

REPORT
OF THE
DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD FOR IRELAND

TO INQUIRE INTO THE
HOUSING CONDITIONS

OF THE
WORKING CLASSES IN THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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T. FISHER UNWIN, LONDON, W.C.

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DUBLIN HOUSING INQUIRY.

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DUBLIN HOUSING INQUIRY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, DUBLIN,

7th February, 1914.

GENTLEMEN,

(1) We have the honour to report that in accordance with your instructions contained in a letter to us of the 3rd November, 1913, we have made inquiries into the housing conditions of the working classes in Dublin, under the following heads:—

- I. How far the existing accommodation for the housing of the working classes is inadequate in view of the ordinary requirements of the working classes in the city ;
- II. The general circumstances of the working classes in Dublin with special reference to the amount of rent they can reasonably be expected to pay for suitable accommodation ;
- III. To what extent it is possible by the exercise of the powers granted by the existing law to remedy the housing conditions of the working classes in the City ;
- IV. The finance of housing schemes which have been carried out by the Municipal authorities or other agencies for the city workers, and the class of accommodation provided by such schemes ;
- V. What measures (including any legislative amendments) you would suggest for dealing with the housing problem in the City and the probable cost of any of the schemes so suggested.

(2) In order to carry into effect your special direction that ample opportunity should be afforded to all persons of putting forward their views, we held a public Inquiry at which we took evidence on oath from members and officials of the Corporation, as well as from a large number of the general public. The Inquiry extended over seventeen days, and we examined 76 witnesses. We submit the Minutes of Evidence together with this Report.

We have also informed ourselves of the conditions and circumstances of the labouring classes, by personal inspection of a large number of tenement and other dwellings inhabited by them, and during this inspection we have satisfied ourselves in a general manner as regards the accuracy of the maps and returns submitted at the Inquiry by the Corporation.

We think it best in this report to deal with the matters referred to us in the specific terms set out in your letter, and while we bear in mind your wish that we should deal with the housing conditions generally in Irish towns, the first part of our report will relate entirely to the City of Dublin.

HEADS I. AND II.

How far the existing accommodation for the housing of the working classes is inadequate in view of the ordinary requirements of the working classes in the city ;

The general circumstances of the working classes in Dublin with special reference to the amount of rent they can reasonably be expected to pay for suitable accommodation ;

(3) To consider these matters we found it desirable as a first step to ascertain, as accurately as possible, the number of the labouring classes and their dependents in the City, and, with a view to obtaining this information, we invited the various Trades Unions and Labour Organisations in the City to give evidence on this and other points, and we also sent them a list of queries which, if answered, would have given a fairly accurate history of the conditions under which the working classes live.

We regret to say that the response to our invitations was somewhat limited.

We have, however, abstracted from the Census Returns the numbers of workers, with their dependents, following the various trades and occupations as set out in Table 71 of the General Census of Ireland, 1911. The information obtained from these returns is set out in the Appendix, and the Registrar-General informs us that he thinks

that the Return gives a tolerably accurate idea of the numbers of the working class population and their dependents in the City. The total ascertained in this manner excluding domestic servants, is 194,250, and, in further confirmation of this figure, we would point out that the population occupying accommodation consisting of not more than four rooms in the City of Dublin (abstracted from page xiv. of Vol. 8 of the Census of England and Wales, 1911) is 194,870. The total population in the City of Dublin at the time the Census of 1911 was taken was 304,802, and the figures we have abstracted would show that about 63 per cent. of the whole population belong to the working classes. We have now to show how these are housed.

(4) It would appear from the evidence given before us, and the statements submitted to us, that the following Companies and Societies have provided housing accommodation for the working classes in the City :—

| | Dwellings. | Population. |
|---|------------|------------------|
| Artizans' Dwellings Co. | 3,081 | 13,938 |
| Iveagh Trust (not including Iveagh House) | 586 | 2,026 |
| Iveagh House | 1 | 450 (average) |
| Association for housing of Very Poor ... | 157 | 810 |
| Industrial Tenements Co. | 50 | 250 |
| City and Suburban Workmen's Dwellings Co. | 288 | 1,645 |
| G. S. & W. Railway | 149 | 870 (estimated) |
| Midland Great Western Railway | 83 | 400 |
| A. Guinness & Co. | 87 | 450 |
| Watkins & Co. | 87 | 400 |
| Dublin United Tramways Co. | 165 | 800 (estimated) |
| Messrs. Pile | 90 | 500 |
| Mr. Patterson | 36 | 180 |
| Vance's Buildings | 180 | 780 |
| Earl of Meath | 93 | 450 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 5,133 | 23,949 |
| Alexandra Guild | 60 | 240 |
| Social Service Tenements Co. | 77 | 272 |
| Corporation—(includes 8 labourers cottages at Donnycarney). | 1,385 | 7,500 |
| Lodging House, Benburb Street | 1 | 100 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 6,656 | 32,061 Estimated |

(5) We have thus accounted for the housing of 32,061 of the working classes and of the balance (162,000) we have evidence from the Corporation through the Chief Superintendent of the Sanitary Staff, Mr. Travers, who, at our request, undertook, with his staff, to make an actual survey of the City, that 25,822 families consisting of 87,305 persons are living in 5,322 tenement houses, this latter figure representing the number of tenement houses in the City. The same Department of the Corporation also gave evidence that 2,257 families, consisting of 9,812 persons were living in 2,413 second and third class small houses. In regard to the number of persons ascertained to be living in both tenement houses and the second and third class small houses, it was pointed out to us by Mr. Travers that this number would show an average of only 3.4 persons per family. The Census Returns for 1911 state that the average per family in Dublin is 4.6 persons for all classes in the City, and having regard to the fact that we are dealing with the working classes who, as a rule, have large families, and that our figure, 194,250, which is the number to be accounted for, is taken from the Census Returns, we think it would not be unfair to adopt the Census average of 4.6 and to assume that the figures returned by the Sanitary Officers have been somewhat understated to them. If we do this, we find that the population of the tenement houses would be about 118,000, and the population of the 2,413 second and third class houses would be about 10,000, accounting for 128,000 of the working class. This figure together with the 32,000 inhabitants accounted for in dwellings provided by Companies and Corporations gives a total of 160,000 and the balance of the working classes may, we think, be fairly assumed to occupy first class small house accommodation, as to which we did not seek information, or to be accommodated in some of the public institutions of the City.

We are, however, primarily concerned with the occupants of the tenement houses and the second and third class houses. From the foregoing it will be seen that even if the figures given by the Sanitary Staff are adopted about 45 per cent. of the working population in Dublin live in tenement houses, and 50 per cent. either in tenement houses or second and third class small houses. It is perhaps well that we should here explain the term "tenement house" as used in Dublin.

(6) The tenement houses of the present day are for the most part houses that were originally built to accommodate and provide for one family, and as a rule they face a thoroughfare of the City, though some are to be found in Courts and Alleys. The tenement houses as a whole are exceedingly old structures, and are more or less in an advanced state of decay.

Mr. Travers' evidence would indicate that the tenement house system was in existence in the year 1840. He stated that there were in that year 353 tenement houses in the City, and that at the time of the famine there were 1,682. By 1850 the number had increased to 5,995, some of which are still in use as tenement houses.

The evidence given before the Royal Commission, 1880, would show that by that time the number had still further increased, as it was then stated that there were 9,760 such houses.

(7) The tenement house system is due to many causes which we are not called upon to analyse, but the result is that houses which were built to accommodate one family have been taken over by landlords who farm them out, without in any way making them suitable for the purpose, in one, two, or three roomed dwellings. We had evidence given before us that showed that there are sometimes five owners interested in one tenement house. These tenement houses are to be found all over the City, and quite close to the most fashionable parts, but some areas such as Railway Street, Corporation Street, Cumberland Street, Francis Street, The Coombe, Chamber Street, Cork Street, portion of Gardiner Street, Dominick Street, and many others, may be said to be entirely devoted to them.

(8) The Sanitary Staff of the Corporation have submitted Returns dividing tenement houses into three classes:—

- (a) "Houses which appear to be structurally sound; they may not be in good repair, but are capable of being put in good repair, called first class."
- (b) "Houses which are so decayed or so badly constructed as to be on or fast approaching the border-line of being unfit for human habitation, called second class."
- (c) "Houses unfit for human habitation and incapable of being rendered fit for human habitation called third class."

The Corporation Returns will be found in the Appendix, and an examination of them discloses that there are 1,516 tenements of class (a) found to be occupied by 8,295 families and by 27,052 persons; 2,288 of class (b) found to be occupied by 10,696 families and 37,552 persons and 1,518 of class (c) found to be occupied by 6,831 families and 22,701 persons. Of the 25,822 families living in tenement houses, the figures supplied would show that 20,108 live in one room, and we might point out that this figure very nearly approaches the corresponding figure given in the Census Return of 1911 for the whole City, viz., 21,113 families.

(9) The 5,322 tenement houses in the City contain 35,227 rooms, and 4,331 cellars or kitchens, and of the rooms, 32,851 are occupied and 1,560 of the cellars are occupied. There are 20,108 families occupying one roomed dwellings, 4,402 families occupying two rooms, 821 families occupying three rooms, and 491 occupying four rooms. It will thus be seen that 78 per cent. of the lettings are one room lettings. In a special report to the Board of Trade made in the year 1908 describing the conditions of the working classes in the principal industrial Towns in the United Kingdom, Dublin is singled out as a City of one room tenements, a fact which is fully demonstrated by the following Table taken from Table xix., page xv., of Vol. VIII. of Census for England and Wales, 1911:—

NUMBER of TENEMENTS of one room, of two rooms, of three rooms, of four rooms, per 1,000 total tenements in principal cities of United Kingdom.

| Number of rooms per tenement | Dublin | Edinburgh | Glasgow | London | Liverpool | Manchester | Birmingham | Belfast |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|------------|------------|---------|
| 1 ... | 339 | 94 | 200 | 134 | 54 | 18 | 10 | 6 |
| 2 ... | 210 | 316 | 462 | 190 | 74 | 35 | 21 | 41 |
| 3 ... | 105 | 219 | 189 | 213 | 132 | 97 | 305 | 50 |
| 4 ... | 104 | 144 | 66 | 159 | 185 | 406 | 165 | 239 |

From this it will be seen that Dublin has by far the largest percentage of one-roomed tenements of principal cities, viz., 33.9, and we have ascertained that the highest percentage in England occurs in Finsbury, viz., 27.7 (population 87,923). (See page xviii. of Vol. VIII. of English Census.)

(10) The Census Returns, 1911, for England and Wales, page xv., Vol. VIII., show that 22.9 of the population of the City of Dublin live in one-room tenements. This percentage, 22.9, representing the ratio of population living in one-room tenements in Dublin is considerably higher than the corresponding figure for any of the large towns in the United Kingdom, the only large centres of population approaching Dublin in this respect, being Finsbury with 14.8, and Glasgow with 13.2. The average number of persons in each one-room tenement in Dublin is shown to be 3.31, which is again the highest figure compared with that of any of the principal Towns in the United Kingdom. These facts can be gleaned from the following Tables taken from Table xix., page xv., of Vol. VIII. of Census for England and Wales, 1911 :—

AVERAGE number of occupants per room in tenements of one room, two rooms, three rooms, and four rooms :—

| Number of rooms per tenement | Dublin | Edinburgh | Glasgow | London | Liverpool | Manchester | Birmingham | Belfast |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|------------|------------|---------|
| 1 ... | 3.31 | 2.71 | 3.18 | 1.92 | 2.09 | 1.79 | 1.64 | 2.23 |
| 2 ... | 2.26 | 2.16 | 2.43 | 1.71 | 1.68 | 1.44 | 1.39 | 1.59 |
| 3 ... | 1.64 | 1.52 | 1.73 | 1.37 | 1.51 | 1.39 | 1.43 | 1.40 |
| 4 ... | 1.29 | 1.15 | 1.25 | 1.19 | 1.15 | 1.09 | 1.10 | 1.17 |

NUMBER OF PERSONS per 1,000 total population living in tenements of one room, two rooms, three rooms, and four rooms :—

| Number of rooms per tenement | Dublin | Edinburgh | Glasgow | London | Liverpool | Manchester | Birmingham | Belfast |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|------------|------------|---------|
| 1 ... | 229 | 56 | 132 | 59 | 23 | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 ... | 194 | 296 | 469 | 149 | 50 | 22 | 13 | 26 |
| 3 ... | 106 | 217 | 205 | 200 | 122 | 86 | 277 | 42 |
| 4 ... | 110 | 144 | 69 | 174 | 173 | 379 | 154 | 223 |

Further figures supplied by the Corporation denote that of the 20,108 families living in one room in tenement houses, 2,800 are families of one person, and 5,266 are families of two persons. It would follow that 12,042 families consisting of 73,973 persons as ascertained by the Corporation officials, occupy one room, and this gives an average number of occupants per room for these 12,042 families of 6.1. If the Census average of 4.6 per family be taken as the basis of calculation the average works out at 6.5.

(11) These figures, perhaps, speak for themselves as regards the density of population in these houses, but in order to appreciate their full significance, it will not be out of place to give shortly the condition of life in tenement houses.

There are many tenement houses with seven or eight rooms that house a family in each room, and contain a population of between forty and fifty souls. We have visited one house that we found to be occupied by 98 persons, another by 74, and a third by 73.

The entrance to all tenement houses is by a common door off either a street, lane or alley, and in most cases the door is never shut day or night. The passages and stairs are common, and the rooms all open directly either off the passages or landings. Most of these houses have yards at the back, some of which are of fair size, while others are very small, and some few houses have no yards at all. Generally the only water supply of the house is furnished by a single water tap which is in the yard. The yard is common, and the closet accommodation is to be found there, except in some few cases in which there is no yard, when it is to be found in the basement where there is little light or ventilation. The closet accommodation is common, as the evidence shows, not only to the occupants of the house, but to anyone who likes to come in off the street, and is, of course, common to both sexes. The roofs of these tenement houses are as a rule bad. In some cases the structure of the house appears to be in fairly good repair, and in others it appears good in front but the backs of the houses are very dilapidated and almost ruinous. The passages, landings and stairs are, in many cases, cramped and narrow, and the woodwork defective. The floors of the rooms are often out of repair, and the window frames and sashes in poor condition, those in the landing windows being not infrequently absent. The fireplaces in the rooms are small open ones, unsuited for general use.

Having visited a large number of these houses in all parts of the city, we have no hesitation in saying that it is no uncommon thing to find halls and landings, yards and closets of the houses in a filthy condition, and in nearly every case human excreta is to be found scattered about the yards and on the floors of the closets and in some cases even in the passages of the house itself. At the same time it is gratifying to find in a number of instances that in spite of the many drawbacks, an effort is made by the occupants to keep their rooms tidy and the walls are often decorated with pictures and when making some of our inspections after Christmas we frequently noticed an attempt to decorate for the season of the year. Of the many closets we inspected, it was the rare exception to find one that could be described as even approaching a clean condition, and in no single case did there seem to be any special accommodation provided for children, but in some isolated cases, notably at Vance's Buildings in Bishop Street, an effort was apparently made to provide separate accommodation for males and females, while in 3 and 4 Brown Street, belonging to a Mr. Kerlin, and in some of the houses belonging to the Jervis White estate, separate accommodation was provided for each letting.

Having regard to the above conditions, we are quite prepared to accept Sir Charles Cameron's evidence, that the female inhabitants of the tenement houses seldom use the closets; indeed it would be hard to believe otherwise, as we cannot conceive how any self-respecting male or female could be expected to use accommodation such as we have seen.

(12) It was stated in evidence before us, by several witnesses, some of whom were clergymen whose duties bring them into close touch with tenement houses, and who are, therefore, well qualified to speak, that the constantly open doors and the want of lighting in the hall, passages and landings at night, are responsible for much immorality. We fully endorse the evidence given by many witnesses that the surroundings of a tenement house in which there can be no privacy, and in which the children scarcely realise the meaning of the word "home," form the worst possible atmosphere for the up-bringing of the younger generation who, as one of the witnesses stated, acquire a precocious knowledge of evil from early childhood.

A complaint was frequently made to us in the course of our inspections through the city by the occupants of tenement dwellings in answer to a question whether they could not provide themselves with better accommodation, that the fact of having a family of young children rendered it very difficult to get a good class of dwelling, landlords having an objection to take in tenants with young families. This, we think, is a difficulty that should not be allowed to stand between the labourer and a suitable dwelling.

In the foregoing, we have only dealt with the general conditions prevailing in tenement houses, but one of our members has prepared a special report giving a detailed description of the life of the poorer classes in the City, which we submit herewith.

(13) In the year 1879, and again in the year 1900, Commissions were appointed to consider the cause of the high death-rate in the City of Dublin, and in 1905 Surgeon-Colonel Flinn, your Medical Inspector for the time, was also asked to report on this subject. In each of the reports it is stated that one of the principal causes contributing to the high death-rate is the bad housing of the working classes in the City. We have been pointed out a rather striking table in the annual reports of the Registrar-General which emphasises this conclusion in regard to Tuberculosis, as it shows that the death-rate for domestic servants, who are principally recruited from the working classes, more nearly approaches the death-rate in the Professional and Independent classes, is even below that of the middle classes, and considerably lower than the death-rate in the Artizan and General Service class as will be seen from the following Table:—

DUBLIN REGISTRATION AREA.

TUBERCULOSIS DEATH RATE.

(Taken from Annual Reports of Registrar-General).

| | 1908. | 1909. | 1910. | 1911. | 1912. |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Professional and Independent Class. | .73 | .63 | 1.49 | 1.15 | .41 |
| Middle Class | 2.23 | 2.36 | 2.42 | 2.35 | 1.92 |
| Artizan Class and Petty Shopkeepers. | 3.71 | 2.94 | 2.71 | 3.04 | 2.94 |
| General Service Class ... | 3.99 | 3.69 | 3.55 | 3.56 | 3.16 |
| Domestic Servants ... | 1.32 | 1.31 | 1.61 | 1.72 | 1.83 |

While there has been a slight reduction in the death-rate in Dublin from all causes in recent years, still the death-rate for the year 1911, the last year for which complete returns are available for the United Kingdom, was higher than in any of the large centres of popu-

lation in England, Wales, or Scotland, and we fear that until the housing problem is adequately dealt with, no substantial reduction in the death-rate may be hoped for.

(14) In the evidence given before the Royal Commission in the year 1880, it was stated that there were then 9,760 tenement houses in Dublin occupied by an estimated population of 117,000 persons and that of this number 2,300 houses occupied by an estimated population of about 30,000 persons were declared to be then unfit for human habitation. It follows that the average number of persons occupying each tenement house in that year was about 12.

While the number of tenement houses has been reduced to 5,322, they are now occupied by a population of 87,305 being the number ascertained by the Sanitary staff, giving an average of 16.5 per house, and if the population be estimated on the Census basis it amounts to 118,000 persons, giving an average of 22 persons per house. The number of tenement houses occupied at present though stated to be unfit for human habitation is 1,518, and the number of persons returned by the Sanitary Staff as occupying them is 22,701, so that now both the general density of population per tenement house, and the proportion of tenement houses which, though occupied, are stated to be unfit for human habitation are substantially greater than in 1880.

(15) The following is a summarized statement of a return submitted by the Corporation showing the distribution of families in the tenement houses of Dublin :—

First class tenement houses distribution is :—

| | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 811 | are occupied by | from 1 to 5 families. |
| 632 | „ „ | 6 to 10 families. |
| 45 | „ „ | 11 to 15 families. |
| 6 | „ „ | 16 to 19 families. |

Second class and third class tenement houses' distribution is :—

| | | |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2,459 | houses occupied by | from 1 to 5 families. |
| 1,146 | „ „ | 6 to 10 families. |
| 59 | „ „ | 11 to 15 families. |
| 1 | house with | 16 families. |
| 1 | house with | 17 families. |
| 1 | house with | 24 families. |

(16) With all these facts before us, and the experience we have gained by personal inspection of the tenement houses, we readily concur in the very strongly expressed opinion of many of the witnesses that the existing conditions of life in tenement houses in the City are both physically and morally bad, and that there is urgent necessity for reform, which must have as its ultimate object the complete breaking up of the tenement system as it exists.

(17) So far we have dealt with the conditions of life in tenement houses, but we have still to deal with those obtaining in what are termed by the Sanitary Staff of the Corporation—second and third class small houses other than tenement houses.

Some of these structures scarcely deserve the name of house, and could be more aptly described as shelters. A number of them are erected in narrow areas almost surrounded by high buildings or walls, with alleys or passages, which in some cases are scarcely more than nine or ten feet wide, as a means of approach.

These houses have, as a rule, no separate closet accommodation but one or two or occasionally more closets are situated somewhere in the vicinity, and are common to the occupants of the cottages or anyone who likes to use them, while the water tap, which is situate close by, is also common. The houses are, therefore, as far as sanitary arrangements are concerned, in much the same category as the tenement houses, and in all cases where we inspected, in which the closets were common, they were exceedingly dirty, and badly kept and unfit for use by persons of cleanly habits. These rows of cottages may be said to suffer from many of the drawbacks of tenement houses and they have the added disadvantage referred to before of being in some cases surrounded by high walls and buildings which shut out light and air.

Generally speaking the living accommodation provided in this class of house consists of a kitchen and small room. The houses are, as a rule, in bad condition of repair and the roofs are old and defective. Mr. Travers has submitted a return sub-dividing them into two classes, viz., second and third class houses, on the same lines as the tenement houses. It is sufficient for us at this stage to say that, in our opinion, the third class tenement houses, and the third class small houses, which have been stated by the Sanitary Staff to be unfit for human habitation, should as a first step be absolutely cleared away.

We recognise, however, that at present it is necessary to proceed with caution in order that no undue hardship may be inflicted on the inhabitants of these dwellings by eviction before other dwellings have been provided.

(18) The Sanitary Staff, when making their survey of the City, made inquiries into the earnings of heads of families living in tenement houses and second and third class small houses, and the rents paid by them, and as this factor must form an important consideration in dealing with the provision of houses, we have summarised the various returns below. The full returns will be found in the Appendix.

Earnings of Heads of families occupying what are termed first class tenement houses :—

| | |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| 1,385 | earning not more than 15s. a week. |
| 2,269 | earning over 15s. to 20s. a week. |
| 766 | „ 20s. to 25s. a week. |
| 622 | „ 25s. to 30s. a week. |
| 996 | „ 30s. a week. |

while of the remainder, 274 are the owners of the houses, 281 are Old Age Pensioners, and in the case of 1,722, it was not possible to ascertain the earnings.

Earnings of Heads of families occupying what are termed second and third class tenement houses :—

| | |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| 3,918 | earning not more than 15s. a week. |
| 5,856 | earning over 15s. to 20s. a week. |
| 1,567 | „ 20s. to 25s. a week. |
| 876 | „ 25s. to 30s. a week. |
| 1,190 | „ 30s. a week. |

while of the remainder, 355 are the owners of the houses, 589 are Old Age Pensioners, and in 3,176 cases the earnings could not be ascertained.

Earnings of Heads of families occupying what are termed second and third class houses :—

| | |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| 301 | earning not more than 15s. a week. |
| 875 | earning over 15s. to 20s. a week. |
| 252 | „ 20s. to 25s. a week. |
| 149 | „ 25s. to 30s. a week. |
| 198 | „ 30s. a week. |

while of the remainder, 21 are the owners of the houses, 38 are Old Age Pensioners, and in 423 cases the earnings could not be ascertained.

As regards the rents paid, the returns, when condensed, show that the occupants of first class tenement houses pay as follows :—

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Rent from 1s. to 2s. a week | .. | 1,307 |
| Rent over 2s. 0d. to 2s. 6d. a week | | 1,221 |
| *,, 2s. 6d. to 3s. 0d. a week | | 1,673 |
| „ 3s. 0d. to 4s. 0d. a week | | 2,171 |
| „ 4s. 0d. to 5s. 0d. a week | | 733 |
| „ 5s. 0d. to 6s. 0d. a week | | 324 |
| „ 6s. 0d. to 10s. 0d. a week | | 317 |
| „ 10s. 0d. a week. | .. | 75 |
| Free | | 84 |
| Owners | | 274 |
| Unascertained | | 116 |

*Of this number 1,450 pay 3s. a week.

Second class tenements are let at the following :—

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Rent from 1s. 0d. to 2s. 0d. a week | 5,291 |
| Rent over 2s. 0d. to 2s. 6d. a week | 4,123 |
| *,, 2s. 6d. to 3s. 0d. a week | 3,339 |
| „ 3s. 0d. to 4s. 0d. a week | 2,185 |
| „ 4s. 0d. to 5s. 0d. a week | 918 |
| „ 5s. 0d. to 6s. 0d. a week | 410 |
| „ 6s. 0d. to 10s. 0d. a week | 531 |
| „ 10s. 0d. a week. | .. 146 |
| Free | 124 |
| Owners | 355 |
| Unascertained | 105 |

*Of this number, 2,840 pay 3s. a week.

In second class houses the rents are as follows :—

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Rent from 1s. 0d. to 2s. 0d. a week | 237 |
| Rent over 2s. 0d. to 2s. 6d. a week | 286 |
| * „ 2s. 6d. to 3s. 0d. a week | 373 |
| „ 3s. 0d. to 4s. 0d. a week | 667 |
| „ 4s. 0d. to 5s. 0d. a week. | 388 |
| „ 5s. 0d. to 6s. 0d. a week | 116 |
| „ 6s. 0d. a week. .. | 127 |
| Free | 27 |
| Owners | 21 |
| Unascertained | 15 |

*Of this number, 338 pay 3s. a week.

Summarising the returns for the heads of families living in all classes of houses, we find that of those ascertained, 5,604 earn not more than 15s. per week ; 9,000 earn over 15s. to 20s. ; 2,585 earn over 20s. to 25s. ; 1,627 earn over 25s. to 30s. ; and 2,384 earn over 30s. ; and as regards the rents that 13,222 heads of families pay a less rent than 3s. a week ; 4,628 pay a rent of 3s. a week, and 9,108 pay a rent of over 3s. a week. The total rental of the tenement houses amounts to £191,509 10s. 0d., and the valuation to £82,595.

(19) Before concluding our remarks in regard to this portion of our report, it is necessary that we should give some indication of the industrial position of the city, and also of the different opportunities of employment for the working classes.

Dublin does not lend itself to comparison with the large manufacturing centres of the United Kingdom. There is no predominating industry affording employment to a large portion of its population, and apart from brewing, distilling, the manufacture of soda water and biscuits, it has no special trades of its own, the other trades carried on being merely those which are essential to supply the requirements of every community.

It is the terminus of the four principal railways and is connected with every part of Ireland, and, being favourably situated as a port, acts as a large distributing centre.

This description is corroborated by the table we have previously referred to indicating the number of the working classes employed in different trades in the City. It will be seen from this table that the number of factory workers and their dependents is very small indeed, and that the unskilled labouring classes with their dependents largely predominate.

Our personal investigations lead us to believe that a large number of the labouring classes, van drivers, carters, messengers, and such like, earn wages not in excess of 18s. a week.

The Sanitary Staff of the Corporation, when making their inquiries as to the housing conditions, ascertained the occupation of the heads of families occupying all classes of tenements and roughly summarising these returns and classifying the occupations in accordance with another return submitted by Mr. Travers which shows the different classes of workers belonging to Trades Unions and the standard rates of wages recognised, we get the following results :—

| Heads of Families | All classes of tenements | Second and Third tenements | Second and Third class houses |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Rate of wages regulated by Trades Unions ... | 4,573 | 2,775 | 392 |
| Wages not regulated by Trades Unions ... | 8,246 | 5,488 | 594 |
| Labourers | 9,542 | 7,107 | 1,055 |
| No occupation | 331 | 143 | 25 |
| Old Age Pensioners | 906 | 594 | 48 |
| Owners | 639 | 355 | 21 |
| Widows | 485 | 379 | 61 |
| Unascertained | 728 | 433 | 34 |
| Pensioners | 372 | 252 | 27 |

From the above table it is apparent that the class of workers occupying tenement houses and second and third class small houses is mainly composed of those whose earnings are likely to be the lowest.

(20) Dublin, in common with most other urban areas in this country, has been affected by a gradual influx of population from the country districts. From the appended table,

which shows the population of Dublin since 1821, it will be seen that since 1891 the population of the city has been on the increase, even allowing for the extension of boundaries which took place in the year 1900 when three suburban townships were added to it.

| Year | Population | Total houses | Inhabited | Uninhabited | Building |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| 1821 | 178,603 | 14,803 | 14,029 | 734 | 40 |
| 1831 | 204,155 | 17,083 | 16,042 | 889 | 152 |
| 1841 | 232,726 | 21,771 | 20,109 | 1,561 | 101 |
| 1851 | 258,369 | *24,284 | 22,224 | 1,918 | 122 |
| 1861 | 254,808 | *24,585 | *22,935 | 1,550 | 100 |
| 1871 | 246,326 | 25,042 | 23,896 | 1,059 | 87 |
| 1881 | 249,602 | 27,587 | 24,211 | 3,060 | 316 |
| 1891 | 245,001 | 29,368 | 25,764 | 3,448 | 156 |
| 1901 | f (a) 260,810 | — | 26,927 | — | — |
| | l (b) 290,638 | 35,460 | 32,061 | 3,195 | 204 |
| 1911 | f (a) 265,649 | — | 28,406 | — | — |
| | l (b) 304,802 | 37,597 | 35,477 | 1,934 | 186 |

*Excludes Institutions.

(a) Old City.

(b) New City.

In the last two decades the population within the old City boundary has grown by no less than 20,648, and is now at the highest point since 1821, when the first census was taken.

The following table shows the population and density of population per acre in the old and new City for the last three decennial periods :—

| | 1891 | | 1901 | | 1911 | |
|-----------------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Population | Density | Population | Density | Population | Density |
| Old City | 245,001 | 65·6 | 260,810 | 69·8 | 265,649 | 71·1 |
| New City | — | — | 290,638 | 36·7 | 304,802 | 38·5 |

We have now dealt with Heads I. and II. of the terms of reference and it only remains to draw our conclusions therefrom under Head V.

HEAD III.

To what extent it is possible by the exercise of the powers granted by the existing law to remedy the housing conditions of the working classes in the City.

(21) The consideration of this term of reference renders it necessary to summarise the powers given to the Corporation in various Acts, relating in any way to housing, and to examine the administration of these Acts by the Municipal Authority.

The powers which the Corporation and other similar bodies in Ireland, have had in regard to housing, may be classed under two heads :—

- (1) Powers in regard to housing affecting public health, and which are to a large extent mandatory on the sanitary authority ;
- (2) Powers relating to the provision of houses for the working classes, either in substitution for dwellings which have been closed under Statute, or on account of there being insufficient housing accommodation within the sanitary district.

(22) The principal Act under (1) is the Public Health Act, 1878, which gives sanitary authorities power to regulate new buildings and sets out that in certain circumstances old buildings may be treated as new buildings ; imposes on the sanitary authority the duty of deciding what closet accommodation may be necessary for every house within their district ; lays down specifically the conditions that are necessary before what are termed Cellar Dwellings may be occupied ; gives power to the sanitary authority to regulate and license common lodging houses, and empowers them, under certain conditions, to make Bye-laws with regard to houses other than common lodging houses, which are let in lodgings, known in Dublin as tenement houses ; authorises the

sanitary authority to fix the number of persons who may be allowed to occupy such houses or parts of houses, and specially authorises them to decide the necessary closet accommodation for these houses. This Act also provides that overcrowding, uncleanly condition of premises, shall be considered a nuisance, and gives the local authority power to obtain orders for the closing of insanitary houses.

In the year 1890, the Corporation obtained additional powers by a special Act promoted by themselves, termed the Dublin Corporation Act, 1890, which strengthened their general powers in regard to tenement houses requiring them, amongst other things, to keep a tenement house register and making it expressly obligatory under a penalty of £20 on every owner of a tenement house to inform the Corporation of his ownership and to give certain particulars. This Act also gave the Corporation additional power of control over what were termed Neglected Structures and Dangerous Structures, and special powers to make bye-laws relating to new buildings and repairs to be done to old buildings.

With the exception of powers given to the Corporation under that portion of Parts I. and II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, which empowers an urban sanitary authority to deal with insanitary areas and houses on the certificate of the Medical Officer of Health, the foregoing Acts comprise the general powers and duties of the Corporation in regard to public health matters in relation to housing.

(23) We come next to deal with the powers of the Sanitary Authorities concerning the provision of houses for the working classes, on account of the accommodation already provided being either insanitary or insufficient. In order to appreciate how these powers originated and to judge accurately of the further powers that may be necessary, it may perhaps be well for us to refer shortly to the various Acts under which Municipal Authorities obtained power in this regard. The first Act dealing with the provision of housing accommodation in Ireland was an Act passed in the year 1866, termed the Labouring Classes Lodging Houses and Dwellings Act, and was the adaptation of an Act which had been passed in England in the same year. It authorised the lending of money by the Public Works Department for the providing of houses and lodging houses for the working classes, the money to be lent at the rate of 4 per cent. and for a period not exceeding 40 years. This Act also enabled the Commissioners of Public Works to advance money on loan to certain companies and persons for building houses under the Act, but in this case only one moiety of the value of the security given for the repayment of loans could be advanced. The next Act was the Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act, 1867, which amended the above Act in some small matters concerning only the conditions of mortgage with the Public Works Commissioners. In the year 1868, an Act entitled the Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act was passed which empowered the Local Authorities, through their Officer of Health, to inspect and report on the conditions of houses within their district, and authorised them to compel owners to put in order houses that were dangerous to health according to the specification and plan prepared by the Local Authorities. Power was also given to the Local Authorities in case of default by the owner, to obtain an Order from a competent court to do the work themselves, and to charge the cost of so doing as a first mortgage on the property, bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum. This Act also provided that if repairs to houses were carried out by the owners for the time being, they should have a right to create an annuity on the property paying interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum for 30 years; the Local Authorities might borrow money from the Commissioners of Public Works for the purposes of this Act, and power was given to the Authorities to levy a rate not exceeding 2*d.* in the pound. The next Act, entitled the Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Improvement Act, was passed in the year 1875, and this Act related to the clearing of insanitary areas, and is practically re-enacted in Part I. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890. It however, indicated that if houses were provided they had to be provided on the cleared area. The Commissioners of Public Works were authorised to lend money at the rate of 3½ per cent. for a period of 50 years for the purposes of this Act. An Act entitled the Artizans and Labourers Dwelling Improvement Act, 1879, amended the conditions contained in that portion of the Act of 1875 which confined the Authorities to building on the cleared area, and provided that the accommodation could be supplied elsewhere. A further Act, entitled the Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act (1868) Amendment Act, 1879, allowed owners to compel the Local Authorities to acquire the property that was to be repaired. Another Act, entitled the Public Works Loans Act, 1879, enlarged the powers of the Public Works Commissioners in regard to lending money for the purpose of providing housing accommodation. In the year 1882, an Act, entitled the Artizans Dwellings Act, 1882, authorised the Local Authorities to clear obstructive buildings, and this is substantially re-enacted in Part II. of the Act of 1890. In 1885, an Act, entitled the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885, defined more particularly the term lodging house, and extended all previous Acts to Urban Authorities with the consent of the Local Government Board, and authorised the provision of a garden of not more than half an acre in extent with each cottage.

(24) With the exception of Sections 3, 7 to 9, and portion of Section 10 of the Act of 1885, all the foregoing Acts have been repealed by the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890; and this latter Act, together with that generally known as the Clancy Act of 1908, (after the name of its promoter, Mr. J. J. Clancy, M.P. for North Dublin), are the Acts which at present govern the powers of Municipal Authorities in regard to the housing of the working classes.

The Act of 1890 is divided into three parts. Part I. relates to the duties and powers of Municipal Authorities regarding the clearance of insanitary areas and reconstruction of same; Part II. refers to their powers in regard to dealing with insanitary houses; and Part III., which is merely adoptive, refers to their powers in regard to providing accommodation in areas which have not been declared insanitary. The Act of 1890 before its amendment by the Clancy Act gave power to the Commissioners of Public Works to lend money to the Local Authorities for a period of 50 years, at a rate of not less than £3 2s. 6d. per cent. for portions under Part I. of the Act, and, in effect, provided that if the money could be obtained in the open market for Parts II. and III. of the Act, the repayment of loan might be extended for a period not exceeding 60 years. The Act provides that loans can be obtained by Companies or private individuals, who undertake the building of houses for the working classes; the money is to be lent at a rate of not less than £3 2s. 6d. per cent., and to be repaid in a period of not more than 40 years, but only a moiety of the total value of the security can be advanced. The Act also specifically lays down the conditions which are to govern the Arbitrator in determining the value of the land taken compulsorily under Parts I. and II. of the Act, and, among other things, it declares that the property is not to be enhanced in value because it is taken by compulsion. This latter provision does not, however, apply to Part III. of the Act. Three small Acts were passed, one in 1893, another in 1894, and another in 1896, removing doubts arising out of the previous Acts.

(25) The Housing of the Working Classes, Ireland, Act, 1908, or "the Clancy Act," makes an important change in the principles of the Act of 1890 as it empowers the Inspector of the Local Government Board to make the Provisional Order in the same manner as under the Labourers Acts, and it is no longer necessary to submit the Order to Parliament. It enables the Commissioners of Public Works to lend money to Local Authorities for a period not exceeding 80 years, at a rate of interest which shall be the minimum rate at which money is advanced out of the Local Loans Funds. It also provides that for the first two years following the exercise of borrowing powers the local Authorities shall not be required to pay off any portion of the principal money borrowed by them; and it created for the first time the Fund called the "Irish Housing Fund" to assist Local Authorities in the repayment of loans contracted after the passing of the Act. This Act also removed the general limitation of the borrowing powers of Local Authorities in regard to money borrowed for the housing of the working classes.

(26) The Housing Fund was started with a capital amounting to about £180,000, but as the payments therefrom in assisting housing operations did not relate to any work prior to the passing of the Act there was a surplus, after distribution, for the first three years, which surplus went to capital account, and the fund has now a yearly income of in or about £6,500.

In the financial year ended 31st March, 1913, the entire income of the fund was distributed, and according as the operations under the Housing Acts become more numerous in the different Urban or Town areas the proportion received by each body will be less.

Dublin City has only received out of this fund since its inception an entire amount of £867 17s. 3d., and it is quite clear that the income of the fund will prove altogether inadequate to provide any substantial aid to the Local Authorities in regard to housing operations, even on a moderate scale.

(27) We have now, so far as is necessary for the purpose of this Report, summarized the various powers conferred by legislation on the Corporation in regard to housing, and we turn to the question of administration.

We shall commence with the Public Health Act of 1878 in so far as it concerns housing conditions.

In pursuance of the powers given them under this Act the Corporation in the year 1880 adopted Bye-laws with the approval of the Local Government Board, for regulating houses, and parts of houses, let in lodgings and occupied by more than one family, or what are known as tenement houses, and, amongst other things, these Bye-laws provided the number of cubic feet of space to be allowed for each person. The Bye-laws also imposed on the owner of each house the duty of supplying it with properly constructed water closet accommodation sufficient for the inhabitants; this set of Bye-laws did not

define what might be considered by the Corporation sufficient sanitary accommodation. These Bye-laws imposed on the owner the duty of providing a sufficient supply of pure water ; they required that the roofs, external walls and basements of these houses should be kept in a reasonable state of repair and prevention against wet ; that the windows should be capable of being opened from the top and bottom, and that the houses should be kept clean and well ventilated. These were the principal provisions of the Bye-laws adopted in the year 1880, and, as far as we can gather, these Bye-laws remained in force until the year 1902, when they were superseded by another set of Bye-laws which were adopted by the Corporation and approved of by the Local Government Board in that year.

The Bye-laws of the year 1902, like those of 1880, were made under the powers given to the Municipal Authorities by the Public Health Act, 1878, and the particular powers given to the Corporation under their own Act of 1890 were not availed of in drawing up the Bye-laws of 1902. The Bye-laws adopted in the year 1902 are in some respects more stringent than those of the year 1880. They regulate the number of occupants allowed to each house by the cubic capacity of each room. They stipulate that there shall be one closet for every twelve persons. They also provide that the landlord shall keep the courts and yards in a clean and wholesome condition, and that he shall keep the structure of every closet belonging to the house in good order ; that he shall keep the basements or unoccupied basements of the house in a clean state and properly ventilated ; that he shall keep the stairs, landings and passages thoroughly clean, and that every window shall be made capable of being opened from the top or raised from the bottom. They throw on the roomkeepers the onus of keeping in a clean condition the portion of the premises of which they have exclusive use. It will be noticed that they leave out all reference to the keeping of the structure of the house in good repair, as under other Acts the Corporation have express power to close dwellings unfit for habitation either on account of their insanitary or dangerous condition. It is right to point out that some of these Bye-laws were declared to be *ultra vires* on technical grounds in the year 1910, but, of course, the power of the Authority under the principal Act continued to be enforceable.

(28) It was put before us by the Corporation that the powers they had under the Public Health and other Acts were not sufficient to permit of their coping with the evils of the tenement house system, and we have it in evidence that in 1908 the Corporation promoted a private Bill in which they sought to get more extended powers. This Bill, however, never reached Parliament, being rejected on a Plebiscite of the citizens.

The plea of the Corporation in regard to the insufficiency of their powers would have considerably more force were it supported by evidence of a rigid administration of existing powers.

The facts, however, would go to show that Sir Charles Cameron has taken on himself a dispensing power in regard to the closet accommodation stated to be necessary under the Bye-laws relating to tenement houses, and we have ascertained that out of the 5,322 tenement houses there are 627 with sanitary accommodation at the rate of 1 closet for 20 to 24 persons, 299 with accommodation at the rate of 1 closet for 25 to 29 persons, 145 with accommodation at the rate of 1 closet for 30 to 34 persons, 58 with accommodation at the rate of 1 closet for 35 to 39 persons, and 32 with accommodation at the rate of 1 closet for 40 or more persons.

The condition of the tenement houses at our inspection would, we think, apart from the evidence of many witnesses at the Inquiry, justify us in coming to the conclusion that the owners were not stringently compelled to keep them in a clean and sanitary condition.

Under their own Act of 1890 the Corporation obtained powers to compel owners of tenement houses to register their ownership under a penalty of £20. On inquiry we have been informed that this power is ignored, the registration being effected by the Sanitary Sub-Officers. Under the same Act it was made mandatory on the Corporation to keep a tenement register, but on applying for information regarding tenement houses before 1901 we were informed that no register had been kept prior to that year, and the information recorded since is very incomplete, as it does not disclose the information necessary to ascertain whether a house or a room is overcrowded, and the evidence given at the inquiry shows that the sanitary sub-officers have to make this information out for themselves by taking actual measurements whenever they deem it necessary.

The fact that evidence was given at the Inquiry showing that there are 1,518 tenement houses inhabited by 22,701 persons, and 1,289 small houses inhabited by 4,851 persons, and 20 lodging houses over which the Corporation have licensing powers and which are licensed to accommodate 434 persons, giving a total of 27,986 persons living in houses

stated by the Corporation Officers to be not fit for human habitation would not, we think, argue a very stringent application of the closing powers of the Corporation.

(29) We think it desirable in connection with this subject to refer to some matters which came under our notice relative to tenement and other property owned by members of the Corporation, and also to touch upon the exercise by the Corporation of the powers given to them under their own Act of 1890, Section 75, with regard to the granting of a rebate in taxes on premises whose valuation does not exceed £8, and which in their opinion are suitable as dwellings for and are occupied by artizans or labourers. The Corporation have themselves laid down certain conditions which must be observed before the rebate can be given. The amount of rebate allowed is 25 per cent., and the total amount of rate remitted last year was £3,819, a matter of some importance to the Ratepayers. Speaking generally the tenement house property in Dublin is owned by a large number of small owners who, as Mr. Travers told us at an interview subsequent to the inquiry, hold at the most about 40 houses each. The principal owners of tenement houses sitting as Members of the Corporation, are Alderman G. O'Reilly, Alderman Corrigan, and Councillor Crozier, who are returned to us in the evidence as either owning or being interested in 9, 19 and 18 tenement houses respectively, and in 4, 13 and 1 small houses, while ten other members of the Corporation own or are interested in one to three tenement houses, and Alderman O'Connor owns or is interested in 2 tenement houses and 6 small houses.

(30) We regret to have to report that some of the property owned by the three first named gentlemen, and from which they are deriving rents, is classed as third class property by the Sanitary Staff, or in other words that it is unfit for human habitation. A feature which makes this all the more discreditable is that actually on some of this class of property, both Alderman O'Reilly and Alderman Corrigan are receiving rebates of taxes under Section 75 of the Corporation Act, 1890. Councillor Crozier is also receiving rebate on property which, though not classed as being unfit for human habitation, is not, however, in our opinion in such a condition of repair as to warrant a rebate being given, and does not comply with the express conditions required by the Corporation.

In two instances affecting twelve dwellings belonging to Alderman Corrigan, the property was certified by the Sanitary Sub-Officer as not fit for a rebate, but was subsequently passed as fit on the authority of Sir Charles Cameron. In the first instance comprising 10 dwellings, it was stated that the drains were not properly trapped or ventilated, and that the entire premises were not kept clean or in a good state of repair. In the other case, comprising 2 dwellings, it was stated that there was not proper and sufficient yard space, and that the tenants had no water closet accommodation, and were compelled to use the water closet accommodation attached to another set of cottages. Mr. Corrigan admits having done nothing to the drains in the former case after the inspection by the sanitary sub-officer, and the evidence of Mr. Travers would show that the sanitary accommodation provided for the use of the tenants in the latter case which was, as stated, used in common by the occupants of other cottages, consisted of only three waterclosets for 81 persons. Sir Charles Cameron stated in his evidence that he accepted full responsibility in these cases.

(31) In view of these disclosures, we thought it well to inspect a number of the dwellings on which rebates are given, and we regret to state that in many cases the conditions laid down by the Corporation are not complied with. Sir Charles Cameron having taken on his own shoulders the responsibility of dispensing in certain cases with the Bye-laws governing tenement houses and with the conditions laid down by the Corporation in regard to rebates, we feel that we can lay little blame in regard to these matters on the Corporation as a body, though we think that they cannot be entirely absolved from censure, as it was their duty to keep themselves informed of the manner in which their Superintendent Medical Officer of Health carried out their orders. In extenuation of the want of rigid enforcement of the laws, it was put before us by Sir Charles Cameron and others that the stringent enforcement of the sanitary laws might inflict great hardship, as it might lead to the eviction of a number of people. While we cannot dispute the truth of this plea were the enforcement of hitherto dormant powers suddenly and drastically exercised, we cannot help coming to the conclusion that had a judicious but firm administration of the powers already given been exercised during the last 35 years since the passing of the Public Health Act, 1878, it should have been possible without any undue hardship being inflicted to have produced a better state of affairs than exists at present, and especially as at one time during this period the population of Dublin reached the lowest point it has touched for 60 years.

(32) Be this as it may in regard to the administration of the powers of the Corporation enforceable by penalties we can see no possible justification for the exercise by Sir Charles Cameron or his staff of discretion in regard to the remission of any of the conditions laid down by the Corporation for the granting of a rebate. No question of hardship can arise in these cases, and the plea put forward by Sir Charles Cameron that by the use of his discretion with regard to the remission of the conditions laid down he was able to secure that these habitations were kept in a more sanitary condition than they would otherwise be, would seem to strengthen our view that there has been a want of firmness in the enforcement of the ordinary Public Health laws in regard to housing.

While we recognise that the tenement house is of itself a great barrier in the path of the sanitary staff, we think that this fact rather intensifies the necessity for a rigid application of all the powers at the disposal of the Sanitary Authority, more especially when the density of population in this class of house increases, and this not alone in the interests of the inhabitants of the houses themselves, but in the interests of the city generally. We have shown that in regard to density of population the tenement houses of the present day are in a substantially worse state than they were in 1880.

(33) Before concluding this aspect of the question, we must state that in our opinion the low social conditions among the poorer classes in Dublin are in some measure due to the failure to enforce stringently the sanitary laws, though we do not suggest that this feature is peculiar to Dublin. While we say this, we are aware that there are other contributory causes arising from the past history of the country, and the tendency of the rural population to come into the cities and urban areas. A firm administration would, however, in our opinion, have deterred the rural labourer from coming into the City and the absence of such administration must therefore be held to have produced a converse result, and to have had the indirect effect of keeping wages at a low level.

We suggest, also that the non-enforcement of the sanitary laws has permitted dwellings which are not fit for habitation to be inhabited by the poorer classes at rents which though in some cases low in themselves are altogether excessive for the class of accommodation provided.

Further it would seem to us that the want of a firm administration has created a number of owners with but little sense of their responsibilities as landlords, and that it has helped much in the demoralisation of a number of the working classes, and increased the number of inefficient workers in the city.

We suggest also that the provision of sanitary Dwellings by private enterprise has been to some extent handicapped by unfair competition with insanitary dwellings which could be let at rents that would not pay for the provision of decent homes.

We now turn to the action of the Corporation in regard to the provision of houses.

(34) The finance of their operations is dealt with later, and it is with pleasure that we state that they appear from the very beginning to have taken advantage of the powers given to them in this regard, and it must not be forgotten that the Acts before 1890 placed a limitation on their borrowing and rating powers for this purpose.

The Corporation have provided 1,385 dwellings and lodging house accommodation for in all about 7,600 people or, in other words, they have housed 2.5 of the population, and it was claimed on their behalf that they have done more for the housing of the working classes than any other city in the United Kingdom. Other schemes, viz., Lisburn and Lurgan Street, Trinity Ward; Beresford and Church Streets and Ormond Market, in which it is proposed to provide accommodation for 2,025 persons, are passed, and are intended to be put shortly into operation.

The Corporation have also under consideration schemes for providing further accommodation for 6,480 persons. Up to last year the business of the Corporation under the Housing Acts was carried out by a Committee of the Corporation called the Improvements Committee, but early last year a special Housing Committee was formed, and we think

the evidence clearly indicates that this step on the part of the Corporation was a correct one, as much greater activity has since prevailed.

We would, however, point to one feature of the work of the Corporation in the matter of housing schemes with which we are not in full agreement.

So far as we have been able to form an opinion on the work accomplished or in contemplation, we think that the schemes are incomplete and too scattered, as they often deal with small areas when larger ones could have been undertaken with more advantage. It is within our knowledge that Mr. P. C. Cowan, your Chief Engineering Inspector, has been continually pressing this view on the Corporation at various Inquiries held by him.

As an example of what we mean we might quote the most recently completed scheme of the Corporation, viz., Cook Street. The area dealt with is small, it is almost surrounded by insanitary property, and the Corporation, we are informed, now contemplate promoting a supplementary scheme to deal with some of the insanitary property alongside.

(35) We may here refer to what has been done by private persons under the various Acts enabling them to borrow money from the Board of Works, and for this information we are indebted to a statement obtained by us from that department.

Excluding the work of the Companies dealt with later, we find that a sum of £89,249 was advanced by the Board of Works to thirty-two private agencies or persons for the erection of 918 artizans' houses, the houses accommodating 978 families. Of this amount £86,874 was advanced before the year 1898, so that since that year private persons have only borrowed £2,375, and this fact, together with the statement of the Artizans Dwellings Company that they have not undertaken any building operations since 1907 would seem to indicate that the provision of houses for the working classes through the medium of private enterprise under existing conditions can no longer be relied on. We shall deal somewhat more in detail in our conclusions with this aspect of the problem.

(36) A great amount of criticism was levelled at the Corporation on account of the high price paid in compensation for land acquired under the Housing Acts amounting, as it did in one case, to about £10,000 an acre, and, as we will show later, to an average of £4,070. We desire to point out that in most cases the price was paid as the result of arbitration proceedings carried out in accordance with the law, and that Mr. Rice, Law Agent to the Corporation, gave evidence that the Corporation in every case took all possible advantage of the law in pleading their case before the Arbitrator, so that in this regard no responsibility attaches to that body.

Evidence was tendered to us by Sir Lambert Ormsby that he, acting for the Housing of the Very Poor Association, was able to buy, as a private individual for £1,857, a piece of land similar in extent to the Brides Alley area, for which the Corporation had paid the sum of £10,000 an acre, and generally speaking it seemed to be admitted by the different witnesses that the Corporation had to pay more for their land than a private person. In this respect we do not think their experience has been different from that of other Corporations or Public Bodies. Reference was made by Mr. Rice to a case of compensation arising out of the acquisition of the lands for the Montgomery Street scheme in which he stated that the Corporation had, through a gentleman whom they employed as an agent, obtained from Messrs. Tuck & Co., who were interested in some of the property, an agreement, which subsequently proved not to be binding, to sell their interest for a sum of £100. Messrs. Tuck & Co., however, declined to be bound by this agreement, and the matter came before the Arbitrator, who allowed them £2,000. Mr. Rice stated that on the evidence the Arbitrator's action was correct. We have had an opportunity of speaking to Mr. Taylor, the Arbitrator, as to his action in this case, and he has submitted the minutes of evidence to us. Without expressing any opinion on the amount awarded by the Arbitrator, we are satisfied that he most thoroughly investigated the facts.

(37) Mr. Rice stated to us that in his opinion arbitrators in dealing with land taken under Parts I. and II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, have not correctly interpreted their duties under Sections 21 and 41 of the Act in regard to property in an insanitary condition, and that thereby compensation above its true value has sometimes been given, and he stated that these Sections want clearer interpretation. We shall deal with this matter under Head V.

HEAD IV.

The finance of housing schemes which have been carried out by the Municipal authorities or other agencies for the city workers, and the class of accommodation provided by such schemes.

(38) From the complete and clear information supplied to us by the Corporation, it is easy to answer this question in regard to schemes carried out by them, but it is somewhat difficult in regard to schemes promoted by other agencies. In so far as we can, however, we shall give the condensed information in regard to all, dealing first with the Municipal Authority.

The Municipal Authority, as before stated, have provided 1,385 dwellings, of which 20 are shops, and housed a population of in or about 7,500 persons.

Their operation have extended over 12 schemes, two of which were taken over at the time of the extension of the City boundary in the year 1900, while in two of the schemes the sites were leased to the Artizans Dwellings Company, who erected the houses thereon.

The capital cost of these operations is as follows :—£354,215 19s. 0d. The yearly gross cost to the Corporation in regard to these schemes for the past two years is £20,321 19s. 9d. for 1911–1912, and £21,758 3s. 3d. for 1912–1913. In neither of these figures is there any cost included for the Cook Street area which has been only recently completed.

The portion of this yearly expenditure allocated to repayment of interest and capital is £13,946 16s. 4d. for 1911–1912 ; and £14,008 6s. 5d. for 1912–1913, the balance coming under the heads of leasehold rents, rates and insurance which amount to £2,320 19s. 10d. for 1911–1912, and £2,387 14s. 6d. for 1912–1913. Maintenance £3,649 1s. 4d., and £4,712 5s. 7d. respectively, and supervision and collection £405 2s. 3d. and £515 2s. 0d. respectively.

On the other hand the Corporation have received as rents :—£9,810 10s. 2d. for 1911–1912, and £11,945 7s. 1d. for 1912–1913, leaving a net deficit of £10,511 9s. 7d. for 1911–1912, and £9,812 16s. 2d. for 1912–1913, representing a rate of a little over 2½d. in the pound.

We are obliged to draw particular attention to the expenditure incurred under the head of maintenance, as we find it averages for the two years £2 14s. 3d. per tenement or dwelling, a matter to which we shall have to refer later.

The capital, £354,215 19s. 0d., was obtained as follows :—£246,133 10s. 5d. from Commissioners of Public Works, of which £73,700 has been discharged by the issue of stock or through revenue ; £38,082 8s. 7d. raised directly by the issue of stock, and £70,000 obtained on loan from an Insurance Company.

The periods of repayment for these loans vary somewhat, the maximum period being 64 years, which was allowed in the most recent schemes.

The loans from the Commissioners of Public Works and the Insurance Company bear interest at present Rates varying from 2¾ to 3¾ per cent. This percentage does not include any repayment of capital, which varies from year to year, the loans by the Commissioners of Public Works being Instalment loans and the Insurance Company loans being annuity loans.

The class of dwellings provided by the Corporation, of which a full list will be found in the appendix, is as follows :—

Five sets of block buildings in which there are—

- 20 shops let at rents from 5s. to 10s.
- 445 one room dwellings at rents varying from 1s. to 2s.
- 374 two room dwellings at rents varying from 2s. to 4s.
- 109 three room dwellings at rents varying from 4s. to 6s. 6d.

Self-contained cottages—

- 32 self-contained 2-room cottages at 2s. 6d.
- 326 self-contained 3-room cottages at rents varying from 2s. to 5s. 6d.
- 79 self-contained 4-room cottages at rents varying from 4s. 6d. to 7s. 6d.

The total cost of sites secured by the Corporation for their various schemes would appear to be £98,517 7s. 10d., and the area acquired for this sum is 24 acres and 33 perches, or at the rate of £4,070 per acre.

(39.) We now proceed to deal with the finance of companies and other agencies providing housing accommodation for the working classes.

The foremost among these is the

ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS COMPANY.

This Company was formed in the year 1876 with a view of providing housing accommodation for the industrial classes, and they have provided 3,584 dwellings, housing in or about 16,000 persons.

Their building operations have been divided among 23 schemes, three of which are outside the City boundary, one being in Bray, another in Kingstown, and the remaining one in Rathmines township.

Their Capital expenditure in providing this accommodation to the 31st December, 1912, as would appear from their balance sheet, was £587,882 13s. 6d., of which, so far as we can ascertain, the capital raised by means of shares was approximately £294,589 0s. 0d. The Company have borrowed from the Commissioners of Public Works £291,582 0s. 0d., and of this latter amount £164,818 13s. 10d. had been repaid by 31st December, 1912.

It is important here to note that the share capital includes a sum of £24,229 2s. 10d. premium on the issue of shares. It would appear that no shares have been issued for some time past, and owing to the present state of the money market it is stated that it would be difficult now to raise money even at par. No building operations have been undertaken since 1907.

The Company provided accommodation as follows:—

| | No. of Dwellings | | Average Weekly Rent (including all rates and taxes) | |
|---|--------------------|----------|---|--------------|
| | Block Buildings | Cottages | Block Buildings | Cottages |
| | | | <i>s. d.</i> | <i>s. d.</i> |
| One room | 75 | — | 2 0 | — |
| Two rooms | 173 | 419 | 3 0 | 3 9 |
| Three rooms | 206 | 1,339* | 4 3 | 5 3 |
| Four rooms | — | 1,049 | — | 7 1 |
| Five rooms | — | 48 | — | 9 10 |
| Six rooms | — | 5 | — | 10 7 |
| Eight rooms | — | 9 | — | 10 9 |
| Total No. of Dwellings, 1s. 9d. to 11s. per week | 454 | 2,869 | | |

*One storey, 854 ; Two storey, 485.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Number of Dwellings, City and Harold's Cross, let at rents varying from 1s. 9d. to 11s. per week (including taxes) | 3,323 |
| Number of Dwellings, City and Harold's Cross, let at rents ranging from 12s. upwards | 36 |
| Number of Shops, City and Harold's Cross, with dwelling accommodation .. | 20 |
| Total number of Dwellings and Shops (provided with dwelling accommodation), City and Harold's Cross | 3,379 |
| Number of Shops (without dwelling accommodation), City and Harold's Cross | 17 |
| Number of Stores included among Dwellings in Annual Report, City and Harold's Cross | 4 |
| | 3,400 |
| Number of Dwellings, Kingstown, and Bray | 183 |
| | 3,583 |
| | Total |

NOTE.—The total shown in Annual Report (1912) is 3,584. During 1913 two adjoining cottages were combined to form one.

The cost per acre of the sites obtained by this Company varies in the City and Harold's Cross from £450 to £1,630 for Freehold, and £400 to £1,720 for Leasehold, capitalising ground rents at 20 years' purchase, but one site at Crampton Quay (Leasehold), shows a value of £5,600 per acre.

The cost of repairs and cleaning for the past two years has been for 1911 £3,639 10s. 8d., and for 1912 £2,908 17s. 10d., showing an average of £1 0s. 4d. per dwelling for 1911, and 16s. 2d. for 1912.

The Company have paid a yearly dividend of five per cent. since 1899, but they state that their ability to do so is largely due to the existence of the reserve fund which now amounts to £168,376 7s. 8d., and to the fact that up to some time ago their shares were at a premium on the market. It was stated by one of the Company's Directors that they had obtained two block dwellings from Messrs. Guinness and Company at less than cost price, while they hold two sites from the Corporation, viz., Coombe Area and Plunkett Street, at a yearly rent of £191 13s. 0d. and £133 16s. 0d., respectively. It has been put forward by the Company that, owing to the increment duty payable under the Finance Act of 1910, and to the uncertainty consequent upon a revaluation every fifteen years, they have been to some extent debarred from undertaking further building operations.

IVEAGH TRUST.

(40.) This Trust comes next in importance, and was founded by Sir E. C. Guinness (Viscount Iveagh) in April, 1890, with a gift of £50,000, under the title of the Guinness Trust (Dublin Fund). In 1899 Lord Iveagh obtained powers to acquire Bull Alley Area, and to erect buildings thereon, at his own expense, the eventual control and management of the property being vested by the Act of Parliament in the Trustees of the Guinness Trust, but as a separate undertaking. The Iveagh Trust Act of 1903 amalgamated the two undertakings, and gave the Trustees enlarged powers, so that the whole of the property and funds vested in them, from whatever source derived, might be administered as one consolidated fund.

The Capital of the Trust now amounts to £207,210 18s. 0d., including the sum of £50,000, mentioned above; £116,606, the value of the Bull Alley Area land and buildings vested in the Trustees in 1903, 1905, and 1906; and £40,604 18s. 0d. net income from rents, investments, etc., 1890-1912.

The Tenement Buildings belonging to the Trust afford accommodation for 586 families. Details as to the accommodation provided in each building are as follows:—

TENEMENTS.

| | One Room | Two Rooms | Three Rooms | Total | Rooms |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|-------|-------|
| Kevin Street ... | 108 | 208 | 20 | 336 | 584 |
| Patrick Street ... | 11 | 78 | 33 | 122 | 266 |
| Bride Street ... | 10 | 80 | 38 | 128 | 284 |
| | 129 | 366 | 91 | 586 | 1,134 |

N.B.—Patrick Street Buildings contain also 20 Shops.

Bride Street Buildings contain also 6 shops.

In addition to these the Trust have provided a model lodging house called Iveagh House, which has accommodation for 508 men, and also Public Baths, including private baths for men and women.

The average weekly rent of each tenement room is approximately 2s.

Having regard to the manner in which the capital of this Trust was provided, and to the fact that the surplus at the end of each year is added to capital, the particulars furnished are not sufficient to enable us to compare its financial operations with those of other dividend paying companies.

THE DUBLIN AND SUBURBAN WORKMEN'S DWELLINGS COMPANY.

(41.) The first of this Company's operations would appear to have taken place in the year 1890, and they have provided 288 self-contained cottages comprising 212 two-room, 71 three-room, and 5 four-room cottages, accommodating in or about 1,645 persons, and let at rents varying from 3s. 6d. to 7s.

The Capital was provided by the issue of Preference and Ordinary shares as follows:—Preference shares fully paid, £7,610; Ordinary shares fully paid, £6,270; a loan from the Board of Works £10,176 at three and three-eighth per cent. interest, the loan being an instalment loan, and the balance of this loan remaining due on 31st December, 1912, was £4,514 1s. 8d. They would seem to have other capital liabilities to the amount of £5,402. They do not appear to have ever paid a dividend to the ordinary shareholders, and there are arrears of dividend due to the preference shareholders on 31st December, 1912, of nearly £7,000. The average cost per dwelling for repairs for the year 1912 would appear to be £1 5s. 0d.

THE HOUSING OF THE VERY POOR ASSOCIATION, LIMITED.

(42.) This Company was formed in the year 1898 with the object of providing single room tenements at a low rent to the very poor, and they have provided 157 single room dwellings let at rents varying from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 6d., housing a population of about 810.

Their Capital has been provided by the issue of £11,913 of ordinary stock, and £4,500 debenture stock, while £3,000 was obtained from the Commissioners of Public Works, of which £350 had been repaid on the 31st December, 1912.

This Company has paid a dividend of two per cent. since the year 1898, except for two years; but the last audited account would seem to disclose the fact that no depreciation had been written off the buildings or property for that year.

THE INDUSTRIAL TENEMENTS COMPANY.

(43.) The first and only undertaking of this Company was in the year 1868, provided six houses with about 50 dwellings, their Capital being obtained by issue of stock to the extent of £5,655. The dwellings are let at rents varying from 6d. to 4s. a week. They pay a dividend of 2 per cent. They did not fully use the Capital subscribed, and invested about £800 in Consols.

THE GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

(44.) This Company have provided 149 self-contained houses, accommodating about 870 persons and costing £257 per house, the rents varying from 3s. to 6s. 6d. per week. The cost of the sites averaged £225 per statute acre. This Company have some other houses at North Wall, of which no particulars have been furnished.

THE MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

(45.) This Company have built 83 cottages near the North Circular Road at a cost of £262 per house, at rents from 4s. 6d. to 8s. per week; the cost of the site being £1,800 per Statute acre.

THE EARL OF MEATH.

(46.) This Nobleman has provided 93 dwellings, accommodating 450 persons, the average cost of building is £207 5s. 7d., and the rents charged vary from 4s. to 8s. He appears to have purchased a site with two houses on it, about 8,000 square feet in extent, from the Dublin Corporation for £400, or at the rate of about £2,000 an acre.

THE SOCIAL SERVICE TENEMENTS COMPANY.

(47.) This Company has renovated a number of tenement houses, their Capital being provided by the issue of shares amounting to £3,248. The Society has not paid a dividend since 1905.

THE ALEXANDRA GUILD TENEMENTS COMPANY.

(48.) This Company has renovated six tenement houses, the Capital being provided by the issue of shares amounting to £1,335, on which they pay a dividend of about 2½ per cent.

The houses provided by the two last-named Companies accommodate about 512 persons.

(49.) This completes an account of the operations of private agencies as supplied to us, but, as the table on page 2 shows, a number of other Companies (Messrs. A. Guinness & Co., Watkins & Co., Dublin United Tramways Co.,) and also some private persons (Messrs. Pile, Patterson and Vance), have at one time or another provided improved houses for the working classes.

It will be noted that none of the purely building or housing Companies, except the Artizans Dwellings Company, are able to pay a commercial dividend, although in some cases they have little or no management expenses. In the case of the Artizans Dwellings Company we have already pointed out how favourably they are circumstanced financially.

HEAD V.

What measures (including any legislative amendments) you would suggest for dealing with the housing problem in the City and the probable cost of any of the schemes so suggested.

(50.) In the first part of our report we stated that in our opinion any scheme for housing reform must ultimately contemplate the complete breaking up of the tenement house system as it exists, and, before proceeding any further, it might be desirable for us to indicate the class of accommodation we think should be provided.

The evidence given before us at the Inquiry clearly shows that public opinion now recognises and demands that every working class family should be provided with a self-contained dwelling of sufficient size to prevent over-crowding, and which admits of the separation of the sexes. We entirely concur in this opinion. A self-contained dwelling is one which provides living accommodation with scullery and water-closet accommodation for the sole use of each family.

It would follow that we are opposed to the provision of one room dwellings for families of more than one or two persons. This leads us to the consideration of the extent of new accommodation to be provided.

(51.) The evidence indicates that out of the 25,822 families occupying tenement houses, 8,066 are families not exceeding two persons, or, in other words, that 69 per cent. of the total number of families require accommodation in excess of one room. It would be impossible for us to forecast with any degree of accuracy the numbers of different classes of dwellings required.

It is quite possible to conceive, and it was suggested to us that a number of the first class tenement houses would lend themselves to remodelling so as to provide self-contained dwellings on the lines before indicated, and we are not quite sure that it would be altogether fair without further detailed inspection to say that the entire 2,288 second class tenement houses are in such a condition as absolutely to preclude their being so remodelled, although the evidence would rather indicate the contrary. We therefore recommend that in regard to these houses such powers as may be necessary should be conferred on the Corporation in order to enable them to compel owners to remodel them, and failing their doing so, the houses could then be declared unfit for habitation, and demolished. We shall refer later to the powers we think necessary in order to achieve this object.

In arriving at the actual number of new houses required, we feel bound to accept the evidence of Mr. Travers in regard to the number of tenement houses unfit for habitation, and we think that as soon as other sufficient accommodation is provided, these houses should at once be closed.

It would, therefore, be necessary to undertake the provision of housing accommodation for the 6,831 families occupying the third class tenement houses. The same considerations apply to the second and third class houses and in this regard steps should be taken for the provision of accommodation for the 1,136 families occupying third class small houses.

(52.) If, however, the provision of new housing accommodation were to be limited to the above the overcrowding that exists in the first and second class tenement houses would not be relieved, and it is therefore necessary to take this question into consideration when dealing with the number of houses to be provided.

Assuming that all the first and second class tenement houses did in fact lend themselves to being remodelled so as to contain one, two, or three lettings, varying in size from one to four rooms, we have, after careful consideration, come to the conclusion that they could not accommodate more than 13,000 families. Additional accommodation would therefore have to be provided for the remainder, viz., 5,991 families, giving as a minimum of new housing accommodation required, 13,958, or say, 14,000 houses or dwellings.

(53.) It should, however, be pointed out that this number must include some of the work-shy and loafing class, who, we suggest, should more properly be dealt with under a reformed Poor Law system. It would seem to us not undesirable if large housing responsibilities are to be undertaken by the State or Municipality that such changes should concurrently be made in the Poor Law as would admit of this undesirable class being specially dealt with. We have, however, not been able to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the proportion of these classes included in the 13,958 families and accordingly for the purposes of our calculations we have assumed that new accommodation is required for each family dispossessed.

Having drawn attention to this matter we proceed to discuss the provision of houses by private enterprise and the State or Municipality.

(54.) It was put before us by many witnesses that it would be prejudicial to the best interests of the City that the Municipality or State should undertake building on so extensive a scale, and it was urged that every encouragement should be given to private enterprise. Up to the year 1907 there might have been some grounds for holding that with a little further encouragement private enterprise would have to some extent supplied the deficiency of housing accommodation, but we have now little hope that it would be in any appreciable degree sufficient to grapple with the present needs of the City.

We are aware that it is held that from a strict economic point of view the sound attitude to take up would be, while stringently enforcing the sanitary laws, and perhaps strengthening them in certain respects, to allow the problem to be solved by the ordinary law of supply and demand. We cannot, however, shut our eyes to the fact that legislation has for some time past tended to show that the State recognises that the strict economic treatment of the question does not meet the necessities of the case. The legislation for the providing of proper housing accommodation for the labourers in the rural districts of Ireland, which has been attended with such great success, would seem to indicate that the State not only recognises that it has a duty in regard to the provision of loans to enable local authorities to build, but that it has a direct share in the responsibility of providing the houses, as it gives two free grants, one of 16 per cent., and the other of 20 per cent., or in all 36 per cent. of the total amount of the repayment on monies advanced.

It might be held therefore if the State has taken on itself a duty in regard to the rural labourer that, on proof, of the conditions of the urban labourer being as urgent, it should be willing to undertake similar obligations on his behalf.

(55.) While this may be so, we nevertheless consider it our duty to make some suggestions which might render building by private enterprise possible for some classes of the industrial population, or which might at least enable employers to give effect to the moral obligation referred to by Mr. Charles Eason, in his evidence, of providing proper housing accommodation for their employees.

So far the encouragement given by the State to Companies and other persons who undertake the provision of dwellings for the working classes has been confined to lending them a moiety of the value of the security given, at the same rate at which loans are made for the purpose to the local authorities, but for a period of not more than forty years.

In some instances we have been informed that the Commissioners of Public Works have not felt themselves able to sanction the advance of the moiety, as their estimate of the value of the property fell short of that fixed by the intending borrower.

We recommend that the lending power should not be so limited, and that the decision as to the proportion to be advanced should be based on the general financial circumstances of the applicant, the Commissioners of Public Works being allowed to lend the full amount if they are satisfied with the security. We also recommend that the period for repayment of loan should be decided in each case after a full review of the financial condition of the applicant.

In addition to the encouragement hitherto given to private enterprise by the State, the Corporation has power under its own Act of 1890 to give rebate up to 33 per cent. on houses that are under £8 in valuation, and are suitable for occupation and occupied by the working classes.

It was suggested that this power might be extended, and that it should be permissible to the Municipality to give a rebate in full for a limited period. We concur in this suggestion, and think that it would be reasonable to give a full rebate of taxation for a period say, of ten years after the house is built, half rebate of taxation for the succeeding ten years, and 25 per cent. rebate afterwards. In making this recommendation we presuppose that the conditions under which a rebate may be allowed will be rigidly adhered to in future, and that the rents charged for such houses shall be within the means of the working classes.

We shall touch later on the powers that the Municipality might have in regard to the transference of sites to Companies or persons for the building of houses for the working classes, when we are dealing with the amendment of the Corporation's powers.

It has been suggested to us that the law in regard to the recovery of possession of premises let to an undesirable tenant operates unfavourably in regard to owners, as if the amount of rent sought to be recovered is in excess of 4s. 8d. the case cannot be dealt with by the Police Magistrates, but has to be brought to the Recorder's Court, thus involving considerable delay, and a very much increased cost. This seems to us a small matter which might easily be remedied.

We suggest also that property devoted to the housing of the working classes might be exempted from increment duty under the Finance Act of 1910.

(56.) We have now dealt with the main points which occur to us as being likely to induce private enterprise again to come forward and undertake building for the working classes, and we come to the question of the finance of the housing operations if undertaken by the Municipality or State.

It is somewhat difficult to estimate the exact cost of erecting such a number of dwellings, as it must depend on the number of the different classes of dwellings required varying from one to four rooms.

In estimating the cost at an average figure of £250 per dwelling to cover all expenditure we think we are adopting a figure that cannot lend itself to severe criticism, and it would follow that the amount of money required for building the 14,000 cottages would be £3,500,000.

(57.) It becomes necessary at this stage to analyse the various items of expenditure connected with each house.

These are as follows :—

- (a) Repayment of capital and interest ;
- (b) Cost of ordinary public health and other services similar to those rendered in respect of other houses, and which are ordinarily met by rates ;
- (c) Insurance ;
- (d) Supervision ;
- (e) Cost of maintenance.

We shall consider these consecutively.

- (a) The amount to be repaid each year depends on three factors, period allowed for repayment, rate of interest, and mode of repayment.

By the Clancy Act of 1908 a period of 80 years may be allowed, but owing to regulations issued by the Treasury, it has not been possible to allow this period for loans obtained from the State, except on land, and private lenders have not come forward, so that the concession contemplated by the Act has been inoperative.

The rate of interest in pursuance of the Clancy Act is to be the minimum for which loans are issued out of the Local Loans Fund, and has been for some time past $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Two modes of repayment of loan come up for consideration, viz., the Instalment System and the Annuity system.

In the Instalment system a fixed portion of the principal is paid back each year during the currency of the loan, together with interest on the principal outstanding. In this way the amount of repayment is reduced each year, and the charge is, therefore, a decreasing one. Under the Annuity system the same sum is paid each year throughout the whole period for which the loan is running, and while less than that required for the Instalment system in the initial years, it exceeds the latter a considerable time before half the period of the loan is reached, and the amount is in excess each year thereafter. Under the Annuity system at the expiration of the period a much greater aggregate sum has been levied off the rates than under the Instalment system (the excess consisting of interest paid on money outstanding for a longer period).

- (b) In ordinary circumstances the rate assessed is taken as the measure of the services rendered. We have not, however, sufficient data to enable us to arrive at an absolutely correct figure in this case, but we think a sum of £2 per annum would be a fair approximation of the cost.
- (c) & (d) These items are more or less fixed though possibly the item under (d) might be reduced in case of large schemes—these costs average at present 11s. 5d.
- (e) Cost of maintenance. This is an item which admits of considerable savings. We have already called attention to the very high cost of maintenance of the dwellings provided by the Corporation at present, amounting to £2 5s. 10d. for 1911—12, and £3 2s. 8d. for 1912—13, or an average of £2 14s. 3d. a year representing over 1s. per week per dwelling. This is much in excess of the figure reached in the case of private Companies in Dublin, and the corresponding figure in the case of the Liverpool Corporation is £1 15s. 4d. We propose to adopt the latter figure for the purposes of our calculations.

(58.) We have now to show what would be the cost of providing the number of dwellings necessary, under either the Instalment system or the Annuity system, and for this purpose we have to ascertain what the cost would be for one dwelling for the repayment of loan and interest only, on a loan repayable in sixty-four years, which appears to be the maximum period sanctioned so far, covering both land and buildings, and assuming the cost of the dwelling to be as stated before, viz., £250, and the rate of interest to be $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

On the Instalment system the repayment of interest and principal would amount to £12 13s. $1\frac{1}{2}d.$, which would be reduced each year by 2s. $8\frac{1}{2}d.$

On the Annuity system the repayment of interest and principal would amount to £9 16s. $9\frac{1}{4}d.$, and would remain at this figure for the whole period of the loan, there being thus an initial difference between the two of £2 16s. $4d.$

By calculation it will be found that for about 21 years the ratepayers under the Instalment system would be paying more than they would be required to pay under the Annuity system, but after that period their liability would be less.

We believe that from the point of view of strictly sound finance the Instalment system is preferable. The total amount that has been levied off the rates for the repayment of principal and interest at the expiration of the period is considerably less than the amount so levied under the Annuity system. It may also be held to be more equitable as between the different generations of ratepayers in the sense that the payments to be made in the latter periods of the term are a constantly reducing amount when the age of the dwelling would naturally require a heavier expenditure on maintenance. We cannot, however, ignore the fact that apart from the purely financial aspect, the adoption of the Instalment system would be taxing unduly the present generation of ratepayers for the benefit of the future who, if the work is done now, will reap all the advantages that may ensue from the better health and greater efficiency of the working classes as a result of being better housed.

We therefore submit that the State might consent to advance money on the annuity system, and we point out that this is already done in England in the case of loans for the housing of the working classes.

(59.) From the information supplied to us by the Corporation staff, we have ascertained that the average rent paid by the working classes for the accommodation they at present occupy in tenement and small houses is 3s. per week.

We believe that this is not the true measure of their capacity to pay rent, as we think that they would be willing if provided with decent dwellings, to pay a somewhat increased amount. We are disposed to hold that for the present, at all events, the average rent that is paid by the tenants of the dwellings provided by the Corporation and who belong to all grades of the industrial classes is a more reasonable index of their rent-paying capacity; this is 3s. $7d.$ per week.

(60.) Assuming that the State consented to advance the money on the annuity system, the following would be approximately the annual outgoings throughout the whole period on the basis of an average expenditure per dwelling of £250 and a sixty-four years' period at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|----------------|
| Interest and repayment of Principal | 9 | 16 | $9\frac{1}{4}$ |
| Cost of Public Health services | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Cost of insurance and supervision | 0 | 11 | 5 |
| Average cost of maintenance | 1 | 15 | 4 |
| | <hr/> | | |
| | £14 | 3 | $6\frac{1}{4}$ |

In order to pay this amount without any loss to the rates, it would be necessary to charge an average weekly rent of 5s. $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ We believe, however, that an average rent of 3s. $7d.$ is, at present, all that could be reasonably charged having regard to the fact that provision has to be made for the housing of a number of workers whose earnings do not admit of their paying rent commensurate with the cost of the accommodation they require. On these figures there would be a weekly loss of 1s. $10\frac{1}{2}d.$ to be met out of the rates, amounting on 14,000 dwellings to £1,312 10s. per week, or £68,250 per annum, equal almost to 1s. $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the pound on the rates.

This amount would be an entirely excessive one to place on the shoulders of the rate-paying community in Dublin, in view of the figure at which the rates stand at present. From a return submitted by Mr. Eyre, City Treasurer, it would appear that the average rate for the past ten years has been 10s. $5d.$ for the North Side, and 10s. $1d.$ for the South Side, and many of the witnesses at the Inquiry stated that this very high rate was the cause of retarding the commercial prosperity of the city. We fear, therefore, that any substantial increase in this burden would be altogether detrimental to the best interests of the City, and as a natural consequence to the welfare of the working classes.

(61.) We will next show what would be the effect if the money was advanced on the Labourers Acts terms, which are annuity for $68\frac{1}{2}$ years (at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. covering principal and interest), and also if the period for repayment was extended to eighty years, taking interest in the latter case at either 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

If the money was advanced on Labourers Acts terms the gross annual charges per house would be £12 9s. 3d., thereby effecting a saving to the rates of about 6d. in the pound. If advanced for a term of eighty years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the gross annual charges per house would be £13 13s. 8d., and a saving of only 2d. would be effected, but if advanced for eighty years at 3 per cent. the annual charges would be £12 12s. 4d. effecting a saving of about $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. Under the most favourable of these proposals the rates would be required to pay about $11\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound for providing the housing accommodation required in addition to the burden they already bear of $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound, making a total of 1s. 2d., which we think would still be excessive.

(62.) We suggest for consideration whether the principle of giving grants in aid for the providing of proper dwellings for the working classes having been recognised in the Labourers Acts, similar facilities for the provision of suitable dwellings in the urban areas in Ireland should not be granted, and this view was strongly urged upon us at the Inquiry. We would refer to our remarks in an earlier portion of this report showing how dependent the City of Dublin is commercially on the general well being of the rural areas, and this applies with equal force to nearly all the urban areas in Ireland. While much ameliorative legislation has been passed in the last thirty years for the direct benefit of the working classes in the rural areas, the same classes in the urban areas have not had the advantage of corresponding legislation, although in some cases the circumstances of both are almost identical.

(63.) Assuming that the force of this claim is recognised and that the State give a grant equivalent to the smaller of the two Government grants made under the Labourers Acts, namely, 16 per cent. of the total amount required for annual repayment of principal and interest, this would, if the Labourers Acts' terms as regards period and mode of repayment be adopted, reduce the annual charge in respect of each house from £12 9s. 3d. to £11 3s. 3d. The following Table shows the result of the various schemes detailed, and assuming the cost per house to be £250, and the average rent 3s. 7d. per week, and the number of houses to be 14,000.

| Period of repayment | Rate of Interest. | Full charge on Rates in respect of loan of £250 to defray the cost of a house. | Poundage Rate to meet charge in preceding column or 14,000 houses if placed entirely on the Rates. | Net charge per house on Rates allowing for 16 per cent. contribution from State towards the annual sum required for repayment of Principal and Interest. | Poundage Rate to meet net charge in preceding column on 14,000 houses. |
|--|-------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Years. | Per Cent. | £ s. d. | d. | £ s. d. | d. |
| 80 | $3\frac{1}{2}$ | 4 7 4 | 15·7 | 2 17 5 | 10·35 |
| 80 | 3 | 3 6 0 | 11·9 | 1 19 6 | 7·12 |
| $68\frac{1}{2}$ (Labourers Acts Terms). | — | 3 2 11 | 11·3 | 1 16 11 | 6·65 |
| 64 | $3\frac{1}{2}$ | 4 17 $2\frac{1}{4}$ | 17·5 | 3 5 $8\frac{1}{2}$ | 11·84 |

(64.) It may be urged that our calculations are based on an unchangeable rent of 3s. 7d. for the whole period, and that better housing and increased commercial prosperity to which everyone is looking forward may ultimately lead to the rent paying capacity of the working classes being brought up to an economic standard. The State might therefore hold that it should not be saddled with a fixed burden of 16 per cent. during the full period. We recommend, if our proposals are entertained, that the State should reserve to itself the right of revising its financial liability at the end of, say, each ten years.

(65). It will be seen that so far our consideration of the financing of future schemes has not contained any reference to the present housing fund to which we referred earlier in this report.

This omission is purposely made, as we fear that a grant in aid of 16 per cent. will scarcely prove sufficient to enable many of the smaller and poorer Urban areas in Ireland adequately to house their workers. We therefore consider that the income from this fund should be devoted to specially assisting those Urban districts whose rates (notwithstanding the adoption of our recommendations) for housing purposes may be considered excessive. We suggest that the basis of distribution of this fund be entrusted to the Local Government Board to settle after a full consideration of the special circumstances of each Urban area.

(66). It was put before us by many of the witnesses that full benefit of the expenditure of money for the cure or prevention of Tuberculosis could not be derived until the housing question was fully dealt with. We concur in this view, as it would appear to be of questionable advantage sending patients, for the period of eight or ten weeks, to sanatoria fitted with all modern appliances and allowing them back to housing conditions that are in many instances the source of the evil themselves.

It is not improbable that if decent and proper houses were provided for the people, much saving might thereby be effected both to the State and Municipality by the raising of the moral tone of the people and the almost certain consequent reduction in crime and sickness.

Both these considerations furnish, in our opinion, strong grounds for generous financial treatment.

(67). Leaving the question of finance, we are confronted with the question of future administration.

It was suggested by some witnesses that it was not desirable that the Corporation, on account of its many other duties, should be left to undertake housing operations on a large scale, and one witness, Mr. Aston, put forward a concrete proposition for the formation of a housing authority.

While we see some force in this view, we do not think it expedient to take the matter out of the hands of the Corporation.

The housing question is so intimately bound up with many other questions over which the Corporation have and must continue to have control, that the creation of another body would only add to the difficulties which already surround the problem.

Under the law as it stands at present the Local Government Board's powers over the Corporation in regard to housing matters are largely of an affirmative character, and those powers which are not affirmative can only be put into operation on a formal complaint being made to them.

We suggest that inasmuch as no complaint in compliance with the statutes has ever been made to the Local Government Board in the case of Dublin, a strengthening of their powers both under the Public Health Acts and under the Housing Acts is necessary. We recommend that they be empowered to consider as a complaint made to them under the Public Health Acts or Housing Acts any formal report of their Medical Inspector, and, further that all the powers they at present have under the Labourers Acts should be conferred on them for the purposes of the Urban Housing Acts.

(68). We turn now to the lines on which building operations should in future be undertaken. The state of affairs which it is sought to remedy is not one that has sprung up suddenly, but it is one that has come to a crisis after a growth of certainly 70 years and possibly much longer. Even if it were possible it would not be desirable to seek to cure it in one or two years. Nothing would, in our opinion, be so detrimental to the best interests of the city or more likely to attract a further population to the city than hasty and indiscriminate building of dwellings for the working classes.

At present the overcrowding and insanitary conditions are confined practically to within what may be termed the old City boundary, and what is required is decentralisation, and while we are satisfied that there are a number of workers, particularly in Mountjoy, Trinity, and North and South Dock Wards who, from their employment on the Quays would require to be housed within a convenient distance of their work, still we believe that there are a large number of others all over the old City who could, without much disadvantage to themselves, be housed on the outskirts of the old City. We therefore deprecate much work being undertaken at the start in the heart of the City, and would rather see such houses as may be built erected on virgin soil in suitable sites on the outskirts. The Borough Surveyor's evidence shows that there are 1,146 acres of land at present either under grass or tillage which are stated to be available for building within the City boundary.

(69) There are in addition a large number of vacant derelict sites and insanitary areas in the City, the exact acreage of which we have not been able to ascertain, but they represent a substantial quantity of land, and are enumerated in a schedule given in the Appendix. We also submit a Map with these sites and areas marked thereon. They are in many instances occupied by ruins in various stages of decay, and in some cases are mounds of accumulated masonry and filth. They are to be seen in nearly all parts of poorer Dublin, and we have had photographs taken of some of them, which we print with this report, together with others showing typical tenement and small houses. In their present condition these sites and areas are an eyesore, and a reproach to the City.

Hitherto it has been the practice in dealing with such sites or areas to include them in a housing scheme under either Part I. or Part II. of the Act of 1890, with the consequent result that the owners have been freed from the burden of putting their property into a sanitary condition, and the clearing of these areas when they have been acquired has formed no inconsiderable item in the cost of the various schemes.

We think that the cost of making sanitary such property should not be borne by the ratepayers, but should fall on the owner of the property, and we point out that this principle underlies all the provisions of the Public Health Acts. As the law stands at present the powers of the Corporation or local authorities are somewhat limited in cases such as these, unless they proceed to acquire the areas under the Act of 1890.

We suggest that their powers should be extended, and that the law should be amended so as to make it quite clear that the owner of property on which there are insanitary houses, or buildings in a state of decay or dilapidation, or mounds of debris, all of which we suggest should in themselves constitute an insanitary condition, can be compelled by the local authority to clear his property of such houses or buildings and to remove the debris. If he should fail to do so we think that the sanitary authority should have power to do the work for him, and by entering on the lands for that purpose thereby become owners in fee of the area or site, unless the owner within a reasonable period pay the full cost incurred by the sanitary authority in carrying out the work, and before allowing the owner to redeem the cleared area by payment as above, he should be obliged to satisfy the local authority as to his title to same. We think that the Corporation should have borrowing powers for the purpose of carrying out any work of clearance in the manner suggested.

Of course this provision should be safeguarded in the owners' interests by rendering it obligatory on the Corporation to serve notice on the owners interested or reputed to be interested, and by putting up notices on the site as to their intention to clear the site. Having cleared the site ample notice should be given to the owner that unless he redeems his interest within a reasonable time he shall be considered to have forfeited his right of redemption.

We think that in the case of sites acquired in this manner, and which might be suitable for dwellings for the working classes, it should be competent for the Corporation either to lease them or sell them, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, to any persons or companies who would utilise them for that purpose at a cost that would fully compensate them for the work of clearing. As regards sites that might not be suitable for workmen's dwellings they might be disposed of, subject to the Local Government's Board's approval, to the highest bidder, and any profit arising out of their sale might be utilised to reduce the ratepayers' liability in regard to the provision of working class dwellings. In cases where the owner or owners either clear the area themselves or subsequently redeem it, and that the local authority consider it advisable to acquire the land for the housing of the working classes it can be acquired under the other powers of the Corporation.

(70). It is necessary when large building operations are contemplated that they should proceed on regularly defined lines. We suggest that by starting on the outskirts on sites which are obviously suitable, and which could not interfere with further development, congestion in the centre will be relieved, and concurrently with this, the civic authorities should make a comprehensive survey of the City, and by the exercise of the powers we have suggested above secure the clearance of derelict sites, and ruinous buildings. We consider that they should be in a position, say at the expiration of two years, to put before you a complete scheme of housing for the working classes in the City. If these views meet with your approval, we submit that the question of building on sites already acquired might be reconsidered.

(71). We recommend that more freedom be given to the local authority, with the consent of the Local Government Board to acquire, by agreement, suitable building sites whenever a favourable opportunity offered.

(72). We feel that we must touch upon a matter which was referred to by some of the witnesses, namely, the question of the extension of the City boundaries so as to include Pembroke and Rathmines Townships.

In regard to this matter, so far as it affects housing only, there would not appear to us to be any urgent necessity at present for the extension of the boundary.

(73). We next come to deal with the question of amending the laws in regard to Arbitration proceedings where land is taken compulsorily. It appears to us that both much time and money could be saved if Article 8 of the First Schedule to the English Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 were applied to this country. We would also recommend the application of Article 9 of the same Act. The latter article relates to fixing a scale of costs, and gives the Arbitrator power of determining and disallowing witnesses costs under certain conditions. We think this latter section might be extended so as to give the Arbitrator power in cases where an offer has been made and refused, and in which he is satisfied that the offer is a reasonable one, to charge the owner with an amount equivalent to the consequent cost to the authority of such refusal on his part.

It was suggested to us by Mr. Rice, as previously indicated, that Section 21 (2) and 41 (2) of the Act of 1890 are not sufficiently clear in regard to the directions to the Arbitrator in fixing the value of insanitary property.

That there is a doubt in the exact interpretation of these Sections would appear clear from the fact that the English Housing Act of 1909 under Section 29 legislates for the removal of this doubt, and although we hope that a previous recommendation of ours will prevent the possibility of insanitary property being acquired compulsorily, still we see no reason why an enactment of a similar nature should not apply in Ireland.

We suggest also that the provisions prohibiting an additional allowance being made on account of purchase being compulsory which are contained in Sections 21 and 41 in relation to schemes under Part I. and Part II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, should be expressly applied to schemes under Part III. of the same Act, and we would point out that a similar provision is made in the English Housing Act of 1909. We also consider that Part III. of the Act which is at present only adoptive should be of universal operation, and that it should be made clear as in the recent English Acts that there is power under this part of the Act to provide recreation grounds, playgrounds, &c.

(74). The question of amending the law in regard to proving title was brought under our notice at the inquiry.

As the law stands at present the onus of examining title is thrown on the local authority, who have to bear all the costs, and these are considerable. It was put forward on behalf of the Corporation by Mr. Rice, Law Agent, that much time and money might be saved in regard to the proving of title to lands taken for the purpose of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts if the Land Registry Office undertook the examination. This body has the custody of all the deeds and examination of title is, we understand, part of their ordinary functions. Perhaps arrangements could be made for facilitating the local authorities in this manner. It was also suggested to us that Section 11 of the Clancy Act, 1908, might be amended by the substitution of £250 for £60. We submit these proposals for consideration.

We also think that the clauses in the Labourers Acts as regards the registration and exemption from stamp duty of deeds, &c., in connection with the proving of title might be applied in the Housing of the Working Classes Acts.

(75). It was suggested to us at the Inquiry that there should be a charging power on tenement houses and other houses occupied by the working classes in the case of owners who hold only on short leases, so that the entire cost of remodelling these houses should not fall on the immediate owners.

We have carefully considered this suggestion, and having regard to the fact that a radical change must take place in the structure of those tenement houses which are allowed to remain, and that these structural alterations could not have been contemplated at the time of the original agreement, we think it is not unreasonable that the various owning interests should bear a share of the cost.

There is, however, great practical difficulty in determining how the charge should be apportioned, and we think, therefore, that on the whole the fairest course is to allow the intermediate owners if they so wish to surrender their leases.

We desire to draw attention to Section 67 of the Act of 1890, which authorises the Commissioners of Public Works to lend to private persons holding estate under certain tenure money for the purpose of constructing and improving dwellings for the working classes, and although we have no evidence that the powers under this section have been taken advantage of in regard to improving existing dwellings, the law is there and we are not aware of any reason why it should not be utilised for the purpose for which it was passed.

(76). Mr. Rice suggested that the definition of the tenement house should be extended so as to cover a house let or offered for letting in unfurnished apartments for occupation by members of more than one family. We agree with Mr. Rice that the definition should be extended, but we do not think that he goes far enough, as in our inspection we have come across houses let in furnished rooms to the working classes which would be excluded by the above definition. We suggest that the definition should also include furnished apartments let at a rent which a member of the working class might be likely to pay, say a rent not exceeding 7s. 6d. a week.

(77) The Corporation are somewhat hampered in dealing with tenement houses by the fact that their existing powers cannot be exercised until the house has been occupied as a tenement house.

The Corporation, in the year 1908, promoted a Bill called the Dublin Housing Bill, in which it was proposed that the Corporation should have the power of licensing tenement houses or, in other words, that before a house could be used as a tenement house it would have to be declared fit for such purpose. We see no reason why this power should not now be given to the Corporation. Having regard, however, to the housing conditions obtaining in Dublin at present and to the fact that it would militate much against the ultimate usefulness of a provision of this sort if it was administered with laxity in the beginning, and that it could not be otherwise administered in regard to existing tenements without causing undue hardship we think that it should not come into operation in regard to old tenements for a period of, say, five years, but that its powers should have instant effect in regard to any house not at present a tenement house, but which it may hereafter be proposed to use as such. Power should be given to the Corporation subject to the approval of the Local Government Board to prescribe the conditions precedent to a license being granted, the principal provisions of which should be that each dwelling should be self-contained as defined in a previous portion of our report, that adequate provision for the lighting of halls and stairs has been made by the landlord, that the landlord keeps halls, stairs, landings, passages, and yards clean, that the house be constantly kept in good structural repair, and that the house be not used for any illegal purpose. The licence should come up for revision each year, and be subject to revocation at any time on breach of any of the conditions being proved.

(78). It may be necessary, having regard to the number of interests concerned in a tenement house, to legislate for giving power to the landlord for the time being to enter on the premises to carry out any work that he may be required to do by law.

(79). We are of opinion that where a closing order has been granted and taken effect in regard to an insanitary or dangerous building, and where this building is situated in an insanitary area, that there should be no power to re-open the building, until the area has been certified as being in a sanitary condition by the Local Authority.

(80). It was stated by Mr. Rice that difficulty is often experienced by the Corporation in inducing receivers on property in the Court of Chancery to carry out their obligations as landlords, and we feel sure that it is only necessary to have the attention of the proper authorities drawn to the matter to secure that such property is kept in a sanitary condition.

(81). It was also stated to us by Mr. Rice that the present procedure in the Police Courts in the cases of summonses under the Public Health and Housing of the Working Classes Acts affecting house property is the cause of much loss of time to the members of the sanitary staff of the Corporation who often have to spend a considerable time in the Courts before their cases are called. It was suggested that the Magistrates might fix a special hour each day for the hearing of sanitary cases, and Mr. Rice proposed that a special Magistrate should be appointed for the purpose of hearing these cases. While we cannot go this far we think that there should be little difficulty in arranging as to the special hour.

(82). We come now to the last point that occurs to us as necessary to touch upon in regard to Dublin, and it is one of some importance having regard to the catastrophe that occurred in August of last year in Church Street.

The point we refer to is the inspection of dangerous buildings.

So far as we could gather there is no systematic or comprehensive inspection by the experts of the Engineering Department of the Corporation, with a view of ascertaining whether buildings are in a dangerous condition. It appears to be the practice that when their attention is drawn to any building suspected of being in a dangerous condition by either the sanitary staff of the Corporation or the public, the dangerous building staff inspect the building named and satisfy themselves as to its general condition.

It was put forward by Mr. Buckley, Borough Surveyor, in charge of this branch of the Corporation's work, that with the existing powers it is almost impossible to form a trustworthy opinion in all cases, as there is no authority to open up structures for the purpose of ascertaining their true condition. He suggested that it was desirable that such power should be given, the Corporation bearing the cost of making good any damage so caused should the structure be found to be in good order.

While these powers are somewhat drastic and might be held to be open to objections, we do not feel ourselves justified in refusing to recommend them, in view of the fact that they have been asked for by the Borough Surveyor, who is the responsible officer, and more especially if they are necessary to prevent a repetition of the dreadful catastrophe which occurred in Church Street.

We have ourselves seen houses in several places in the city shored up with baulks of timber, and while this may be necessary as a temporary expedient, pending reconstruction, the safety of such houses should be specially investigated. We desire particularly to emphasize the present necessity, having regard to the introduction of motor-lorry traffic, of a close examination of all buildings which appear to be in any way dangerous or which from their situation are subject to much vibration on account of such traffic. Outside the principal streets most of the buildings in Dublin are very old, and in their original construction timber was largely inserted in the body of the walls. The inevitable decay of the timber has weakened the walls which are in many cases bulged, and out of plumb. Any wall so deformed, is if not actually unsafe, greatly weakened, and no calculation as to its strength can be depended upon. Indeed its safety is a matter of conjecture only. It is a matter of precise fact that any structure such as the wall of a house, is, if subjected to vibration weakened while that vibration lasts to a degree which depends upon the severity of the vibration. If the vibration reaches a certain limit the structure can carry no load at all, and will collapse. The effect is also cumulative, so that a wall originally none too safe not only may become dangerous during the period of such vibration but its strength is in some degree permanently impaired.

It only remains for us to thank the officials of the Corporation generally for their courtesy in furnishing us with all available information, and we think it only fair to say that a special word of praise is due to Mr. Travers, the Chief Superintendent of the Sanitary Staff, and those under him, for the expedition with which they obtained for us the very voluminous returns which were submitted at the Inquiry.

APPLICATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO IRISH TOWNS GENERALLY.

(83) We have obtained from the various Town Authorities throughout Ireland information as to the work done by them under the Housing Acts, a summarised statement of which will be found in the Appendix.

We are satisfied that the problems surrounding the housing question in Dublin present themselves in much the same form in most of the towns in Ireland, and we feel that little advantage would be gained by analysing them over again in detail. The legislative and financial measures we have advocated for Dublin would, therefore, apply equally to all the other towns in Ireland.

We desire, however, to revert to the recommendation we have already made relating to the distribution of the existing Housing Fund, as we think that this recommendation requires further development. As we have stated, some of the smaller urban districts in Ireland will find it difficult, even with the assistance of the terms recommended in the case of Dublin, to carry out schemes that would be sufficient to meet the housing necessities of the working classes in their districts.

This inability is due to their small valuation per head of population, and a scheme of even moderate size would impose a rate which would be altogether beyond the resources of the ratepayers.

The wages of the labourers in these small Urban areas do not range high, and while the rents they at present pay might possibly admit of an increase, we fear they could not be raised to such a degree as to render special aid unnecessary. The circumstances of these workers differ very slightly, if at all, in these areas from those of the rural labourer, and this was one of the considerations which led us to recommend the extension to Urban housing of the financial clauses of the Labourers Act.

The general condition of these Urban areas, in our opinion, makes it essential that they should be specially subsidized for the purposes of carrying out housing operations, and the recommendation we have made in regard to the distribution of the Housing Fund will enable the Local Government Board to give effect to this view.

As in Dublin, we would urge the necessity of each Urban District Council considering the requirements of its district as a whole and formulating a comprehensive scheme, and, in order to do this, they should thoroughly inform themselves by special investigations

of the numbers of the working classes in their district and the conditions under which they live. Until this information is obtained it would not be possible to form even an approximate idea of the number of dwellings required to house the workers in the different Urban centres, and any estimate of the amount of money required to provide such accommodation would necessarily be a matter of conjecture.

We have had under consideration the fact that it may be necessary for some Urban Authorities, in order to deal effectively with the housing question, to seek an extension of their boundary, but we do not feel able, with the information before us, to say in what cases this will arise. We suggest that the law might be amended so as to permit of this question being dealt with at the Local Inquiry held into the housing scheme, and that the Local Government Board should be empowered to authorise any necessary extension, notwithstanding the fact that the Urban District Council might not have been able to secure the assent of the County Council.

We suggest, having regard to the difficulties that the interpretation of the Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1876, has, in some cases, placed in the path of housing schemes in the smaller Urban Areas, that it may be desirable to modify somewhat the terms of Section 12 of the above Act, so as to permit of the Local Government Board using its discretion where they are satisfied that the discharge of crude sewage into a non-tidal river shall not cause injury or nuisance.

We have the honour to remain,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed), CHARLES H. O'CONNOR.

S. WATT.

J. F. MACCABE.

ALFRED P. DELANY.

To

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD FOR IRELAND.

MEMORANDUM BY MR. MACCABE.

I sign the Report, with the following reservations:—

1. I do not accept any statement which expresses or implies that the sanitary administration of the Dublin Corporation is, or has been, defective, or, that it is in any way responsible for the present housing conditions in Dublin.

What the Corporation (during the short time it has had powers to act) has done is to reduce by thousands the number of tenement houses, compel the introduction of the water-carriage system of sewage, and reduce enormously the zymotic death-rate.

What the Corporation has left undone is, in my opinion, beyond its power to effect in practice. The tenement system is, as my colleagues say, bad in itself, and, in my opinion, no sanitary regulation could do more than prevent the evil becoming absolutely intolerable.

2. Whilst agreeing generally with my colleagues' views regarding future building operations in the City, I do not think they go sufficiently far concerning one vital point. The past schemes of the Corporation show little evidence of conformity with modern ideas. They have looked to a part and not to the whole of the City. The maximum number of houses has been put on each site, and the resulting density of population perpetuates slum conditions.

If even the areas which have already been acquired are built upon before a Civic Survey is completed, I shall look upon it as a grave misfortune. A Civic Survey embraces all the factors hitherto left out of consideration—the topography, the means of communication, the industries (past, present, and future) and the movements, needs, and occupations of the population of Dublin and its surroundings, and without such information no Town Plan can be produced. To build without a Town Plan in the old City will prevent effectually Dublin ever becoming what it should be—as beautiful as its own surroundings.

J. F. MACCABE.

7th February, 1914.



Waste ground and ruins near Chancery Street, the houses of which are shown in the background.



Waste ground, and ruins, Cook Street.



Smullen's Court, off Church Street.



Ruinous houses near corner of Jervis Street and Parnell Street.



Ruined houses, 68, 69 and 70 Upper Dominick Street.



Dilapidated houses and waste ground, Temple Lane, Hill Street.



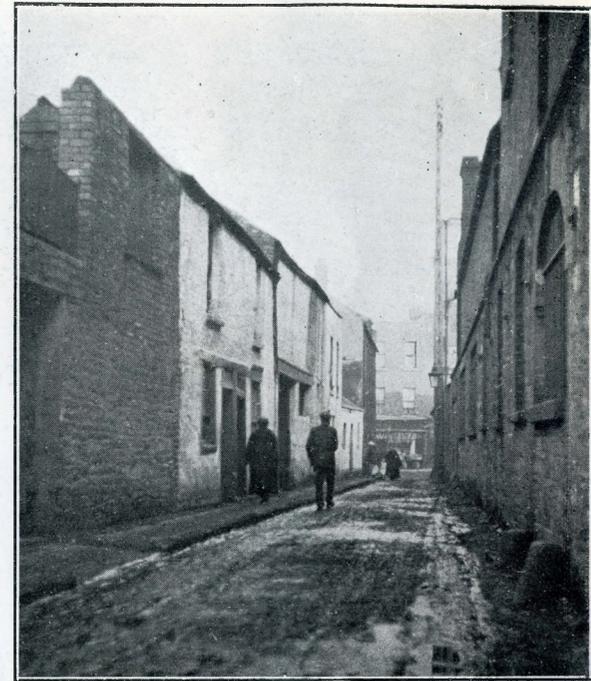
Ward's Cottages, off Church Street.



Hanover Lane, off Francis Street.



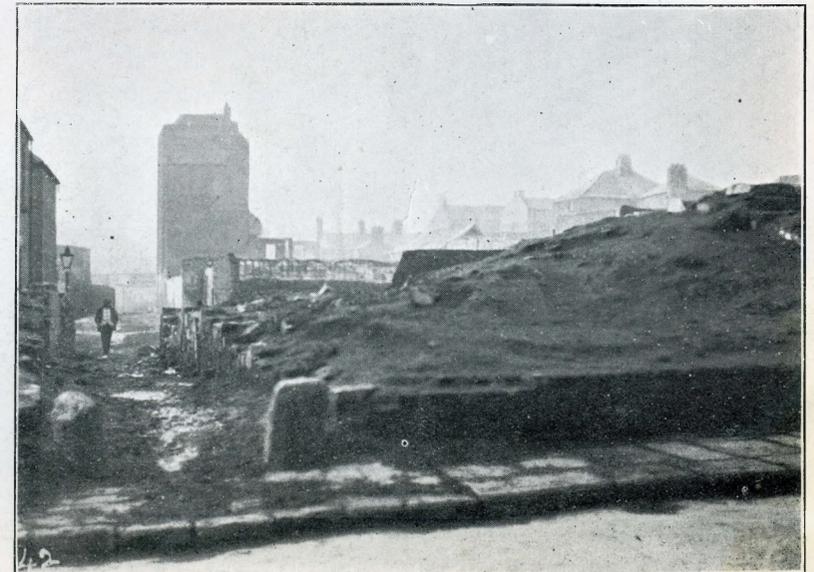
Catherine Street, off Crostich Alley



Swift's Alley (From Engine Alley to Francis Street.)



Park Street, showing ruins and waste ground



Park Street, from Spitalfields.



Storey's Buildings, off Taylor's Lane, off Marrowbone Lane.



Dickson's Lane, off Robert Street, off Marrowbone Lane.



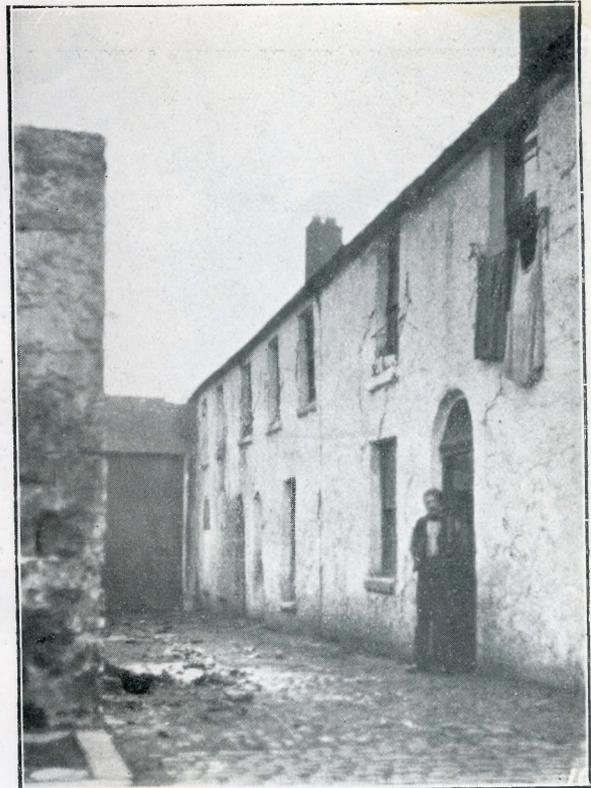
Kavanagh's Court, off Bow Street, off North King Street.
(Ruins, dilapidated sheds, manure heaps, etc.)



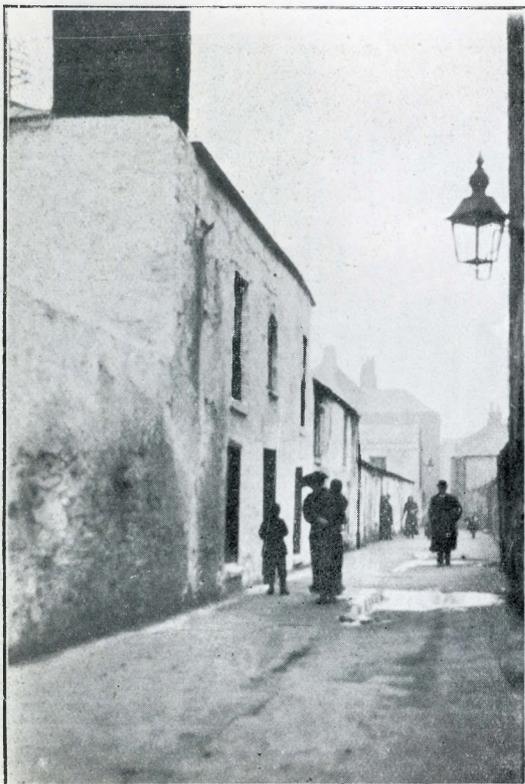
Waste ground and rears of ruined houses in Little Britain Street.



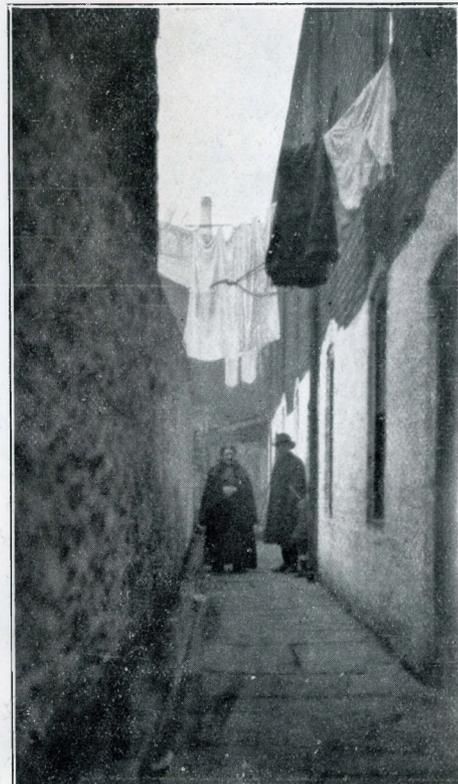
Dilapidated houses, 30 and 31 Grenville Street.



Alley off Gardiner's Lane.



Gordon's Place, between Charlemont Street and Richmond Street.



Magee's Court, off Charlotte Street.



Faddle's Alley, off Dowker's Lane, off Lower Clanbrassil Street.

9



Dilapidated cottages, Hackett's Court, off Upper Kevin Street.



Rear of dwelling in Faddle's Alley, off Dowker's Lane.



Robinson's Cottages, off Cork Street.



Yard of Morgan's Cottages, Power's Court, showing sanitary accommodation.
(Between Upper and Lower Mount Street.)

7



General view of yard, Morgan's Cottages, Power's Court.



Morgan's Cottages, Power's Court, between Upper and Lower Mount Street.

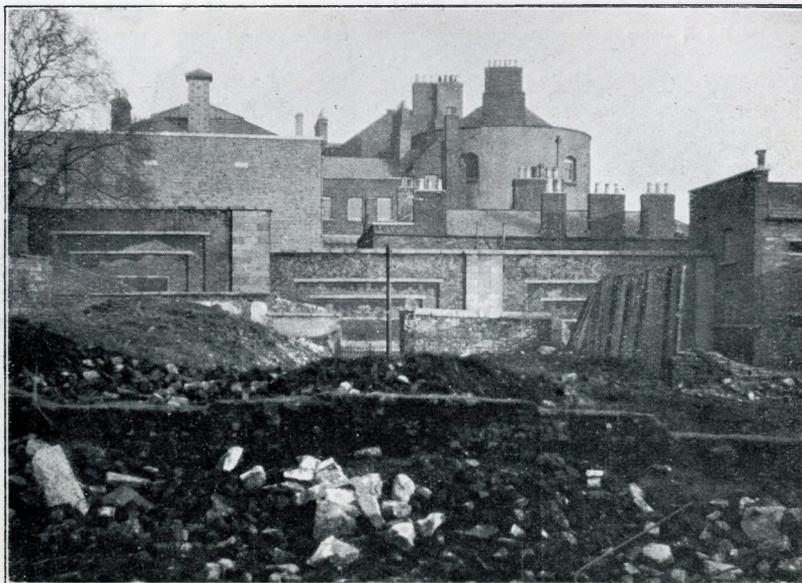


Forbes' Cottages, Forbes' Lane, off Marrowbone Lane.



Rears of old houses, Blackpitts (piggeries, sheds, etc.).

1
00



Ruins of Hoey's Court, between Werburgh Street and the Castle, the Birmingham Tower and Castle steps in the background.



General view of Blackpitts, showing old and ruinous houses.



Ruins of Hoey's Court, between Werburgh Street and the Castle.
(Looking towards Werburgh Street.)



Waste ground and ruins at corner of Railway Street and
Lower Gloucester Street.

6



Ruinous houses, 88 to 93 Railway Street.



Waste ground, with ruinous houses, stables, etc., at North Cumberland Street, Upper. Rears of houses in Gardiner Street in background. (Site of Nos. 11, 12 and 13.)



Waste ground and ruins at corner of Railway Street and Lower Gloucester Street.



Ruins and dilapidated buildings, Railway Street.



Brady's Cottages, off Lime Street.



Waste ground and ruins adjoining Cottage Place, off Boyne Street.



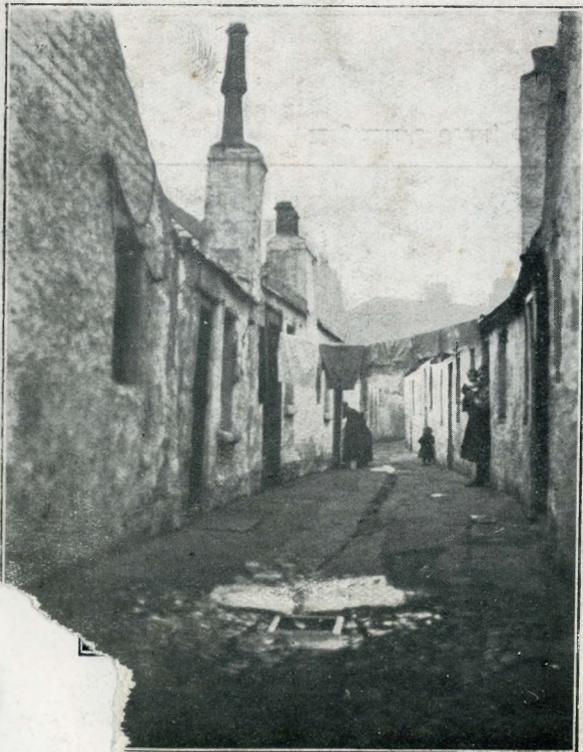
Barry's Yard, off Townsend Street. (The ruined cottage on left is tenanted.)



St. Mark's Court, off Mark's Lane, off Mark Street.



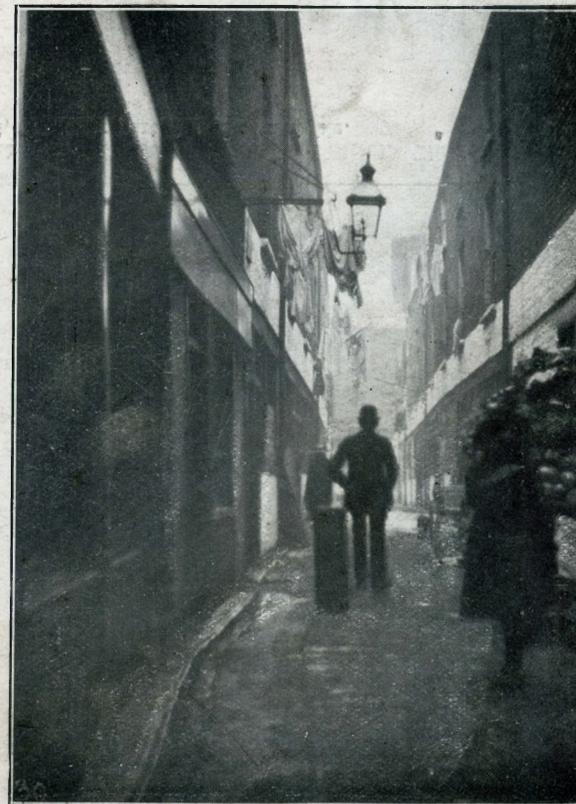
Asylum Yard, Mark's Court, off Mark's Lane, off Mark Street.



McKett's Cottages, off Sandwith Street.



Tyndall's Alley, off Bridgefoot Street.



Denmark Place, between Cole's Lane and Denmark Street.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD FOR IRELAND.

41ST ANNUAL REPORT, for the year ended 31st March, 1913.

Local Government (Ireland) Act, Motor Car Acts, Old Age Pensions Act, Unemployed Workmen Act, &c. Poor Relief and Medical Charities. Public Health Acts, Tuberculosis Acts, &c. Provisional Orders under the Public Health Acts, the Housing of the Working Classes Acts, and the Local Government Acts, &c. Labourers Acts. Loans sanctioned for Housing Schemes, Public Health purposes, &c. Payments from the Local Taxation Account in aid of local rates. Audit. Examination of Parliamentary Bills. Deputations received. Departmental arrangements. Appendices. [Cd. 6978] of Session 1913. Price 1*s.* 9*d.*, post free 2*s.* 1*d.*

DUBLIN DISTURBANCES.

REPORT OF THE VICE-REGAL COMMISSION appointed to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the disturbances and riots which took place in the City of Dublin in the months of August and September, 1913, and into the allegations made against the police of the use of excessive and unnecessary force in the suppression of these disturbances. [Cd. 7269] of Session 1914. Price 2½*d.*, post free 3½*d.*

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

REPORT of the Irish Land Commissioners for the period from 1st April, 1912, to 31st March, 1913. With Appendix. [Cd. 6979] of Session 1913. Price 1*s.* 3*d.*, post free 1*s.* 6*d.*

Return of ADVANCES made under the Irish Land Purchase Acts, during the month of April, 1913. [Cd. 7222] of Session 1914. Price 4½*d.*, post free 6*d.*

Return of PROCEEDINGS under "The Land Law Acts," "The Labourers (Ireland) Acts" and "The Land Purchase Acts," during the month of September, 1913. [Cd. 7203] of Session 1914. Price 2*d.*, post free 2½*d.*

IRISH LAND ACTS, 1903-9.

REPORT of the ESTATES COMMISSIONERS for the year ending 31st March, 1913, and for the period from 1st November, 1903, to 31st March, 1913. With Appendix (Statistical Tables). [Cd. 7145] of Session 1914. Price 11½*d.*, post free 1*s.* 2½*d.*

IRISH MILK SUPPLY.

VICE-REGAL COMMISSION appointed to inquire into the alleged scarcity in the supply of Milk in some parts of Ireland; and to report upon the causes of the deficiency, where it exists, its effects upon the public health, and the means whereby the deficiency can be remedied; and also to inquire into and report upon the dangers of contamination and infection in the present Milk supply, and the methods best adapted to guard against these dangers.

FIRST REPORT.

Submits an instalment of the minutes of evidence taken. [Cd. 6683] of Session 1913. Price ½*d.*, post free 1*d.*

APPENDIX TO FIRST REPORT.

Minutes of Evidence taken in Dublin, Belfast and Newry, 29th November, 1911, to 1st March, 1912, inclusive. List of witnesses. With index. [Cd. 6684] of Session 1913. Price 3*s.* 3*d.*, post free 3*s.* 8*d.*

SECOND REPORT.

Submits a further instalment of the minutes of evidence. [Cd. 6936] of Session 1913. Price ½*d.*, post free 1*d.*