitalists in foreign countries. This capital has been created by our workers. It has been annexed by the idle classes under our present industrial system, and it is now being used to build up foreign businesses to compete with British labour, and thereby permanently to throw many of the very people who have created this wealth on to the unemployed labour market to starve and perish. Mr. J. M. Potter, a Bradford wool merchant, speaking at the Bradford Liberal Club on January 14, 1905, said that "England's stake in Argentina is £250,000,000. The curious fact is that all enterprises are carried out there with foreign capital. The banking, quays, railways, tramways, waterworks, electricity and insurance, are managed and financed chiefly by the English, although only 5 per cent of the population are English."

This statement gives us some idea of these foreign investments, and tends to show that there are a large number of rich people who have so much money that they cannot invest it in their own country, and efforts should be made to prevent this surplus wealth from leaving the country, and the way to do so is to place a heavy tax on incomes from foreign investments, and also on large British incomes, in order to help to provide old age pensions, for the feeding of starving children, and to provide work for the unemployed. As it is the foreign investors only pay 6 per cent. out of our taxation. The interest-mongers in 1897 shared up £340,000,000, and we can safely estimate that owing to loans to the Government amounting to about two hundred millions, to carry on the recent war in South Africa, and loans

to the Japanese Government to carry on their war, that those who live on interest are getting about £400,000,000 per annum. Altogether the rent and interest-mongers "share up" about seven hundred millions per annum in unearned incomes, for rendering no service to the community, but who are two classes of the "Idle Rich" who live on the backs of the workers. We now come to the third class—those who live on profits and who receive salaries. The worker's child, as soon as he is able to work, finds himself absolutely dependent upon the whim and caprice of a small class of the organisers of work called employers for the opportunity to work. He finds that he cannot exist without work, and that he cannot work without capital, land and the instruments of production, and he finds these in the hands of a few, and that he cannot live on the earth without their permission. The price of that permission is that he shall work and slave to keep these few and their wives and families in constant affluence and luxury without working, while he (the worker) and his family in many instances live in semi-starvation; he must pay a toll called rent for permission to use the land; and a toll called interest for permission to use capital; and a toll called profit for permission to use the instruments of production; and if he cannot pay these he is thrown upon the industrial scrap-heap, where he can either starve to death, steal, commit suicide, be locked up in the workhouse, or perish in some other way. And only a very small minority of the workers have yet realised that those who own the capital, instruments of production, and the land, also own the workers, who cannot use them without their permission. In other words, they are wage slaves, and the only liberty they have is to starve, to think (but they mustn't think aloud), and, if trade is good, they can choose which employer they will be exploited by, and which landlord they will pay rent to, and at election times they can choose whether they will vote for the Tory "Mug 'em" or the Liberal "Cod 'em," who generally sees to it that the "mugged" and the "codded" are eventually either locked up for life in the workhouse for living on the earth too long, or are allowed to slowly starve to death on parish relief; or if he wishes to escape these "glories" of the British Empire, he can commit suicide, and by so doing his memory is revered by the "snobocracy," because he saves their poor rates! We Socialists contend that the State should own the capital, land, and instruments of production, and that these should be used in the interests of all, instead of being used in the interests of a few. Our so-called employers are simply organisers of labour, who undertake to manage the productive forces of the country, so that the produce shall go from the producer to the consumer—in other words, the consumers are the real employers of labour. The so-called employers of labour, and those who live on salaries, such as parsons, lawyers, Government, municipal and Poor-Law officials, "share up" about £500,000,000 per annum, of which over eighty millions is received by Poor Law, Municipal and Government Officials. The total amount "shared up" nine years ago was about £435,000,000, and, as salaries are always going up, we can safely estimate that profit and salaries have increased to the extent of £75,000,000 per annum. The largest part of the amount which is "annexed" in profit and salaries goes to the so-called employing classes for kindly allowing some one else to work. I have now dealt with the "sharing up" of £1,200,000,000, or two-thirds of the annual revenue, and the workers who produce it all have not had a look in ye. While the incomes of the idlers have been

going up, the incomes of the workers have been going down. It is estimated in the Fabian tract "Facts for Workers" that in 1897 the wages paid to labour amounted to about £650,000,000, but we can safely estimate that owing to reductions in wages, short time, increased prices of necessities, and extra taxation, that the wages will have decreased £50,000,000 per annum compared with eight years ago, which means that those who live on rent, interest, profit and salaries, "share up" £1,200,000,000 per annum, and the workers receive in wages £600,000,000, or one-third of the national income, and the most remarkable fact is that the classes who plunder the workers out of two-thirds of their earnings do nothing for the workers that they cannot do for themselves if they were to organise their own labour by State and municipal means.

Out of the 600 millions which the workers receive in wages they spend about 100 millions per annum in intoxicants, of which 36 per cent. is taxation, so that really the workers spend 66 million pounds per annum; even part of this amount is returned to the community by the Brewers and Publicans in local rates. Out of the amount over one-third is used, through taxation, to help to keep up our army and navy, royalty, provide well paid sinecures and fat pensions for the younger sons of the nobility and middle class, etc., so that out of every eighteen pence which the workers produce in wealth, the rent lord receives three pence, the interest lord four pence, the profit lord and the official receives five pence, of which two-thirds of a penny goes to the brewer and publican, and the producer (*i.e.* the worker) receives six pence, and when the sixpenny chap requires someone to look after his salvation upon our imperial or local authorities he generally sends either a Liberal or Conservative rent, interest, or profit lord. The average temperance reformer believes that the class who receive two-thirds of a penny are the cause of the workers' poverty, but we Socialists affirm that this is only part of the problem, that the workers are also plundered by our present system out of a further eleven pence and one-third of a penny out of every eighteen pence which they earn, and that this is taken by certain classes of drones who live on the workers' backs.

Over 90 per cent. of our women do not drink, back horses, smoke, attend football or cricket matches, they do not stop off their work to watch England and Australia play at cricket, and the result is they are paid less wages than men in our factories for doing the same work, if drink is a cause of poverty, then our women folk who work in our factories, laundries, etc., ought to be well off, but as a matter of fact large numbers of them have to sell their bodies in order to add to their miserable starvation wages, and the girl who has no parents to depend upon has the greatest difficulty to eke out an existence upon the 10/- or 12/- per week which she receives in wages, and if she is off her work sick, or on short time, she is immediately thrown on her beam ends. The following fable will illustrate the position of the workers. There was once a farmer, who, owing to a series of bad harvests, etc., was heavily in debt and at his wits end how to dodge his creditors. In going over his farm one day thinking over his miserable lot, he saw a crow lazily flying over one of his fields, and he said to himself, "Ha! I wish I was that crow, with its free life and with no anxiety or care, and no creditors to chase it." He had hardly given vent to the wish before he was transformed by some extraordinary means into a crow. He began flying about with great joy and

exuberance of spirit, he felt he was free from his creditors and business cares; after flying about for some time he felt tired and decided to rest upon a tree. He had scarcely rested upon the tree two seconds before another crow came from the other side of the tree and said, "you can't rest on this tree without my permission, you have no right here, my ancestors went to the crows-parliament. (You have seen, reader, the crows-parliament being held at the top of some tree, with the crows making a tremendous din, the crows do as much good for you at the top of those trees as the human Liberal or Tory crows do in parliament) and they passed acts of parliament that this tree was to belong to our family for ever, so clear off or I will have you." "run in" for trespass." Singular to relate the crow found every tree in the possession of some crow, so feeling hungry and exhausted, he decided to alight in a field and try to secure a few worms, but as soon as he alighted, a well-fed crow came across the field, who told him the same story as the crow in the tree had done, that his ancestors had been to parliament and they had passed laws that the field had to belong to their family for ever, and that no other crow could use the field without his permission. The crow flew about from field to field vainly searching for a tree or a field in which he might find food, rest and shelter, but they were all under private ownership, and they had notices up in large type, "Crows who trespass on the earth without permission will be prosecuted." At last in his despair he came across a benevolent looking old crow in a field, and decided to ask his advice as to whether he had a right to live on the earth or not, so he approached and said, "Good Crow, I am tired and hungry, and I would fain eat and rest, but I find I am denied the right to do so, because I find the means of sustenance are in the claws of a few, and they refuse me permission, canst thou give me advise how I canst secure me the means to live and rest, or I shall surely die." And the kindly, benevolent old crow replied. "I and my good brother live for the sole purpose of allowing such poor crows as thou to have food and shelter, and thou has already realised that thou cannot live without our help and permission, so thou can see that we are philanthropists and benefactors, I will allow thee to work and get worms in my field each day on these conditions, that thou returns me one worm out of every three which thou gettest, and I may tell thee that by hard work and diligence thou will be able to get three worms per day, I may also inform thee that my brother is the owner of some trees at the bottom of my field, and he is a good crow like unto myself and he will allow thee to have rest and shelter if thou payest him one worm each night, of course thou knowest that thou art free to reject or accept, I do not press thee, and thou must realise how kind I am to make thee this offer to allow thee to live." After hearing the magnanimous offer, the homeless, hungry crow being free to decide between starvation and death and the offer of the owner of the field, he decided to accept the least of the two evils and he agreed to the terms laid down, and he found that out of every three worms he was to secure by hard labour each day, he paid two to the owners of the land and trees for permission to live, and he found that these kind, benevolent crows had a number of poor destitute crows working hard in all kinds of weather in order to live, and paying two-thirds of their worms to the field and shelter owners, and he also found that these two crows and their families never did any work in order to feed themselves, and they were fatter and happier than those who did, and that

every now and again, such as previous to, a crows parliamentary election, or at Christmas time, or when one of the rich young crows got married, the owners of the field and trees distributed a few worms in the shape of charity amongst those who found all the worms, and when the crows who worked hard in the fields required someone to go to the crows parliament to bring about their emancipation, they always sent the owners of either the fields or the trees. The time came when the poor farmer who had been transformed into a crow, became old, his eyes became dim, his legs became weak and knocked together, he could not get three worms per day so he was locked up in the crows workhouse for life for living on the earth too long and the owners of the fields and trees were elected as Guardians to take charge of him, and he was told that he had been wasteful and thrifless, and that he should have saved part of the worms which he had received for his old age. He never realised that he had been amongst robbers all his life, and unlike the Biblical story of the man who "fell amongst thieves," he wasn't left at the road side to perish, but he was locked up out of sight in the "Bastile" instead. The cause of poverty amongst the workers is because about one-eighth of the population who produce nothing, "share up" two-thirds of the annual wealth, and the other third is received by the seven-eighths of the population who produce it all, and the reason why the workers are poor in their old age is because they have been amongst robbers all his working days who have been crafty and cunning, and who, after extracting all the energy and strength out of the toiler, throw their worn-out human machinery on the industrial scrap heap to perish and die.

Out Door Relief a direct incentive to Starvation, Immorality, Lunacy, Thieving and Murder.

This country was more wealthy than ever before, and why should there be poverty and misery in their midst. There were thousands of their own flesh and blood under a Divine Curse—they were not allowed to live by the sweat of their brow, although they desired to do so. They wanted protection, but it was protection from the Capitalist. During the past twelve years there had been improvements in the Poor Law administration, the workhouse was a better place, but it was not home. He knew that from his personal experience, and although he was now chairman of the Board of Guardians who sent him to the workhouse as a boy, he loved the workhouse none the more. It was a disgrace to the country that we should only offer the old people who had toiled hard in the past the workhouse instead of an old age pension. It was a lie to say that they could not afford when they could spend £250,000,000 on a useless war. But of the £27,000,000 contributed in poor rates, £14,000,000 went in poor administration and £6,000,000 to the poor in outdoor and indoor relief in England and Wales.—WILL CROOKS, M.P., Lancaster, April 29, 1905. *Bradford Observer* May 1, 1905.

According to the estimates of Lord Rothchild's Committee, 1898, there are only one-third of the population over 65 years of age who do "not require aid." The only public aid provided for the rest is that of the poor law, which disfranchises and often degrades. That two-thirds of the aged, dwelling in the wealthiest country on this side of the globe should be left with no other prospect for their declining years than pauperism, charity, or dependence on often over-burdened relatives, is to my mind a disgrace to the nation, a crime against humanity, a sin against God.—Dr. HORTON, President of the National Council of Free Churches; Appeal to Parliamentary Candidates, Oct. 1905.

The Poor Law Relief system has been invented and designed for the sole purpose of preventing decent respectable people from applying for any assistance under its provisions. In order to prove this I will go through the whole of the treatment which applicants receive when they apply for relief. In the first place they have to attend at the

relief station, a place which is set apart in each district where the starvation relief is paid out. When the destitute person attends to ask for relief, they know that there is generally a relieving officer who is very uncivil, because he knows that this acts as a preventative against sensitive people applying for relief; in other words the relieving officers are the paid bullies of the Capitalist classes, who pay them good salaries to keep down the poor rates. The Guardians play one relieving officer off against another, and if the relief goes up in one district, the relieving officer responsible is hauled up before the Board to give reasons for the increase, and the result is that he has to apply the "screw" in order to keep down the relief; of course there are a few humane relieving officers who try to treat the aged poor in a kind and considerate manner. The aged person, deserted wife, or starving wife of an unemployed workman, knows when she applies for assistance that there will be from 50 to 100 neighbours and friends at the relief station drawing their pay, she knows that they will inform their friends Mrs. So-and-So has been applying for relief, in other words people who apply for relief are "shown up," every one in the neighbourhood gets to know they are applying, and this is one of the means which is used, and which is very effective in causing a large number of aged and destitute people to slowly starve to death, commit suicide, lead immoral lives, or steal, before they will go through the ordeal and degradation of applying for relief. If they do summon up courage to apply, the following questions are asked by the relieving officer: Name, address, how long has applicant resided in district, how many children, their ages, if married their ages and where they work, their wages? and the applicant is then informed that the firms where the children work will be written to in order that their average wages can be secured for the previous three months, and a printed form with the name of the Poor Law Union printed in bold type at the top is sent to each firm where the children work, and the result is that many poor old people refuse to go through with their application rather than have their children "shown up" where they work; in many instances relieving officers actually illegally send notices to firms where sons-in-law, sisters, aunts, and other relatives of applicants work, although these relatives are not legally liable to maintain the relative who may be applying for relief, but it is all part of the game which is played in order to prevent destitute persons from getting relief. After the questions have been answered by the starving applicants they are told by the relieving officer that their case will be considered at the next meeting of the relief committee, and they are told to attend again in a fortnight and he will let them know the decision of the committee; and I have seen poor old people 60 or 70 years of age turned away with tears streaming down their cheeks to starve for another 12 days. If they send someone else for their pay, the Relieving Officer sends word that they must come for it themselves. This is part of the "sharing-up" process. Recently the Speaker in the House of Commons retired (Mr. W. Gully). When he was appointed 10 years ago he was provided with an outfit to work in (*i.e.* robes to make him look respectable in the Chair of the House of Commons) at a cost of £1000, he was also provided with a house near the House of Commons, rent and rates free. He was given 200 ounces of gold plate with which to decorate his dining table, a salary of £5000 per annum, six months' holiday each year, and when he retired a few months ago, after receiving £100 a week on which to practice thrift, or £200 for each

week that he "worked," he sent in an application for out door relief; he did not apply at a relief station, he was asked no nasty questions as to how he had spent his £100 per week, there was no inquiry experts called relieving officers to chase his sons to inquire why they didn't keep their parents in their old age, no relief committee to sit on the case, no degradation, no pauperism, no disfranchisement, no applying to the relief station each week for his pay, all this is reserved for the 20/- per week workers, Mr. Gully was provided with a pension of £80 per week for life. When the aged workers apply for relief, tears are generally trickling down their cheeks with the thoughts of the degradation, the brand, and stigma which is attached to them when they receive grants of public money in their old age, but whoever saw a policeman, civil servant, postman, soldier, or Speaker cry when they apply for out-door relief. The Chief Constable of the West Riding of Yorkshire (Capt. Russell) has recently retired after drawing £20 a week, and the "liberal" West Riding County Council have voted him a pension of £712 per year, or £14 per week. When the Education Bill was passed about two years ago, and School Boards were abolished, and the Municipalities took over Education, the clerk of the Bradford School Board (Mr. Thos. Garbutt) who was in receipt of £13 a week was given an increase of salary by the City Council of £2 per week, to £15 per week, and it transpired during the discussion that if the Council did not retain his services he would be able to claim a pension of £430 per year, or over £8 per week pension after receiving £13 per week, and we find that instead of the Speaker of the House of Commons suffering any inconvenience from receiving out door relief, this middle class pauper was sent up to adorn the House of Lords, and the Freedom of the City of London was conferred upon him.

The following "Preventatives" are used to keep people from applying for any relief:—(1) They are "shown up" by having to apply at a relief station where a large number of their friends and neighbours attend to draw relief. (2) They have generally to meet a cold-hearted, callous, uncivil relieving officer who bullies them, and whose main business is to keep down the rates, these men are the "bull dogs" of the Liberal and Tory Capitalists and monopolist "bosses" of the workers. (3) If they have any children, those children are not only compelled to pay rates to keep other aged and destitute people, and taxes to provide fat pensions for persons who have received big salaries, but they are "shown up" at their work to their employers, and in many instances they are hauled up before the magistrates and compelled to pay part of the miserable pittance which is given to their parents. (4) In some instances in order to get rid of the applicant they are told to appear before the relief committee of the Board of Guardians, and in many country Poor Law Unions this means a walk of from 14 to 16 miles. (5) They are disfranchised, losing all their rights as citizens, and they are branded with the name of pauper. (6) They have to attend the relief station each week; if they send someone else the relieving officer sends word that they must come for it themselves. The result is that a large number of decent, respectable, hard-working people refuse to apply for relief, and prefer to starve to death or commit suicide before they will undergo the degrading process. If they do summon up courage to apply, they find it nearly as difficult to get relief as it is "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle." The cannibalism of olden times was more humane than

present Liberal-cum-Tory-cum-Nonconformist-cum-Church Poor Law methods of the 20th century. The cannibals did kill their victims off out of their misery, but when a worker commits the crime of living too long he is compelled to slowly starve to death on 3/- or 4/- per week out-door relief or be locked up in a workhouse or commit suicide. The ne'er-do-weel persons who have always dodged work and held public house walls up are told that they will have to go into the house, where they cost the ratepayers about 11/- per head, but if the relieving officer reports that a person who applies has a good character, and that he or she has been a respectable, honest, hard-working person, the Guardians say, "This is a very deserving case, we must not force this person into the "house," we must give out-door relief," and the result is that the "decent, respectable" applicant is allowed, in the case of a non-householder, 2/6 or 3/- per week, and of a householder, 4/- per week, on which they slowly starve to death. The cheapest commodity in Christian England is the flesh and blood of the workers. It costs 17/6 per week to keep and stable a Corporation horse in the city of Bradford, 15/- per week to keep a criminal in prison, 15/- per week to keep a patient in our asylums, about 11/2 per week to keep an inmate in our workhouse, 8/2 per week to keep one of the "Submerged Tenth" on Gen. Booth's Farm Colony at Hadleigh, the children in the cottage homes under the North Bierley Board of Guardians cost 5/1 per week, and they are kept cheaper than any other Poor Law children in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It costs 4/- per week to board a child out with foster parents, with 30/- per year for clothing, or 4/7 per week, and 3/- or 4/- is allowed in out-door relief for an aged person to provide all the necessities of life, in other words the aged man or woman is four times cheaper than a horse. It ought to make the blood boil of any worker who has a spark of humanity about him. It is the greatest conundrum of the 20th century to find out how 4/- per week can be made to pay rent, provide coal, light, boots, clothing, etc., pay insurance, and provide 3 meals a day, seven days a week. The Bradford Board of Guardians decided recently to provide meals in the schools for some of the starving children, they found that no meals could be provided under 2d. per head, which works out at 3/6 per week for food alone for a child, and yet this "Great Imperial Nation" can only provide from 2/6 to 4/- for its aged poor. I recently received an invitation to a dinner which was being given to the Mayor of Bradford by certain members of the Corporation, and the price of the dinner was 15/-, in previous years the cost had been 25/- per head. A deputation of six members of the Bradford Corporation recently went to London, it cost £99 15s. 4d. in hotel and other expenses during their visit of 12 days, or £ 1 6s. 4³/₄d. per head per day, or £9 4s. 9¹/₄d. per week per head, this was the cost independent of rail and cab fares, which amounted to £23 15s. 0d. This gives some idea of the cost of keeping those who live on the backs of workers, 15/- dinners, and 29/4 per day to keep the 'shirker,' and 4/- per week to keep the aged worker. In order to more fully understand the starvation rates of out-door relief, I give you the scale and regulations which is in operation under the Board of which I am a member, and which is an improvement upon the scales of many Boards. Clause 8 in relief regulations states that "in the cases of widows and widowers not able bodied, who are over 65 years of age, whose lives will bear the strictest investigation as to sobriety, morality, and general behaviour, and whose poverty has not been caused by their own im-

providence, each of these persons may be allowed 4/- per week." If the applicant resides with friends or relatives they are generally allowed 2/6 or 3/- per week, if they are householders without any friends or relatives to help them they are allowed 4/- per week, in very exceptional cases they are given 5/-, but out of 1655 persons who were in receipt of out door relief on April 1st, 1905, only 7 persons were in receipt of 5/- per week, or less than one half per cent., 82 were receiving 4/- per week, 49 were receiving 3/6 per week, 185 were receiving 3/-; a large number of those receiving 3/- and 3/6 per week were blind, deaf and dumb, sufferers from paralysis, debility, Rheumatism, epileptic fits, cancer, weak mindedness, hip disease, rupture, consumption, asthma, bronchitis, St. Vitus dance. Out of 12 blind persons who were in receipt of out-door relief, only one received 6/- and one 4/- per week, the others received from 2/6 to 3/6 weekly; 197 persons received 2/6 weekly, or less than 1½d. per meal for 21 meals per week, with nothing left for either clothing, boots, coal or rent; 14 of those in receipt of 2s. 6d. weekly were over 80 years of age; 64 cases were between 70 and 80 years of age; 68 were between 60 and 70 years of age; two were blind and three were nearly blind; other recipients were suffering from weak intellect, crippled spine, diabetes, dyspepsia, rheumatism, heart disease, lameness, paralysis, rupture, bronchitis, debility, fits, consumption, deafness. These cases were persons who had no home or friends or relations to help them, and amongst these were eight persons who were only receiving 2s. weekly. The average amount paid to widows, widowers, and single persons, was 3/0½ per head per week.

About eighteen months ago a new Act was passed to the effect that in giving relief to anyone who was in receipt of not more than 5s. per week from a sick club, or trade union superannuation fund, or pension, that no amount up to 5s. should be considered when fixing the amount of relief; in other words, that the aged poor should not be penalised for being thrifty, but in every case in which a person has applied in our union the Act has been ignored, and the applicant has been penalised for making some little provision for his old age. In one case an old man eighty years of age has 2s. 6d. a week from a club: his out-door pay is 2s. 6d. per week, or 1s. 6d. per week below the maximum scale of the board. (2). An old couple aged 73 and 63 years; the husband has 5s. club pay; out-door relief allowed 4s., or 4s. below the maximum. (3). Married couple aged 71 and 68 years, husband has pension of 5s. weekly, out-door relief allowed 2s. 6d. per week, or 5s. 6d. below the maximum allowance. (4). Man aged 67 years has 2s. 6d. from club, allowed 2s. 6d. per week relief, or 1s. 6d. below maximum. (5). Man aged 78 years, income from club 2s. 6d. per week, pay allowed 2s. 6d., or 1s. 6d. below the maximum. (6). Married couple aged 70 and 68 years, income from club 2s. per week, relief allowed 6s. per week or 2s. below maximum. (7). Man aged 69, club 3s. 7d., relief 2s. 6d., or 1s. 5d. below the maximum. (8). Married couple aged 68 and 67 years, club 2s. 6d., relief 4s., or 4s. 6d. below the maximum. (9). Married couple aged 69 and 58 years, husband suffers from paralysis, club 4s. 2d., relief 4s. 6d., or 3s. 6d. below maximum. These are cases of persons who have tried to make some provision for their old age, and they find themselves in the same position as those who have made no provision whatever, and then we are advised to practise thrift. In a great many cases aged people have outlived their savings, one old lady who had done so recently received

3/- per week out relief. In every case where the workers have made some provision they ought to be allowed the maximum amount of relief; but the facts are that the ne'er-do-weel, who has been in the habit of holding public-house walls up, is generally offered the "House," when he applies for relief, and when inside, even with the miserable fare which is provided, he will cost the ratepayers about 11s. per week. In urban districts an aged person cannot get even a one-roomed house under 2s. per week, so that at least this amount will be paid for rent; about 8d. per week for coal, 2d. for paraffin, insurance rd., clothing and boots, 6d.—total, 3s. 5d.—which leaves 7d. per week for food, if they have 4s. relief, or three-sevenths of a penny per meal, for 21 meals per week. If I had my way, I would place every Liberal and Tory guardian who believes in this starvation rate of pay on 4s. per week out-door relief for the term of their natural lives. In the cases of married couples the maximum relief allowed is 7s. per week, except in a few cases when they receive 8s. weekly. Only 3 couples, however, received this amount. 1 couple received 7s. 6d. and 13 couples received 7s. per week each couple; 2 received 6s. 6d. per week; 32 received 6s. per week; 2 received 5s. 6d. per week; 37 received 5s.; 1 received 4s. 6d.; 17 teen couples, 4s.; 9 received 3s.; 9 received 2s. 6d. The average paid per couple in the North Bierley Union is 5s. 8d. per week, or 2s. 10d. per head; 9½d. per day to feed, clothe and house two persons; 5d. per day, per head, or 4½d. per head weekly less than is given to widows, widowers and single persons.

The following are some of the cases taken from the Press, of aged workers who have committed suicide rather than accept the provision of the Poor Laws:—(1) John Spencer, aged 74, gardener for 36 years to gentleman near Sheffield. He was a steady, respectable man. He got too old and infirm to do any work, became depressed. He was found dead with throat cut. Verdict, "Temporary Insanity." (2) George Bottom, labourer, aged 60. Parish relief stopped, and he was offered the workhouse. He told a man he would sooner cut his head off than enter the workhouse. Found drowned in the canal. Verdict, "Temporary Insanity." (3) Daniel Howarth, aged 68, been in workhouse three months, allowed out to visit his son at Christmas, was out six weeks, was then told he would have to return. Rather than go in he cut his throat. (4) Mary Hewitt, aged 78, applied for outdoor relief, but was refused. She had been in the workhouse once before, and she told her neighbour that "rather than go in again she would commit suicide." Found hung by a thin cord. Verdict, "Temporarily Insane." (5) Joseph Ingall, aged 51, saw-maker, had abscess on leg, for some years was unable to do much work, and had to go short of food; wife died, leaving him with four small children. His body was found in the canal. Verdict, "Found Drowned." (6) A middle-aged couple named Hutton found dead, having apparently committed suicide with cyanide of potassium. Both bodies were much emaciated, and the cause of self-destruction was evidently poverty. The husband in a letter which he left behind said, "We have poisoned ourselves so as to escape the workhouse, as we have no money and nothing to make anything of. We owe two weeks rent, have been out of work seven months. May the Lord forgive us." (7) Geo. Hurst, aged 57, grave-stone worker, been out of work for several months, had frequently tried for employment, but without success. Found drowned in the canal. Verdict, "Found Drowned." (8) George Cocking, black

smith, been out of work for some time, became low spirited, cut his throat from ear to ear. (9) Wm. Potter, aged 84, farm labourer, was receiving outdoor relief, but Guardians insisted on his going into the House. "Found Hung." (10) Henry Knighton, aged 67, joiner, could not follow his employment regularly, complained of feeling weak and exhausted. Cut his throat with a large carving knife. Verdict, "Temporary Insanity." (11) Robert Burton, aged 62, wood turner, always been a steady man. He was destitute and starving, and was advised to go into the workhouse. His answer was, "No friends of mine have died within the walls of the workhouse, and I am not going to." Verdict, "Death from Starvation and Exposure." (12) William Webb, aged 78, silk weaver, given an order for the workhouse, but begged to be allowed to stay out another day. Cut his throat and was found with a razor clenched in his right hand. (13) Thomas Mason, over 80 years of age, said "he could not end his days in the workhouse." He tried to drown himself, and the magistrate said "that he must go to the workhouse or to prison." (14) Daniel Hill, aged 85, a farm labourer, began work at 5 years of age (worked for 80 years). He was given notice by his employer. "So I shall have to fall back on one loaf and 2s. per week," he said, meaning out relief. (15) Wm Grunnell, 84 years of age, been a lifeboat man, saved several lives at sea, for which he had a silver medal. He was unable to work, and the Guardians refused him out-door relief. He could not bear the thought of going into the workhouse. Found drowned in an old brickyard near his house. (16) Jacob Bright, aged 96, charged before the Leeds stipendiary magistrate with begging. The Stipendiary asked him why he didn't go into the workhouse, and he replied that "he would rather make a hole in the water than go into the workhouse; he wasn't born for the workhouse." He was discharged. These instances of murder which I have quoted, caused by the Poor Law system, should bring the blush of shame to the cheek of every worker in the United Kingdom. It is by their votes that this hideous system is allowed. The capitalist classes do not care, because by this means of self-murder they are able to get rid of their useless, worn-out human machinery, and save the poor rates. The following cases are some that have come under my own observation, and they prove how the miserable rates of out-relief cause lunacy, starvation and prostitution:—

(1) Widow, resident in district 56 years, decent, respectable, hard-working woman, married son, miner, with one child, working about three days a week. She lived with married daughter, whose husband was a miner on short time. They had four children, no workers; relief refused three times because the guardians considered married son ought to keep her. She had done little charing, but was troubled with rheumatism in her arm. She was forced into the workhouse. She said she could manage on 2s. 6d. weekly, assisted by her charing. She was allowed 2s. 6d. per week for a few weeks, and it was then stopped, the guardians saying she was too young to receive relief—her age was 56 years—and eventually the relief committee refused her permission to appear before them to state her case.

(2) A respectable, hard-working lady, nearly 70 years old, lived in district all her life, paid rates for 50 years. She was in receipt of 2s. 6d. per week out-relief. She lived by herself in a house at 2s. 6d. weekly rental. She took washing in, and minded children for neighbours who worked in the factory. Recently, owing to depression in trade,

she had had very little washing or children to look after, so she applied for more relief. I moved 1s. 6d. per week increase, and the Relief Committee was going to adopt my suggestion, when a Liberal member said—"I do not know what this Committee is coming to when they propose to increase a person's relief 1s. 6d. weekly all at once." The result was that her relief was increased 6d. per week, making 3s. altogether, out of which she has to pay 2s. 6d. for rent, and to provide 21 meals per week, pay insurance, and purchase clothing, boots, &c.

(3) A ratepayer for 24 years, a Christian worker, and a teetotaler, 57 years old. Been ill and off work for 12 months; also daughter ill and off work for two years. Sole income, son working, earning 8s. weekly. Five in family. I moved 10s. per week relief. The Committee allowed 6s.; total income per week, 14s., to keep five people, including two who require plenty of good support. Have to pay for rent, coal, clothing, boots, insurance, &c., 7s. 11d. per week; total amount left for food, 6s. 1d. per week, to keep five persons—10½d. per day, 3½d. per meal, or a little over one halfpenny per head per meal.

(4) Old lady, lived in district all her life, over 70 years of age; worked in a coalmine when 7 years of age, in boy's clothes, 12 hours per day, six days a week, for 4s. weekly. She never saw daylight in winter, except on Sundays. She has been a decent, honest, hardworking person all her life. All that Liberalism and Toryism could do for her in her old age was 3s. per week out-relief. County Court Judges receive £30 per week salary, and £20 per week pension. I moved in the Relief Committee that her relief should be increased to 5s. weekly, but they voted me down, but increased her relief to 4s. per week.

(5) An old man, over 70 years of age, with his wife, who has lived in district all his life. Ratepayer for 50 years. Had sickness in family. Helped to keep his father for years. Drawn all benefits out of his friendly society. Allowed 5s. per week out-relief. They paid 4s. 5½d. per week for rent, insurance, and coal, leaving 6½d. per week for food for two persons. I have moved on three occasions that their relief be increased to 7s. weekly, but have been voted down. I also moved 6s. weekly, but was voted down by four votes to three—two Liberals and two Tories being against. The old man slowly perished of starvation. Judges of our High Courts receive £100 weekly in salaries and £70 per week pensions. We have six ex-Judges, who are now drawing these pensions.

(6) Man and wife, lived in district 20 years, husband aged 61, wife 54, woolcomber; husband fell out of work, and applied for relief. They were allowed 5s. weekly, out of which they had to pay 2s. 9d. for rent. A Liberal guardian said that if they gave any more the wife would not get any work. After starving on this amount for some months, the husband was taken to the asylum, where he costs the ratepayers 15s. per week, the relief was stopped, and the wife was left to starve. And some people wonder how it is that lunacy is increasing! One reason is that the brain cells of many aged persons are starved for the want of sufficient nourishment, and the brain gives way owing to anxiety caused by the struggle to live; and the result is that it cost in our poor-law union nearly £7,500 per year out of the poor rates for lunacy, and nearly a quarter of a million pounds sterling in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

(7) Married couple, husband aged 58 and wife aged 69. They were weeping bitterly when they applied for relief. (Policemen, postmen, soldiers, judges, &c., don't weep when they apply for their relief,

or pension). The husband was suffering from paralysis. The relieving-officer inquired if the wife could not get some work (note her age, and the state of her husband). The husband had made some provision—he was in receipt of 4s. 2d. per week from a sick club. The guardians allowed them 4s. 6d. per week, making 8s. 8d. per week, or 7½d. per head per day, out of which they had to pay rent, insurance, provide light, boots, clothing, coal, etc. They had always been a very sober, respectable couple, and the husband had worked hard and paid rates in the district for over 40 years.

(8) Widow, 63 years old, chapel attender all her life, lives in cottage by herself, earns 1s. 6d. to 2s. weekly by knitting, charring, &c.; very good character; allowed 3s. weekly, out of which she pays 2s. rent and 8½d. for coal.

(9) Old couple, husband aged 79, wife 55, allowed 7s. weekly, out of which they pay 2s. 9d. rent, coal 1s., insurance 6d., total 4s. 3d.—leaving 2s. 9d. per week for food, clothing, &c.

I now come to the treatment of deserted wives and widows who are left with families of small children. The general policy of the Board of which I am a member is to refuse out-relief to deserted wives with less than two children, in fact the regulation is that no deserted wife shall be allowed out-relief without her case being brought before the whole Board, and another regulation is that no out-relief shall be given to any able-bodied widow with one child. The reason that the "House" is offered to deserted wives is because, as one Liberal Guardian recently said, "If they gave out-relief they would have every deserted wife in the district applying for relief." This proves that the "House" is offered to prevent starving women from applying for help from public funds; this is a direct incentive to force them to either live, immoral lives, commit suicide or starve to death, because if they enter the "House" they are branded with the name of "Pauper" (one of the most hateful words in the British language), they are forced to break their homes up, they are compelled to don the workhouse dress, they are compelled to work in the workhouse laundry or at other drudgery, they are compelled to eat the workhouse fare in a large dining-room where there are about one hundred male inmates and thirty female inmates all eating at once. They are compelled to eat and sleep with all kinds of people, and if out-door relief is allowed, it is lamentably inadequate to provide even the barest necessaries for the wives and children who are needing help and sympathy in their trouble and distress. The regulations for out-relief for widows and dependent children, and married women whose husbands are in hospital, lunatic asylum or prison are as follows:—Mother 3/- per week, 1st child 2/-, 2nd child 2/-, 3rd child 2/-, 4th child 2/-, 5th child 1/- or 2/- per head per week, or the magnificent sum of 3½d. per head per day, on which to pay rent, insurance, provide boots, clothing and 3 meals per day. I have tried on two occasions to get this scale improved, but I have been voted down by the Liberal and Conservative members of the Board, but the relief committees of the Board in many instances do not even pay the amount which is provided in the regulations. The following cases are some of the allowances, and they prove that in some instances the starvation amount of out-relief paid to young deserted wives and widows is a direct incentive to immorality

and prostitution. (1) Deserted wife, age 32, with 3 children, ages 8, 4 and 2, amount allowed 5/-, other income 4/-, total 9/, or 2/3 per head per week. or 4d. per head per day. (2) Widow, age 37, with 7 children, ages from 1 to 11 years, amount allowed 12/-, no other income, 1/4 per head per week or 2½d. per head per day. (3) Person aged 33, husband in asylum, 2 children, ages 12 and 8 years, allowed 3/-, or 1½d. per head per day. (4) Widow, age 34, with 3 children, ages from 5 to 8 years, allowed 6/-, or 4½d. per head per day. (5) Widow, age 35, with 4 children, ages range from 1 to 5 years, allowed 6/-, or 3d. per head per day. (6) Widow, 26, 2 children, ages 1 and 3 years, allowed 4/-, or 2½d. per head per day. (7) Widow, age 32, with 3 children, ages from 6 to 11 years, allowed 4/-, or 1½d. per day per head. (8) Widow, aged 43, off work seriously ill, 2 children, ages 12 and 9 years, amount allowed 5/-, other income 2/9, total 7/9 per week, of which 2/9 is paid in rent, which leaves 3d. per day per head—only 3d. per day upon which a widow is expected to regain her strength so that she could go back to her work in the weaving factory. (9) Widow, age about 28 years, left with 2 children, ages 5 and 3 years, she had not been used to working in a factory, but after her husband's death she went to learn a woman's trade. For the first few weeks her wages averaged about 4/- per week, she was allowed 5/- per week out-relief, total income 9/- per week, out of which she paid 2/9 rent, and 3/- per week for her 2 children being cared for whilst she was at work, leaving 3/3 per week, or 2d. per head per day on which to live, provide boots, clothing and coal. (10) Deserted wife, age 26, with 3 children, ages 5, 4 and 2 years, allowed 5/- per week or 2½d per head per day. Complaints have been made to the relieving officers, which they have brought before the relief committee, of widows and deserted wives leading immoral lives, and the relief has been stopped. I say that the starvation amount of out-door relief allowed in many cases is a direct incentive to immorality and prostitution. The average amount allowed per head including earnings of mother and children is 2/8 per week, or 4½d. per head per day, out of which all the necessaries of life have to be provided. When the breadwinner of a family is taken ill, and, owing to low wages, has been unable to make provision through a friendly society or sick club, the first business of a Board of Guardians should be to grant such adequate out-relief and medical assistance as will get him back to his work as soon as possible, but I do not know of one single case in our Union where this has been done. The following cases will prove this:—(1) Husband, age 47, wife, age 45, with 6 children, ages from 1 to 12 years, no workers or income, amount allowed 6s. worth of provisions. (2) Husband ill, age 32, wife 30, no income, with 5 children, ages from 6 months to 8 years, amount of out-relief 10s. per week, or 2d. per head per day. (3) husband, age 32, nearly blind, wife, age 31, with 5 children, ages from 6 months to 7 years, no income, amount allowed, 10s. per week, or 2d. per head per day. (4) Husband ill, age 37, wife, age 33, 4 children, ages from 3 to 9 years, amount allowed, 10s., or 2½d. per head per day. (5) Husband, age 33, consumptive, wife, age 33, with 3 children, ages 5 to 10 years, no income, amount allowed 12s., or 3½d. per head per day. (6) Husband, age 29, suffering from pleurisy, wife, age 26, with 4 children,

ages from 1 to 5 years, amount allowed 10s., or 2½d. per head per day (7) Husband, age 43, consumptive, wife, age 43, with 6 children, ages from 6 to 18, income from children 14/6, amount allowed 7s. total 21/6, or 4½d. per head per day. (8) Husband suffering from chronic asthma, age 38, wife, age 39, with 8 children, ages from 1 to 16 years, income from children 16/10, out relief allowed 10s. per week, total 26/10, rent, coal, gas, boots, clothing, insurance amounted to 8/6 per week, total left for food 18/4, or 3d. per head per day, or one penny per meal per head. The average amount allowed in the North Bierley Union to sick persons and their families, including the earnings of their children is 2/4½ per head per week, or 4d. per head per day. This is a penny wise and pound foolish policy, because in many instances in consumption in its early stages and other diseases, if the breadwinner was provided proper support and medical attention, his life would be saved, and the result would be that fewer widows would be left to come on to the rates. I have amply proved by the facts and figures which I have given, that the out-relief that is given causes people to die from starvation, suicide, and creates lunacy, immorality, prostitution and crime. We see many cases in the Daily Press of unemployed fathers murdering their children before they will apply for relief from the Guardians.

Buried Alive for Living too Long. Abandon Hope all ye who enter the Workhouse.

In this special workhouse there were 288 men and 437 women over 65 years of age, the majority of them—427—were infirm, worn-out, broken in health, even if not suffering from positive disease. In at least two cases out of three it was either illness or an accident that had in the first instance forced the women inmates into the house, in other cases it was owing to being left without shelter, they had fallen behind with their rent and the landlord had seized their bit of furniture, most of their life seemed to have been one long struggle to keep a roof over their heads. So long as women of this class cannot save, there is no escape for them from pauperism, let them toil and pinch as they will, and many of these women had certainly toiled hard and had pinched too. One of them had supported herself entirely for 50 years by charring, another had supported herself for 25 years, and a consumptive husband for 5 years by shirtmaking, while others had been domestic servants for 40, 50, and in one case nearly 60 years. Among the more respectable of the inmates of this place (London workhouse) there was a hopelessness, an unutterable misery such as I have never seen elsewhere. They were sitting on wooden benches, benches without backs for the most part, women of 70, 80, and more. That is something I have never seen out of England. There they must sit for the hour together. "For God's sake get me out of this place," one of them said to me with a look on her face that I shall never forget, "Oh, if I could have died before I came here," said another, while at least half a dozen among the deserving told me in all seriousness that they found life in the Union well nigh intolerable, a burden almost too heavy to be borne. The men seemed to feel more keenly than the women the degradation of pauperism. "There's no room in the world for the old, and we're old at fifty now," one man told me bitterly. He was under sixty, and he had been turned out of his work to make room for a lad of 20. In this workhouse, every inmate costs his fellows 13s. 6d. per week. There was a time when we were supposed to provide more humanely and wisely than other nations, but now, it is only in England that poor old folk who have toiled hard for long years and pinched and saved, must pass their last days in the workhouse. In England a visit to any of the abodes where the aged poor are housed, is as a rule more depressing than a visit to a prison, at every turn one sees a troubled discontented face or hears a voice that tells of hopeless misery.—Miss EDITH SELLERS in "Nineteenth Century," October, 1902

Mr. F. H. Bentham, the Liberal Chairman of the Bradford Board of Guardians, said some time ago in a speech at the Central Liberal Club, Bradford, that "His ideal of what a

perfect workhouse should be, was that it ought to be a veritable Siberia—a test-house in the strictest sense of the word.” In other words, a place of punishment to prevent people from entering it. When a person has applied to our Board whose character was not of the best, Liberal and Tory Guardians have said, “We must not give out-relief to this person, the house is plenty good enough for him.” This proves that the workhouse is generally looked upon as a place of punishment; a kind of mongrel or margerine prison. Personally, if there is no forgiveness for a person who is supposed to have had a bad character (in many instances they are the products of our profit-making industrial system), then why not send them to a proper prison. The most deplorable fact is that a large number of inmates in our workhouses are decent, respectable people. Some of the inmates in the workhouse of which I am a Guardian have been as industrious and as hard-working as any I have ever known, and five are blind. I want to burn this last fact into my readers’ hearts and brains. In Christian England, where brotherhood, love, sympathy and compassion is preached in thousands of pulpits on Sundays, while such hymns as “Rescue the perishing” and “Scatter seeds of kindness” are sung, we have five persons “locked up” in our workhouse because they are blind, “locked up” because they cannot fight for themselves, “locked up” because they cannot work, “locked up” because the profit-mongers cannot make a profit out of their labour. Altogether there are over 3,000 blind persons “locked up” in the workhouses of this country. They are fed on the workhouse fare and treated in the same way as the biggest criminal loafer or drunkard who ever entered a workhouse. The only days in the year when they get a decent meal is on Christmas Day and New Year’s Day. If there are such places as Heaven and Hell the time may probably come when the so-called Christian Guardians and Liberal and Tory politicians who believe in the Poor Law system will be allowed to “come up,” have a “cooler” and a look round paradise on Christmas Days and New Year’s Days. It is to be hoped the blind poor and other inmates of workhouses will be receiving kinder and more humane treatment than they receive from the “religious” Bumbles of to-day. I try to imagine the bitter thoughts and the depressing sorrow of the aged man and woman when they are making their way, after one long, bitter, continual struggle against poverty, down the road to our workhouse. But unfortunately they are getting what they have voted for, by sending Liberals and Tories to look after their interests. This is the reward for being faithful voting machines for Liberalism and Toryism. When they enter the house they are placed in a receiving room, where they receive a bath, and they part with their own clothing for the prison—I mean the workhouse, dress. They are then drafted into the house. They are now merely automatons. They get up in a morning by clockwork, they eat by clockwork, they work, if able-bodied, by clockwork, they go to bed by clockwork, their food is measured out to them nearly to the grain. If they don’t like the food they can “lump” it. There is no second course, no second helping of potatoes or meat, no second helping of bread. In other words, they are now in the way or on the rates. The able-bodied

inmates are put to chip chopping, corn grinding, railway sleeper sawing, floor washing, helping with the cooking, washing in the laundry, etc. No matter how hard or long an inmate works they are still labelled "pauper" (the most hated word in the British language). They have the same food as ordinary inmates with the exception that some of them get a little meat and bread extra. These inmates are punished because they did not automatically die off when they ceased to produce profit. On the female side of the house the women are all herded together in two or three rooms. Those who are blind, those who have been decent, sober and respectable live with the bad and vicious. All are treated alike. There is a small recreation ground, provided with one miserable-looking seat, minus one leg. It is also the drying ground for the laundry. There are no flowers and scarcely a blade of grass on it. I have never seen an inmate walking in it or using the seat. This is the only out-door breathing place they have. Some of them sit all the day sewing, knitting, darning and repairing inmates' underclothing, etc. They are always busy. They amply earn proper clothing, food and liberty. And yet they are supposed to be on the rates. But the most detestable fact is that they are not allowed to take their meals in the rooms where they live. They have to march each meal time into a large dining hall, single file, where there are long, hard wooden benches and seats, with no tablecovers.

There is generally 100 male inmates on one side of the room, and 30 or 40 females on the other all eating together. Women generally have a strong objection to eating before strangers, and yet I have seen old women over 80 years of age eating in this room. The scene of these poor aged women being compelled to march into the room amongst all these men is one of the most depressing work-house sights I have seen. They are provided with no periodicals or newspapers, unless some charitable person outside the Union presents some copies. No games are provided for able-bodied inmates. The tea for the inmates is barely sweetened, some Trades' Union delegates that I recently took round said the tea tasted like medicine. I have seen slices of bread from 2 inches to 2½ inches thick with ½ oz of butter provided. The following dietary is provided:—Table 1, men Sunday breakfast, 8 oz bread ½ oz. butter, one pint tea or coffee; dinner, 4½ ozs. roast beef, 4 ozs. bread, 12 ozs. potatoes; tea, 8 ozs. bread, ½ oz. butter, 1 pint tea. Monday breakfast, 2 ozs. bread, 1½ pints porridge, 1 oz. sugar, 1½ ozs treacle; dinner, 12 ozs. suet pudding, 1 pint broth; tea, 8 ozs. bread and 1 pint new milk. Tuesday breakfast, same as Monday; dinner, 6 ozs. bread, 1 pint hotch potch stew; tea, same as Monday. Wednesday breakfast, same as Monday; dinner, 16 ozs. of meat pie; tea, same as Monday. Thursday breakfast and tea, same as Monday; dinner, same as Sunday. Friday breakfast and tea, same as Monday; dinner, 16 ozs. meat pie. Saturday breakfast and tea, same as Monday; dinner, 1 pint of meat stew and 6 ozs. bread. For six days in the week breakfast and tea are the same, with slight variations for dinner. Old men and women have to assimilate this monotonous routine of food, if they cannot eat it, they must leave it, no other food is provided. I have seen an inmate over 55 years of age leave her dinners untouched, and yet she was working hard

in the laundry from 7 a.m. until 4-30 p.m. Every week on stew day she went without dinner, and on potato pie day she would go without dinner because she could not assimilate this class of food. This person had to go without three dinners per week, although working hard for about nine hours per day in the laundry. I could see that the woman was slowly starving to death and working at the same time. It is a crying shame that a woman who earns at least decent food, shelter and clothing should be treated by the poor law regulations in this infamous manner and be described as a pauper. Of course, the Guardians, if they choose, could have appointed her assistant laundress, as she was a good, useful and experienced laundress, placed her on officer's rations, paid her a small salary, and allowed her reasonable liberty outside, but they hadn't "humanity" enough to do it.

I found an inmate attending to the laundry boiler—a man 61 years of age. He had been working 14 months, 12 hours a day, seven days per week, without a day off! He was compelled to do this or be sent to prison, or go outside and starve to death. While Liberal politicians were sobbing on platforms about the sufferings of the Chinese in South Africa, I found that a Liberal majority were allowing an inmate to undergo worse conditions than the Chinese. The Chinese can have twenty-four hours' leave; our attendant couldn't. The Chinese could leave at the end of five years; our stoker could go outside and starve. The Chinese receive wages; our stoker received nothing. His hours were from ten minutes to six in the morning, until twenty minutes past six at night—for a little extra food and tobacco!

I brought the case before the Board, and, instead of doing something to help the man they proceeded to vilify his character. I suggested that he should have 4s. per week wages, 4 ounces of tobacco, and reasonable liberty. The Board voted me down.

Deserted wives with no children, or one child, are generally forced into the house. They are compelled to store their furniture or break their homes up. This treatment of decent, respectable, deserted wives has broken many hearts. The following instance of the treatment of a deserted wife has come before my notice—A decent, respectable young woman, with two children, was deserted by her husband. She applied for relief, but she was forced to lock up her house and furniture and go into the house. I told her I would try and get her out at the next meeting of the Relief Committee. I informed the Committee that if they would allow her 5s. per week her brother-in-law would take her in and look after her. They voted my proposal down. She was put to work in the laundry, and in less than three weeks she died of a broken heart in the infirmary. The primary cause of her death was the brutality and neglect of her husband, and the secondary cause was the callousness and inhumanity of certain members of the Relief Committee. Table 2 dietary for women inmates is as follows:—Every morning in the week, breakfast 6 ounces of bread, 1 pint of tea or coffee; on five days in the week for tea they receive 6 ounces of bread 1 pint of tea and half an ounce of butter; on Tuesday they receive one pint of tea with 4 oz. of seed cake, minus butter, which is made of the following ingredients to each pound:—13 ounces of ordinary bread dough, 2 ounces sugar, 2 ounces dripping, one-fourth ounce caraway seeds. I have seen inmates over 80 years of age trying to make a meal out of a slice of seed cake three-fourths of an inch thick and a pint of tea! Truly a remarkable meal for an octogenarian in this great,

"Christian," Imperial country! On Friday they receive 6 ounces of plain cake, minus butter, and one pint of cocoa, so that 12 meals out of the 21 provided out per week are exactly the same—bread, butter and tea. And, if the inmates are rather short-sighted, they will fail to see the half-ounce of butter spread over a slice of bread from one inch to an inch and a-half thick; and if they haven't a very "sweet" tooth they will fail to realise that their tea is sweetened. Dinner—on Sundays and Thursdays—consists of 4 ounces of beef, 4 ounces of bread, and 8 ounces of potatoes and other vegetables; on Monday, of 12 ounces of suet pudding and one pint of broth; on Wednesday and Fridays, 14 ounces of meat pie; on Saturdays, 4 ounces of bread, one pint of meat stew.

Table 3 for men is slightly better, the allowance of butter being $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz.; a little extra food is given to some of the inmates who work hard.

The ingredients for making tea are, to 10 pints, 2-oz. tea, 5oz. sugar, $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints of milk. Cocoa, 10 pints, 5-oz. cocoa, 4-oz. sugar, 2 pints of milk. Porridge, to one gallon, 2-lbs. oatmeal, water and salt. Suet pudding, to a pound, 8-oz. flour, 2-oz. beef suet, water and salt. The weekly dietary for the officials is as follows:—Bread 7-lbs., flour 1-lb., meat 5-lbs., rice, sago, or arrowroot $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb, sugar 1-lb., tea 4-oz., coffee 4-oz., potatoes 7-lbs., butter 12-oz., milk 7 pints, cheese 8-oz., eggs 3, jam or dry fruit 4-oz., fish, vegetables, or fruit to the value of 6d., bacon, ham, or sausage 1-lb. The inmates in the infirmary are put on the same dietary as the ordinary inmates, with the exception that the doctor can order them extras, but most doctors are case-hardened to the sufferings of sick inmates, and with very few exceptions they are allowed very few delicacies. A few weeks ago I found one of our inmates, 84 years of age, who had been provided with a thick slice of seed cake with no butter on it for her previous day's tea. She had only eaten about two bites from it, and she was partaking of a slice of butter and bread, three-quarters of an inch thick on the day I saw her. This is not the kind of food which should be provided for poor old sick people over 80 years of age. The sick also are placed in long rooms containing from 16 to 18 patients, some of whom are suffering from consumption, and the continued coughing from these patients continually annoys the other inmates, and as patients are continually dying, and the others see a screen drawn around them when they are dying, and after they are dead they see them carried out, it must be a mournful and pitiable plight to be in to live under such circumstances. The mixing up of sick people suffering from different diseases in long rooms with rows of bedsteads on each side, is not conducive to the happiness and comfort of those whom sickness, misfortune, and our present industrial and poor law system has forced into the infirmary.

New workhouse infirmaries are being built in different parts of the country at great expense owing to our present infirmaries being over-crowded, and this over-crowding is being caused by the starvation amount of out-relief which is too small to supply the wherewithal to get the barest necessities if they continue to reside with their friends or relatives, and the result is that these friends and relatives find themselves unable to keep them when they are sick and require good nourishment, and they are sent into the workhouse. The able-bodied

inmates (males) after they have finished their work generally sit in a little room in the evenings, with hard wooden seats. No papers are provided, except some given by outsiders as charity. They can play no games such as dominoes or draughts. There is no table in the room where they sit after tea, and how they get the time over passes my comprehension. The old men who are past work have a sitting-room where they try to kill time all through the day. There is a small recreation ground about 70 yards square, with walls round it over 8ft. high to block out the grand views which surround our workhouse. This is part of the punishment for living on the earth too long.

One old man, 77 years of age, told me recently that he was slowly being murdered by the workhouse dietary, which he could not assimilate. I have seen him slowly failing for the want of suitable food which the workhouse master had no power to give him. He told me that he had seen many fellow inmates slowly starve to death because they could not eat the workhouse food. This old man was transferred to the infirmary, where he was still receiving the ordinary workhouse food. The inmates are shaved by contract at 4½d. per dozen for shaving, and 6d per dozen for haircutting. One of the inmates some time ago sent me a letter in which he stated that the man who had the contract was in the habit of sending an apprentice to practice on the inmates, to get his experience for regular customers. This youth was in the habit of either dragging their whiskers out with a blunt razor or chipping a piece off their chins. If the inmate protested he received abusive language. I went up to the workhouse one morning to see the process, and I found a chair was used without any back upon which to rest the neck. They were lathered by an inmate who had hands like emery paper, and he received 3d. per week from the barber who had the contract. The inmate started his lathering operations from a given centre.—The man's mouth, he then went round the side of his face and round his chin. If he required shaving on his top lip two-thirds of the lather was forced up his nose during the process of lathering his top lip, the "emery paper hands" were applied, and then with no back rest for his head he could choose the lesser of two evils, being "chipped" or the hair being "shaved" off by the roots. When I brought this before the Board some of the members said that for 20 years there had never been a complaint, and when I ventured to suggest when the contract came up for renewal, that the next tender at an increased price should be accepted, I was ruthlessly voted down, and remember, reader, when your turn comes round to be shaved at 4½d. per dozen that this is your reward in an "Imperial" country for placing your faith on the Tory "codlin" and the Liberal "muglin." Remember when you vote that you are voting for the Tory "Mr. Mug 'em," free beer, and the "Bastile" in your old age, or for the Liberal "Mr. Cod 'em," 4½d. per dozen shaves and slices of bread from 1 to 1½ inches thick. Some of the old men have never been outside the house for over three years. The master has power to allow them a day's or a few days leave, but many of them have no friends to go to, but they would like to walk round the beautiful country which surrounds our workhouse during the day-time between meals, but they are denied the opportunity, they are "locked up."

The inmates get up at 5-45 in summer, young, old and

middle-aged, and 6-15 in winter, and the octogenarian is not allowed to have a lay down at any part of the day. There they have to sit thinking, thinking, thinking their declining years one long lingering monotonous existence. If a friend or relative comes to see them, they are only allowed to see them in the porter's lodge with an official present. Only bars are required and then it would resemble an interview in prison with warders present.

In the North Bierley Workhouse the cost of providing food, clothing and boots, etc. for about 336 inmates is £5,000 per annum or £100 per week, or slightly more than the pension (£80 per week) paid to the late Speaker of the House of Commons. The salaries of 20 indoor officials is £988 4s. od. per year, £19 per week Rations for officials, £500 per year, £10 per week, or 9s. 7½d. per head per week. The average cost of officialism is £1 6s. 8½d. per official per week. The salaries paid range from £10 per year with rations, for Probational Nurses, to £110 per year for Medical Officer. The proportion of other Poor Law expenses for indoor poor, such as legal expenses, interest and repayment of loans, renewals of furniture and property, repairs, collection of Poor Rates, etc., amounts to £2,378. The total annual cost of providing for 336 inmates is £0,804 4s. od. of which 52½ per cent. goes in officialism, etc., or about 6½d. out of every shilling; and 47½ per cent. to provide necessaries for the inmates, such as boots, clothing, food, gas, soap, coal, bedding, etc. Altogether, it costs 11s. 2d. per head per week for each inmate, 5s 2d for necessaries and 6s. per head for officialism, etc., and our Workhouse is one of the most economically managed Workhouses in the United Kingdom.

In the imbecile ward are about 50 or 60 imbecile patients and epileptic fit cases. These poor people receive the same treatment as the ordinary inmates, with the exception that they have a white table cloth extra, and they are taken out for exercise now and again by the attendants. I was told when I first became a Guardian that I should get "hardened," and that I should find out that the inmates were there from their own fault. But I have found a large number of the decenterest and most respectable persons in our workhouse that I have ever known. It is a lie to say that they are there from their own fault. They are the "cast offs," "worn outs," and products of our competitive, beggar-my-neighbour system. If the treatment of the aged poor at the present time is right, then Christianity is a lie, a sham, a mockery and a fraud. If this treatment of the aged poor is to be allowed to go on, then churches, chapels, and other so-called religious buildings should be demolished, and "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you" should be blotted out of the British language. If this brutality to our fellow creatures is in accordance with Justice and Truth, then present-day Christianity requires exposing as a gigantic swindle, imposture and hideous hypocrisy. It is an amazing thing to me that Liberal and Tory Christian Guardians, who claim to have the "Love of Christ" and the "Grace of God" in their hearts, can practise such cruelties on their poor fellow creatures, and it is the duty of all truly religious men and women who stand for the greatest and oldest religion the world has ever known, namely, "Humanism," to come out from amongst the so-called Christians in order to

fight earnestly and strenuously to abolish our present monstrous system of torturing and starving our aged poor. If millions of pounds can be spent in providing pensions for the sons of the classes, who have every opportunity, millions of pounds can and shall be spent every year to provide old age pensions for the masses.

How the Guardians find work for the Unemployed. Seven days Hard Labour in a workhouse "Lock-Up" for being out of work.

I have known for years that it has been a crime in Christian England to be hungry, in other words if you are found without visible means of subsistence you are sent to prison, but I never until recently realised that it was a crime to be out of work. One of the most terrible things in this country is to see an honest working man with a starving wife and little children, who is denied the right to work. The only public authority that a man can apply to for help when starving as a result of unemployment is the Board of Guardians.

Every man ought to have an opportunity to keep his wife and family in respectability and comfort, but Liberal and Tory politicians have utterly failed to devise some practical scheme whereby honest work can be provided at least temporarily until such times as he can get work elsewhere. Every Board of Guardians in the United Kingdom ought, during the last 70 years, to have been growing all the fruit and vegetables used by the officials and inmates of workhouses, by unemployed workmen on farms. Guardians have always had power to do this, but instead of doing this, when a starving unemployed workman applies for relief from the Guardians, he is offered test-work, which generally consists of breaking stones, grinding corn, or sawing "sleepers." Test-work is looked upon as degrading work, and the payment is on a starvation basis, half in money and half in kind, such as flour. The man is disfranchised, and if he is kept on test-work for some time he gradually gets lower in the social scale. No man has ever learnt anything, or been lifted higher up, or provided with any better opportunity in life by test labour. In many country Unions (including North Bierley) there is no test work provided for unemployed workmen, in fact there is nothing provided except that when he applies for relief he is offered the House. The following instances will show how the practical Liberals and Tories deal with the unemployed workman who applies for relief:—(1) Woolcomber out of work four months, wife and family had to go into the workhouse, the Bradford Guardians summoned the husband for failing to maintain his family. The wife would cost the ratepayers about 9s. per week to keep in the workhouse, and the children not less than 5s. per week, total for maintenance 36s., and if the husband was sent to prison he would cost the citizens 15s. per week, thus the family would cost 54s. per week to keep out of public money, instead of work being provided for him so that he could keep his wife and children himself, and he informed me that if he could get some work at 18s. per week he would take his family out of the workhouse and keep them. (2) An able-bodied workman out of work four months, wife and two children, no workers or income, they were starving, so wife applied for relief. The relieving officer told her that he would send her some relief the next morning (Sat.) if her husband went into the workhouse (distant 7½ miles). The wife said she must have some food for her children,

so he made her an order for her husband to go into the workhouse. Next day the relieving officer sent her an order for 4s. 6d. worth of groceries to keep four persons for a week, the husband tramped over 7 miles on the Friday evening, and over 7 miles back again on the Saturday morning, and as he was unable to secure employment he repeated this process for three week ends. On the fourth Friday, the failure of the husband to secure work caused the wife to again apply for relief, the relieving officer realising that the week end incarceration in the workhouse was not forcing the family to quietly starve before apply for relief, informed the wife that if he gave any relief that week the husband would have to go into the workhouse and he would not be allowed out for seven days. The wife having to decide between starvation and the terms of the relieving officer, accepted the least of the two evils. He was employed repairing one of the roads which leads to the workhouse. The master was instructed not to allow him out without seven days' notice, in other words he received eight days "hard labour" in a modern "Bastile" for being out of work, because he was not liberated until the following Saturday. During the time he was in the workhouse the Bradford Corporation started a big job, laying electric cables, and as he knew several of the foremen he told me that he missed getting a job on these extensions. The governing classes have not only devised a system which degrades and takes away an unemployed workman's rights as a citizen, a system which gives starving men no assistance, but in this case it actually prevented this man from getting employment.

If all unemployed working men had the pluck to do what this man did, the whole Poor Law machinery would be smashed to pieces, and the "classes," owing to the poor rates being twenty shillings in the pound, would chase the unemployed masses in order to provide them with decent, honest work. (3). A most remarkable case, which shows the utter incapacity of our present Liberal and Tory governors and law makers, and the scandalous waste of public money which is provided for the maintenance of the aged poor. It also proves how expensive and useless our present system is for dealing with starving able-bodied workmen. A young man about 20 years of age came from London to work in Leeds. After two or three weeks' trial, his employers turned him away as not being a suitable workman. He tramped to a small village in our union called Farsley, where he found himself "stranded," hungry and destitute. He knew if he begged (if it became known he were hungry) and if he slept out he would be sent to prison, so he decided to apply to the nearest relieving-officer for relief. He was offered an order for the workhouse. Having to decide between perishing of hunger and going into the "Bastile," he chose the latter. We kept him in our workhouse for four weeks, at a cost of 11/2 per week, and the Guardians decided—as he was not chargeable to our union—that he should be transferred to the Shoreditch Union, London, in which district he was born. The Guardians thought he might get lost on the way, so they deputed one of our relieving-officers to go with him, in order to take care of him, the ratepayers of our union paying all expenses. The relieving-officer could not find time to take him until the Saturday afternoon, and he spent the week-end in London at a cost of 2s. 3d. hotel expenses, all at our ratepayers' expense. These two able-bodied men had a cab to the station (trams were not considered

good enough), and the total cost of the little trip was as follows:— Railway and cab fares, £2 11s. 4d.; hotel expenses, £1 2s. 3d.; four weeks' keep in our workhouse, at 11s. 2d. per week, £2 4s. 8d.; total £5 18s. 3d.; and the ratepayers of Shoreditch kindly took his maintenance off our hands after his safe arrival there. All this absurd expense and trouble instead of providing him with some useful work, and allowing him to maintain himself. (4). A single young man, about forty-five years of age. He had worked for one firm for a large number of years, wages 14s. per week. He was discharged owing to the firm shutting down for want of orders. He tried hard to get employment, but failed. He came to me with tears in his eyes, to see if I could do anything for him. He was willing to do anything, and anxious to keep his poor old mother in comfort. I did all I could to get him employment, but failed. After being out of work about two months he was compelled to apply for relief. The Guardians allowed his mother 4s. per week out-relief, and offered him the house. "There's something rotten in the state of Denmark," when a sober, industrious man is denied the right and opportunity to work to keep his poor old mother. When a mother and son are compelled to break up their home, and starve on 4s. per week out-relief.

The only real solution of the Unemployed problem is the complete re-organisation of industry on a collective basis, but pending the realisation of this ideal State, we want old age pensions, 8 hours on railways, an eight-hour day for Government and municipal employees, afforestation, the reclamation of foreshores and waste lands, and the provision of land and labour colonies. The provision of degrading work, called test-work, and the incarceration of able-bodied workers in the workhouse, is unworthy of any Party which pretends to govern a great Empire.

In Denmark a scheme has been working since 1891, and applies to all persons over sixty who are Danish subjects, and who have what we may roughly call a good record.

The amount of the pension varies for town and country. It is determined by the circumstances of the pensioner and the number of his dependents. A wife over sixty becomes "a pensioner." A young wife with children is "a dependent," and receives aid through her husband.

Originally all the pensions were paid out of the rates, but latterly the Imperial Exchequer has contributed one half the necessary sums. The average pensions paid are £10 a year for a man, £7 10s. for a woman and £15 a year for a married couple. These figures apply to the cities of Copenhagen and Fredericksburg. In the rural districts the amounts are considerably lower.

Germany is also far ahead of old Great Britain. The object of the law is "to bring concurrently together the help of the State, the help of the employer, and the help of the workman himself." In fact "the pension fund is created by compulsory contributions, a compulsory contribution is only a tax in another form. I do not approve of the German scheme, which is hampered by false notions of inspiring thrift. The best that can be said of it is that it places the pensioner in a better position than a pauper.

Belgium works along the modest lines of a kind of friendly Society guaranteed by the State, and it is not easy to see how this is better than our own great system of "friendlies." The remark applies also to France. Austria is famous for her almshouses, many of them extremely ancient, and these represent what a workhouse ought to be.

No stigma attaches to the inmates, as may be gathered from the following description.

The home for the aged, called the Spitalgnasse, is situated in the city of Vienna, and is large enough to accommodate over sixteen hundred persons. It stands in a beautiful garden and the various wings of the building are divided into a number of airy rooms, all opening into a long corridor and in each room are a number of beds the smaller rooms containing ten and the larger ones twenty beds. There is considerable freedom given to the old people; they may furnish their rooms with their own furniture, and there is in consequence a home-like aspect to rooms which differentiates them strikingly from the ordinary Asylum or Workhouse. Flowers and birds are much in evidence during the warmer months of the year, but the latter may be banished if their singing annoys the inmates who are not owners of the birds. This is practically the only interference with the liberty of the old folks there is. The corridors are light and pleasant, are furnished with couches and seats, and are well warmed in winter. They form a sort of common room, where the men smoke and gossip and the women bring their knitting and their needlework. Women, whether married or unmarried, have, or may have, separate rooms of their own, but there is no enforced separation of married couples.

In New Zealand, a municipal pension of £18 is provided for all respectable persons reaching the age of 65. The scheme, subject to limitation, is as follows:—

The pensioner must have been a resident in New Zealand for 25 continuous years, and must show that he does not possess or receive as wages an income of more than £34 a year, and does not own property of a higher value than £50. For every £1 of income above £34, and for every £15 of property above £15 a deduction is made of £1 from the pension, and anyone who has an income of £1 a week, or has property to the value of £320 cannot claim a pension at all. All applicants must appear before the district magistrate to have their claims tested, and a magistrate's certificate that the conditions have been fulfilled is necessary before any pension can be claimed. Should any pensioner become addicted to intemperance or other misconduct, or try to borrow money on his pension or assign it to a creditor, he is liable to forfeit all claim to it, or it may, under special conditions, be assigned to the pensioner's husband or wife.

A Bill is now before the New Zealand Parliament to increase the pensions to 10/- per week.

I cannot see a single good point about our workhouse and out-relief system. The only good feature of our poor law system is the provision of scattered homes for children. Blind persons should be provided with adequate pensions to provide everything to make their lives happy and comfortable. If they have no one to look after them, cottage homes should be provided, each home should have about six inmates with a kind humane nurse, they should be provided with good food and clothing, and the greatest kindness and compassion should be bestowed upon them, and they should have as much liberty as possible, as it is the duty of the community to look after those who cannot look after themselves. All workhouse infirmaries should be transformed into municipal infirmaries without any stigma or degradation of pauperism. Old-age pensions of at least 7/6 per week should be provided for all aged workers over 55 years of age. If this was done there would be no need to extend infirmaries or workhouses.

Cottage homes with adequate pensions should be provided for the infirm poor who have no one to look after them, and nurses should be appointed to make them comfortable. The Boards of Guardians and poor rates should be abolished, and the care of the aged, the infirm, the sick, and the blind, should be taken over by the municipality, the cost to be placed upon National funds. The revenue for this purpose should be raised by a graduated income tax. Last year (1904) income tax was paid on £900,000,000, the highest amount on which the tax has been paid in any one year.

The provision of the money to make provision for destitution, sickness, and old age pensions, should be placed upon the unearned increment of the rich. The money can always be found to pay for wars in the interests of British and Jewish land and gold-mine grabbers in foreign countries. In order to provide cheap Chinese labour in South Africa, the people paid over £75,000,000 in extra taxation in three years, from 1900 to 1903, made up as follows;—Tea, 2d. per lb., £6,014,000; tobacco, 4d. per pound, £3,967,000; spirits, 6d. per gallon, £644,000; sugar, 4s. 2d. per cwt., £10,876,000; coal, 1s. per ton exported, £3,304,000; corn and flour, 3d. and 5d. per cwt., £2,347,000; beer, 1s. per barrel, £5,324,000; spirits, 6d. per gallon, £2,636,000; income tax, 4d. in 1900-1, 6d. in 1901-2, and 7d. in 1902-3, £39,884,000; glucose, £154,080. Total, £75,150,000, or over £25,000,000 increase per year in taxation to pay for a war in the interests of capitalism.

The income upon which income tax is paid has increased from £317,000,000 in 1855-6, to over £900,000,000 in 1904. A large part of this income is unearned. Those who receive it organise no labour or do any useful work, and this is the source from which we should extract the "honey"—from the idle drones—in extra taxation in order to make decent provision for the maimed and aged "bees" of industry. If we can raise extra taxation to be used in the interests of capitalism, the money can be raised to be used in the interests of Labourism too. The following scale will show how £34,000,000 extra taxation could be raised every year by a graduated system of taxation.

ESTIMATED EFFECT OF GRADUATED SCALE AS HEREUNDER.

Schedules D and E.—Assessments per £.

Exceeding £200, not exceeding £300,	£46,829,975	at 1%	£465,380
" 300	26,986,554	" 2 "	539,731
" 400	18,978,835	" 3 "	569,365
" 500	11,735,515	" 4 "	469,420
" 600	8,021,179	" 5 "	401,059
" 700	8,183,745	" 6 "	491,025
" 800	4,959,444	" 7 "	347,161
" 900	8,058,517	" 8 "	644,681
" 1000	30,908,289	" 9 "	2,781,746
" 2000	17,335,249	" 10 "	1,733,525
" 3000	12,585,312	" 11 "	1,384,384
" 4000	11,149,128	" 12 "	1,337,895
" 5000	35,102,638	" 13 "	4,563,343
" 10000	85,953,403	" 14 "	12,033,476
" 50000 and over,	158,184,088	" 15 "	23,727,613
Unclassed incomes (estimat. at £400)	21,185,483	" "	423,710
Total	£506,157,354		£51,913,514

Schedules A., B., and C.

Assuming the ratio of Assessment under these Schedules to be the same as under Schedules D and E, then the proceeds under these Schedules would be:—

Incomes Assessed to Schedules D & E.	Estimated amt. which would be produced by above scale.	Incomes Assess. to Schedules A., B. & C.	
£566,883,069	£51,913,434	£300,110,384	: £27,483,200
Estim. Prod. under suggested Scale,	Schedules D. and E.	£51,913,434	£51,913,434
"	"	"	A., B. and C. 27,396,634
Total Estimated Yield under suggested Scale,			£79,396,634
Less—Estimated Deductions from Gross,			9,114,795
			£70,281,839
Prod. of Actual Tax laid for 1901-2, at 1s. 2d. in the £			- 35,440,470
			£34,841,369

By the adoption of this scheme no person who paid the increased tax would suffer any loss either of food, clothing, or any of the other necessaries of life, and the raising of the money would confer untold blessings upon the aged poor of the United Kingdom. This reform cannot be brought about by sending Liberal and Tory income tax payers to Parliament.

The Infamous Treatment of Vagrants, bona-fide Workmen, or Tramps.

For years the vagrants in our casual ward have been receiving less than the Government Regulation of Food. The tramps, etc., in our casual ward received worse food than criminals in prison. When an "Out-of-Work" applies for admittance to our casual ward he is asked the following questions: "Name," "Where he has come from," "Where he is going," "Has he ever worked." His hands are examined, he is searched, his pockets are emptied, he then has a bath, and he partakes of his supper, bread and water, ozone and scripture texts: he can have as much water and ozone (fresh air) as he likes, but the bread is measured, he sleeps on a wire bed, 25 inches wide (he has to be careful in turning or he will fall out), his cell is 55 inches wide. He rises next morning at 6 a.m., when he has bread and water again; he then has to pick oakum until noon (a degrading task). Oakum is old, thick, hard strips of tar rope which they have to pick with their fingers into threads. If they are not put to oakum picking they saw thick railway sleepers, or grind corn. They have bread, water, and cheese for dinner, then oakum picking etc., until tea time, and then bread and water, and bed at 5 o'clock in the afternoon; bread and water next morning, and then they are liberated. In prison, criminals have for breakfast, 8 oz. of bread and tea; for tea, 8 oz. of bread and tea or cocoa; for dinner, 3 days a week, potatoes or kidney beans, 3 oz. meat and 6 oz. of bread; and on the other 3 days, soup and 6 oz. of bread. Can the public wonder that homeless, workless men steal when they can get better treatment in gaol than they can from Guardians. There isn't a single member of a Board of Guardians who treats his dog like the inmates of casual

wards, the cast-off machinery of Capitalism. I intend to move a resolution in favour of abolishing oakum picking, and that the casuals be placed on some of our land to produce potatoes and other vegetables, butter, eggs, etc., for the inmates, which are now purchased by contract. Recently gruel has been added to the vagrants' diet.

The master has been empowered to allow bonâ-fide workers out early in the morning instead of detaining them two nights. The treatment of the tramps, casuals, and unemployed workmen is callous, cold-hearted, and cruel, if I had a dog and I had to choose between drowning it and handing it over to the care of a modern Board of Guardians I should drown the dog.

How the Poor Law Officials fare. A Contrast. How money provided for the needs of the Poor is squandered.

While we are told how Old-Age Pensions would demoralise the workers, and we see how the "classes" provide such abominable means of dealing with the poor, it is interesting to note what the classes have done for the officials. I hope my readers will note the generous dietary which is provided for the officials, the details of which I have given in a previous chapter. The official, after being provided with a good salary on which he has ample opportunity to practice thrift, is also provided with superannuation, true, he has to pay a small amount (3 per cent.) out of his salary towards it, but it is very small compared with the amount he receives in his old age. If a relieving officer has £100 per year, he pays 1s. 1½d. per week towards his superannuation, and his pension is one-sixtieth of his salary for each year of his service, so if an official retires who has one hundred pounds per annum after 30 years service, he pays £90 towards his pension, which amounts to £50 per year, so that he receives back again all he has paid within the first two years. The following example will show how carefully the interests of the official has been protected.

Dr. Joseph Jackson, the Medical Officer to our workhouse, resigned his appointment at the end of 1904, after thirty-nine years and eight months' Poor-law service. His salary as Workhouse Medical Officer was £110 per annum, and he was also District Medical Officer for Clayton, at £20 per annum. In addition, he received emoluments in the shape of extra payment for vaccination (6s. 8d. per case), for certifying lunacy cases (21s. per case), examining boarded-out children each year (2s. 6d. per case), maternity cases (10s. 6d. and 21s. per case); also extra medical fees for medical operations, &c. And on the top of this he was allowed to practice privately. So that it could be said with truth that he had an income sufficient to practice thrift upon. But I found that he was entitled to a pension of £104 3s. 5d. per year for life, towards which he had paid £39 18s. 3d. into a superannuation fund.

His case is typical of thousands of others, where men with good salaries are provided with good pensions; and this only shows that we have had class legislation. The reason why these persons are provided for is because the professional classes have always been well represented in Parliament, and they look after their class interests. We advocate that the masses should unite and send men from their own ranks, to see that public money is used to provide old-age pensions for the aged veterans of their class.

When I suggest a shilling or two more in outdoor relief, I am told that a large number of ratepayers are very poor, and great care must be taken of their money. But here is a medical man who has averaged £5 or £6 per week for years (including extras). He has had a private practice; he has had probably ten times more income to practice thrift on than the working classes. And now every quarter a cheque is sent to him for £26 os. 10d., and the poor ratepayer, already quoted, will have to find the money. He has to pay rates to provide these pensions for officials, but when he requires help in his old age he is treated in the infamous manner that I have previously pointed out—£2 per week pension for a professional man, who has probably averaged £10 or £12 per week income (including private practice), and 3s. or 4s. per week for the wage-earner, who will have averaged a pound to thirty shilling per week, and in many instances less. This should be a remarkable object-lesson to the masses: Pensions for the Classes—Parish Relief for the Masses!

How long, how long will you stand it, when salvation is in your own hands? You receive this treatment because you send rich Liberals and Tories (who do not require pensions) to look after your interests. You must "strike" in the ballot-box, and "lock out" the crowd who have been doing their best for you (so they say), with the result that every other person you meet (if he is a worker) will, if he commits the crime of living to the age of sixty-five, become a pauper.

The late clerk to the Bradford Guardians and Assessment Committee, Mr. T. Crowther, was appointed in 1891 at a salary of £650 per year, with large offices provided free of expense. He also had the office of registrar of marriages, births, and deaths; this also brought him a good income. Early in October, 1894, he found he was overworked, so he applied for an assistant, and his son was appointed to help him at a salary of £75 per year. Soon his salary was increased to £120 per year. Soon afterwards the father applies for an increase of salary and he is granted an increase of £75 per annum, and at the commencement of 1904 the father retires on a pension of £600 per year, or £12 per week, and his son is appointed to his well-paid job.

The Rev. H. C. Price, Rector of Wormshill, formerly the Chaplain of the Hollingbourn Workhouse a position he had held for fifteen years at a salary of £100 per year, now draws a pension of £25 per year, or 10/- per week, and he will still draw his stipend as a parson. Many poor law officials are greatly overpaid. The surveyor and valuer to the Bradford Guardians has £600 per year, out of which he pays his clerks; architect, £400; superintendent relieving officer, £220; relieving officers, £160; nearly £500 is paid to parish doctors and other emoluments. The Workhouse medical officers and dispenser receive nearly £800; chaplain, £50; Roman Catholic religious instructor, £40; Nonconformist religious instructor, £40 (I do not know how they can cheek to talk about Christianity to the inmates). The salaries to officials have increased as follows during the last twenty years:—Bradford: 1885, £4,005; 1904, £12,174; Skipton: 1885, £1,118; 1904, £1,404; Wharfedale: 1885, £639; 1904, £1,096; Keighley: 1885, £1,136; North Bierley, 1885, £1,889; 1904, £2,719. So that the Bradford salaries bill is £214 per week and the North Bierley salaries bill is £54 per week.

The cost of the officials' rations per head is as follows:—

Barnsley Union 9s. 6d., Huddersfield 9s. 2d., Ecclesal Burlow 14s. 3d., Sheffield 10s. 1d., Rotherham 11s. 2d., or an average of 10s. 10d. per head for food alone. The average per head for boots, clothing, food, rent and all the necessaries for a worker's family is 4s. per head per week. The following facts will give some idea of the pickings or extras which officials secure in addition to their salaries.

• Lunacy Cases.—Relieving officers, for giving information, each case, 2s. 6d. Medical officers, for calling and certifying a case of lunacy, each case, 21s. (It is a wonder they don't send many more to the asylum, but they have to leave some out to pay the expenses). Expenses of taking patients to Menston Asylum for relieving officers, assistant, and cabman, 7s. 6d. A dinner is ordered on the way, which costs 5s. 6d. for the three, or 1s. 10d. per head. I asked one of the relieving officers if he thought it right to spend 1s. 10d. of the ratepayers' money upon a dinner, and then recommend the Guardians to allow 2s. 6d. to poor widows or old men to provide twenty-one meals a week, pay rent, insurance, and provide boots and clothing

One relieving officer attended at the Police Court on seventeen occasions to prosecute husbands who had deserted their wives. He received 2s. 6d. for each attendance. He called to interview a lawyer on two occasions on Poor-law business. He charged the ratepayers 2s. 6d. for each consultation. He calls on the Magistrates' Clerk on three occasions; he charges 2s. 6d. for each call. Another relieving officer goes on Poor-law business three miles from his own district; he charges 3s. rail fare and refreshments (the rail fare is 6d.). Another relieving officer visits our Workhouse in the morning, for which he charges 2s. 10d. rail fare and expenses (the rail fare is 10d.). In the afternoon he visits Leeds, for which he charges 3s. 6d. expenses (the rail fare is 6d.), making 5s. for the day for refreshments. All these extras are in addition to their salaries, which range from £1 19s. to £2 15s. per week, and they are paid for sickness and all holidays. I protested on three occasions against these expenses and emoluments, and at the meeting of the Board held on August 24th I moved the whole question back again to the Finance Committee, but I was voted down by 13 votes to 11.

• If you are satisfied with the treatment of the aged which belong to your class you will go voting for "Tweedledee" and "Tweedledee." If you hate the Poor Law system, you will help to send honest, bold, fearless men to Parliament, who will be absolutely independent of the two old Parties who have misled the workers so long—men who will solemnly pledge themselves to annihilate such a monstrous state of affairs.

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