

PART III

CHAPTER VI

PUBLIC HEALTH

*INCLUDING MORTALITY RATES, MAIN DRAINAGE,
CLEANSING AND SCAVENGING, INFECTIOUS DISEASES
AND HOSPITALS, TUBERCULOSIS, VENEREAL DISEASES,
SMOKE ABATEMENT, MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE*

IN order to trace the development of public health through the century, we have included in the chapter some services that are not under the control of the Public Health Committee,¹ and we have not dealt with others that are. Lack of space made it impossible to deal with every branch, and we have chosen those that illustrate—in Manchester—the development that was taking place all over the country in the same period. When the newly elected municipal councils first turned their attention to the problems inseparable from the accumulation of large masses of people in towns where nothing had replaced the primitive sanitation of the village, they felt that improvement of the environment was the first necessity.

Scientific knowledge of the diseases that ravaged a city like Manchester was almost non-existent. Vaccination gave a weapon against smallpox, but the method by which infection was borne in the case of cholera, typhus, typhoid, dysentery and those "miasmatic" fevers which were thought to come from the damp climate, was unknown until the middle of our period. Isolation in cases of infectious disease was gradually secured and curative treatment of the individual, whether the sufferer from tuberculosis or the child, did not come about until the twentieth century. The importance of fresh air, and therefore of good houses, of exercise and recreation, and therefore of playing-fields, of personal hygiene

¹ The first Health Committee was appointed in 1868, some of the duties having previously been performed by the Nuisance Committee and the Building and Regulations Committee. In 1890 the Health Committee became the Sanitary Committee and the newly formed Cleansing Committee took over some of its work. In 1919 the name was again changed to Public Health Committee.

and proper feeding, and therefore of school nurses, health visitors and child welfare clinics, has only been recognized by the public in the last twenty-five years.

A hundred years ago Manchester had very little water, no main drainage, no scientific collection and disposal of refuse, no adequate accommodation for infectious or other diseases, no provision for the health of the children who died in such appalling numbers. Gradually she has acquired all the services, some in advance of, some behind, other towns. Apart from housing, she is now free with one exception to devote her public health activities to ensuring that every citizen shall live a healthy life to the full span of years. The exception is smoke abatement. Although Manchester tackled the problem early it is still far from being solved, but that is not entirely the fault of Manchester.

MORTALITY RATES

The mortality rates are the recognized index of the state of the public health. That being so, Manchester must have been an exceptionally unhealthy city even in the times when all cities were unhealthy, for she occupied a very bad place amongst the other large towns. She often had the highest death-rate of all and was almost always amongst the three worst. As we shall see, Manchester's bills of mortality were the subject of anxious inquiry and comment by her public-spirited citizens in the early part of our century; and later, after the first appointment was made in 1868, by successive Medical Officers of Health.

The Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths Act was passed in 1836 and the General Register Office was set up. The year 1838 appears to be the first for which an annual report was published, but in that and the two succeeding years no attempt seems to have been made to get out mortality *rates*, only to supply the numbers of deaths that occurred in certain districts.

For comparing Manchester's death-rate with that of other large towns, the first figures are in a table in the Registrar-General's Report for 1858 which gives the annual average death-rate over ten years (1841-51) for twenty large towns. A similar table appears in the 1868 report, taking us up to the year 1861, but unfortunately it is not repeated after that.

The figures for England, Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester are set out in the tables below:

<i>Average Annual Death-rate per 1,000 in the 10 years— 1841-50</i>		<i>Average Annual Rate of Mortality per 1,000 in 10 years— 1851-60</i>	
England	.. 22	England	.. 22
Birmingham	.. 26	Birmingham	.. 27
Manchester	.. 33	Manchester	.. 31
Liverpool	.. 36	Liverpool	.. 33

For 1868, the year when a Medical Officer of Health was at last appointed for Manchester, the comparative mortality rates as given by the Registrar-General were: Birmingham, 25·4; Liverpool, 30·4; Manchester—the highest in the country—33·6. Thenceforward we can trace in the reports of the first Officer of Health and his successors, Manchester's death-rate slowly improving, though with frequent setbacks and reversions to a higher figure, as one sanitary reform after another was effected, until we come to the present century when the improvement becomes more persistent.

But before passing to the years after 1868, let us turn back to the 'forties and get from another angle sidelights on the Manchester death-rate—that is, from individual investigators and those early voluntary associations which were such a feature of the city's public life. That the incidence of death was highest in early childhood was noted: William Jones, writing in 1840,¹ showed that the percentage of deaths under four years of age was 44·46 for Manchester and 43·64 for Liverpool compared with Birmingham 41·08, London 38·13, and England and Wales 37·08.

The high death-rates not only of children but also of young adults in Manchester troubled the Statistical Society a little later. Their report on "The Annual Mortality Bills, 1840-1841" includes the following table:

TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER	
<i>Percentage of Total Deaths at Different Ages:</i>	
	<i>1840</i>
Under 1 year	.. 26·50
All under 20 years	.. 64·25
All 20 years and upwards	.. 35·74

¹ Vital Statistics of Manchester, 1838-9.

The same report tells us that of 706 spinsters who died at ages 16 to 102 (!) in 1840-41, no less than 70·92 per cent were between the ages of 16 and 30.

A further illustration of the loss of child life is found in the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners in 1842.¹ "It is an appalling fact that, of all who are born of the labouring classes in Manchester, more than 57 per cent die before they attain five years; that is, before they can be engaged in factory labour, or in any other labour whatsoever."

As soon as Dr. Leigh became Officer of Health in 1868 he set himself to examine Manchester's "unenviable position as one of the most unhealthy towns in the kingdom." The pollution of the air by smoke and by foul effluvia from cesspools and middens, the lack of hospitals for infectious diseases and finally the effects of poverty were all regarded as contributory causes. In his annual report for 1874,² wishing to call attention to the sociological factors influencing the death-rate, he gives the comparison of deaths for children under five in a mixed population of rich and poor—poor predominating—compared with a selected group of well-to-do people. He found that the average percentage of deaths of children under five to the total deaths in Manchester for the five years 1869-73 inclusive was 47·6, but the average percentage of deaths at similar ages for the same period amongst families belonging to the Society of Friends was only 12·9.

In 1877 the mortality dropped to 25 per 1,000, and Dr. Leigh regarded this satisfactory result as due to the fact that some 40,000 pail closets now replaced the old middens and ashpits in the central districts.

In 1886 it was still nearly as high, 24·69, and would have been higher but for the extension of the city in 1885 to include the healthier districts of Rusholme, Harpurhey and Bradford. In this year Dr. Leigh calls attention to the higher incidence of deaths in the poorer districts. Ancoats had the highest mortality rate—24·4, while Beswick was 22·0, St. George's 21·8 and Hulme 21·3. Of the newly-incorporated districts, Rusholme, then a high-class residential suburb, had a mortality rate of 11·0 per thousand;

¹ Report of the Poor Law Commissioners on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain, 1842, p. 158.

² City Council Minutes, April 1, 1874.

Harpurhey was considerably higher, 18·1, and Bradford higher still, 20·1.

Dr. Niven¹ comments in his report for 1898 on the position of Manchester's death-rate—24·80—amongst the thirty-three great towns, only two, Liverpool and Salford, having a higher figure. "*Manchester's high death-rate,*" he says, "*still awaits explanation.*"

The beginning of the twentieth century brought new developments when the discovery was made that the death-rate of infants under one year of age was not falling, and that the problem must be tackled otherwise than by environmental improvement. The Registrar-General commented on this fact as follows:

"In the course of the forty years ended in 1900 the corrected death-rate at all ages had fallen by about 15 per cent,² but no such corresponding reduction could be recorded in the proportion of deaths of children under one year, the average ratio to the total births having been fairly constant in each decennium."³

The story of how public health administration in Manchester gradually took the child under five in hand and later the victim of tuberculosis is related elsewhere in this chapter. Meanwhile, in addition, many environmental improvements were going on, housing and smoke abatement, however, lagging behind the rest.

Let us look again at the Manchester death-rates, summarizing Table 1 in the Appendix. The general death-rate for the year 1900 was exceptionally high (27·4). The average death-rate over the five years' period 1896-1900 was 22·7; for the next five years' period 1901-5 it was 20·1 and had dropped to 17·7 in the following quinquennium.⁴ Over the next two quinquennia there was a substantial drop to 13·9 and 13·8 respectively. Twice only has the Manchester death-rate fallen below 13; it seems to fluctuate just above that figure as will be seen from the table for the last five years:

¹ He succeeded Dr. Tatham as Medical Officer of Health 1894-1922. His early reports were regarded as classical treatises on Public Health administration, and were greatly in demand by other medical officers.

² The reference is to England and Wales as a whole. Manchester could not claim a reduction as large.

³ Annual Report of the Registrar-General, 1907.

⁴ The city was extended to include Moss Side and Withington in November 1904, Gorton and Levenshulme in November 1909, and Wythenshawe April 1931. The inclusion of healthier suburban districts would be reflected in a lower death-rate for the city as a whole.

Year	General Death-rate				
1932	13.0
1933	13.4
1934	12.2
1935	12.9
1936	13.5

The infant death-rate, which was 188 per thousand born for the year 1900 and an average of 192 for the five years' period 1896-1900, began to show a substantial reduction in the new century. The annual average for the five years 1901-5 was 173, and there was a sharp decline to 147 in the next five years. By 1925 it was down to 95, that is, just under half the figure at the close of the nineteenth century. The rates for the last five years are set out below and show a tendency to rise after a highly satisfactory drop in 1934.

It might be interesting once more to compare Manchester with Liverpool and Birmingham. Taking the last five years, their mortality rates are as follows:

DEATH-RATES IN:

	MANCHESTER		LIVERPOOL		BIRMINGHAM		
	General	Infant	General	Infant	General	Infant	
1932	..	13.0	85	13.2	91	11.2	67
1933	..	13.4	75	14.4	98	average 1931-35 10.9	average 1931-35 64
1934	..	12.2	69	13.1	81		
1935	..	12.9	71	13.1	83		
1936	..	13.5	77	12.9	75	11.3	62

It will be seen that over the last five years Liverpool has had a higher mortality rate, both general and infantile, than Manchester's, while Birmingham has, as hitherto, considerably lower figures.

One other comparison in the matter of death-rates remains to

be made—not Manchester in comparison with other towns, but one part of Manchester with another. It has already been shown that quite early attention was called to the higher death-rates in the poorer parts of the city. In spite of all that has been done, and in the last thirty years in particular, it still remains true that the wards in the inner ring, where the poorer people live, have higher death-rates than the suburban wards where the middle-class predominates.

Year 1936

Ward	General Death-rate	Infant Mortality
Inner Ring:		
All Saints	17.57	110
Medlock-street	14.46	92
New Cross	20.66	92
Suburban:		
Chorlton-cum-Hardy	11.06	77
Didsbury	10.33	43
Withington	9.08	54

MAIN DRAINAGE

Nowadays when a builder wishes to erect houses his first step is to inquire from the Corporation whether it will be possible to connect drains from his houses into the main drain. The question of the number of the houses, the lie of the land, and the capacity of the sewers, have all to be settled before he is given permission to proceed. It is then his duty to make the drains from the houses connecting with the main sewers. Before any of his houses can be lived in, he has to receive a certificate of habitation from the City Architect. These certificates are granted before the road is finally paved—which may not be done until years afterwards—but they cannot be given until the sanitary arrangements are satisfactory. A hundred years ago there were no such regulations and, although there were provisions in local Acts making the owner responsible

—as he still is—for paving and draining the road opposite his house, none of this work was done until after the house had been built.

"All around Manchester and Liverpool, houses are springing up on undrained land, some of it actually saturated with moisture, and a great part in that wet and unhealthy state indicated by the growth of rushes. The Acts do not contemplate these new accessions to towns, and do not recognize their existence until they have been for a considerable time exposed to all the evils which sprung up with the buildings themselves."¹

It took over sixty years for the Town Council to provide a satisfactory main drainage system, and excellent though our system now is, we were far behind other cities in realizing the necessity in the interests of health of a proper method of sewage disposal. The story of these sixty years is not very creditable to our forefathers.

The system in force, not only in Manchester, but in most of the towns in the north, where coal, being cheap, was largely used by working-class households, was the privy midden system with an ashpit. Sometimes adjoining the cottage wall, at best in a small back yard, a rough wooden seat was erected over a pit, into which ashes were thrown from the side, the idea being that they disinfected the excrement and did not injure its manurial properties. In very few cases was there a separate privy and ashpit for each house, nor was there always a separate ashpit for each privy. Sometimes, in a court containing many dwellings, there would be three or four privy middens with a common ashpit. These middens, which were not emptied at regular intervals, soon became not only loathsome to sight and smell, but hotbeds of infection for the surrounding houses closely packed with human beings. These middens were usually over-full before they were emptied, and the emptying process, as can easily be imagined, was far from complete or cleanly. Much of the contents were spilled about the yard or street, and after a few years the soil surrounding the middens became thoroughly polluted. Before a pure water supply was brought from Longdendale, many of the wells and springs from which the people drew their water were polluted in

¹ "State of Large Towns," Part II. Appendix. *Report on Sanitary Conditions, 1845*, by Dr. Lyon Playfair, p. 45.

this way, and the cholera epidemics of 1831 and 1849 were largely due to this cause.

Although, as we shall see,¹ improvements were made in the primitive sanitary arrangements by the erection of more privies and ashpits, the drains from the streets and from the houses ran into the rivers, so that they became open sewers. There was no control over the rivers, and each manufacturer whose mill bounded the Medlock or the Irk dammed it up as he liked. This meant that at certain times the rivers overflowed their banks and brought all the filth into the streets and into the houses of those parts of the town.

We owe most of our knowledge of sanitary conditions in Manchester in the 'fifties to a series of reports by Robert Rawlinson, a civil engineer who was employed by the Government. Until 1888 outside the boroughs there was no organization other than that of the parish or township, and neither of these authorities had any sanitary powers. The Public Health Act of 1848 empowered a township to apply to set up a Board of Health, which then had the power to levy a rate. When an application was received, the Government sent down a Commissioner to hold an inquiry in the district. Those who wished to set up a Board, and those who objected, both gave evidence. The Commissioner then made his report to the Government, who took the decision. The procedure was very similar to that under which the Ministry of Health now holds Town Planning and other inquiries.

Various townships on the outskirts of Manchester and Salford—Newton Heath, Pendleton, Broughton, Altrincham—all applied for Boards of Health between 1850 and 1852, and Robert Rawlinson held inquiries and made reports on each of them.

He was a man who held somewhat advanced views about drainage for his time, and although he had no opportunity of inquiring into the drainage of Manchester directly, most of the townships were in the drainage area of Manchester and Salford, and he took the opportunity in each of his reports to deal with the problem as a whole.

In no measured terms he attacked the existing system, which he called one consisting of "a rude and most imperfect description of cesspool." Manchester had many excellent drains, but no inter-

¹ See below, p. 288.

cepting sewers,¹ so that all the refuse drained into the rivers—the Irwell, Medlock, Irk and Cornbrook. “They are not rivers of water, but rivers of sewage, refuse, of great value as manure, if properly applied to the land, but festering and fermenting in the foul streams, they are most disgusting to sight and smell and most pernicious to health. For many miles in length there is death in the evaporation from the sluggish semi-liquid refuse.”² “Parties are living,” he says in another report, “who have fished in the Irwell, but now, all these river courses pass, not water, but liquid refuse, fetid and loathsome to sight, the exhalations from which are most dangerous to health. . . . Natural watercourses cannot, with impunity to the unfortunate residents near, be converted into huge cesspools or sewers.”³

Since 1851 a good supply of water was being brought to the town, and all the better-class houses in the suburbs were fast installing water closets. This only aggravated the evil. “The house drains of the suburbs on all sides pass into cesspools; or out into the nearest streams, watercourses or ditches, many of which are small, shallow or sluggish at all times, so that in summer evaporation taints the atmosphere of the whole district. . . . An improved and increased water supply, with extended house drainage, will only add virulence to the existing evil.”⁴ “The filthy condition of the Irk and the Irwell, the Cornbrook and the Canal is most disgusting in dry weather, the entire volume of these streams is one mass of fermenting corruption from 15 or 20 miles down their course. The water above and in Manchester is used by bleachers, printers and dyers, the refuse from which works is passed into streams. In Manchester, the water thus tainted is further used for condensing and other purposes in steam engines and is discharged heated, back into the open or covered watercourses, which also receive the drainage of this large town, so that a semi-liquid compound is formed, an accurate idea of which no written description can convey. A thick scum coats the surface, upon and over which birds can walk; the putrid carcasses of dead animals, dogs, cats, etc., float and rot in the midst; fermentation takes place rapidly, as

¹ That is a sewer that collected the drainage and carried it away before it could pollute the rivers.

² *Report on Newton Heath*, by R. Rawlinson, 1853, p. 23.

³ *Report on Abingdon*, by R. Rawlinson, 1851, p. 16.

⁴ *Report on Pendleton*, by R. Rawlinson, 1851, p. 16.

large bubbles of gas may be seen escaping, and a thick vapour hangs over the entire area."³

It is difficult for us, with our modern system of drainage and of collection of rubbish, to realize the situation when most of the refuse—except that imperfectly collected by the night-soil men of the Corporation, which could immediately be sold as manure, for there was then no method of treating it—went into the rivers. All the house drains, all the street drains—which received much of the contents of the middens and cesspools from the larger houses—all the tins, bottles, boxes, paper, dead cats, dogs, etc., all the trade refuse from the slaughter-houses, markets, mills, shops, except that collected by the bellcats in the township of Manchester, everything went into the rivers. Nobody in Manchester at that time realized the importance of outlet or intercepting sewers. Rawlinson said: "The question of outlet sewers is one of the first importance in every case of town drainage, because it is the test by which the value of the whole of the secondary works must be tried. Any system of sewerage deficient in this main feature is not only imperfect as regards the works, but in a case of things in many aspects very much worse than if no sewerage or drainage existed. Take the present condition of Manchester and Salford as an example, and it will be found that the inhabitants bordering the rivers Irwell, Irk, Medlock, the Cornbrook and the Bridgewater Canal are, by the sewage of these two populous towns poured out into these rivers and watercourses, placed in much worse sanitary condition than if no sewerage existed; and every so-called improvement of a secondary character will but add to the already enormous evil. The cost paid by the unfortunate landlords and the owners of house and other property on the lines of districts so abused is depreciation of value to an extent which would more than construct the necessary works. The penalty paid by the wretched inhabitants, compelled from force of circumstances over which they have no control, to take their abode here is an undue amount of misery, sickness, fever, cholera and premature death. The punishment recoils back upon the general community in the form of excessive sickness and death at all times, but more observable in epidemic seasons, in largely increased poor's rates to maintain widowhood, orphaned and enfeebled paupers, and to relieve vagrants. . . . It is a costly

³ *Report on Altrincham*, by R. Rawlinson, 1851, pp. 22–23.

and fatal mistake to consider that any town is in a good sanitary condition, or that it is properly regulated, because there are wide thoroughfares, main streets well paved and regularly cleansed, large warehouses, active guardians, numerous relieving officers, costly gaols, and an efficient police force, these are all secondary arrangements, and should be so considered.¹⁴

He estimated that a series of intercepting sewers to discharge their contents on unoccupied land beyond the city where it would be rendered innocuous by air and sun, would cost a sum of £100,000, or £5,000 a year. Some of this cost at least could be recovered by the sale of manure, and he said that the collection of night-soil alone then cost the ratepayers of Manchester and Salford that amount. He pointed out the great advantage of water carriage over privies and middens, and explained that this system should be supplemented by the collection of solid refuse and ashes from each house once a week.

The problem of drainage was not confined to Manchester and Salford. All the rivers were already polluted by towns on their banks before they arrived in Manchester. He quoted the Registrar-General as saying, in reference to the high death-rate from this cause in Lancashire, "What then is wanted? Apparently only this one thing, that the leading men of Lancashire, animated by goodwill, should apply that skill and vigour which have been so successful in the use of machinery, and the production of clothing of mankind, to the amelioration of the social condition of the two millions of Englishmen around them."¹⁵

But although, as he stated, local authorities realized that this work was necessary, nothing was done. Manchester's only contribution to the problem at this time was to inflict a penalty upon anyone who permitted a water closet to empty into the River Medlock. A few years after this series of reports had been issued, instead of tackling the problem boldly, Manchester sought powers in a Waterworks Act¹⁶ to charge 10s. a year for every water closet in houses rented under £30, which would have included all the working-class houses in the city. She wished to do this, she said, as "the consequences of the general adoption of water closets

¹⁴ *Report on Penitence*, by R. Rawlinson, pp. 28-29.

¹⁵ Quoted in R. Rawlinson's *Report on Newton Heath*, 1852, p. 17.

¹⁶ Manchester Corporation Waterworks Act, 1858.

would be that the state of the rivers would be insufferable, that an enormous waste of water would arise, and, in the opinion of the Council, the present sanitary condition of this City would be most seriously deteriorated and a very large additional charge would be imposed upon the inhabitants." Water closets meant new house drains because the existing ones were too small to allow for flushing, and more water than could be provided by the Longendale Works.

But the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association¹ now entered the lists. It sent a deputation to the Parliamentary Committee, and got not only Robert Rawlinson, but Edwin Chadwick, of Poor Law and Public Health fame, to give evidence against this clause. Chadwick explained that as a native of Longsight, he took a considerable interest in the city. Both he and Rawlinson urged the institution of water carriage and a proper treatment of sewage. Much to the annoyance of the Corporation, and in spite of the efforts of the Town Clerk to prove that the privy midden system was both sanitary and cheap,² these representations won and the high charge was not allowed.³

Still nothing was done. The position in England with regard to main drainage was not very advanced. Towns like Liverpool which could drain into the sea had little difficulty, but the Thames, which had been grossly polluted by the drains from London, had only introduced a system of sewage treatment that year, 1858.

In 1863 a Committee was appointed by the Council to consider the question of the River Medlock. This Committee became later the Rivers Committee, the euphemistic title by which our main drainage committee has ever since been known. In addition to the annually increasing pollution of the Medlock, the amount of solid refuse continuously cast into it silted up the bed and increased the risks from floods. It also suffered from the uncontrollable action of riparian owners, who dammed it up and let it loose again to suit their own convenience with no consideration for others.

Powers⁴ were acquired to build protecting walls and to prohibit pollution by any matter whatsoever. There seem to have been no prosecutions under these Acts. Alderman Hopkinson—on whose

¹ Formed in 1851.

² Appendix to Council Minutes, September 1, 1858.

³ There was a shortage of water in the city until the Thirlmere works were finished.

⁴ Manchester Corporation Acts, 1865, 1866, 1871.

initiative the Rivers Committee had been formed—stated that “the powers have been resolutely applied with gentle constant pressure, preventing irritation or resistance. The stronger the known power possessed by the authority, the less need for its application.”¹ This rosy view of the situation was not held by outside experts, and the Royal Commission appointed in 1867 to inquire into River Pollution, which had the indefatigable Mr. Rawlinson as its secretary, announced its intention of visiting Manchester.

After the Commission had been and taken evidence, they wrote to the Council for further information. In reply, the Council did not confine itself to the matter of drainage, but explained various of its other activities, by which means it apparently hoped to distract attention from its drainage deficiencies. It referred to Alexandra Park, the cemeteries, the local town halls, the markets and the waterworks. In reply to a leading question about especially unhealthy areas in the city, it had another answer: it said that areas such as Deansgate, St. George’s, St. Michael’s and Rochdale Road were the most unhealthy, and the state of such districts arose, no doubt, to a considerable extent, from the nature and character of the population, and from their filthy and dissolute habits, and also from the overcrowding of their dwellings. When it could no longer evade the direct question as to whether sickness was attributed to the existence of privy middens and ashpits, it replied ironically that there were differences of opinion, “which are expressed by gentlemen who take an interest in sanitary questions”²—a reference to the Sanitary Association which had given evidence when the Commissioners were in the city. Then, as now, Manchester was ready to resent criticism from an outside authority.

It was just about this time that the Social Science Congress met in Manchester and talked in very uncomplimentary terms of Manchester’s death-rate and housing conditions. A Medical Officer of Health had, largely owing to pressure from without, just been appointed.³ Out of the 67,000 dwelling-houses in the city, there were 10,000 water closets and 38,000 privies, and the Corporation, from a mistaken idea of economy, obstinately stuck to its preference for the latter system. Even so, 28 per cent of the houses had no separate privy.

¹ Memo. by Alderman Hopkinson: lent by Miss Hopkinson.

² Council Minutes, December 2, 1868.

³ See above, p. 165.

There had been no immediate result from the Royal Commission on River Pollution and when Sir Joseph Heron gave evidence before the Sanitary Commission (1871), he reiterated his opinion that privies and ashpits properly constructed were the best system for Manchester under the circumstances; that if all the 38,000 privies were turned into water closets the rivers would become abominable; that there was not enough water for water closets; and that until a satisfactory system of sewage disposal was found, the only thing was to keep out of the sewers as much fetid matter as possible. That could be achieved, he held, by the Corporation having the right to empty the privies. He was evidently satisfied, as he said, that sewage irrigation on to the land was impossible for Manchester, and that it would cost £1,000,000 to take it to the sea.

In view of the fact that Salford began to construct an intercepting sewer in 1872, and that Leeds had a system of sewage treatment in 1874, it is difficult to believe that Heron was justified in this attitude, although it is true that there was not, at that date, complete agreement between experts as to the advantages of water carriage with intercepting sewers. The privy midden system was common to most industrial towns because (owing to the cheapness of coal) ashes, which were supposed to disinfect the refuse, were plentiful. The argument that the working classes could not be trusted to keep water closets in order was also brought forward, and we recognize it as the forerunner of the one familiar to us, that baths in cottages are unnecessary as they would only be used for the storage of coal. At this time, too, there was no accepted method of treatment of sewage beyond that of spreading it on the land. But it is clear that the Town Clerk, in defending the privy midden system, was influenced more by the expense that would be involved in providing the extra water than by the excellence of the system which, he had to admit before the House of Commons Committee in 1858, meant that approximately one and a half tons of refuse from every house was removed on the average only twice a year. The Waterworks at Longdendale had only been working since 1851, and already, owing to the growth of the population and of the trade of the district, the demand was heavier than the experts had calculated, but it was not until 1875¹ that the Corporation was prepared to consider a supply from the Lake District. The Medical

¹ See below, p. 353.

Officer of Health, Dr. Leigh, appointed in 1868, was genuinely perturbed by the high death-rate and by the horrible insanitary system of privy middens. In one of his early reports he tried to get the Council to realize the situation by imagining that all the middens of the city were concentrated in one area. They would make, he calculated, a lake sixteen times the size of St. Ann's Square and five feet deep. Those middens were not emptied at any regular times, but when they were full, a note was sent to the Town Hall and men were sent to empty them. Although the stench from these middens was almost insufferable, the inhabitants only complained when they were full! After he had made an unsuccessful attempt to ventilate ashpits, and to use a cinder-sifter system, he thought that he had found a solution of the problem in the substitution of pail closets for privies, and in the filling-in of cesspools. Thus, in 1872, started the "Dolly Varden"¹ era in Manchester, an advance on privy middens, but much inferior to water carriage. Long, low carts with a dozen compartments collected the pails from the houses, and as they were drawn slowly through the streets, sometimes three together, the stench was nauseating.

It seems curious that Dr. Leigh did not urge the importance of a main drainage system. Perhaps the fact that he was a resident of Manchester and had no experience of methods of other cities made him somewhat conservative. It is only fair, too, to say that fifteen years later other medical men also were in favour of the dry closet system. But other officials were more far-sighted. The Borough Engineer and Surveyor at this time, A. M. Fowler, was in favour of water closets and intercepting sewers to carry the sewage to works where it could be treated, and he reported what was being done at Leeds. As the chief argument against a universal system of water closets was shortage of water, he proposed to utilize for the water closets waste water from the house and rain water from the roofs. This system, he said, was in use in a part of Salford.²

The City Analyst also seems to have realized the importance of the problem. "Although," he wrote, "the total cost of the cure may at first appear great, it behoves Manchester to look as carefully to

¹ The name of a popular scent of the time used ironically.

² Paper read to the Scientific and Mechanical Society, Manchester, on the "Utilization of the Town's Sewage," 1896.

the future sanitary requirements of a city, which may number a million, as she has already done in providing for other requirements, by her new Town Hall and gigantic water scheme."¹

The policy of the substitution of pail closets for privies, which was forced upon owners of property, caused much opposition in the Council. It was done at the owners' expense, but they could pay over a period of seven years. From 1877 the Corporation contributed £1 per closet. The total cost was about £3. It was being carried on at the same time as the more drastic reconditioning of houses under the 1867 Act, and the Health Committee was continually criticized and obstructed in its policy. But it persisted, and after eight years (1881) 60,000 pail closets had been installed. As the total number of houses was now 72,504, this showed that there had been little increase in water closets, which in 1868 had numbered 10,000.

The substitution of pail closets was afterwards described as "next to the provision of an abundant and pure water supply, the greatest sanitary achievement ever effected in Manchester,"² and undoubtedly it was a great improvement on privy middens, but it still left the polluted soil under the houses, and even pail closets added to the pollution if not regularly emptied. The great advantage of this system was that pail closets had to be emptied more frequently than middens.

Two Acts of Parliament, the Public Health Act of 1875, which put the responsibility for providing proper drains upon the owners of property, and the Rivers Pollution Act of 1876—the result of the Royal Commission of 1867—brought the matter again before the Manchester authorities. Salford also, which suffered from the pollution of the Irwell as much as did Manchester, and which had already begun its own intercepting sewer, raised the question. In 1876 the Rivers Committee received a report from its officials recommending an intercepting sewer to Davyhulme, where it was proposed to acquire land for sewage disposal.

The Rivers Pollution Act³ made it an offence for sewage to be passed into the rivers unless it could be shown that the best prac-

¹ City Council Minutes, February 2, 1879.

² Report of the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Tatham, 1891.

³ The administration of this Act was given to the River Medlock Committee, and as more than one river was now concerned, the name was changed to the Rivers Committee.

licable and available means to render it harmless were being used. Manchester realized that she could not claim exemption unless she altered her system, and could not prosecute other authorities which were polluting her rivers higher up so long as she continued to pollute them lower down. Also, the cost of a main drainage scheme to Manchester would be reduced if the surrounding local authorities could be induced to pay their share.

A Conference¹ of fifteen authorities—including nine that were eventually included in the area of Manchester—was called, and met at the Town Hall in 1878. It agreed to obtain a plan of a sewage scheme, the cost to be apportioned according to the amount of sewage contributed by each authority. The City Analyst, as we saw, sent in a report with a strong recommendation for action. The cost worked out at about £560,000, of which Manchester would pay rather over half. When, however, their contributions were made known to the other local authorities, they all withdrew from the scheme. Manchester did not feel inclined to go on alone, and nothing more was heard of the matter for several years, during which time the Rivers Committee said that they had been considering a scheme for the city alone.

Egged on by the Local Government Board, the Committee visited other towns—including Salford—and at last produced a scheme which was estimated to cost £500,000. It was practically the same as the original one of ten years earlier, and included the purchase of land at Davyhulme for sewage treatment. The Council still delayed, and it was only in 1889 that approval was finally given. A part of this scheme was carried out in 1894.

Meanwhile, Dr. Leigh had been succeeded by Dr. Tatham in 1888. Formerly Medical Officer of Health of Salford, he had been accustomed in that more enterprising city to a system of water drainage, and he was anxious to get it installed in Manchester. At his suggestion the Unhealthy Dwellings Committee visited Burnley and Leeds, and recommended that, in view of the new sewage system, water closets should be installed in all houses. Power to insist on this in new houses was taken in 1891,² but owing to the opposition by property owners the case of existing buildings was held up for five years,³ and only went through the Council then

¹ November 12, 1878.

² Manchester Corporation Act, 1891.

³ Under the Manchester Waterworks Act, 1867, 1869, and Manchester Orders, 1881.

because the Corporation undertook to contribute £2,105.¹ towards the cost of the conversion which, with the inclusion of house drains, amounted to £3.10 a house. As the Corporation had only just finished forcing property owners to convert from privy middens to pail closets, this provision was not only expedient but fair. But that did not prevent violent opposition from property owners, who managed to hold up the conversion scheme for at least ten years more.

Meanwhile, the extensions of the city in 1885 and 1890 necessitated an enlargement of the drainage scheme. A new factor had also appeared to complicate the problem, and that was the Ship Canal, which objected to the discharge of sewage very imperfectly treated. The Committee now found that a complete scheme would cost over £1,000,000 instead of £560,000 as originally estimated. At that time Manchester was spending much less per head of the population on sewage than Birmingham, Wolverhampton or even Bury.²

There now ensued a period during which the Council, the Local Government Board and the ratepayers contested the advantages of rival systems of sewage disposal, but the Local Government Board won by refusing to grant borrowing powers for any scheme unless a really satisfactory one was adopted. Meanwhile, the Mersey and Irwell Joint Board, of which Manchester was a member, had summoned the city for pollution of the Ship Canal, and the Stipendiary Magistrate, in imposing a fine, threatened to increase it at the rate of £50 a day if nothing was done. Even the "economists" in the Council now realized that further opposition would be wild extravagance, and the first instalment of thirty-six acres of bacteria beds and twenty-six acres of storm water filters at Davyhulme was completed in 1904. At last Manchester had a satisfactory drainage system. In 1911, when the city had again been extended, a second main drainage system was planned and approved. This second scheme is only just completed. It is calculated to serve not only the city, but a population of 1½ millions, and a drainage area of 39,000 acres until 1960 at least. The system of activated sludge process is considered one of the best in existence.³

¹ It is interesting to know that there was no statutory authority in Manchester for this contribution nor for the earlier one for the conversion from privy middens to pail closets.

² Council Minutes, September 5, 1900.

³ *The City of Manchester*, 1936, p. 105.

Dr. Niven, who succeeded Dr. Tatham as Medical Officer of Health in 1893, was convinced that the death-rate of Manchester, which gave the city an unenviably high place amongst the big towns, was largely due to the lack of water carriage. There was still a great number of privy middens in the suburbs, and the pail closet also, in his opinion, caused an excessive pollution of the soil. Once a really satisfactory system of main drainage was installed, conversion to water closets could be pushed forward. But in 1902, out of a total of 151,471 sanitary conveniences, only 45,686, or 37 per cent, were water closets.¹ A particularly energetic Sanitary Inspector, W. Stansfield, worked out and carried through an ambitious conversion programme at the rate of about 10,000 a year, and by 1917 pail closets and privy middens were entirely abolished. A few years before the work was practically finished, the Council decided to discontinue its contribution to the cost of conversion.

How far the high death-rate of Manchester—higher than that of other industrial towns—was due to its defective sanitary arrangements can never be really determined. It is enough for us that all three Medical Officers of Health were convinced that there was a close connection between the two.

The story of main drainage in Manchester does not reflect credit on the Council. That one of the richest cities in England and one of the largest, should have been behind much smaller towns like Salford and Leeds, in tackling a prime necessity for health, speaks little for the foresight or even for the humanity of our forefathers. But if the story is depressing, it points the moral closely. It was an outstanding case of "penny wise and pound foolish policy." Even if we admit that the system of main drainage recommended by Robert Rawlinson in 1850, and estimated to cost £100,000, would not have been sufficient without extension and improvement for the needs of 1900, there is the other side of the account. If the water carriage system had been introduced at that date, the double cost to the property owners of conversion, first from privies to pail closets and then, ten years later, from pail to water closets, would have been saved. The first conversion from privy midden to pail closet cost the property owners £154,000 during the nine years 1872 to 1881, and the Corporation, which contributed £1

¹ *Conditions in Manchester and Salford*, by T. R. Marr, p. 45.

to each conversion, £59,000, or a total of £212,480. Later, these same pail closets had to be gradually converted into water closets at a considerable cost both to property owners and to the Corporation, who again made a contribution. If the conversion had been carried through energetically in 1892 when powers were first obtained, the Sanitary Committee calculated that there would be an immediate saving of £2,100 and after thirty years—when the loan to enable the Rivers Committee to deal with the sewage (£250,000) had been paid off—a net saving of £15,270 to the rates.¹ This calculation takes no account of the saving in human life and happiness that Manchester sacrificed so callously all these years. By 1897, Dr. Niven reported that of the seventy-eight principal towns of the kingdom, only four still advocated pail closets,² yet still twenty years had to pass before Manchester could be considered a sanitary city.

Apart from the cost of the double conversion, an efficient main drainage system proved to cost less than an inefficient one. In 1900 the cost per head of the population was 8s., in 1937 it was 6s. 6d. That property owners and ratepayers' associations, in their shortsighted zeal for saving the rates and their own pockets, may not always be the best judges even of their own interests and certainly not of those of the community as a whole, is clearly proved in this instance.

CLEANSING AND SCAVENGING

Scavenging is one of the earliest services coming within the sphere of local government. In the township of Manchester we find that by an Act of 1792 the Police Commissioners were required to provide carts to visit twice every week, or oftener if the Commissioners so directed, all streets and places where carts could pass, and give notice of their approach by a loud cry or the sound of a bell, the inhabitants being required to bring their "dust, dirt, dung or ashes, and other filth (except filth from privy)" to the doors of their houses or premises, and to deliver the same to the scavenger,

¹ Report of Sanitary Committee on the Water Closet System, October 19, 1892. (This Report was never signed by the Chairman or presented to the Council.)

² Report of Unhealthy Dwellings Sub-Committee, May 4, 1897.

the expense being made a legal charge on the township rate. But the collection of night-soil or the contents of the privies was no part of their duty. This was disposed of by the landlord to farmers for manure, and there was no regular collection of it. In 1845¹ the Corporation took powers to collect this night-soil and dispose of it.

When the Council was formed, the scavenging of the streets was done under contract by the Road and Street-cleaning Company for the Lamp and Scavenging Committee, which had continued to work under the agreement which this company had had with the Police Commissioners. Part of the scavenging done under this contract was carried out by means of a patent machine invented by Mr. Joseph Whitworth, the first experiment with which was made in London in February 1841, and since that time it had been regularly in use in Manchester and in the townships of Chorlton-on-Medlock and Ardwick. As the cart wheels revolved, the brooms swept the surface of the ground and carried the soil up an incline at the top of which it fell into the body of the cart. It was claimed by the inventor of this machine that it performed in a quarter of an hour nearly the day's work of one man. The machine was used to clean the principal streets and thoroughfares, the others being done by hand labour because they were too narrow to admit the machines.

In 1846 we find dissatisfaction expressed by the Lamp and Scavenging Committee with the way in which the contract was being carried out. There was also a growing feeling that "the cleansing force ought to be under the control of your Committee and that no system of contracting can meet the varying wants of this community." As some of the Council, however, were in favour of renewing the contract with the contractors, the Committee agreed to an alternative plan, whereby there was a division of the scavenging work between the company and the Committee, the company undertaking to do the whole of its cleansing by machine and the Committee making its own arrangements for cleansing some of the roads by hand and also for cleansing the footpaths. This arrangement did not prove satisfactory, and as the company would not hire out the machines to the Corporation, the Committee decided to cleanse the entire township by hand labour. The principal streets were swept daily, the second-class streets three times a week, the third-class streets twice a week, and the fourth-class streets,

¹ Manchester Improvement Act, 1845.

including all courts, alleys and passages, once a week. Judging by the descriptions of the working-class districts, this programme cannot have been rigidly adhered to.

Meanwhile, the scavenging in the other townships, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Ardwick and Cheetham, each under the control of the township committee, was done by contract with a private company, but in Hulme it was done by direct labour.

In 1875, as we saw,¹ the separate township committees were abolished, and their scavenging duties transferred to the Highways Committee of the borough. The removal and disposal of night-soil, however, was transferred to the Health Committee. In 1890 a re-arrangement of committees took place, under which cleansing, scavenging and the removal and disposal of night-soil were again united and put under a new committee, the Cleansing Committee, which has been responsible for the carrying out of these functions ever since.

Meanwhile, the lack of water carriage in Manchester and the rapid growth of the town were raising more acutely than ever the problem of the disposal of night-soil, street sweepings and refuse. There was little scientific disposal of refuse. A certain amount of cinders, broken pots, etc., were mixed with the lime and made into mortar. Some of the slaughter-house refuse was ground with ashes and mixed with excreta and gypsum to make concentrated manure which was sold to farmers, but the great bulk of it was carried to various tips. That at Holt Town, in the middle of a crowded part of the city, caused various protests from the neighbouring residents.

In 1878 the first advance was made in Manchester, when the Holt Town disposal works were constructed. "The scheme was planned on a large and comprehensive scale to deal with 90,000 tons of refuse per annum. Batteries of incineration boilers were installed for the double purpose of burning the ashbox refuse and the generation of power to drive the extensive machinery and plant. Resultant clinkers from the fires were turned into builders' mortar. Pail contents were heat-evaporated in an arrangement of concentrators, riddles and tanks, and manufactured into an artificial fertilizer, the sales of which soon exceeded £20,000 per annum. From the animal and fish offals brought in from slaughter-houses and markets, fats, soaps, size, grease and oils were derived and sold.

¹ See above, pp. 132-133.

There cannot be any doubt that the building of these new works, equipped as described . . . constituted a mile-post in the development of public cleansing. . . . The dump-hole in a field had been superseded by the utilization works.¹⁴

Holt Town works could, however, deal with only part, and in 1885 64 per cent of the refuse was still deposited on the various tips and sent by rail to the rural districts. The difficulties of this problem were increased by the extension of the city in 1885 and by the refusal of the railway company any longer to convey over the country odorous trucks of night-soil.

The reclamation of waste land by the tipping of refuse so that the land, continually fertilized by the contents of pail closets, could then be cultivated, was undertaken by the Committee and the Carrington Moss estate of over 1,000 acres was bought in 1885. The Cleansing Committee itself farmed the land, which soon proved a sound investment. As the city grew, more land was needed and the Chat Moss estate was purchased in 1895. In this case the land was let out to tenants who promised to take a certain quantity of night-soil from the Committee. Since the acquisition of Carrington and Chat Moss, 3,000,000 tons of pail contents, refuse and street sweepings have been deposited upon these estates, and the farmsteads and holdings reclaimed from the bog-land yield a rent of over £7,000 a year.

When the city finally had a proper sewage system and water carriage, the Cleansing Committee was relieved of part of its previous duties, but there still remained the collection and disposal of dustbin refuse and trade refuse and the cleansing of the streets. It is the second of these which presents the greatest problem and yet offers the most scope for progressive methods. In modern developments of refuse disposal the method of incineration is losing ground in favour of that of utilization and salvage. The first separation plant in Manchester was opened in 1920 and the second and third in 1931 and 1932 respectively.

In recent years another form of tipping has been evolved, known as "controlled tipping"; sometimes called the Bradford system, because that city was the pioneer of this method and demonstrated its practicability on a large scale. Owing to the changes that take

¹⁴ "Public Cleansing," by Bertram B. Jones, printed in *Municipal Engineering and the Sanitary Record*, October 25, 1934.

place in the interior of a refuse tip after the tip has been satisfactorily covered by earth or other suitable material, the contents of the tip are rendered harmless. The low-lying land by the Mersey, which is liable to flooding and therefore of little use, is being reclaimed by this method, and nearly 40 per cent of the ashbin refuse is annually deposited in this way.

Manchester was late in turning from horse to motor vehicles both for cleansing the streets and for the collection of refuse. Horse-drawn uncovered dust carts—or only covered by canvas, when the cart was full and not overfull—were a common sight until a few years ago, and can still be seen in some parts of the city. The fact that the work of the Cleansing Committee had attracted to it members of the Council who were experts in buying and caring for horses, but who knew nothing of motor cars, delayed the transition until the waste and inefficiency of the old-fashioned methods were at last realized. The Committee is now doing its best to make up for lost time, and in spite of the thousands of post-war houses with gardens, the dustbins of which take longer to collect and empty, about £74,000,¹ more than a 3d. rate, is being saved by the improved methods.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND HOSPITALS

In considering infectious diseases, we have to realize that the means of prevention had, during the last hundred years, to be acquired slowly and piecemeal. Manchester, in common with the rest of the country, suffered badly from recurrent epidemics of infectious diseases of various kinds, some of which are practically unknown to-day. It will readily be understood that the condition of housing, the absence of main drainage, the gross overcrowding of people in small, dark and airless dwellings, the letting of cellars as separate habitations, the filthy condition of the soil surrounding the houses of the working class, would greatly encourage disease and foster the spread of infection.

We are so accustomed to the machinery of protection against infection that it is difficult to realize that a hundred years ago the most elementary of these were lacking. There was, it is true,

¹ See above, p. 148.

quarantine of a sort, but it did not prevent cholera being brought into the country, and there were no hospitals in which infected persons might be isolated, no means of disinfection except some rough and ready ones such as linewashing buildings, and, what made epidemics especially difficult to deal with, no notification to the sanitary authority of cases of infection. The registration of deaths became compulsory after the passing of the Registration Act of 1836, but registration was imperfect for some years. However, the registration of deaths was sufficiently general to give an indication of the localities chiefly affected during an epidemic. There was no knowledge of the cause of infectious diseases, bacteriology being unknown. There were curious speculations as to whether cholera was caused by a lack of ozone in the air or was affected by the amount of electricity in the air.¹ That in the case of diarrhoeal diseases, to which class cholera belongs, the most potent source of infection lay in the human excrement allowed to accumulate in middens or on the open ground in close proximity to dwelling-places, was not known until much later. The operations of the house-fly in spreading diarrhoea and of the body louse in disseminating typhus were not discovered until the twentieth century.

It was thought that filth had some connection with disease as a source of pollution of water and of air. Against the disease smallpox, a weapon had been discovered in vaccination as early as 1798, and in 1840 gratuitous public vaccination was established by Act of Parliament, but it was many years after that before complete protection from smallpox by vaccination was arrived at.

Through our hundred years we shall see a population at first quite defenceless against the recurrent invasions of epidemics gradually acquiring a measure of protection against some and complete protection against others. We shall see the City Council gaining new powers from Parliament to combat disease; not always using them to the full until urged forward by public opinion; sometimes trying to use them, finding them inadequate and applying to Parliament for more. Later come the results of having the health services under a medical head who, in addition to directing the services, was enabled by his own investigations on a medical basis to throw light on the cause and spread of infectious diseases. The

¹ *History of Cholera in Manchester, 1849*, by John Leigh and N. Gardiner.

ravages of diseases had their uses; they were "deeply and dreadfully instructive."¹ Mankind began to learn its lesson aided by the growth of scientific knowledge and also, as always happens, by the work of a few outstanding people. Amongst the names associated with the rise of preventive medicine are Sir John Simon, Edwin Chadwick, Southwood Smith and Sir J. P. Kay-Shuttleworth who, as Dr. Kay, was for a time a medical practitioner in Manchester.²

To a city that had no means of protecting itself against the invader, the news that in 1849 Asiatic cholera was again travelling westward across Europe must have been terrifying, all the more so because the epidemic of 1832 had been particularly severe in Manchester. Fortunately, the 1849 epidemic was late in reaching the city and its virulence declined with the general decline all over the country, so that Manchester was under its ravages for a shorter time than other towns. Nevertheless, it lasted from June until October and there were 814 deaths.³ The total number of persons attacked was not known.

Descriptions are given elsewhere in this book⁴ of the state of the houses inhabited by the working classes and their overcrowding, the pollution of the soil through defective and inadequate middens. Such conditions would foster cholera. Dr. John Leigh said that cholera had "almost entirely confined its ravages to those localities or particular streets in which noxious exhalations, proceeding from putrefying or otherwise decomposing matters in rivers, canals, etc., prevail; in which the inhabitants breathe polluted air, arising from bad drainage, overcrowding and bad ventilation, whose employment is precarious and not very remunerative, and whose means therefore are insufficient to procure a necessary amount of suitable and nutritious food." In September the Town Council decided to enforce the Nuisance, Removal and Prevention of Contagious and Epidemic Diseases Act which had been passed earlier in the year, but the colder weather of October seems to have been largely responsible for the departure of cholera from Manchester.

The fear of a recurrence of cholera, which, however, did not materialize, led to the formation three years later of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association. A leading article with the title

¹ Sir John Simon: *English Sanitary Institutions*.

² See above, p. 23.

³ *History of Cholera in Manchester in 1849* (Leigh and Gardiner).

⁴ See below, pp. 284-287, and above, Ch. I.

"Manchester Movements" in the *Examiner and Times* of October 9, 1852, referred to "the formation of a society for the promotion of sanitary purposes. Its chief object is to diffuse by means of lectures and cheap publications a knowledge of the laws of health and thus to prevent the generation and spread of disease and to promote the welfare of the people."

The Sanitary Association appears to have been able to draw into its membership all the keenest spirits in Manchester and Salford amongst the clergy, doctors and business men. They not only sought to spread knowledge, but set themselves to gain it. Some of their members made careful researches and investigations. Before notification of infectious diseases became compulsory they arranged that the Poor Law medical officers should send their secretary details of the cases of infectious disease occurring in their practice. They published a list of these each week, and although they had no information regarding cases occurring in private practice, such facts as they had enabled them to trace the beginning and the decline of epidemics amongst the poorest inhabitants of the city. The Association prided themselves a good deal on these lists, which they described as "an unpaid contribution to knowledge."¹

It was one of the fundamental rules of the Association "to induce general co-operation with constituted authorities." This "co-operation" not infrequently took the form of spurring the Corporations of Manchester and Salford to greater diligence in the carrying out of their powers and in the pages that follow we shall see how actively the Association pressed the provision of isolation hospitals for cases of infectious diseases.

There was no further cholera epidemic in Manchester, but other infectious diseases were almost constantly in evidence though more prevalent in some years than others. In 1863 there was a heavy death-rate from scarlet fever, smallpox and typhus. The report of the Sanitary Association for that year records their dealings with smallpox. Fortified by knowledge arising from their weekly returns of cases obtained from Poor Law medical officers, they tried to rouse public opinion. They urged re-vaccination and the removal of patients from their homes. They waited on the Press and on Boards of Guardians. "The disease abated although it threatened at one time almost indefinitely to pursue its noisome track through

¹ Annual Report of Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, 1863.

every corner of the town and suburbs." The Association's report for 1864 says there were about 4,000¹ cases of smallpox in 1863 with 166 deaths, and in 1864 there were 286 cases in public practice, of which one in sixteen proved fatal. The report for this latter year records 1,124 cases of scarlet fever in Poor Law practice, and that one patient in every ten died. We are still in the time when Manchester had no Medical Officer of Health: in this report for 1864 the Association, with much justification, compares its work with that of Medical Officers of Health and Sanitary Inspectors in other towns.

The Sanitary Act of 1866, which was mainly if not wholly due to the fear of cholera in England, gave local authorities power to provide hospitals, to insist on disinfection after infectious disease, and to provide "a proper place" (that is what we now call a disinfecting station, usually called "ovens" in those days) in which clothing and household effects could be disinfected. The beginning of the ambulance service also came with this Act which gave local authorities powers to provide "carriages" for conveying infectious persons to hospital. They also had powers to provide mortuaries and to regulate lodging-houses.

In 1868 Dr. John Leigh became Medical Officer of Health, and at once began to call attention to the need for isolation hospitals on the grounds of the high mortality of children under five years of age and of the fact that when he took office one-sixth of all deaths in Manchester were caused by infectious diseases. In this endeavour he was consistently supported by the Sanitary Association, who sent several memorials to the City Council. In his report to the newly-established Health Committee² in the month following his appointment, Dr. Leigh called attention to the large number of deaths from infectious diseases in the ten years 1851-60. These deaths represented an immensely greater number of attacks. There being no compulsory notification, he had no knowledge of the total numbers attacked, but he quoted the statistics obtained by the Sanitary Association from Poor Law medical officers, which showed that 31,575 cases of infectious disease occurred in their public practice alone in the seven years 1861-7. To this total must

¹ This was an estimate. The Association had records of cases occurring in public practice only, but would be able to obtain information of all deaths.

² Health Committee Minutes, April 6, 1868.

be added an unknown number that fell to the care of private practitioners.

The table below,¹ giving the deaths from infectious diseases in Manchester during the ten years 1851-60, shows not only the enormous number of deaths from infectious diseases, but that nearly three-quarters of the deaths occurred in children under five. With this average of over 1,000 deaths per annum amongst a population of over 300,000, it is interesting to compare the deaths

1851-60	Deaths under 5	Total Deaths at all Ages
Smallpox	356	551
Measles	1,462	1,550
Scarlatina	2,531	3,522
Diphtheria	68	97
Whooping Cough	2,176	2,278
Typhus	685	2,930
	7,278	10,928

from infectious diseases, both notifiable and non-notifiable, in Manchester² in the year 1936, when the population was over three-quarters of a million.

It will be noted that while two of the diseases in the table for 1851-60, smallpox and typhus, have disappeared; others, which if not new, were not then recognized as infectious, now appear.

Dr. Leigh urged that the most efficacious mode of arresting the spread of infectious disease was by the isolation of the cases; "it was idle to attempt to stop the spread of disease by antiseptics alone." Isolation was not possible in working-class houses. In succeeding monthly reports he harped on the same string, the need for more hospital accommodation. Diarrhoea was prevalent and very fatal in the summer of 1868, and he complained that the procedure of charitable hospitals and of Boards of Guardians was too slow to meet the exigencies of a sudden, severe attack. By the time the necessary formalities required by Boards of

¹ Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Registrar-General.
² Medical Officer of Health's Report, 1936.

Guardians were compelled with the patient, if a young child, was likely to be dead before medical assistance was obtained. And as regards the public medical charities, first a "recommendation" must be obtained from a subscriber—a lengthy and troublesome task. The provision of hospital accommodation for infectious diseases was extremely meagre. A fever hospital, called the House of Recovery, had been opened in 1796 by public-spirited doctors

1936	Under 5	Total Deaths at all Ages
Chickenpox	1	1
Measles	108	121
Scarlet Fever	5	10
Influenza	7	128
Whooping Cough . . .	46	47
Mumps	—	2
Diphtheria	39	92
Poliomyelitis	—	1
Cerebro-Spinal Fever . .	19	38
Enteric Fever	—	2
Epidemic Diarrhoea . . .	1	1
Diarrhoea	68	72
	294	515

and their friends, which accommodated a hundred patients.¹ In 1852 this hospital had been absorbed by the Manchester Royal Infirmary and the number of beds set aside for fever patients was only 32. The Poor Law infirmaries provided 157 beds and there were five beds for children in the children's hospital at Bridge Street.

This provision for a population of 300,000, with scarlet fever, smallpox, typhus, typhoid, measles, dysentery and diarrhoea prevalent, was justly condemned as inadequate by the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Association. Their efforts possibly led to the recognition that the time had come for the separation of fever from general cases. In 1869, Mr. Robert Barnes² gave £9,000

¹ *A Short History of the House of Recovery in Manchester*, by F. Renaud, 1888.
² Member of the Council from 1848-57, Mayor 1851-53, donor of the Barnes Convalescent Home

towards the cost of a new fever hospital to be built in one of the suburbs of Manchester. This was the beginning of Monsall Hospital, which was opened in 1871 with accommodation for 128 patients. It was a charitable hospital under the control of the Royal Infirmary, and ordinarily patients would need a "recommendation" from a subscriber. The Manchester Corporation, however, contributed towards the funds of the hospital and sent patients there. In 1875 it built a temporary pavilion in the hospital grounds for thirty-two smallpox patients. The way was thus prepared for what must inevitably come to pass: the ultimate taking over Monsall Hospital by the Corporation. This took place in 1896 under the Manchester Corporation Act of that year.

It was not until 1871 that the City Council decided to erect a disinfecting station. In his annual report for that year Dr. Leigh reports that the "oven," that is, the disinfecting station, was working well, and that vigorous disinfection of houses followed by lime-washing was being carried out by a permanent staff of four disinfectors.

Manchester came out really well in the smallpox epidemic of 1871, having a death-rate of only seven per thousand of the population—the lowest amongst the large towns, and Dr. Leigh attributed this to intensive vaccination and re-vaccination.

The view that the municipal authorities and not charitable bodies should provide accommodation for infectious diseases was put forward by a Manchester doctor in a paper read to the Sanitary Association¹ in 1872. Isolation of the sick, he contends, is the only means for preventing the spread of infection, and he insists that "to make provision for cases of fever by the ordinary system of private charity is from a sanitary point of view utterly wrong." He goes on to criticize the current procedure for getting a child suffering from, say, scarlet fever into a general hospital. "When the child has been ailing for several days the mother gets a 'recommend' for the Infirmary or one or other of the children's hospitals and waits several hours with perhaps 100 others before arrangements are made for taking the child who would not have done so much harm if left at home, though the other's chance of survival might be increased by treatment in hospital." Monsall Hospital was then being built through the munificence of Mr. Barnes, but the writer decides

¹ Report of Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, 1872 (Appendix).

that fever hospitals "are not a case for the exercise of private charity." His proposal that arrangements should be made with Poor Law medical officers and doctors in private practice "to give information of cases coming under their notice," was prophetic, but he saw difficulty in getting private practitioners to send their poor patients to hospital!

In the two following years the demand for sufficient hospital accommodation grew stronger. The Sanitary Association accused the City Council of not fulfilling its undoubted function of providing proper hospital accommodation for infectious diseases.¹ In 1874 Dr. Leigh, who apparently contemplated that the Corporation should maintain, but private charity should build, fever hospitals, attributed the high death-rate of children from scarlet fever to "the apathy, indifference, and neglect on the part of the wealthy."² In the same year the Sanitary Association sent yet another memorial to the City Council urging fever accommodation, not through voluntary charity but under the powers given to local authorities by the Sanitary Act of 1866.³

In the November of 1875 the Association seemed to lose patience altogether with the City Council and took it sternly to task for its continued inaction.⁴ The Association had asked in October of the previous year for the provision of small isolation hospitals and had been told that a Special Committee had been appointed to go into the matter, but nothing had been done. They contended that "in spite of structural sanitary improvements the more serious infectious diseases are still in evidence in the city." It appears from another communication⁵ sent to the Council in the following year that the Association did not consider the arrangements made for sending patients to Monsall Hospital (still under the Infirmary) and to the Children's Hospital at Pendlebury satisfactory. They wanted the Corporation to have isolation hospitals under its own control.

In 1875 the Public Health Act, which is commonly referred to as the Magna Charta of public health administration, was passed. It did not, however, embody the recommendation which the Man-

¹ Annual Report, 1873.

² City Council Minutes, April 1, 1874.

³ Annual Report, 1874, Appendix C.

⁴ Annual Report of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, 1875.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1876.

chester and Salford Sanitary Association had made for compulsory notification of infectious diseases. Possibly the adverse influence of the medical profession was too strong. The vast majority of doctors were at first opposed to notification.¹ However, Manchester secured notification as early as 1881 under an order with a very cumbersome title,² but notification was not made compulsory in the country as a whole until 1899.

Means for combating infectious diseases were rapidly accumulating in Manchester in the closing years of the nineteenth century. The first municipally-owned hospital was a building in Clayton Vale, taken over from the Cleansing Committee in 1893 to be used for smallpox cases. In 1896 the Corporation took over Monsall Hospital from the Royal Infirmary Board under a local Act of Parliament. It then contained 299 beds.³ Manchester has only had four medical Officers of Health, having made the appointment later than other large towns, and each in turn has devoted himself to reducing the mortality from preventable diseases. That they are to a very large extent preventable can be recognized by a glance at Table II in Appendix II. No deaths from typhus appear since 1890 nor from smallpox since 1905. The tracing of smallpox contacts with a view to their vaccination (or re-vaccination) to prevent their contracting the disease seems, according to Dr. Niven, to require the keenness, energy and resource of a Sherlock Holmes. He relates how in the 1903 epidemic he visited suspected common lodging-houses at night and examined the foreheads of sleeping inmates by means of a lamp. Thanks to the preference of the smallpox eruption for the forehead, he detected thirty-two cases in this way.⁴ Turning again to the table, we see that deaths from enteric (typhoid) fever have diminished and do not figure in the mortality table since 1930. While scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles and whooping-cough still make their attacks, chiefly on young children, the case-fatality⁵ has been greatly reduced. Dr. Veitch Clark, the present Medical Officer of Health, has shown that whereas for the forty-five years 1891 to 1935 the scarlet fever case-fatality was

¹ Newsholme: *Fifty Years in Public Health*.

² Manchester Order confirmed by the Local Government Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Halifax, etc.) Act, 1881.

³ Subsequent extensions have brought the accommodation up to 760 beds.

⁴ *Observations on the History of Public Health Efforts in Manchester, 1935*.

⁵ Case-fatality is the percentage of deaths occurring amongst cases notified.

2.99 per cent, it was only 0.46 per cent in the year 1936. In the case of diphtheria, the Schick test has been used since 1927, with the result that up to the end of 1936 no less than 68,872 persons had been immunized or found to be immune from diphtheria.¹

TUBERCULOSIS

Tuberculosis was another of the diseases which during the century under review killed tens of thousands of Manchester citizens without any direct efforts by the public health services to check its ravages, except in so far as general improvement in the environment may be said to have had some effect. To die of a "decline" in youth was accepted as the common fate of a large section of the community in the middle of the nineteenth century; it was not recognized as an infectious disease and the "treatment," which mainly consisted of carefully keeping fresh air from the patient, was calculated to hasten his death.

The effectual dealing with tuberculosis started in the early days of the present century and is part of that new orientation whereby, without ceasing to effect improvements in the environment, public health administration turned its attention to the individual.

Soon after Koch had discovered the tubercle bacillus in 1882, and the work of other German scientists had shown the disease to be infectious, Professor Delépine was working on the subject at Manchester University and Dr. Niven, who was a pioneer in the fight against tuberculosis, was investigating deaths from this disease in Oldham, where he was then Medical Officer of Health. By 1893 he was making proposals for the voluntary notification of phthisis, and although he carried the Oldham Medical Society with him, the Sanitary Committee turned them down. In 1894, Dr. Niven became Medical Officer of Health for Manchester, where he found that some steps of a tentative character had been taken.² Professor Delépine had advised on general measures of disinfection, and Dr. Arthur Ransome and the staff of the Consumption Hospital had turned their attention to the prevention as well as to the cure of tuberculosis. In 1898, Dr. Niven's efforts to obtain the

¹ Manchester Health Report, 1936.

² *Observations on the History of Public Health Effort in Manchester, 1923.*

voluntary notification of phthisis were backed up by the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association under the chairmanship of Dr. Daniel Leech, and were finally successful in September 1899. Manchester was the second town to adopt voluntary notification, Brighton, where Dr. (subsequently Sir) Arthur Newsholme was Medical Officer of Health, had secured it a few months earlier.

At first notifications were only invited from public institutions, but in February 1900, private practitioners were invited to notify cases occurring in their practices. It will be realized that tuberculosis, where illness lasts on into months and years, is in a different category from acute infectious fevers which run a relatively short course. Moreover, there was the fear that notification might brand the sufferer and adversely affect his occupational and social relations. It says much, therefore, for Dr. Niven and those who supported him that voluntary notification of phthisis by medical practitioners was achieved so early. The importance of milk as a method of infection, especially in children, was realized; the noted Manchester's Milk Clauses were passed,¹ authorizing inspections by a veterinary surgeon of cows in the Manchester cowsheds for tuberculosis of the udder, and of cows on farms outside the city from which tuberculous milk had been sent into the city. Orders similar to the Manchester Milk Clauses were subsequently made for the whole country.

Dr. Niven records at length² the system of investigation, disinfection and education of the patient in personal precautions against infecting others which was carried out under his direction. He traced a close connection between tuberculosis and poverty, overcrowding and malnutrition. A voluntary fund was raised by public appeal, there being at that time no other source except charity for supplying necessitous patients with additional nourishment. The extent of institutional treatment was extremely limited, attention being chiefly turned on disinfection, especially after deaths, and on teaching the infected person not to be a danger to others. As a matter of fact, such sanatorium treatment as was given was brief and intended to train the patient in personal hygiene, to sleep with windows open and to carry on the routine after returning home. The experiment of using the smallpox hospital in Clayton

¹ Manchester Corporation Act, 1899.

² *Observations on the History of Public Health Effort in Manchester, 1923.*

for tuberculosis began in 1901; it was interrupted in 1902 by the occurrence of smallpox and resumed in 1904. In 1905 the Corporation secured twenty beds at the new Crossley Sanatorium at Delamere. In addition to these fifty beds provided by the municipality, there was a variable number up to about four hundred available in the Poor Law hospitals, but, needless to say, the independent poor objected to making use of them.

Voluntary notification adopted in the more progressive towns led the way to compulsory notification. When Mr. John Burns was President of the Local Government Board and Sir Arthur Newsholme Chief Medical Officer, the Tuberculosis Regulations were made which became operative on January 1, 1909.

The National Health Insurance Acts brought in "Sanatorium Benefit" in 1912, the term including not only treatment in sanatoria but at dispensaries and by private practitioners, and progress was stimulated by Exchequer grants up to half the total estimated cost of treating non-insured persons and the dependants of insured persons.

The Manchester Tuberculosis Scheme centred round a Chief Tuberculosis Officer¹ and the Dispensary in Hardman Street.² Baguley Sanatorium, originally the fever hospital of the Withington Urban District Council, was enlarged and adapted as a hospital for moderately advanced cases. Abergele Sanatorium, with fifty-eight beds, which had belonged to the Guardians, was also taken over and the number of beds at the Crossley Sanatorium was increased. Clayton Hospital, enlarged up to sixty-eight beds, was reserved for advanced cases.

In the quarter of a century that has elapsed since 1912 much development has taken place. Baguley Sanatorium, enlarged and improved, now makes a feature of occupational therapy and has good workshops. A section of the Abergele Sanatorium, opened in 1931, now contains over two hundred beds for children who suffer from surgical tuberculosis and who can enjoy the sun cure in that lovely part of Wales. In addition to resident doctors and a large staff of nurses, there is a school and a staff of eight teachers.

The achievements in the control of tuberculosis have been great.

¹ Dr. D. C. Sutherland, who is now the Senior Tuberculosis Officer.

² A new dispensary in Oxford Road opposite the Infirmary has replaced the one in Hardman Street.

The mortality rate has fallen markedly and is now about a third of what it was in 1881, when records were first kept. The incidence rate, that is, the proportion of the population attacked, was 1.65 per thousand in 1936 as compared with 5.32 in 1913, when notification of all forms of tuberculosis became compulsory. In addition to the preventive measures which reduce the number of persons attacked, the curative treatment is increasing the number of complete recoveries. In the five years 1932-36 inclusive, 2,020 cases have been taken off the register as cured.

Tuberculosis, like some of the other diseases that did so much damage, is now on the wane. When we realize how many lives can be saved by preventive measures, better sanitation, better housing, better food, more knowledge, as well as by earlier diagnosis and treatment of disease, we are encouraged to go on with the battle against the diseases which still threaten our citizens.

VENEREAL DISEASES

The Venereal Diseases Scheme, inaugurated in 1916 under the Public Health (Venereal Diseases) Regulations, added more curative work to the Public Health Department. There was no notification as in the case of tuberculosis, the Government grant was larger (75 per cent) and the general hospitals were brought into the scheme, treatment centres apart from hospitals being only sanctioned in exceptional circumstances. Originally there were centres at four hospitals, now extended to six hospitals. In addition, clinics are held weekly at two of the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres and there is an auxiliary centre in the grounds of Monsall Hospital. Ablution centres formed part of the scheme in the early days, but they were subsequently closed.

GENERAL HOSPITALS

All this time, whilst the City Council had been dealing with infectious diseases, tuberculosis and venereal diseases, hospital accommodation for surgical cases and for general diseases had been provided by the Poor Law Guardians for the destitute, and by

voluntary hospitals for the general public. The Local Government Act of 1929, which abolished the Guardians, brought their hospitals¹ with over five thousand beds under the control of the Public Health Committee.

The City Council lost no time in making the necessary declaration² by which all hospital treatment was to be provided under the Public Health Acts and not by way of poor relief. That meant that in future no distinction would be made in the hospital treatment provided between "necessitous" and other citizens.

The next step was in 1935, when the Manchester Joint Hospitals Advisory Board was formed. The object of the Board is so to co-ordinate the work and equipment of the hospitals—both voluntary and municipal—that the hospital service of the city shall ultimately function as a single hospital service.

The Board, which includes representatives of the University—in virtue of that body's interest in the training of medical students—as well as of the voluntary hospitals and of the Public Health Committee, has in its constitution provided for a much larger sphere of action than that outlined in Section 13 of the Local Government Act, 1929. All the hospitals in the city have subscribed to this constitution.

An advisory panel with co-opted specialists has been created to advise the Public Health Committee on the appointment of consultants to the staff of the municipal hospitals. There is considerable likelihood that this method of appointment will be extended to cover the voluntary hospitals of the city also.

Investigation into the reduction of waiting lists and the organization of fracture clinics is proceeding, and other matters of general hospital interest are receiving the attention of the Board.

SMOKE ABATEMENT

Though Manchester is probably not guilty of producing more smoke for its size than any other large industrial town, the city is so situated as to suffer badly not only for her own crimes, but also

¹ Crumpsall and Withington Hospitals, Booth Hall Hospital for Children, Langthorpe Colony for Epileptics, and Rose Hill Convalescent Home for Children.

² August 28, 1929.

for those of her neighbours. Lying in a hollow, with the prevailing winds blowing smoke from many neighbouring towns into the city, she will inevitably receive and retain a great deal of it. Nature has not been kind to Manchester in helping her to get rid of smoke. It is perhaps for that reason that powers were sought early to deal with the nuisance, and that up to the present day Manchester has been called "the home of smoke abatement."

In advance of national legislation on the subject, Manchester had a smoke clause in her Police Act of 1844¹ which requires that "every furnace employed . . . in the working of engines by steam, and every furnace . . . employed in any mill, factory, dye-house, iron foundry, glass-house, distillery, brewery, bakehouse, gas-works, or other building used for the purposes of trade or manufacture, shall in all cases where the same shall be practicable be so constructed so as to consume or burn the smoke arising from such furnace . . ."

Having got a smoke clause, Manchester seems to have set to work to administer it vigorously. The Minutes of the Nuisance Committee of December 30, 1844, state that notices were to be advertised in all the Manchester newspapers and also printed for distribution "that from and after 1st March next proceedings would be instituted against all parties who offend and neglect to consume smoke arising from their respective furnaces." Several offenders seem to have been detected by the beginning of May, though they escaped immediate retribution because the Town Clerk was absent in London on public business.² Thereafter the Minutes of the Nuisance Committee relate at intervals notices served and fines imposed, but what relation successful actions bore to the total number of offences does not appear. That the smoke clause was not wholly adequate is shown from passages in a letter dated March 4, 1847, from the Town Clerk (Joseph Heron) to Viscount Morpeth when national legislation on the subject was under consideration. He writes: "I fear that the clause proposed (which is almost the same as the clause in the Manchester Police Act) will not satisfactorily secure the intended object. The consuming of smoke is scarcely possible, although the prevention of smoke in certain kinds of furnaces and fireplaces is to a great extent practicable. . . . In the opinion of practical and scientific men the law ought to apply to the making of smoke and not to the construction

¹ Section 75.

² Minutes of the Nuisance Committee, May 7, 1845.

of the furnace." To-day, ninety years after Sir Joseph Heron wrote to Lord Morpeth, his opinion still holds good that the making of smoke should constitute the offence and not the construction of the furnace. But it is very curious to note that legislators seem attached to the idea of consuming smoke and like to concentrate on the construction of the furnace, because a phrase similar to the one in the Manchester Police Act has appeared in all the national Acts passed subsequently, though they do contain an alternative phrase penalizing the *making* of smoke. So advanced for his time was Manchester's Town Clerk that he even mentions smoke from house-fires which, he says, cannot be prevented except by the use of coke.¹

An attempt was made to introduce a smoke clause into the Public Health Act of 1848, when the voice of Lancashire, though not apparently of Manchester, was raised in protest. The clause was inserted while the Bill was in a Select Committee of the House of Lords with the full sanction of the Government, but was furiously opposed and finally disagreed to by the Commons.² Mr. John Bright, having declared it his custom to oppose every Smoke Bill, said: "It was quite impossible to work out any smoke bill. . . . The clause was ridiculous. In Lancashire no three men were found to agree upon any effectual plan for preventing smoke." Mr. Henry Drummond queried whether black smoke was prejudicial to health. The more he had seen of the Bill the more he was satisfied there was a good deal of quackery and mock philosophy in such questions. Mr. Howard did not think it possible to apply the clause to any manufacturing town, but he, as Lord Morpeth, who was in charge of the Bill, subsequently remarked, represented the highest chimney in England! The Lords were much displeased at the rejection of their smoke clause and blamed the Government for giving way to the "great chimney owners."³

So the smoke clause in the 1848 Act was lost, but Manchester had a weapon in her 1844 Act, imperfect, but better than nothing. From 1856 onward we find the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association concerned with the smoke nuisance amongst their other

¹ In 1935 the Manchester Housing Committee decided experimentally to equip 50 houses at Wythenshawe with grates constructed to burn coke and lighted by means of gas jets.

² House of Commons, August 7, 1848.

³ House of Lords, August 15, 1848.

numerous activities. Time and again they presented memorials to the City Council asking for stricter enforcement of the law, chiefly in the interests of the working classes, who were more grievously injured than others "in as much as they are compelled from the nature of their employment to live in the vicinity of the establishments where the smoke is produced."¹ The Sanitary Association did not stop short at bringing pressure to bear on the City Council. They realized the need of an educated public opinion, being "persuaded that the full abatement of the nuisance will be secured only in proportion as correct information upon the subject is generally diffused."² They seemed to have used the Press a good deal for their propaganda, and the report already quoted tells us they inserted in all the local newspapers a digest of the Report from the General Board of Health presented to Viscount Palmerston—then Home Secretary—in 1854. This digest contained "evidence in favour of the suppression of the smoke nuisance;" by Manchester's own Town Clerk and it was a bright idea on the part of the Sanitary Association to give it publicity in the local Press.

In 1866 the Sanitary Act was passed, and the powers of local authorities for dealing with the smoke nuisance were considerably strengthened. Section 19 (3) is similar to the smoke clause in the Manchester Act of 1844 and concerns any fireplace or furnace which does not consume its own smoke, but a second phrase was added which reads "any chimney (not being the chimney of a private dwelling-house) sending forth black smoke in such a quantity as to be a nuisance shall be deemed to be a nuisance liable to be dealt with summarily."

So, after nearly twenty years, Sir Joseph Heron's sound opinion was embodied in a national Act with a workable clause in which not the construction of the furnace but the making of smoke constituted the offence.²

The Minutes of the Nuisance Committee do not record the coming into operation of new legislation as it affects its work, but it may be assumed that it did use its powers under the smoke clauses of the 1866 Sanitary Act as they were stronger than those in the local Act of 1844. At any rate, in 1874 we find the Sanitary Association, which had appointed two inspectors to take

¹ Annual Report of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, 1856.

² The smoke clause in the Public Health Act of 1875 was similar to that of 1866.

independent observations of smoke from factory chimneys, urging the City Council to give full effect to its powers under the Sanitary Act of 1866, because the evidence showed that the law was extensively infringed in Manchester.

In the next few years the Nuisance Committee was increasingly active about the smoke nuisance. The peak years seem to have been 1876 and 1877, when the number of firms visited and cautioned and the number of abatement notices served reached a very high total. The passing of the Public Health Act of 1875 may have stimulated the Committee to greater activities though it did not increase its powers, or it may have been the wholesome effect of the voluntary societies that were so watchful in the matter of smoke. We find that in 1878 the Noxious Vapours Abatement Association told the President of the Local Government Board that as regards Manchester the Committee was maintaining a very strict supervision and it commented on "the zealous co-operation and assistance" of Mr. Rook, the Superintendent of the Nuisance Department.¹

As the fines imposed under the 1875 Public Health Act for smoke nuisances were too small to be an effective deterrent the City Council secured by a local Act a daily penalty of up to £10 for failure to comply with an abatement order.² That was a gesture showing that it meant business, but the Nuisance Committee seems to have grown slack by 1891, when the City Council received a severely-worded memorial from the Noxious Vapours Abatement Association complaining that only a very small proportion of offenders and not necessarily every bad case was summoned before the magistrates. "At this date the full penalty of £10 a day had never been imposed though some firms had been fined £5."³ The Association also in the same year turned to advocate a new line of attack on the smoke problem by the cheapening and popularizing of smokeless methods of heating. A memorial was presented to the Gas Committee⁴ which urged "the increased use of gas as one of the most feasible methods of lessening the present excessive pollution of the air by coal smoke." It submitted "that the

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, January 18, 1879.

² *Manchester Corporation Act*, 1883, Section 44. The penalty clause is still used, although prosecutions are now made under the Public Health Act, 1936.

³ *Manchester City News*, March 21, 1891.

⁴ Minutes of the City Council, February 4, 1891.

excessive price of gas constitutes a tax which is most unfair in its incidence upon citizens, inasmuch as gas consumers of to-day have to pay for improvements and public works from which all citizens derive benefit."

Pressure brought to bear on the Council to allow the Gas and Electricity Committees to provide their services at cost price and in the interests of a cleaner atmosphere to cease taxing profits for the relief of rates is dealt with in another chapter.¹

So far we have recorded pressure of voluntary societies in favour of more stringent application of the law against smoke. But there were exceptions. In December 1894 a deputation from the Chamber of Commerce² complained to the Sanitary Committee that inspection was too drastic, that no other local authority was so rigid in its method of smoke inspection as Manchester and that the result would be to drive away trade from the city.

In subsequent years pressure begins to come from within the City Council itself as well as from outside bodies, and demands for a special committee to consider the whole question of the smoke nuisance are recorded in the Council Minutes. In 1912 the Air Pollution Advisory Board was formed as a sub-committee of the Sanitary Committee, with experts in science and architecture as co-opted members. A memorial presented to the Council by various scientific and other societies was the immediate cause of the formation of the Board which confined itself entirely to research and propaganda.³ The war, coming soon after the Board began work, hindered its activities, but researches were made by Dr. Margaret Fishenden on domestic fire grates and by Professor Gee, of the College of Technology, on the condition of the Manchester atmosphere. In 1919 the Board published a pamphlet entitled *The Black Smoke Tax*, which has been more often quoted than any other on the subject, perhaps because of its arresting title.⁴

The existence of the Air Pollution Advisory Board does not seem to have been officially terminated, but it has not functioned in recent years. Efforts to attain clean air took a new direction in 1924, when the Manchester and District Regional Smoke Abate-

¹ See p. 261.

² Sanitary Committee Minutes, December 30, 1896.

³ Report of the Sanitary Committee on Air Pollution, 1915.

⁴ *The Black Smoke Tax—an inquiry into the cost of household washing in Manchester and Harrogate respectively.*

ment Committee was formed at the instance of the Ministry of Health. The Committee covers the Regional Town Planning area; fifty-six of the local authorities in that area are represented on it. The Committee acts in an advisory capacity. It assists manufacturers with technical advice on the efficient operating of boiler plant so as to reduce smoke. It has made recommendations for uniform time limit concession,¹ definition of black smoke and methods of inspection, and has arranged training courses for stokers and boiler attendants. It is held that the time has now come for the Advisory Committee to be replaced by a statutory Joint Smoke Abatement Board. Such a body, set up under provisions in the Public Health Act, would be responsible for enforcing the smoke clauses over the whole area, for directing the work of the inspectors—who would be in the Board's employment—and for taking legal action when necessary. It is estimated that one-ninth of a penny rate contributed by each of the constituent bodies² would meet the expenditure of the Statutory Board. The result would be uniform administration over the area, bringing the small urban districts, which often make much smoke but cannot afford adequate inspectorial staff, under the same quality of inspection as the large towns. Manchester is pressing strongly for the Statutory Board and since 1935, Alderman W. T. Jackson and Dr. Veitch Clark, Chairman and Hon. Secretary respectively of the Advisory Committee, have been actively engaged in getting support from local authorities represented on that Committee for the proposal to approach the Ministry of Health for a Provisional Order setting up a statutory body.

The story of the fight against air pollution by smoke is a long one, dating from the thirteenth century. We have followed it in Manchester for the last hundred years. What is the position to-day? We cannot say that Dr. John Leigh's "dark canopy which hangs as a pall over the city" is a thing of the past, or something dimly remembered by the very old. At the time of writing, November 1937, that dark canopy has been much in evidence, for Manchester

¹ It is held by the local authority that there is no offence unless the emission of smoke exceeds a certain time in a given period. The time limit in Manchester is two minutes in the aggregate in a half-hour period. Less strict authorities allow three minutes or more in half an hour.

² There are between eighty and ninety local authorities in the Regional Town Planning area.

has had early and severe visitations of fog this winter. Sometimes it has been the overhead darkness, which requires complete lighting-up for houses, business premises and vehicles at midday, when the city has literally been under a roof of soot, but without mist, visibility at street level being the same as at night. Other times the city has been wrapped in choking sulphurous fog, composed of mist, a natural phenomenon met with in the open country and at sea, but here laden with soot. And if further demonstration of our smoke-laden air is necessary, there are the fine new buildings built in the last ten or fifteen years gradually approximating in dinginess to the old. Even the new Central Library is grimy compared with the still newer Town Hall Extension. So much thought and energy have, as we have seen, been spent on the smoke question during the last hundred years and yet this urgently needed health reform lags behind all the rest. The reason is partly because although smoke kills, it does not kill quickly.¹ Polluted water will kill more quickly than soot-laden air and the relation of cause and effect will be more obvious.² Public opinion is not yet alarmed about the smoke evil. It was wholesome fear that led to the successful tackling of "stinking nuisances" and horrible diseases such as cholera and smallpox.

So far as industrial smoke in Manchester is concerned, the position should be greatly improved if and when the proposed Statutory Joint Smoke Abatement Board is set up. The city does now control her own chimneys to an increasingly great extent. The four smoke inspectors devote their whole time to the work. But Manchester has neighbours in whose areas smoke, which does not respect local government boundaries, is produced. Some striking figures in the Medical Officer of Health's Report for 1935 show how much industrial smoke is produced outside the city boundaries compared with the smoke emitted from chimneys inside the city itself.

Over domestic smoke the local authority has no powers—as yet. The building of thousands of new houses has greatly added to air pollution from this source, in spite of the increased use of

¹ The Manchester death-rate from respiratory diseases is higher than that of the country as a whole.

² An unfounded rumour that water-recess was responsible for a typhoid outbreak in Croydon recently made all water-recess wherever grown unsaleable for a time. A severe visitation of fog in Manchester and long lists of deaths in the newspapers the following week leaves public opinion undisturbed.

gas and electricity for cooking. Every new house has at least one open fireplace and in the overwhelmingly great majority bituminous coal is burned.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE

For the beginning of this side of public health administration we must go back for just three-quarters of a century. In fact, Manchester may claim the credit for having invented health visiting on a voluntary basis. In 1862 the Manchester and Salford Ladies' Sanitary Reform Association was formed. It was afterwards called the Ladies' Health Society and in 1878 was amalgamated, as the Ladies' Section, with the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association. They employed women of the working class to visit among the poorer people and teach them the laws of health. They seem from the reports to have, with considerable success, concentrated attention largely on promoting cleanliness, and when occasion required it they turned up their sleeves, tucked up their skirts, and gave the housewife a demonstration in how to clean her house.

In the Annual Report of the Ladies' Sanitary Reform Association for 1872 we read that "Domestic teaching of almost every kind is being carried into the houses of the people. . . ." The following sentences are amusing in view of later developments. "The disinfecting powder and the medical soap are the keys by which the doors and hearts are opened. There are so many irritating and degrading discomforts against which these simple remedies secure them that the poor are most grateful for the agents' visits." While not necessarily accepting the optimistic view of the efficacy of the powder and soap against verminous insects to which the delicately-veiled remarks obviously refer, we can admire the attempt of this voluntary society to deal with pests which, for many years to come, public health administration did not tackle seriously. True, local authorities provided cleansing stations for the treatment of verminous persons, but arrangements to disinfect houses are of very recent date. They have, however, made rapid progress in the last few years especially in Manchester, which did pioneer work with hydrocyanic acid gas for disinfecting the household effects of tenants from slum clearance areas. Manchester is still one of the

few towns where houses are disinfested prior to demolition as a precaution against the spread of vermin.

To return to our women visitors. They had no special training in instructing mothers in child-rearing and, indeed, in those early days it would have been hard for them to get it. Some years of the present century had elapsed before the human infant was regarded as worthy of a place in the medical curriculum. The work of the visitors seemed to meet with the approval not only of the society which employed them but also of the Corporation, for after nearly thirty years of activity the latter undertook, in 1890, to pay the salaries of six of the fourteen visitors. Dr. Tatham was then Medical Officer of Health and it appears that he assumed a general supervision of the work of all the visitors. Later, Dr. Niven recommended appointment of a trained educated woman to supervise the visitors, and Miss Eleanor Greg was appointed in 1905. In 1907 the Infant Life Protection Sub-Committee was set up by the City Council and took over the whole staff of the voluntary society, it being understood that when new appointments were made, only trained nurses would be eligible.

A system of voluntary notification of births by midwives had been arranged, but "owing to local opposition"¹ Manchester did not adopt the Notification of Births Act, 1907, until 1912.

In 1908 the Schools for Mothers were started in Manchester. The first centre was opened at Mill Street, Ancoats; by 1915 there were six. Others were opened subsequently and have been gradually taken over by the Corporation, but not to the total exclusion of the voluntary workers who still continue to assist.

The Notification of Births Extension Act of 1915 not only made notification compulsory everywhere, but brought in Government grants in aid of the local authorities' work for child welfare. Since then there have been great developments in all directions. The Local Government Board and subsequently the Ministry of Health pressed for large staffs of health visitors. The number of centres was increased and they were supplemented by ante-natal clinics and gradually a certain amount of treatment, hitherto regarded as the sphere of the private practitioner only, began to be given. The supply of milk at cheap rates, Virol, cod-liver oil, etc., and later massage, all became part of the provision for maternity and child

¹ Niven: *Observations on the History of Public Health Effort in Manchester, 1923.*

welfare. Beds in the Manchester Babies' Hospital¹ were reserved for use in this connection.

From the small voluntary beginning as far back as 1862, when a few working women started to visit the poorest homes, and from the experiment, also voluntary, nearly half a century later of centres to which mothers might go for advice, has developed the large municipal Maternity and Child Welfare Department, which is concerned with the child from the time before his birth until he reaches the age of five and passes into the care of the Education Committee.

To-day this large-scale work engages the services under the Medical Officer of Health of a woman Assistant Medical Officer of Health, sixteen doctors and a non-medical staff of ninety-nine persons, including health visitors, inspectors of midwives, Welfare Centre superintendents, nurses and masseuses.²

The fall in the infant mortality rate from 188 in 1900 to 77 in 1937 shows that out of every thousand babies born, over a hundred who would have died thirty-six years ago now survive. Surely the money spent on this service has proved a sound investment. Unfortunately, the maternal mortality rate is high, 4·98 per thousand confinements.

¹ Founded 1914.

² The scheme for municipal midwives was introduced during 1937.

CHAPTER VII

EDUCATION, ART GALLERY, LIBRARIES

I

1838-1870

THE early part of the nineteenth century had seen in Manchester, as in the rest of the country, a stirring of interest in the education of the people.

The Sunday school movement, which started in Manchester in 1784 with a meeting summoned by the Borough Reeve and Constables, had spread, so that in forty years there were 23,000 children in these schools being taught reading as well as religion. The unexampled success of the Sunday school movement all over the county, and particularly in the industrial towns, was largely due to the happy combination which it provided of the two predominant sentiments of the upper towards the lower classes at that time. On the one hand, the outburst of humanitarian feeling towards the children of the poor, which expressed itself in the first Factory Act (1802), was strong amongst the more humane of the men who were benefiting by the rapid growth of industry in the northern towns and, on the other hand, the subversive doctrines of the French Revolution, which found an echo in the demands of the early Socialists and Radicals, made employers nervous of the results of popular education.

Later they came to share Adam Smith's belief that safety lay in education, but in the early part of the century they were doubtful if ability to read would not lead to a spread of seditious doctrines. At this time the question that agitated the minds of the public was not: "How are the masses to be educated, but shall they be educated at all?"¹ The Sunday schools appeared as a solution of the problem. They were financed and largely taught by members of the middle class, and they were the means of bringing a civilizing influence to bear upon the mass of hideously overworked and uncared for

¹ *Memoirs of Reverend Cecil Wray*, by Henry Wray, 1867, p. 11.

children, who swarmed in the filthy surroundings of the industrial towns. At the same time, as one of their supporters said, "they seek to furnish opportunities of instruction to the children of the poor without interfering with any weekday industry; to infuse into the tender minds of infancy ideas of decency, sobriety and industry; to inure them to early habits of regularity in their attendance at church and to teach them how to spend their leisure hours of Sunday to their own improvement, advantage and happiness, which are now almost universally consumed in idleness, profanation and riot."¹

When the Manchester Statistical Society undertook its survey of education in 1834² it found that the number of children attending Sunday schools was half as many more as those attending all the other schools put together.

There were eighty-six Sunday schools, of which twenty-five were Church of England, eighteen Wesleyan, nine Roman Catholic, nine Independent and the rest divided amongst other Nonconformist bodies. The number of children attending them was 33,196, of which 31 per cent attended those attached to the Church of England. Reading was taught in all but two, writing in the majority, but not usually on Sunday. Evening schools were held in connection with most of the Sunday schools, to which not only went the children who had finished twelve hours in the factory, and longer hours in unregulated employment, but older boys and girls, and grown men and women. Lending libraries and benefit and clothing societies were found in connection with seventy-four.³

As the Sunday school was the first form of our day school system, so its influence persisted when that system had so developed that there was no longer the necessity for secular teaching in Sunday schools. "Thus the Sunday School," says Sir J. Kay-Shuttleworth, "became the type of the daily school, and it was natural that elementary education should, even in day schools at first, comprise only such rudiments of instruction as enabled the scholars to read the Holy Scriptures."⁴

Following close upon the Sunday schools, and like them drawing

¹ Quoted in *History of English Elementary Education*, by F. Smith, p. 49.

² Manchester Statistical Society's Report on the State of Education in the Borough of Manchester in 1834.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁴ *Public Education*, by Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 34.

their inspiration from religion, came the two great societies, which for so many years provided day schools for the poor. The Royal Lancasterian Association, founded in 1809, which two years later became "The British and Foreign School Society," was a society formed to aid non-sectarian schools organized on the system of Joseph Lancaster, and the "National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church" was connected with Dr. Bell. Manchester benefited early from the efforts of both of these societies.

The Royal Lancasterian Free School in Manchester opened in 1809.¹ William Neild was chairman, and Dr. Dalton and John Owens—later to found Owens College—were members of the committee. Here seven hundred boys and three hundred girls, of all religious denominations, were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and the girls needlework. There were two masters and one mistress, and the 1,000 children were all taught in one room. It was only the use of the monitorial system that made this possible. The first school of the National Society was in Granby Row, founded in 1812 largely owing to Canon Wray's² exertions. Two hundred and eighty boys and one hundred and fifty girls were taught on Dr. Bell's system, reading, writing and arithmetic. The girls were taught needlework for an extra payment of 1d. a week.

Another pioneer in education, Robert Owen, had lived and worked in Manchester, and five infant schools—one was private—were founded in Manchester on the model of his school in New Lanark between 1825 and 1832.

A change had come over the attitude of the governing classes towards the problem of the education of the poor since the early years of the century. Although there was no suggestion, except by some writers like James Mill, and by some Radicals like Roebuck, that there was any natural right to education, the fact that the French Revolution had not been followed by a similar upheaval here, in spite of the popularity of some of its underlying ideas, had confirmed men in their belief that knowledge of the "three R's", especially if it was closely bound up with religious teaching and in the hands of religious people, was a safeguard rather than a solvent

¹ In Lever Street, and then in 1814 it moved to Marshall Street, Oldham Road.

² See above, p. 32.

of society. The industrial system, which was rapidly making England—and incidentally—themselves richer and richer every year, seemed so immensely good to anyone who could appreciate the workings of the laws of political economy, that to understand must be to admire. They were convinced that demands for higher wages resulting in "turnouts," and the bread riots that accompanied the constant commercial crises of the early 'thirties and 'forties, arose from ignorance on the part of the workers. "Knowledge is the bulwark of the state, and the rights of the rich and the poor are one, when rightly understood."¹

This argument might convince reluctant taxpayers, but it could never have driven men like William Neild, Richard Cobden, Thomas Potter and other successful Manchester business men to give time and money to the cause of popular education. More influential with them was the motive that made Dr. Kay give up his medical profession and, by way of a Poor Law Commissioner, become the first secretary of the Committee of the Privy Council for Education. He and his group of Manchester friends were deeply religious men. As members of the Board of Health formed to combat the cholera on its first appearance in 1831, they had seen something of the lives of the submerged masses, on whose labours their fortunes were built. They could not but feel that it was a disgrace to a country calling itself Christian, that little children should grow up in these conditions and unable even to read the Bible. Some of these men were already maintaining schools. Cobden had one near his works at Salden Bridge. Thomas Potter and Benjamin Heywood supported schools near their homes at Hlams o'th'Height, and the latter ran one also in Miles Platting. Others, like William Neild, were associated with the Lancasterian school. Strong churchmen, like the Birley family, who gave much money and more time to found and manage schools, the Rev. Hugh Stowell and Canon Richson, who worked untriflingly for education, expected the day school to be, like the Sunday school, the nursery of the Church.

The first sign of interest in education on the part of the Government was a grant of £20,000 given in 1833 for building schools. It was distributed through the two societies on the basis of a pound for every pound raised by voluntary contributions. This

¹ Quoted in *History of English Elementary Education*, by Frank Smith, p. 147.

was followed by an inquiry into the state of education in the large towns. When this report was published, members of the newly formed Statistical Society in Manchester¹ felt that it was inaccurate as regarded their town, and so they set to work in 1834 to make a survey of their own. This report on Manchester was sent to the committee of the House of Commons which was considering the state of education, and attracted so much attention that similar inquiries were carried out in other parts of the country.

The Manchester committee of inquiry found that there were eight different kinds of schools:

- (1) Endowed schools.
- (2) Infant schools.
- (3) Dame schools.
- (4) Common day schools.
- (5) Superior private schools.
- (6) Evening schools.
- (7) Sunday schools, and one Mechanics' Institute.

(1) *Endowed schools* (21).—The chief of these was the Manchester Grammar School, at this date an entirely free school for 200 boys. Chetham's Hospital, and six charity schools, maintained by endowments, supplemented in some cases by the offertory money from the churches with which they were connected, came also under this description.

Here also came the big schools, namely the Lancasterian (1809) for 1,000 boys and girls, Granby Row National School (1812) for 430 boys and girls, St. George's Hulme National School (1832) for 170 boys and girls, the New Jerusalem Day School (1827) for 200 boys, the Scotch Church Day School (1834) for 130 boys and girls, a Catholic Charity Day School for 400 children of both sexes, and one, founded in 1834, by the Mechanics' Institute.

The two schools for the workhouse children, who made pins in the morning and attended the school taught by paupers in the afternoon, were also included in this classification. About half of the endowed schools were free, in the others there were weekly fees, usually 2d. for reading, 4d. for reading and writing, and 5d. for reading, writing and arithmetic.

¹ See above, p. 35.

(2) *The four infant schools* to which reference has already been made were supported by one or other of the churches or by the Friends, and one, in Chorlton-on-Medlock, by public subscriptions.

The typical infant school of that day was "a large room with a gallery at one end where the whole body of scholars could assemble for a 'simultaneous lesson' or by repetition. At other times the floor was used for teaching smaller drafts of scholars, and monitors were used to a small extent for the more mechanical tasks. But the gallery lesson¹ was the chief medium of instruction."²

In these infant schools the pupils paid ad. a week as a flat rate. The curriculum consisted of the three R's, with religion and morals—separate subjects, and in some cases natural history and geography. The number of scholars averaged 130, but there was only one mistress in each. The investigator had nothing but praise for these schools, and said that "their design and management are excellent and their general utility likely to be very great," and that "the thing most to be wished for children of this early age is, that 'infants' schools should gradually supplant the old Dame Schools, and be established on so large a scale, throughout every part of the Borough, as to afford accommodation for all children of an age to receive instruction there."³

The next three kinds of schools—the dame school, common day schools and superior private schools—were all what we should call private schools to-day. That is to say, the man or woman who ran them had to make his living from the fees.

(3) *Dame schools*.—These were the worst and the most numerous of all the schools in the town. "These schools are generally found in very dirty, unwholesome rooms—frequently in close, damp cellars, or old dilapidated garrets. In one of these schools eleven children were found in one small room, in which one of the children of the mistress was lying in bed ill with the measles. Another child had died in the same room of the same complaint a few days before. In another school all the children to the number of twenty, were squatted upon the bare floor there being no benches,

¹ There are still infant schools in Manchester with the "gallery" in what is now the hall, although it is no longer used for teaching.

² *History of English Elementary Education*, by Frank Smith, p. 96.

³ Manchester Statistical Society's Report, 1834, p. 16.

chairs, or furniture of any kind in the room. The Master said his terms would not yet allow him to provide forms, but he hoped that as his school increased, and his circumstances thereby improved, he should be able, sometime or other to afford this luxury.⁷¹

Most of these were kept, as the name implies, by women, but there were some kept by old men, "whose only qualification for this employment seems to be their unfitness for every other."⁷² Fees varied from 2d. to 7d. a week, 4d. being the average. The average yearly receipts were about £17 1s. 6d. per school. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that many of the teachers had other occupations, such as shop-keeping, sewing, washing, and that the children gained little from attendance, except that they were taken care of.

In some of these schools no books were provided and the children depended upon the chance that one of them would bring a book from home. In the majority only one or two books were found. "One of the best of these schools," say the committee, "is kept by a blind man, who hears his scholars their lessons, and explains them with great simplicity. He is, however, liable to interruption in his academic labours as his wife keeps a mangle, and he is obliged to turn it for her."⁷³

Over 4,700 children, about half of whom were under five years of age, were found attending these schools. That meant that 11 per cent of the total number of children between the ages of five and fifteen attending school were pupils of whom "the vast majority receive no instruction which is at all deserving of the name."

(4) *Common day schools*.—There were 116 for boys and 63 for girls, but this division was merely on paper, as in most of the schools the sexes were mixed. Altogether there were 7,000 children attending them. Fees varied from 3d. to 1s. 6d. a week, the average being 6d. and 9d.⁴ The committee reports that these were, on the whole, rather better than the dame schools, but "still very little

⁷¹ Manchester Statistical Society's Report, 1834, p. 6.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 6, note.

⁴ The pupils came chiefly from the families of mechanics, warehousemen and small shopkeepers, and as the age range in the dame schools was from 2 and 3 to 15, and in the common schools there were some children under 5, it was probably the parents who wished for a better education for their children than that of reading only, and who could afford to pay higher fees, who sent them to the common day schools.

fitted to give a really useful education to the children of the lower classes.¹ The masters were hardly ever qualified for the work, and their average receipts were between 16s. and 17s. a week.

The three R's was the staple education, but in a few of the better schools a little grammar, geography and history was taught. "Religious Instruction is seldom attended to, beyond the rehearsal of a catechism, and moral education, real cultivation of mind and improvement of character, are totally neglected. Morals, said one master, in answer to the enquiry whether he taught them: 'Morals! How am I to teach morals to the like of these?' " But other masters were more boastful. "One of these," reports the committee, "who was especially conscious of the superior excellence of his establishment, as soon as he was acquainted with the object of the visit, began to dilate upon the various sciences with which he was familiar; among which he enumerated Hydraulics, Hydrostatics, Geography, Geology, Etymology and Entomology. It was suggested to him that they had better take the list of queries in their order. On coming to the subjects taught in the school, he was asked: 'Do you teach reading and writing? Yes. Arithmetic? Yes. Grammar and Composition? Certainly. French? Yes. Latin? Yes. Greek? Yes, yes. Geography? Yes,' etc., and so on until the list of queries was exhausted, answering every question in the affirmative. As he concluded the visitor remarked: 'This is *multum in parvo*, indeed!' to which the Master immediately replied: 'Yes, I teach that. You may put that down too.'"²

The committee met with two instances of schools kept by masters of some ability, but much given to drinking, who had, however, gained such a reputation in "their neighbourhood, that after spending a week or a fortnight in this pastime, they could always fill their schoolroom again as soon as they returned to their posts. The children during the absence of the masters go to other schools for the week, or play in the streets, or are employed by their parents in running errands, etc. On another occasion one of the instructors and guardians of the morals of our youth was met issuing from his schoolroom at the head of his scholars to see a fight in the neighbourhood; and instead of stopping to reply to any educational queries, only issued a breathless invitation to come and see the sport."³

¹ Manchester Statistical Society's Report, p. 8, note.

² *Ibid.*, p. 10, note.

The committee summed up its opinion of these schools by saying that the confusion that arose from the absence of any order and system, the low qualifications of the master, large numbers of children to each teacher, great deficiency of books, etc., "render them nearly inefficient for any purposes of real education." The girls' schools were found to be in much better condition than the boys'.

(5) *Superior private and boarding schools.*—There were 114 of these with 2,934 children, but the committee did not attempt to give any opinion on the education. The fees are not given, but on the principle of paying for each subject separately they must have been quite high. In addition to the three R's, grammar, natural history, drawing, mathematics (boys), needlework (girls), languages and morals were taught in most of them, and at least half of them used maps and globes. It would have been one of these schools in Oldham Street that Ada, in *The Manchester Man*, attended.

This concluded the provision of day-time education in the town. There were, however, two other methods by which some children and young people could learn the rudiments.

(6) *Evening schools*, of which there were 86 with 1,458 scholars. The majority of these students were between fourteen and eighteen years of age, although there were some adults and some younger children. "They are," says the Report, "generally more effective than other schools, as none attend them who do not wish to learn, and who are not of an age to appreciate the advantages."¹ The fees were usually higher than for day schools, and the same masters taught in both.

For adult education there was the Mechanics' Institute, established in 1824, for which the committee had nothing but praise. "People of all ages, rank, situation and pursuits take advantage of the classes and lectures," and their only criticism is that the subjects and the manner of teaching are hardly likely to "instruct the lower orders—the really labouring classes of the community."² There were at this date 1,200 members, many under eighteen years of age, who paid an annual subscription of £1, and about half of the members attended the evening classes. A library with 2,600 volumes, a reading-room and a theatre for lectures were all in the building.

¹ Manchester Statistical Society's Report, p. 12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Finally there were Sunday schools, to which we have already referred.¹

Although the committee realized that, apart from religious knowledge, little else was taught in the Sunday schools, they felt that owing to the large attendance, the moral effect upon the children of the habits of cleanliness and regularity, and the strong bond that was formed between the teachers from church and chapel and the children, lasting often all through their lives, these schools were the most important educational influence in the town, which was so lamentably deficient in any proper provision for day-time schooling. Another great advantage of the Sunday school was the high ratio of teachers. Many of the most devoted social workers of that time threw themselves into this work, and there was one teacher to every eleven pupils.

The results of this inquiry can be summarized as follows:²

There were 50,000 children between the ages of five and fifteen.³

There were in attendance at dame schools	4,722
There were in attendance at common day schools	6,790
There were in attendance at superior private schools	2,934
There were in attendance at infant schools	649
There were in attendance at endowed schools	3,566

—
18,661

But if the children under five and over fifteen are subtracted, the inquiry showed that only 28 per cent of all children of school age were attending a day school. Of the 33,000 scholars on the books of the Sunday schools, 23,000 received Sunday school instruction only. Taking all the figures together, only 56 per cent of all the children between five and fifteen were receiving day-time instruction of any sort, and of this number more than half were only receiving Sunday school instruction.

¹ In 1817 a woman, Catherine Prescott, died, aged 108. When she was 100 she had learnt to read at the Sunday school, which later became the most famous of all the Manchester Sunday schools, St. Paul's, Bennett Street.

² All the statistics refer to the Parliamentary borough which was larger than the municipal borough. The latter had not been formed at the time of the inquiry.

³ It is interesting that the members of this committee considered 15 to be the age to which instruction should be continued.

Such was the state of education in Manchester in 1834. Investigations into Salford, Bury and Liverpool followed in the next few years, and Manchester appeared to be rather worse than these other towns in her day-school provision, although better in that of Sunday schools. But what struck the committee of the Statistical Society more than anything was the contrast between all these places and education abroad. In Prussia, in several other German states, in Holland, and in Switzerland conditions were very different. "In Prussia all children between 7 and 14 are obliged to attend school, and from statistical returns it appears that they do so. Schools are carefully provided in every district, and placed under the superintendence of a Master who has himself been educated for the profession."¹ They also found a much more liberal curriculum. Whereas "no school is allowed to exist which does not teach, in an effectual manner, Religion, Reading, Writing and Singing," every complete elementary school taught in addition "the German language, elements of Geometry, Drawing, Arithmetic, elements of Natural Science, Geography, General History (particularly the history of the country), Gymnastic exercises, and simple forms of manual labour." They contrast this wealth of subjects with the bare three R's in England which, they say, "seems to be considered as constituting the finished education of the children of the lower classes of the people."²

Although the religious impulse had, as we saw, been the motive force behind the provision of such education as we possessed, character training and moral instruction were sadly deficient in the majority of schools. The investigators realized that although the indifference and poverty of parents were in some measure responsible, no improvement could be expected until there was a body of well-educated and trained teachers. There was not at this date a single Teachers' Training College in the whole of England. Until 1840, when the Battersea Training College was founded privately by Kay-Shuttleworth and Tufnell, no teachers in English or Welsh schools had received any special education for their work, and only a very moderate amount of learning was required by the managers of the National and British schools. At this time, too, "there was no organized system of inspection, no inspector, no published

¹ Manchester Statistical Society's Report, p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

reports on the state of the schools assisted by the State, and very little assistance ever granted."¹

Abroad, the profession of schoolmaster was one of skill and selection, here it was the refuge of the unsuccessful of all other occupations. Macaulay, who unlike the authors of a statistical study felt no need for moderation in his language, describes the English schoolmasters as "the refuse of all other callings, discarded footmen, ruined pedlars, men who cannot write a common letter without blunders, men who do not know whether the earth is a sphere or a cube, men who do not know whether Jerusalem is in Asia or America. And to such men, men to whom none of us would entrust the key of his cellar, we have entrusted the mind of the rising generation, and with the mind of the rising generation, the freedom, the happiness, the glory of our country."²

Laissez-faire was no policy for education, and State help, in the opinion of these men, was essential. "Whilst—abroad—the Governments provide an ample supply of good efficient teachers, in England absolutely nothing is done either by government, or by any other body for this purpose."³ And their final summing-up of the position shows how urgently they felt the need of Government interference: "It has been the common boast in England, that in her public undertakings the co-operation of private individuals has effected greater wonders, than all the wealth and power of governments in foreign countries. In this great work of national education, there is most assuredly no ground for such a boast. Private benevolence has effected something, but its efforts shrink into hopeless insignificance when compared with those of the governments of the German States. Indeed it is not possible, in any country, to obtain from the conflicting interests and opinions of private individuals that extent and unity of purpose, which is necessary for the establishment of so vast a system, as that which should provide a good and suitable education for every child of the State."⁴ They ask that as a first step a Board of Public Instruction should be set up.

We have given this account of education in Manchester in considerable detail, because it was practically unaltered by 1838.

¹ "Condition of Poor Children in English and German Towns," by Joseph Kay, Manchester Statistical Society, 1853.

² House of Commons, April 19, 1847.

³ Manchester Statistical Society's Report on Education in Liverpool, 1835, p. 42.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 42 and 43.

Four years after the Report was published the only addition made to the glaring deficiency was some factory schools, established in connection with the cotton mills. In 1833 a Factory Act was passed¹ under which children between the ages of nine and thirteen were to have two hours' daily schooling,² in addition to eight hours in the mill. But the State provided neither money nor qualified teachers, and the employers, even the best of them, seemed to have felt little responsibility beyond complying with the law. In the *Manchester Guardian* of 1836 the following advertisement was inserted by McConnell & Company, Ancoats, one of the leading cotton-spinning firms:

"Wanted a Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress to superintend the education of children between 9 and 13 years of age employed in the mills of McConnell & Company, Ancoats. One penny in the shilling will be deducted from the working wages of each child to pay for the schooling; and from 200 to 300 children will probably be employed, whose wages will average 2/6 to 3/- per week. The payment will be guaranteed by the employers. One third only of the children will be in the school at the same time: and the hours of attendance will be from ten to twelve, noon, and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. The employers will contribute an additional yearly sum if the instructors are efficient. It is intended to connect an evening school with the establishment for persons above 13 years of age, and for adults, the receipts of which, after deducting disbursements of light, heat, etc., will go to the schoolmaster and schoolmistress. The system of education taught in the sessional school, Edinburgh, will be preferred."

Where the mill owners took a personal interest and especially where they did not exact the full eight hours' work at the mill from the children, some of these schools were good; others were merely established to comply with the Act of Parliament. Unless

¹ The Health and Morals of Apprentices Act of 1802, which limited hours to twelve in the day, and for which the Manchester Dr. Percival was largely responsible, had urged also that the apprentices should be taught the three R's during their working time by a master or mistress paid by the employers, but the Act had been largely inoperative.

² In 1844 another Factory Act extended the period to three hours and made parents as well as employers responsible for seeing that the children attended. The minimum age of employment was lowered to eight years instead of nine. These provisions were extended to non-textile factories and workshops in 1864 and 1867 (Bilchereough: *History of Elementary Education*, p. 84).

the children attended for two hours daily they were not entitled to a certificate and could not be employed. The Factory Inspector preferred a good school to a bad one but, so long as the law was complied with, he had no power to say anything, and only the mere form of school attendance could be enforced.

The factory schools, therefore—and the requirement as to education only applied to children in textile factories—cannot have added much of value to the educational provision in Manchester, but until 1870 they were all that could be described as a state enforced system.

The inquiry had certainly roused interest in Manchester, and in the thirty years that followed a large public meeting of all parties and all sects which had advocated a national system of education in 1837, Manchester gave birth to eight different associations.¹ The bitter sectarian controversy was fought out in the city during these years and, thanks largely to Canon Richson, the compromise of 1870 was reached in Manchester before the rest of the country was ready for it.²

The necessity for compulsory as well as for free education was shown by the experience of the Manchester Education Aid Society, which was founded in 1864 to pay the school pence of poor children. Although over 2,000 children were sent to school by its help, only 50 per cent of the free grants were taken up by the parents. Agitation all over the country had now been going on for some years, and the Government could no longer ignore the question. Forster's Bill, when first introduced, was found to have been largely influenced by his experience in connection with the Manchester Education Aid Society's Bill which he and Mr. Bruce had sponsored.

As a result of the controversy, facts about education in Manchester were given in evidence before a Parliamentary Committee by Canon Richson in 1853. Comparing this with the inquiry of the Statistical Society, we find that whereas school attendance in 1834

¹ The Manchester Society for Promoting National Education (1837); The Manchester Church Education Society (1844); The Lancashire Public Schools Association, later the National Public Schools Association (1847); The Manchester and Salford Committee on Education (1851); The General Committee on Education (1857); The Manchester Education Aid Society (1864); A branch of the National Education League (1869); The National Education Union (1869).

² Between 1850 and 1870 Bills were promoted in Parliament by one or other of the Manchester societies.

was 9·5 per cent of the population of the borough, or one in eleven, in 1851 it had actually fallen to 7·3 per cent, or one in fourteen.¹ An estimate was made of the children between three and fifteen who were neither at school nor at work. It was found that out of 99,000 children of these ages, 42 per cent were neither at school nor at work. There was only one bright spot in this investigation: the number of children attending private schools—which included dame schools and common day schools—had decreased, and the numbers attending the Church of England and other denominational schools had increased since 1834.

The task of providing schools and making them available to all children was only one part of the problem. Unless children were protected by legislation against employers and parents, it was impossible to offer them schools, even if they were free. Since 1844, children could be employed in textile factories when they were eight years old and their hours were limited to six and a half a day, the beginning of the half-time system, but there were no limitations on their employment in non-textile factories and workshops, or warehouses and offices.

In Manchester, children of nine, ten, eleven and even six years old were working twelve, thirteen and sometimes fifteen hours a day. The managing partner in a firm of paper stamers gave evidence and said: "The children do work a great deal too long. From 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. is much too long, and that is the case for by far the greater portion of the year. They could not, when they are working these hours, go to school, even if they would. We work on, with no stoppage for meals, so that the day's work of 10½ hours is finished by 4.30 p.m. and all after that is overtime, and we seldom leave off working before 6 p.m. so that we really work overtime the whole year round."²

In the manufacture of lucifer matches in Newton Heath, a boy of fifteen, who had been employed there since he was nine, was at the factory by four o'clock in the summer, five o'clock in the winter, and as he lived in Manchester, had a walk of three-quarters of an hour to and from work. He usually stayed until 6 p.m. Some

¹ Joseph Kay, brother of Kay-Shuttleworth, in his paper to the Statistical Society on the "Condition of Education of Poor Children in English and German Towns" (1833), says that in Switzerland one in five, in Germany one in six, of the population was attending school, and attending regularly, for six or seven years.

² Children's Employment Commission, 1867, Reports 1 and 2.

of these children had been to a school before they went to work, and some of them went to Sunday school. It is hardly surprising that most of them had forgotten all they had learnt, including a child of eleven, who said that she had been to school in Blackburn from the time that she was four, and that when she was seven she had had seven children to teach "because there was only one teacher." She could still count a little, but did not remember what 7 and 7 were.¹

Conditions such as these were general all over the country, and as a result of the revelations of this inquiry the Workshop Regulations Act, 1867, forbidding the employment of children under eight, and requiring children to attend school for ten hours every week between the ages of eight and twelve, was passed. Unfortunately, the administration of this Act, unlike that of the Factory Acts, was given to the local health authority, and the Manchester Council did not think it necessary to give the newly appointed Medical Officer of Health any staff to see that it was carried out.² It was, perhaps, not surprising that few children in the Manchester workshops were found in half-time attendance at school.

Three years later an inquiry revealed the disquieting fact that there were only 869 children attending school under the various Factory Acts. Practically all of these came from thirty-eight factories, but as there were 3,000 works that came under the Workshops Regulation Act of 1867, there ought to have been many children between eight and thirteen who should have attended. The Factory Acts were said to be well enforced and the reason for so few children attending school under these Acts seems to have been that most employers preferred to employ young persons rather than children because of the restrictions on the employment of the latter. The Workshops Act was reported not to be enforced, for the reasons just mentioned. If the Act were enforced, the Inspector was sure that the same result would follow as in the case of the factories. Children would be dismissed and "young persons" employed instead, as there was a plentiful supply of such labour. "The educational clauses, in short, of recent Labour Acts have, in Manchester, had no appreciable effect whatever."³

¹ Children's Employment Commission, 1867, Reports 1 and 2.

² Council Minutes, October 16, 1868.

³ House of Commons returns of the Schools for the Poorer Classes, 1870. D. Fernon's Report on Manchester.

But Manchester was rapidly becoming less of a manufacturing and more of a commercial city, and there were unlimited opportunities for the employment of children outside the scope of both the Factory and Workshop Acts, in offices, warehouses, shops, etc. The employment of these children was entirely unregulated as regards minimum age, hours of work, and attendance at school, and only a minority of parents appreciated education enough to make the necessary sacrifices to get it for their children.

On the eve of the introduction of the 1870 Bill, a Government inquiry showed that, although there was provision in Manchester in schools of some sort for 59 per cent of the school population, actually only 45 per cent attended. The position had certainly improved in the thirty-six years, the schools were better and the numbers attending larger, but there were no grounds for complacency and no one who knew the facts was prepared to defend the position.

Meanwhile what had been happening to the schools themselves around which all this controversy raged?

When the first Government grant was given in 1833 it was distributed through the two religious societies, the National Society for the Church schools and the British and Foreign School Society for the Nonconformists. The only condition was that for each pound from the Government there should be a pound from local subscriptions and fees. There were no requirements with regard to buildings or maintenance of the premises, and no inspection.

Dr. Kay had been appointed¹ the first secretary of the Committee of the Privy Council to administer this grant. During the ten years that he occupied the position he laid the foundation of our national system. He realized first of all the immense value of inspection by the central authority, and in 1841 this right was won after a stiff battle with the churches. Compromise was effected on the basis of inspectors for each denomination, recommended by that denomination but appointed by the Committee of Council. His next concern was to get a body of properly educated and trained teachers and for that training colleges were necessary. Although the opposition of the churches defeated his attempt to found a State Training College, Government grants made possible the establishment of denominational training colleges. In 1846 the

¹ In 1839.

famous Minutes of Council were issued under which a grant was available for the first time to pay the stipends of pupil teachers and to augment the salaries of the schoolmasters who taught them. Selected pupil teachers, who pursued their own studies under the headmaster after school hours, gradually replaced monitors, who were children of twelve or thirteen paid 1s. a week to help the overworked teacher. These pupil teachers competed for the scholarships to the various training colleges and the successful ones were known as Queen's Scholars. At the end of the course there was an examination for the certificate, which was granted after two years' probation as teachers. Schools which employed these certificated teachers received an extra grant. Thus the foundation of a profession was at last laid in England.

From the reports of the various inspectors of the Committee of Council we can get some idea of the Manchester schools. All but eight of the voluntary schools¹ in Manchester received grants from the Government, and the teaching in the schools had improved considerably since the Statistical Society painted so depressing a picture of the conditions in 1834.

The Rev. J. Kennedy, the inspector of Church schools in this district, saw a great improvement in the years between 1848 and 1861, "almost," he writes, "like life from the dead." There had been a great increase of schools, and only one had stopped employing certificated teachers, in two out of its three departments. From his experience of these years he was convinced that there were many children for whom free education was essential, and he speaks approvingly of the district of St. Philip's, Hulme, where, in addition to large boys' and girls' schools and two infant schools, the managers had a free school for the necessitous poor, under a master with a first-class certificate.² The difficulty of ensuring that the free schools were not abused had been settled in that parish by the arrangement that when the parents got into arrears with school fees, the children

¹ Some schools refused the grant as they did not want inspection. From the Minute Books of St. Paul's, Bennett Street, Infants' Day School we find that it was not until 1866 that the school decided to accept a Government grant, in consequence of which it had to give three months' notice to the head mistress, as a certificated mistress would henceforth have to be employed. One was appointed at £45 a year. In those days the teachers themselves collected the school pence which went towards their salary, the deficit being made up by the managers.

² This was maintained by the Busley family.

had to go to the free school. Also, if the parents of children attending the free school got good work, they had to send their children to the pay school. "The system," he reports, "appears to work admirably," but more, we feel, from the point of preventing any child who could afford to pay from getting a free education than from the point of view of the child's education. In spite of the real improvement, he feels that there is no general enthusiasm for education, and that the progress so far as the Church schools is concerned, is due most of all to the Birley family. "Five Churches and six admirable sets of schools are monuments of their unostentatious labours and liberality, not to speak of the extensive free school, the large night school, and other schools which I have found carried on and supported entirely by them. Except the labours and benefactions of Mr. W. Colton, in the district of Bethnal Green, I have never heard of anything equal to what has been done by the Manchester gentlemen I have named."

The Roman Catholic schools which, in 1857,¹ were much fewer in number and less well staffed than those in Liverpool and Wigan, had improved so much by 1870 that the inspector said that Manchester and Salford now enjoyed the advantages of many excellent schools that could not anywhere be surpassed for efficiency. They had to meet a special difficulty, namely, that "the English will not attend school with the Irish, or the Irish with the English."

The inspector of the British schools was laudatory. Whether those schools in Manchester were, on the whole, better than the Church schools, we have no means of knowing. The two schools that win praises from successive inspectors are the New Jerusalem School, Peter Street, and Lower Mosley Street Boys' School. The former, originally a Swedenborgian foundation in small and inconvenient premises, had an attendance of 300 boys divided into seven classes, each, it is remarked, "furnished with a separate teacher besides a Head Teacher."² "The most striking thing on entering is to see a schoolroom of which every square yard is actually occupied with scholars, and yet on walking round to find that there is not the slightest noise, confusion or interference of one class with another."³

The Lower Mosley Street Boys' School, said by the inspector

¹ Minutes of Committee of Council, 1856-57.

² Minutes of Committee of Council, 1857: Extract from J. D. Morell's Report.

to be "one of the most remarkable schools now existing in this part of the country," belonged to the Unitarians, and was one of the earliest of the Manchester schools to appoint certificated teachers and pupil teachers, in accordance with the conditions of Government grant in 1846.

There was, however, a general feeling that Government grants were not being applied as originally intended, which was to help the poorest children to get a good education. Inspectors and other investigators found that many of the poorest children were those whose parents did not appreciate the advantages of education, and would not even accept free schooling, or those whose families so desperately needed their earnings that they could not be spared for school. The children who did attend in large numbers were those whose parents could probably have afforded to pay more than 9d. a week, which was the limit for any school that received a Government grant.

"Teachers are, of course, only too glad to fill their schools with such children . . . profiting by them in every way, first by the higher school fee, next by the Government grant, pecuniarily therefore in the first instance, secondly, by the great benefit of attracting to their school pupils from decent and comfortable homes, far easier to manage, quicker to learn, and surer to pass in the examination. . . . They (the teachers) looked askance on children for whom, while their truancy, their raggedness, their roughness, their rawness, and their utter ignorance demanded much greater efforts of patience, kindness and all the resources of the humanest and cleverest teacher, they were paid infinitely less."¹

When fees formed half the income of the school and therefore of the salaries of the teachers, when there was no scale of salaries, so that a school with poorer children could pay lower salaries than one with better class children, when there was no local control over the schools, and the various bodies started schools wherever they liked and openly competed for scholars, uniformity of treatment of school, teacher and pupil was an impossibility. But free education with all the simplification that it brought with it was not achieved for another thirty years.

We refer elsewhere² to the building of the Swinton schools for

¹ Minutes of Committee of Council, 1866-67. Report of E. H. Brodie.

² See below, pp. 319-323.

the workhouse children, hitherto kept in the mixed workhouse. It brought forcibly home to the citizens of Manchester the fact that Canon Richson had urged as an argument for rate aid, namely, that the pauper children were enjoying a much better education than the child of the self-supporting working man. At Swinton there was one trained teacher to every twenty-one children, whilst in the National and British schools there was only one teacher to a number varying between thirty-six and seventy-seven children. The curriculum was much broader, too, including vocal and instrumental music, drawing, mechanics and "Industrial employment and industrial habits" (needlework and knitting for girls). This school received grant from the Committee of Council, and the inspector's report was lyrical. "The ratepayers of Manchester have evinced a liberality, that almost might be termed boundless, in the erection of these magnificent buildings, which are, beyond question, the finest educational establishments for the benefit of the poorest classes that have as yet been set on foot in England."¹

But over and over again the inspectors, in their reports, return to the question of the poor and irregular attendance at the ordinary schools. In the Granby Row Boys' School the inspector found that, in the five months from March to August 1846, four-fifths of the children were admitted and three-fifths had left, so that only one-fifth had remained at school even for five months. Looking back now it is difficult to understand why there was still in 1870 so much opposition to compulsory attendance that the Act only *empowered* School Boards to make by-laws enforcing it, and that ten years more had to elapse before compulsion was imposed upon the whole country by Act of Parliament.

During the years before 1870 there had been an event of great moment for the educational world. The Newcastle Commission, appointed in 1838 to investigate the state of education in England, reported in 1861 and its recommendation that part of the grant should in future be paid on the results of an examination of each child in the three R's was adopted by the Committee of Council. "Payment by results" so much in harmony with the triumphal materialism of the times, especially when the public was undergoing one of its periodical fits of alarm at the expenditure on education,² seemed to these Commissioners the only way to

¹ Minutes of Committee of Council on Education, 1846, vol. II. ² £500,000.

ensure both that the amount of public money should be reduced, and that the teachers did their work properly. They sympathized with the teachers of private schools, who complained that they were being undersold by the State-aided schools. "In our opinion," the report says, "the complaint is well founded. We think that the assistance given by the State to education should assume the form of a bounty, paid upon the production of certain results by any person whatever. We consider it unfair to exclude the teachers of private schools from a share in this bounty, if they can prove that they have produced the results."¹

Fortunately, the Government, which for years had been giving grants in order to encourage the efficient, trained teacher, realized that this would be a complete reversal of its policy, but it saw nothing wrong in applying commercial principles to teachers trained under its own auspices who were, under innumerable difficulties, trying to civilize as well as to teach the children committed to their care.

The Revised Code of 1861 provided that instead of extra grants to certificated teachers and additional grants for teaching pupil teachers, only one grant should in future be paid, and that direct to the managers, who were at liberty to pay any salaries that they liked. Grants could only be earned by children under eleven, as it was held that if the teachers did their work properly, any child could be taught the three R's by that age and that the working-class child needed no more education. Grants were dependent upon a certain number of attendances, combined with an examination by the Government inspector of every child in reading, writing and arithmetic. School managers were not slow to follow the Government's lead, and in most cases made the salaries of the teachers dependent upon the amount of grant earned by the school. On the new basis this grant was often less than it had been before.

This is not the place to discuss the disastrous effect of this policy—which was not reversed until 1877—and whose baneful influence is not yet completely eradicated. Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth saw the work to which he had devoted his life undermined; Matthew Arnold² pointed out that whereas inspection had formerly been directed towards testing and promoting the intellectual force of

¹ Quoted from Drury's *Manual of Education*, p. 30.

² An inspector of schools from 1851 to 1882.

the school, and all the subjects taught came under review, now each child had to be examined in the three R's separately, which involved an immense amount of routine labour on the part of the inspector and made the former type of helpful inspection impossible.

The Government inspector for Church schools in Manchester, the Rev. J. T. Kennedy, found that one result was a deterioration in the type of schoolmaster although, with so few alternate openings for women, the profession still drew good recruits from that sex. With regard to the men, he reports in 1867: "It is my clear conviction that the masters of National Schools are as a class inferior to what they were a few years ago. Several things will account for this. Their emoluments and hopes are less, but their work is heavier, for now they are allowed and in many cases have been required to keep an evening school in addition to all their various labours in the morning and evening. The old masters are discontented with the Revised Code, and the new masters drawn into the profession are not equal to those who have been attracted to it between 1846 and the date of the Revised Code. There are exceptions, but, as a rule, attainments and refinement seem inferior, the aims and aspirations seem lower, and they work with less spirit and zest. The fact that the Schoolmasters' Associations for Mutual Counsel and Improvement are dissolving, as in Manchester, is one sign of the depressed spirit prevailing in the body."¹

The effect on the school as a whole he found bad. "I am frequently surprised and sorry to see how little value a master attaches to anything he may have taught his scholars for the sake of the intrinsic value of the instruction itself. Unless it pays, or comes out in some way at my inspection, the master seems to think his teaching to have been wasted. I have observed a teacher seem to think even his religious teaching thrown away unless brought into display at my inspection."²

On the eve of the Education Bill of 1870 we have a picture of the state of education in Manchester³ which we can compare with that of 1834.

¹ Minutes of Committee of Council on Education, 1866-67: Report by the Rev. J. T. Kennedy.

² *Ibid.*

³ House of Commons returns of all schools for the poorer classes in Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool, 1870.

There were 79 schools, containing 163 day departments and 29 night departments, which were in receipt of Government grant and therefore under inspection, and 78 schools, with 94 day and 9 night departments, that were uninspected.

D. Fearon, who made the report on Manchester, divided these 78 uninspected schools into fit and unfit. The test of fitness was not a high one. It was a school which appeared to be free from gross, palpable defects, either (a) premises, (b) of the teacher, such as incapacity through age, infirmity or evident ignorance, (c) not proposing to teach the elements of reading, writing and arithmetic, or not having the materials and apparatus necessary for doing so. He explains that he has called a school "unfit" if it is kept in a cellar with no admission of light except through the doorway, or one in which no seats for the children are provided except on the staircase, or one in which the teacher is extremely old or paralytic, or one in which there are very bad reading-books or very few slates.

Out of the 90 departments he visited, he excluded 9 which, although the maximum fee was not above 1s. a week, he found were really middle-class schools. Of the rest, he found 37 unfit and 44 fit. The "unfit" schools had an average attendance of 1,407 and the "fit" an attendance of 3,595. Amongst the unfit, were schools with about 50 children of all ages under one teacher. One school, which proved itself unfit on all three counts, was held in two rooms of a private house. There were 52 children in a room 18 by 12 feet, and 30 children upstairs in a rather smaller room, mostly under seven. There was only one middle-aged master, who was trying to teach the children individually. "Disorder was great," reported Mr. Fearon. "They were packed so close and were so disorderly that to a stranger standing in the doorway they looked like a seething mass of children."¹

Another "unfit" school was held in a cellar, which was used as a day and sleeping room. It was very small and very dirty. "It opens into a back cellar which is dark and appears not to be paved; but it was impossible to explore it, as it seemed to be used as a privy." The master, a ragged Irishman, "had just been deserted by his wife, who was a weaver, and who could earn more by her trade than

¹ House of Commons returns of all schools for the poorer classes in Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool, 1870. Report on Manchester, by D. Fearon.

he by his school."¹ The private adventure school, in its worst manifestation, had not improved since 1834.

Of the schools which, though uninspected, were classed as "fit," Mr. Fearon said that "even the best of them are far inferior in these subjects (the three R's) to any fair, inspected school, and some are as bad in dictation as the obviously unfit schools previously described."²

One of the reasons for bad attendance, he said, was that parents who intended to send their children into the factory at ten or eleven, when they expected them to have to attend school half time, did not bother about providing them with any education beforehand. His conclusion was not flattering to Manchester. Although he found the education of the ordinary scholars in the inspected schools much better than that of those in the uninspected, he still found it of a low quality, below the average of the same age for the county. He examined over 700 individual children, and found that only two could pass the sixth standard, which a child who had been attending regularly since the age of five could pass when he was eleven. As for the instruction and discipline in the uninspected schools, they are "so bad that they are scarcely worth reckoning."

The inquiry covered Liverpool, Birmingham and Leeds as well as Manchester. As Birmingham had at that time about the same population as Manchester, we can compare the figures:

	Birmingham	Manchester
Estimated population in 1869	360,846	370,892
Children requiring elementary instruction (one-sixth of population)	60,141	61,815
Accommodation in inspected schools	23,627	35,573
Number on roll in inspected schools	25,203	31,003
Average attendance	16,053	23,250
Number on roll in uninspected schools	12,910	3,298
Actual attendance in uninspected schools	10,783	2,662
Number on roll in private schools, ragged schools, etc.	11,099	2,471

¹ House of Commons returns of all schools for the poorer classes in Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, and Liverpool, 1870. Report on Manchester, by D. Fearon.
² *Ibid.*

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	Birmingham	Manchester
Actual attendance	9,661	2,016
Number on roll of all schools	49,212	36,772
Number on roll of all inspected schools	25,203	31,000

This table shows that although Birmingham had made provision in some sort of school for a larger proportion of its children of school age than had Manchester, 82·5 per cent as against 59 per cent, the proportion of children on the roll of inspected schools was greater in Manchester than in Birmingham, namely 86 per cent, as against 51 per cent.

There was, too, some faint consolation in the fact that W. E. Forster, speaking in Parliament of the revelations of this inquiry, said: "I must add, however, that Manchester appears to be better than Liverpool in one respect: that there are fewer schools in which education is not worth having." But the fact remained that still only 45 per cent of the children of school age were attending any school. Lack of compulsion did not only mean that many children never saw the inside of a school, but that of those who did, their attendance was exceedingly irregular.¹

At the beginning of 1870 the City Council passed a resolution in favour of a State system of compulsory education in schools under local control, whether supported by the rates or taxes. When Forster's Bill was introduced, the Council appointed a sub-committee to consider it. It regretted that compulsion was not obligatory, that the Council was not to be the Education Authority, and that although it would be responsible for raising the School Board rate, it would have no authority over it.

The 1870 Act marked a great change in the attitude of the public towards the public provision of education.

Since 1833 State aid in the shape of Government grants had been given to stimulate voluntary efforts. Two-thirds of the cost was, by 1870, borne by voluntary subscriptions and school pence, and one-third by Government grants. There had been bitter sectarian struggles over the administration of these grants in the early days, and it was only the tact and administrative capacity of Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth that avoided shipwreck in 1846, but although there were still uninspected schools in Manchester in 1870, only a small number of the children attending any school went to them. But the inadequacy of the school provision, not only in

¹ *Four Periods of Public Education*, by Kay-Shuttleworth, p. 568.

Manchester but throughout the country, proved that the system of voluntary effort supported by State aid had failed. There was no school of thought which proposed that the State should take over the whole cost, because there was still great distrust of State interference, particularly where religious questions were concerned. The alternative was rate aid in addition to voluntary subscriptions and school pence, but here also there was suspicion of the municipal councils, and outside the towns there was no elected body to which the new duty could be assigned. County councils were not set up until 1888.

The Government's solution was to set up *ad hoc* bodies. The School Boards were elected by the local government electors, but each elector had as many votes as there were members of the Board, and could distribute them as he pleased. This method of "plumping" meant that the different bodies interested in the elections—the denominationalists and the anti-denominationalists—could organize and make their votes much more effective than could have been done had each voter had only one vote. The result was that the elections were run entirely on the sectarian question and not on the educational qualifications of the candidates.

The country was divided into districts, coinciding in the towns with the borough areas, and an inquiry into the education needs was to be instituted. Where sufficient schools were found, there would be no interference with voluntary efforts, except that all the schools were to be open to inspection. Where the provision was insufficient—and the Education Department, through its inspectors, was to be the judge of insufficiency—six months were to be allowed to see if voluntary effort would supply the deficiency. If not, a School Board was to be set up and schools, built and maintained out of a special rate, the education rate, were to be provided. No aid from rates was to be given to denominational schools; the Government grants for building and enlargement, which had been in existence since 1833, were abolished, but the denominational schools were to receive a larger annual grant from taxes than the Board schools.

The question of making attendance compulsory between five and thirteen was left to School Boards, who were given power to pass by-laws to this effect, but, if so, they had to provide for exemptions on certain grounds for children between ten and

thirteen. Education was not made free, but School Boards were allowed to remit fees at their own schools, or to pay them from the rates to the voluntary schools for necessitous children and, with the consent of the Education Department, to establish free schools in certain cases. School Boards were free to decide whether there should be any religious teaching, but if so, it was to be undenominational, and a conscience clause, by which a child could be withdrawn from religious teaching, was to be enforced on all schools receiving grant from the Government. Managers of voluntary schools could transfer their schools to the Board. Any deficiency, after fees and Government grants had been calculated, was to be raised by the rating authority on the precept of the School Board for the maintenance of Board schools.

II

1870-1902

The second of the two periods into which we have divided the history of education in Manchester, consists of the thirty-two years of the life of the School Board.

A momentous decision had been taken when Parliament decided to keep the voluntary schools within the framework of the national system, although only, as it were, on the outskirts. Up to 1870 all the provision that existed had been made by voluntary bodies, with grants from the Government given to all schools that would agree to the necessary conditions. When rate aid as well as Government grants were found to be necessary, only schools maintained by the School Boards were to receive it. The voluntary schools were to continue to receive annual grants, but no more capital grants, and the accommodation provided by them had to be taken into account when a School Board decided whether or not the accommodation in any district was sufficient. We shall see the administrative difficulties that arose in this connection, and how the continual struggle of the voluntary schools to maintain their income from subscriptions, school pence and Government grant—although the latter was increased in 1897—resulted in the 1902 Act, which firmly established them as part and parcel of the national system.

Competition between them and the new Board schools built

out of the rates, and able to call upon the rates for any deficiency in maintenance charges, after school pence and Government grant had been calculated, was severe. The School Board in Manchester had a majority of Churchmen and Roman Catholics for the whole of its existence, and these members were elected primarily to see that the new Board schools which they had to manage did as little damage as possible to their own schools, in which many of them were naturally more interested. We can hardly wonder that questions which practically never raise their heads in a meeting of the Education Committee nowadays were the usual matters for discussion—and often bitter discussion—then.

In spite, however, of this ever-present irritant, great progress was made during this period, fundamental problems of administration were tackled, and the foundations laid upon which further advance could take place.

The problems which the School Board faced and largely solved were:

1. The provision of schools and their management.
2. The question of securing compulsory attendance of the children.
3. The question of school pence or fees.
4. The extension of the conception of elementary education.

1. *Provision of Schools and their Management.*

The Manchester Council lost no time in applying for a Board, and the first election, in which fifty-nine candidates stood for fifteen seats, took place on November 26, 1870. Out of an electorate of 62,000, in which women were entitled to vote for the first time, 26,513 voted. (Women had been given the municipal vote in 1869.)

The extreme bitterness of sectarian strife had spent itself in Manchester over the controversy of the 'fifties and 'sixties, and the Manchester Education Society supported thirteen candidates of all denominations for the School Board election. But the Church of England ran candidates also, and so did the Roman Catholics. The method of "plumping" resulted in two Roman Catholics¹ being at the top of the list. Next came an independent candidate, who had been supported by the Baptists,² then five Church of England

¹ Rev. Lawrence (later Canon) Toole and Mr. George Richardson,

² William Beech.

candidates,¹ who fought under the slogan of "Vote for Bible education, and save your rates"; then two Wesleyans² who, with these five, were all supported by the National Education Union, the Church of England organization. Miss Lydia Becker, the well-known suffragist, and for many years the only woman member of the Board, stood as an independent, and as a woman.³ Four men,⁴ including Dr. J. Watts who had been a strong secularist, all of whom stood for undenominational education, were also elected. Out of the fifteen members of the Board there were therefore nine who represented denominational interests, although no one could accuse the churchman, Mr. Herbert Birley, who was elected chairman and who held the position with an interval of three years until his death in 1890, of being a partisan chairman.

It was clear from the first that the Board was not very harmonious, and the administration of the Act provided plenty of opportunities for reviving the old quarrels. The majority of denominationalists was maintained throughout the thirty-one years of the School Board's existence.

A survey of existing accommodation by the School Board showed that there was a deficiency of 4,600 school places. The Government inspector, however, made out a deficiency of 8,282 places according to his definition of efficient accommodation.

The Board set to work to build schools to provide the needed accommodation, and Every Street and Vine Street were the first schools erected. But when any question of the provision of extra school accommodation by the Board arose, the proposal was fought by the voluntarists on the ground (1) that there were sufficient places in existing denominational schools, (2) that the new Board schools would undersell existing and poorer Church and Roman Catholic schools, and (3) that it was a waste of the ratepayers' money to erect them. The fact that Mr. Birley, although a strong churchman and a supporter of voluntary schools, usually voted in opposition to the narrow Church party alone ensured educational progress.

¹ Herbert Bailey, W. R. Callender, R. Gladstone, J. Lamb, T. Dale.

² J. Haworth and J. Cooper.

³ Women were not eligible to stand for municipal councils until 1907, although they could be members of Urban District Councils and of School Boards.

⁴ Rev. William McKerrow (Presbyterian), Robert Rumney, Dr. Watts and Oliver Heywood.

The first ten years, 1871-1881, saw the Board in possession of fourteen schools which it had built itself, twenty-one transferred to it by the managers of voluntary schools, and seven temporary premises, making a total accommodation for 24,900 children out of the 61,930 on the rolls. The majority of the children were attending voluntary schools.

At the beginning of its career the Board had given the schools under its control "managers" consisting of members of the School Board and others co-opted from outside. This system had, however, proved a failure, and all the Board schools were put under a sub-committee of the Education Committee, as is the present practice. An inspector was appointed,¹ and there was the usual outcry against "management by officials," but Mr. Birley replied that "the success which had attended the schools since they had been placed under official management was something very remarkable."² This inspector also, after considerable opposition, inspected the secular instruction in those voluntary schools where the Board paid the fees for necessitous children.

During the second ten years, 1881-1891, the problem of accommodation was intensified by the extension of the city in 1885, and again in 1890, to include areas with a deficiency of school places. The abolition of fees in 1891 also caused a rush of children into the schools, particularly in poor districts like Hulme. Voluntary schools were not increasing, and as many of these schools were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain themselves, a considerable number were handed over in this decade.

This period saw a complete reorganization of the evening schools under excellent and keen teachers, and with a much more flexible curriculum, and another interesting development was the provision of free breakfasts, and later free dinners. For some time before 1870 the charitable Mr. Birley had provided free breakfasts in the school of which he was manager, and in 1886 during a hard winter many other schools took up the work. The money was raised by voluntary efforts—school concerts, private subscriptions, etc. The teachers gave their services, and the School Board helped by inquiring into the needs of the children, and by lending the schools for the meals. They were provided only during the winter in bad times.

¹ In 1874.

² *Manchester Courier*, November 10, 1879.

During the last decade of this period the conception of the educational service was broadening. In 1893 an Act of Parliament gave School Boards the power to provide for blind and deaf children. Manchester immediately appointed a special committee to make arrangements with Henshaw's Blind Asylum, Old Trafford, and the Deaf and Dumb Schools, and was soon paying for 56 children, at the cost to the rates of £800. In 1899 two centres for physically and mentally defective children were opened under the permissive power of the Act of that year. The idea, too, of physical training and of the importance of school playgrounds developed. We find in 1893 a site of half an acre for 1,000 children, and one of an acre and a half for 1,100, and the School Board complimenting itself on the ample playgrounds. Seven years later they were taking two acres, and remarking with pride that that was more than the Board of Education required.

The last years of the School Board saw a more rapid extension of its work than at any other time, and when the Education Committee took over from the School Board (July 1903) there were 66 Provided or Board schools, of which 33 had been built since 1870, and the others transferred by voluntary bodies, with 53,674 children on the roll, and 89 non-provided or voluntary schools with 53,439 scholars. The children could hardly have been more evenly divided.

The increasing difficulties of the voluntary schools in the face of the rising cost of education, which meant that their supporters had to increase their subscriptions, as well as to pay the increasing School Board Rate, forced the Government in 1897 to give the voluntary schools an extra grant, aid grant, as it was called, on average attendance. But this was not enough, and the Manchester School Board, with its majority of representatives of voluntary schools, passed each year between 1895 and 1897 a resolution, regularly opposed by the minority, demanding that the voluntary schools should share in the Education Rate.

The following extract from a teacher's reminiscences gives some idea of work in a school at the beginning of this period—1876.

Nor were the scholars as a whole in any way superior to their surroundings. Rather the reverse, I fancy. With unwashed faces, with torn clothes or excuses for clothes, with the absence of shoes and stockings, often with starved and sickly bodies, they added still darker shades to a

grimy building. Schools and scholars partake of the nature of the district. Mills and workshops abound there, and the workers at them formed the greatest proportion of the population. Narrow streets and courts, over which hung a perpetual pall of smoke, housed the residents, and the poorness of the district was further attested by the paltry character of the shops. Even the plate-glass in the gin palaces seemed less brilliant than in the other parts of the city.

I have said the parish was a poor one. How poor appears inconceivable. Probably one-third of the children had their fees paid by the School Board and another third did not pay at all, or only occasionally. If the latter were sent home, in nine cases out of ten they did not return for some days, and we dare not resort to this means in examination times. Parents in many cases were drunken and improvident and took their children away from school immediately it was legal, putting them to the work that would bring the most money. They never gave a thought to the child's future. The standard of exemption being the fourth, we never had more than three or four in the sixth. . . .

There was no lack of candidates for the position of pupil-teacher early in the "seventies," and, after passing the sixth standard, I felt it a great honour, at the mature age of eleven and a half, to be selected to take charge of a class in Mount Zion School. The class numbered seven and consisted of children who were not to be examined in standard one owing to insufficient attendance, and it was relegated to a distant classroom in company with another company of the same size representing standard two. Here we passed the entire day for four months, with occasional brief visits from the headmaster. As long as we kept moderately quiet he was not particular what was done, seeing that all his energies were devoted to those preparing for examination. But I am afraid that we gave him a lot of trouble. The two teachers quarrelled more than once and fought, to the edification of their scholars; whilst, as the majority of the scholars were older and stronger than their masters, the task of keeping them orderly proved rather formidable. Several pitched battles ensued between teacher and scholar, in which the former had often to send hurriedly for his chief.¹

The Manchester School Board had at first followed a cheese-paring policy, and instead of encouraging its pupil teachers to go to college had kept them as assistant teachers at lower salaries. There was no training college in the city, but a day training department was opened at Owens College, first for men (1890) and then for women (1894).

¹ *Manchester City News*, April 4, 1891.

A Pupil Teacher Centre, which had often been discussed, was finally opened in the last decade of this period. Here the pupil teachers were taught together by a full-time staff. This was a great improvement on the system by which the head teacher used to teach them before and after school.

2. *Compulsory Attendance.*

It was, however, one thing to provide schools and quite another to get the children into them.

Parliament, as we saw, shrank from enforcing compulsory attendance, but it gave power to any School Board to do so if it wished.¹ Should it so decide, the Act laid down the limits within which compulsion could be applied, five to thirteen years. It also insisted that the by-laws should allow children between ten and thirteen to have either total or partial exemption if the child had passed—to the satisfaction of the Government inspector—a standard of education which was to be specified. In other words, exemptions must be allowed, but the standard at which they were allowed was left to each School Board, subject to confirmation by the Education Department.

London, Liverpool, and then Manchester were the first of the large School Boards to make such by-laws. Manchester fixed the standard of full-time exemption at the fourth standard, and allowed half-time exemption to any child who had reached Standard III. London fixed Standard V for full-time exemption, and half-time exemption only for those children who were proved to be "beneficially and necessarily at work for the maintenance of themselves or their parents." Manchester was divided into twelve districts, with one or more attendance officers for each, and five rota sub-committees, which dealt with parents who did not send their children to school regularly. If appearances before the Rota failed parents were prosecuted if the child had made *less than four-fifths* of the possible attendances in *the preceding four weeks*.

Evidently the Clerk to the Board and the teachers must have shown too much enthusiasm to sweep children into the schools, for the next year the Board decided that no prosecutions should take place, except with the written consent of two members of the

¹ In 1880 Mundella's Act made it compulsory for School Boards to make by-laws requiring the attendance of children.

Board,¹ and only when the child had made *less than half* the possible attendances in *any* four consecutive weeks. In 1875 the necessary attendances were raised to 68 per cent for girls and 75 per cent for boys, and later in the same year to 80 per cent for both sexes after a strong protest had been received from the committee of the Jews' School, which pointed out that the attendance at their school had actually diminished since the compulsory by-laws had come into force. It attributed this fact to the conflicting decisions of Rota Committees from week to week, and recommended that an experienced permanent official should assist the committees.

It is difficult for us to appreciate the immense revolution in the social habits of a very large section of the community involved by compulsory attendance. Seventy years ago children seldom went to school after they were ten. The Revised Code for 1861 contemplated that children would leave, fully educated, at eleven years of age. Although they could be employed at eight, most employers were coming to realize that the younger children were more bother than they were worth, and ten was becoming the more normal age of regular employment. At this age, therefore, children could contribute to the family earnings, but, more generally, the girls stayed at home and did the housework so that their mothers could go out to work. When compulsory attendance was introduced the family income suffered in two ways, by the loss of the boy's earnings until he could get full-time exemption, or by a reduction when he only got half-time exemption, and also by the loss of the mother's earnings, because the girls were kept at school. In a place like Manchester, where married women's work had always been the custom, the blow was particularly hard, and the School Board, which, after all, had to depend for successful prosecutions on a sympathetic bench of magistrates, evidently found that it must enforce its by-laws with discretion, but in the first year over six thousand extra children were brought into the schools, an increase in attendance of 26 per cent, and the attendance in Manchester compared favourably with that in Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield, although it was below that in Salford.

The battle for the child between industry and the school never raged so fiercely as during the forty-eight years between 1870 and the Fisher Act of 1918, which abolished half-time. Until com-

¹ School Board Minutes, January 27, 1893.

pulsion began, industry, with the exception of the Factory Acts, had had it all its own way, but after 1870 the school began slowly to pull the child back from the factory, workshop, office and shop. Parliament stepped in now and again, either by raising the age at which children could be employed, as in Lord Sandon's Act of 1876, when employment between ten and fourteen was prohibited, or by raising the standard at which exemption would be granted by by-law. But the prohibition of employment only applied to factories and workshops, and there were other ways by which children could earn. Also Lord Sandon's Act worked both ways, for it allowed a child to get exemption by means of having made a certain number of attendances, if he could not pass the examination for the labour certificate. This method of escape was known as the "Dunce's Pass," and remained for many years. The majority of Manchester children left school between twelve and thirteen. For the three years 1897-1900, 10.7 per cent of the total children in attendance were between the ages of twelve and thirteen, only 3.5 per cent between 13 and 14.¹

The Act of 1900 sanctioned the substitution of fourteen for thirteen as the age of compulsory attendance, and Manchester, in common with the other leading authorities, made use of it and altered its by-laws accordingly, so that the "Dunce's Pass" now could be only operative between thirteen and fourteen.²

However, an "intermittent agitation" against the new by-laws was carried on by a society calling itself "The Citizens' Defence Society," and claiming to represent the poor parent who was deprived of his child's earnings. It also represented the ratepayers who wanted to reduce the Education Rate, and at one time it gained publicity by insisting that the raising of the age—even with exemptions—was forcing many parents to seek Poor Relief. When this statement was challenged by the School Board it could not be substantiated, but the Board thought it wise to modify its by-laws, so that full-time exemption could be granted to a child between thirteen and fourteen years of age—apart from the "Dunce's Pass"—when it could be shown that the child was "necessarily and beneficially employed." It also adopted a new

¹ School Board Report, 1897-1900.

² The 1900 Act made 350 and not 250 attendances necessary, and they had to be in the last five years.

income scale by which this condition was determined. In spite of this concession to popular agitation, children were staying longer at school. In 1904, 6 per cent of the children at school were between thirteen and fourteen instead of only 3.5 per cent in 1899.

After the war all exemptions below fourteen were abolished. The ambiguous term "necessarily and beneficially employed" disappeared from educational administration, but now, twenty years afterwards—1939—it is to reappear, in connection with the raising of the age to fifteen. It is true that this time "necessarily" is left out, and "beneficially" is supposed to relate entirely to the child, and to the suitability of the particular occupation. Conditions also can be attached to each certificate of employment, but it remains to be seen whether Manchester will answer in the negative the question whether any employment for a child below fifteen can be "beneficial" for that child.

The problem of school attendance was not confined to gradually raising the age for exemption, but included also the daily work of ensuring regular attendance at school. Attendance officers were appointed early, and although Miss Lydia Becker demanded that some women should be employed for this work, her plea was disregarded then and for many years afterwards.

Manchester did not lead the country in the matter of regular attendance. Several times during the period the Government inspector remarked on its low figure of average attendance. Then followed the appointment of more attendance officers and a rearrangement of districts.

It is interesting to compare the numbers on the roll and in average attendance for 1871, 1900 and 1937:

Number on Books		Average Attendance
1871 44,916	30,202 = 68 per cent
1900 102,086	86,514 = 84 "
1937 98,427	86,169 = 87.5 "

The largest number on the roll, 124,411, was reached in 1920, and we are now (owing to changes in the age composition of the population) on the downward curve and, in spite of further extensions of the leaving age to fourteen, have fewer children in the schools than there were thirty-seven years ago. There has, however, been a real improvement in average attendance.

3. *School Fees.*

The question of school fees was involved with that of compulsory attendance. Although the Education Act had not provided free education—and many years had to pass before Parliament was induced to do so—it had compromised by giving School Boards power to remit fees for necessitous children attending voluntary schools. This was the famous twenty-fifth section of the 1870 Act which went through the House of Commons with little discussion, but which proved such a sectarian bone of contention that it was repealed in 1876. The 1870 Act also gave power to School Boards to provide a free school in any district if the circumstances were such that in the opinion of the Education Department such a school was desirable.

The Manchester Education Aid Society, which, as we saw, had for several years paid fees for necessitous children, now dissolved, and the School Board drew up a poverty scale below which it remitted fees in its own schools and paid them for children attending voluntary schools.¹ In order to prevent the raising of school fees now that they could be paid out of the rates, a scale was fixed by the School Board: 2d. a week for infants, 3d. for girls in girls' schools and for boys in mixed schools, and 4d. for boys in boys' schools.²

Between March 1871 and November 1872, the School Board issued 48,512 orders to the amount of £3,958 for the payment of fees. As the orders had to be renewed every six months, this number represented over 16,000 children. The Poor Law Guardians, in addition to maintaining their own schools for children whose parents were on out-relief, had had power since 1855, owing to Canon Richison's agitation, to pay fees instead for these children to attend any school that the parents chose.³ This Act had been passed as one method of helping the voluntary schools, but the Manchester Board of Guardians had made very little use of it. When the 1870 Act came into operation, the Chorlton Guardians ceased

¹ After deducting rent a family of five was allowed 3s. per head per week. If the income were less than this, fees were paid by the Board. This is the first instance of an official means test, other than the Poor Law destitution test, and was later used in the grant of free meals to school children.

² Miss Becker protested strongly against the proposal that girls were only to get three pennyworth of education whilst boys got four pennyworth, but her protest was disregarded.

³ Denison's Act, 1855.

to pay fees under Denison's Act, as it was called, and the Manchester Board closed their out-relief school, eager to cast on the new Education Rate expenditure which they had formerly had to meet out of the Poor Rate. Half the orders for free schooling issued by the School Board in the first eighteen months were for children who should have been a charge on the Guardians.

In order to make this provision for payment of fees known to parents, twenty thousand forms of application were distributed to ministers and charitable organizations in the city. It was clearly stated on the form that the parents were free to choose any public elementary school, i.e. an inspected school, which would receive the children.

A considerable sum was spent by the Board in this way, in spite of protests from the secularists, who objected to ratepayers' money going to the support of denominational schools.¹ There was difficulty, too, with some of the schools. Class distinctions based upon ability to pay fees had always been present, and now that the parents who could not afford to pay fees could send their children to the school of their choice and have their fees paid, what would happen to the tone of the school? "Ragged and ill-mannered" children tended to drive away the "better-clad and better-behaved" children, and some managers and teachers objected to receiving children who were not only more trouble to teach because of previous neglect, but who kept away children who were able to pay higher fees than those recognized by the Board.

The School Board, faced by these difficulties, applied for permission to establish two free schools in poor parts of the town, but they were unsuccessful.

Meanwhile the agitation in Parliament against the payment of fees by School Boards to denominational schools was so strong that an Act was passed in 1873 making the Guardians responsible for seeing that children of parents on out-relief went to school, and for paying their fees as a part of out-relief. This made compulsory what by Denison's Act had been voluntary. It did not

¹ More use seems to have been made of the 25th section in Manchester and Salford—of both of which School Boards Mr. Biley was Chairman—than in other parts of the country. See *The Struggle for National Education*, by John Morley, p. 2.

satisfy the opponents, as the money still came out of the rates; neither did it meet the case of parents who were too poor to pay fees, but not poor enough to qualify for out-relief under the very stringent regulations of the Manchester Board of Guardians. Also, it seriously complicated the administrative problem. Instead of the fees being paid direct to the school by the School Board, they had to be extracted by the school from each parent out of the meagre sum given by the Guardians for out-relief. The schools suffered, and the School Board was faced with an increase of prosecutions. When the Act came into force the School Board had a conference with the Boards of Guardians in the city, and agreed to continue its previous practice under the twenty-fifth section.

However, in 1876 the original twenty-fifth section of the 1870 Act was repealed.¹ In future parents who could not pay fees, even if they were not eligible for relief, had to apply to the Guardians, who might pay the fee—not exceeding 3d. a week—or any part of it, and this was not to count as relief to the parents.

We can sympathize with the Government in its attempt to find a solution of an impossible position—impossible once compulsion was introduced—but the principle to which the anti-denominationalists objected, namely, rate aid to voluntary schools, still remained.

The result of this legislation was not happy. In the first place, Boards of Guardians—and there were three different ones in the area covered by the Manchester School Board—had different standards of inability to pay fees, and these were all lower than the poverty scale of the School Board. The Chorlton Board refused to settle a scale, and treated each case on its merits. The parent had always to apply in person, and waste time from work in waiting to see the committee of the Guardians. As many parents refused to apply to the Guardians, attendance fell and the schools lost Government grant. The position was so unsatisfactory that the entire separation of education from the Poor Law was urged upon Parliament by Manchester and other School Boards, but without avail.

The situation became easier as the number of Board schools, where the School Board could remit fees on its own scale, increased, and some of the voluntary schools came to the rescue by

¹ In the 1876 Education Act.

admitting a certain number of "free" scholars on the Board's scale without forcing the parents to appeal to the Guardians.¹

The case for free education was gaining ground, and it was a Conservative Government in 1891² that solved the problem. An extra Government fee grant was given both to Board and to voluntary schools, which made it possible for pupils to be admitted free without any inquiry into means.

This Act for the first time laid down the principle that "every father and mother in England has a right to free education without payment or charge of any kind for his or her children between the age of three and fifteen." "The right to free education is not a concession to poverty, but is common to all classes alike—any parent who has not got free education already may write to the Board of Education and claim it, either alone or in combination with other parents."

The Government grant of 10s. per child did not make it possible to abolish all fees, but only those below 3d. a week. This affected about two-thirds of the school places, and in the remaining third the difference between the fee and the 3d. met by the grant was paid by the parent. In 1894, of the children attending the Manchester Board Schools, 67 per cent were attending free, 23 per cent paid 1d. a week, and 5.9 per cent paid 6d., which was the fee charged in the higher grade schools. In the organized science schools, of which there were four, the fee was 7d., including books. There had been much controversy as to whether School Boards should provide education other than elementary, and the House of Commons was not prepared to make it free.

After the 1902 Act fees were abolished in all elementary schools, provided and non-provided, as they were then called, except for higher grade schools.³ Fees in these schools were abolished under the Fisher Act on April 1, 1919.

It had taken twenty years for the country to realize that free education was the natural corollary of compulsory education. In 1907 free places in grant-aided secondary schools opened another door a crack. In 1919 Manchester, one of the first municipal authori-

¹ Most of the voluntary schools by their trust deeds had always provided for some non-fee paying children, and the Managers often remitted part of the fee in other deserving cases.

² The Elementary Education Act, 1891.

³ Ardwick, Central, Chesham and Ducie Avenue.

ties to take the step, abolished fees in its maintained secondary schools. In 1931 this policy was reversed by order of the Board of Education, and 100 per cent special places¹ were substituted. This meant a return in secondary schools to the position which existed in elementary schools before 1891, when parents who could not afford to pay fees could get remission of the whole or of part on a means test.

4. *Extension of the Conception of Elementary Education.*

In England the education of the people, instead of being a State service for all children as in Prussia, Switzerland, and to some extent in Scotland, started, as we saw, as a charitable undertaking by the Churches for the children of the workers. They were left alone to do the work of civilization—work which should have been the concern of the Government—and for the first third of the nineteenth century, when Manchester was undergoing its transformation into the centre of a vast manufacturing district, the Churches struggled unaided with a mass of immigrant children.

When, in 1833, the Government realized that an ignorant and untrained population was a source of danger, instead of taking over the whole responsibility it gave a meagre grant of £20,000. The Churches were then so firmly entrenched in the eyes of the public as the right instruments of education that the grant only got through Parliament on the understanding that it was to be distributed by the two religious bodies.

This decision not only ensured the close connection between the Churches and the schools, which has remained to this day, but it settled the lines upon which State education was to develop. The children of the rich and the rapidly increasing middle classes, did not attend the day schools of either of the two religious bodies. Those schools were for the children of the poor, for which no other provision was made. Parents who could afford to pay high fees sent their children to private adventure schools. Some of their boys went to the Grammar School which, although free and theoretically open to anyone, managed, by providing a purely classical education, to protect itself from the entrance of working-class children.

¹ This means that although all the places are filled by competitive examinations as before, a standard fee is fixed, and parents are excused payment of the whole or part according to the amount of their income.

But the distinction between education for the rich man's son and education for the child of the worker went farther than the actual school in which it was given. Since education was considered by the State primarily as an insurance against unrest, and not as something to which every child, rich or poor, had a right, it followed that the poor child only needed the minimum of education; religion, of course, to teach him his place in a divinely ordered world, writing and arithmetic so that he could be a useful worker, and reading, so that he could read not only the Bible but also the works of Adam Smith, and learn to understand "the laws of Political Economy." If this was the popular view, there were men—and outstanding amongst them was Kay-Shuttleworth—who realized the richness that education could bring even to one who was destined all his life to be a poor man, but even they conceived education as something different for the worker than for the well-to-do. With this attitude towards education on the part of the governing classes, the three R's naturally formed the main subjects of instruction. The teachers, too, were only gradually becoming a trained body, and had often only monitors of twelve years of age to help them with their huge classes. But as conditions improved other subjects crept in: English literature, singing, some attempt at physical training, history, geography. This movement received a severe setback when the Revised Code was adopted, and grants given only on proficiency in the three R's. Not only did this change save money to the Government, which was one of its objects, but it put the education of the worker back on the lines from which, in the opinion of the governing classes, it should never have strayed.

However, after 1870, when the Board Schools with rate aid did not have to depend entirely upon Government grants, and when public opinion was ready for another advance, the natural tendency of education to burst artificial bonds again asserted itself.

In 1883, the new code of the Education Department had tried to improve the deplorable state of affairs brought about by "payment by results," by allotting a part of the Government grant on "merit," that is to say, on the general conduct of the school, its tone, method of teaching and all that goes to make up what Matthew Arnold had called its "intellectual life." The intention was good, but in the opinion of Mr. Scotson, one of the most distinguished of Manchester teachers, the results did not come up to expectation.

He found that the inspectors could not sufficiently detach themselves from the business of examining and marking each child on the three R's to look at the school as a whole, and that the merit grant really depended upon the percentage of passes that the individual children had acquired in the examination.

Even when "payment by results" was abolished (1897),¹ it took some time before teachers and inspectors broke free from its shackles. Although the list of subjects taught in the schools was almost as varied as any list to-day of those taught in Senior Selective Central and Technical Schools, and although the organized science schools were really Junior High Schools in scope, the fact that the subjects were divided into "class" subjects and "special" subjects, carrying different ratios of grant—elementary science was a "class subject," as was geography, whilst hygiene, shorthand and French were "special"—prevented the curriculum from being devised or followed as a whole. It was not until grants were made independent of subjects, and all the different grants consolidated into a block grant, that real progress with a synthesized curriculum could be achieved or even attempted. The present educational tendency to abolish "subjects" could never have been evolved under the old system of grants, which measured out teaching like groceries, and made up a bill to be presented for payment—if signed by the inspector.

From very early days the School Board found it impossible to confine its activities to the three R's. Children whose parents wished them to remain at school after twelve years of age or who, being unusually bright, had passed the Fourth Standard, which gave them exemption too early to be able to go to work, needed more advanced teaching. As there were not enough of these children in each school to satisfy the Government's requirement for a class, they were drafted to Central Schools, which later became higher grade schools, where higher fees were charged. Classes in science and art, originally intended for pupil teachers, were thrown open to others, and this led to the institution of organized science schools. In this way, Manchester, like London, laid herself open to the charge of spending money from the rates on education that was not elementary.

¹ In 1900 the Government grant was again altered, and calculated on average attendance.

The elementary schools also began a connection with the two secondary schools, the old-established Manchester Grammar School and the newly-established Girls' High School.¹ The Grammar School, which had been financially reconstructed, and made mainly into a fee-paying school, offered twenty entrance scholarships each year, ten of which, if possible, were to be given to candidates from elementary schools. To the surprise of the Grammar School and the pleasure of the School Board, fifteen of the twenty successful scholars in the first year came from elementary schools, seventeen out of twenty-one in the second year, and twenty out of the twenty-three in the third year. "This is a very remarkable proof," says the Government inspector, "of the excellence of the best elementary schools, that they have actually beaten the middle-class schools at an examination where some of the subjects were a little out of their usual course of instruction."²

Parliament decided that technical education should be under the control of Councils, not of School Boards, and the Technical Instruction Committee of the Manchester City Council was formed in 1890, Manchester being the second municipality to adopt the Act, under which a rate could be raised for the purpose. The "Whisky Money,"³ which brought Manchester £11,500 in 1892, was also spent on higher education.

The Committee had taken over the Technical School and the School of Art from the Whitworth Trustees (1892) and, after a visit to the technical institutions of the Continent, principally of Germany and Switzerland, realized how far England was behind in this branch of education. "When we think of Manchester as the capital of Lancashire," they reported, "comparison becomes almost ludicrous and the efforts yet made by us appear utterly insignificant."

The new College of Technology was opened (1902), and its students were allowed to enter for the ordinary B.Sc. examination of the Victoria University. The Committee gave up the preparatory department of the Technical School, and instead offered two hundred scholarships for children from the higher grade and Secondary Schools to the College. The education ladder was, said Alderman Hoy,⁴ complete in Manchester. Children from the elementary school, especially the higher grade schools, could go

¹ In 1878.

² See above, p. 138.

³ Report of Government inspector, Mr. Oakley, 1879.

⁴ Chairman of the Technical Instruction Committee.

through either the Grammar School or the Technical School up to Owens College.

In 1905 the Faculty of Technology was instituted at the University, and full-time day students at the College were able to take the degree of B.Sc.Tech. Manchester is the only education authority which houses, administers and finances a University faculty.

III

1902-1918

By the beginning of the twentieth century voluntary schools in Manchester, as in other parts of the country, were having a hard struggle. The cost of education was continually rising, the number of children growing, and these factors not only increased the School Board rate but necessitated larger subscriptions from the supporters of voluntary schools, who thus had to pay twice over.

The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church held strongly the view that education that was not based on the religious doctrines of their Churches was not true education. The Nonconformists, who were equally convinced of the necessity for a religious basis for education, were satisfied with the "undenominational teaching," as it was called, of the Board Schools, but which was much more in accord with their religious beliefs than with those of the Church of England or of the Roman Catholic Church. The people who wanted all religious teaching to be relegated to the Sunday schools and kept out of the day schools were but a small section of the population.

Once again England had the choice of abandoning or saving the dual system, and once more, this time under a Conservative Government, she saved it. Once more the hounds of sectarian strife were let loose, and Nonconformists, who were mostly Liberals, joined with the parliamentary opposition in fighting the Education Bill of 1902 which was crudely described as "Putting Rome on the Rates;" but in spite of strong opposition in the country, and in the House of Commons, the Bill became law. Voluntary schools, now

known as non-provided schools, are maintained by the rates and the taxes in the same way as are the provided or council schools. The only difference is that the former could not until 1936 receive grants towards capital expenditure. This handicap was, however, modified to some extent by the duty laid upon the Education Committee to pay for fair "wear and tear" of the non-provided school premises.¹

The 1902 Act abolished the School Board and handed education over to a committee of the City Council, thus reverting to the plan that had been put forward by both parties in Manchester in the late 'fifties, and rectified what some democrats had felt to be a weakness of the 1870 Act, namely, the divorce between the authority that spent and the authority that raised the rates.

One-third of the managers of the non-provided schools are appointed by the local authority. The managers appoint the teachers in their schools subject to a veto by the Education Committee on educational grounds alone, which means, in effect, that managers of Church of England schools appoint members of the Church of England, Roman Catholic managers appoint members of their Church, and the Education Committee does not concern itself with the religion of the teachers it appoints to its provided schools.

During the thirty-six years since the passing of the Act, and in spite of occasional friction between the committee and the managers of a school, the relations in Manchester have been happy. Managers of non-provided schools often go to the Chief Inspector for help and advice in the appointment of their staffs, the non-provided schools share equally in sports, camps, and all school activities, and there is no feeling on the Committee of antagonism to non-provided schools. At long last the children in the schools, and not the way in which these schools are controlled, are the paramount consideration with members of the Committee, with teachers, and with officials. Whereas between 1870 and 1902 the School Board threw on sectarian quarrels, now the last thing any member of the Committee wants is a dispute involving religious issues.

A serious defect in the Act, pointed out in Manchester by Mrs.

¹ This clause was inserted at the instance of the Bishop of Manchester, Bishop Fraser.

Pankhurst, who a few years later started the Suffragette agitation, was that as women were not eligible¹ for membership of municipal councils, they would not be able to serve on the new education authorities. It was to meet this defect that the condition that at least two of the co-opted members must be women was introduced as the Bill went through Parliament. Manchester had four women² on its first committee of fifty-one. When the total was reduced to thirty-three it had three, but it was not until 1908 that it had its first woman councillor, when Miss Margaret Ashton, who had been co-opted two years before on the Education Committee, was elected to the City Council for the Withington Ward.

A committee of fifty-one—the School Board had consisted of only fifteen members—was found to be unmanageable, especially as, in 1904, Withington and Moss Side were brought into the city and direct representation on the Education Committee promised to them. In 1906, therefore, the committee was reduced to thirty-three, of whom twenty were members of the City Council and thirteen were co-opted from outside.

Instead of a School Board consisting of supposed "educational experts," there was substituted a committee of which two-thirds were members of the Council, not expected to have any special knowledge of the subject, and thirteen co-opted members "who were to be persons of experience in the management or administration of education." Tradition has ensured usually that the Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University and the Dean of Manchester are co-opted, and that an elementary teacher is included,³ and in addition to representatives of the Church of England and of the Roman Catholic Church, a prominent Non-conformist has generally been amongst the co-opted members. The committee in both its elected and co-opted sections tries to represent the proportion of the three political parties in the Council, but the necessity for doing this is not always consistent with selecting as co-opted members persons of "experience in education."

¹ They were made eligible in 1907.

² Miss Sara Burstall, Miss Dendy, Mrs Pankhurst and Miss Eva Gore-Booth.

³ The first of these was Mr. Waindale, then Mr. Lakin, Miss McCulloch, and Mr. Tom Brown, who still holds the position.

The 1902 Act settled the administrative controversy about the provision of higher forms of education from the rates. The new local authority was able to deal with elementary, secondary and technical education, thus providing the local counterpart to the Government department, the Board of Education, which had been set up in 1899, with all branches of education under its control. The higher grade schools remained elementary, and developed later into District General and then into Selective Central Schools, whilst the largest and best of the organized science schools, that in Whitworth Street,¹ was made into a secondary school (1904). Twenty-five per cent of free places were reserved for children from elementary schools who had passed Standard VI, but so many were found to be qualified that a competitive examination had to be introduced. Two new secondary schools for girls were provided. Other important developments of the period between 1902 and the outbreak of war were the grant of scholarships to the universities and to the College of Technology, the institution of the Faculty of Technology at the Victoria University,² the appointment of the first woman inspector,³ the transference of the Domestic Economy School to the Education Committee, the opening of special day schools for mentally defective children at Harpurhey and Embden Street,⁴ the residential school for crippled children at Swinton House and Parkfield,⁵ which was the first of its kind in the country, the School Medical Service, first under a half-time⁶ and then under a whole-time⁷ doctor.

Free meals for children had, as we saw,⁸ been provided during hard winters since 1886. When the Provisions of Meals Act (1906) was passed, meals could be provided from the rates, and the Act was immediately put in force in Manchester. The amount of money that could be spent was limited to 1d. rate, and free breakfasts and dinners were provided at a cost, in 1908, of £11,000.

The problem of certificated teachers became more acute after 1902. There was a quickening of educational effort all over the country, and a raising of standards which intensified the competition for trained teachers. Manchester now wanted them, but could not always get them. In 1907 certificated teachers were only

¹ Mr. Scotton was the first headmaster.

² In 1904.

³ In 1902.

⁴ In 1904.

⁵ In 1903.

⁶ See above, p. 236.

⁷ In 1905.

⁸ See above, p. 244.

66 per cent of the whole staff. An attempt by the Committee to buy the Platt Hall estate for a training college was unsuccessful. It was bought instead for a public park, and the attempt to acquire an alternative site for a training college was not pursued. Instead the Council decided to economise by establishing a Day Training College in the old buildings in Princess Street, where there was already a Pupil Teachers' Centre. Although the Board of Education only gave provisional sanction to the premises in 1911, they remained in use as a training college until 1928.

For the first time, in 1910,¹ the question of the employment of married women was raised, and a resolution was carried that, in future, no married women other than widows be engaged by the Committee as teachers. Although this decision was challenged in the Council, it was confirmed.² Married women already in the service were not turned out, but teachers were expected to resign on marriage. During the war teachers who had married men serving with the Forces were graciously allowed to remain until after the war, thereby helping the Committee out of the difficulty caused by a shortage of teachers. After the war they had to go, but in 1922 they could be retained on two grounds, both of which had to be present, namely exceptional financial hardship and good teaching ability. Gradually, however, only the former was considered, and the Committee for all intents and purposes became similar to a committee dealing with public assistance. The income of the future husband, his dependants if any, as well as those of the teacher, and the resources of other members of both households, were examined by the Education Committee, and if the result was what it considered ample the teacher, however excellent at her work, was told that she must choose between marriage and her job. A first class infant teacher, at a time when such teachers were scarce, was not allowed to continue in her post, although the Committee, realizing that her circumstances would be difficult, was ready to offer her evening work. Another teacher, who had to support an old father and who had been engaged for years to a man earning between £3 and £4 a week, who also had to support his mother, was not given permission to remain, the Committee evidently feeling that an income which had been just sufficient to support two people could easily be stretched so as to support four. A collection of

¹ January 24, 1910.

² Committee Minutes, July 26, 1915.

"hard cases" enabled the question to be raised again in 1928. Although a resolution in favour of allowing women to remain after marriage was defeated in the Education Committee, it was carried in the Council. Since that time women have been allowed to make their own decision as to whether marriage and their work are, or are not, incompatible. Although the opponents again raised the question in 1934, they were this time defeated both in Committee and in the Council.

In 1911 Mr. Reynolds, who had combined the posts of Director of Higher Education and Principal of the College of Technology, retired, and Mr. Wyatt, who had been in the employment of the Committee since the beginning of the School Board and had become Director of Elementary Education, was made Director of Education. A principal was appointed for the College of Technology under the Director, and for the first time all departments were brought under one official.

So far as administration was concerned, the machinery was now satisfactory, both centrally and locally, but the same could not be said of the financial arrangements. In Manchester as elsewhere, the sharing of the cost between rates and taxes had been altering to the disadvantage of the ratepayer. In 1905 54 per cent of the cost of education in Manchester had been met by Government grant; in 1913 no more than 45 per cent. This tendency to put more cost on the rates was having a serious effect upon educational development, and although the Government gave special grants for medical treatment and for special schools, the amount was limited and did not bear any relation to the expenditure. Amongst other recommendations of the Kemp Committee on Local Taxation was that of a percentage grant for education, and after the war this was embodied in the Fisher Act which overhauled the existing grant system and established the guarantee of a minimum grant of 50 per cent to those authorities—Manchester and London were the largest—where the operation of the other factors of the grant formula would not ensure this percentage. This guarantee was abolished in the economy crisis of 1931, and has not yet been reinstated, with the result that to-day the rates have to bear more than half of the total expenditure.

The last thirty years are the years in which, the foundations having been well and truly laid, much greater advance has been possible than at any other period throughout the century. This has been due not only to an improvement in administrative technique and Government aid, but also to the inevitable fact that the more education is given the greater the demand for it from those who have come under its influence.

The comradeship of the trenches may not have meant much when the individuals returned to civil life, and officers and men who had shared the discomforts, dangers and horrors of those war years found themselves back in their old positions of employers and employed. But public opinion kept something of that feeling of equality, and the fact that the Education Act of 1918 was the first piece of reconstruction carried through after the war showed both that in the struggle for a nation's existence the value of education had at last been appreciated, and that the idea that the education of the worker's child should be less in quantity and worse in quality than that of the well-to-do had had a bad jolt.

It was fortunate that the possibilities for this advance coincided in Manchester with the appointment of Spurley Hey as director. He was a man of great administrative ability, with a dominant personality, both physical and mental. He had both the imagination to plan, and the necessary drive to carry out, new policies, and above all he had a passionate belief in what education, widely interpreted, could and should do for the mass of the children of the county. For sixteen years he inspired as well as directed the service.¹

The Education Committee willingly allowed themselves to be dominated by his enthusiasm, his greater knowledge and his sound judgment. This attitude used to call forth amused comments from members of other education committees, who taunted Manchester members with "being run by their Director." Whatever may be the theory of the relation of a municipal official to his committee, there was no doubt that Spurley Hey was an autocrat who made

¹ He died in April 1930.

no attempt to disguise the fact.¹ In a different sphere he was the true successor of Sir Joseph Heron.

He soon became a figure of national importance in the educational world, served on Departmental Committees, helped to run the Association of Education Committees, was the moving spirit of the triumvirate, the other two being the Directors of Leeds and Sheffield,² sometimes called "The Three Musketeers," which was alternately consulted by, and in violent collision with, the Board of Education.

Although, as he said, "no generation can settle the educational problems of its successors," the lines which he laid down for the development of education in Manchester have been followed up to the present, with few alterations.

The Education Act of 1918 made possible for the first time a comprehensive scheme of education from two years until eighteen, "a national scheme—available for all persons capable of profiting thereby." Under the 1902 Act it was only the provision of elementary education that was compulsory, although the local authority was given power to supply or to aid the supply of secondary education. The 1918 Act made it a statutory duty of the authority to provide higher education, including advanced work in Central Schools and classes, for children between twelve and fifteen in elementary schools, and it also gave power to provide for the under-fives by means of Nursery Schools and Nursery Classes. Half-time attendance and all exemptions below the end of the term in which the child became fourteen were abolished, as were also fees in all elementary schools, provided and non-provided, including higher grade schools. An important section (44) made it the duty of the Education Authority to "secure that children and young persons shall not be debarred from receiving the benefits of any form of education by which they are capable of profiting through inability to pay fees." Manchester attempted to carry out this duty in 1920 by abolishing fees in the Municipal Secondary Schools, and by instituting a system of maintenance allowances for children in Secondary and Selective Central Schools.

¹ On one occasion, when the Committee had filled an important administrative post, the successful and somewhat elated candidate said to Mr. Hey that he hoped he was satisfied. "Do you think that you would have been appointed otherwise?" was the reply.

² The late Mr. James Graham and Sir Percival Shap, now secretary of the Association of Education Committees.

"Education is the eternal debt that maturity owes to youth," said Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, and Mr. Hey was also conscious of the debt that the country owed to the children of the "men who fought and the women who worked in defence of their country." He made the Committee realize, too, the urgency of the present. The children only pass through the schools once—they have no second chance—so that the postponement of a problem, either that of the shortage of secondary school places, or of suitable provision for the under-fives until the ideal solution is possible, always seemed to him a betrayal of the children now passing, all too rapidly, through the schools. He drew upon himself violent attacks from the advocates of "Secondary Education for All" and of separate nursery schools, because of this attitude, but he never swerved from it, and the results in Manchester have justified him.

Whilst always taking the long view, he never forgot the present. When in 1924 the Labour Government was thinking of raising the age to fifteen, and made inquiries from local authorities as to the time necessary to provide the accommodation, Spurlley Hey replied that if the age were raised immediately Manchester could manage somehow. It might mean the temporary use of buildings not pre-eminently suitable for schools, it might mean an augmentation of the teaching staff by teachers not so well qualified as he would have liked, but that the children, then aged fourteen and about to pass for ever from any educational influence, would benefit he had no doubts at all.

In 1918 he laid before the Education Committee a report of the position in Manchester and his proposals for the future. He found the condition of the schools above the average of the country, but there was still much to be done. "A continuous and almost unlimited supply of bricks and mortar for the next forty years" he felt would be necessary. Arrears from the war years added to the arrears that had been increasing ever since 1870. Never had the Education Authority been able to keep pace with the demand for school places, and all through the years "temporary buildings" had been erected to solve the immediate problem.

Many schools were overcrowded; the artificial lighting was bad; playgrounds too small; standard of ventilation and cleanliness too low, and furniture and equipment unsuitable and inadequate. He found that there was more residential school accommodation for mentally

and physically defective children than in most other authorities, but that it still fell very far short of the need, and that children were allowed to leave these schools at fourteen instead of at sixteen.

The School Medical Services, which had been depleted during the war, must be increased, and "three times as many clinics are necessary," he said, if treatment was to be brought within reasonable reach of all who needed it.

The evening schools he found excellent. Manchester had done pioneer work in this field in the past, and he thought that the system was being worked to the best advantage, but he found that a fair proportion of the students were over eighteen years of age, so that it was obvious that evening schools were "entirely inadequate as an educational provision for adolescents."

The problem of the adolescent was one that seemed to him of great urgency. He made two inquiries into juvenile crime, and found an intimate connection between it and social conditions, housing, opportunities for recreation, and lack of open spaces. On his advice evening play centres were opened in the crowded parts of the city, and he looked forward with great hope to the compulsory day continuation classes outlined in the 1918 Act. It was a bitter disappointment when the "appointed day" never arrived, but he salvaged from the wreck all he could. About a hundred employers voluntarily sent their boys and girls to the schools for which teachers had been specially trained, and three works schools were staffed and financed by the Education Committee. About 2,000 children between fourteen and eighteen years of age were thus catered for, but there were altogether over 36,000 between these ages.

"All real progress in education will depend ultimately upon the efficiency and adequacy of the teaching staff," and he found that the qualifications of the teachers on the staffs of the elementary schools were as follows. We include for comparison the position to-day.

	1918	1937
Total Elementary staff	3,326	3,105
Graduates	4 per cent	7.7 per cent
Trained and Certificated (these include		
the graduates)	48	85
Certificated but not trained	35	10
Uncertificated	16	4
Supplementary	1	0.33

Already in 1916 the Committee had ceased to appoint any more uncertificated and supplementary teachers. He set to work to get a staff "carefully selected, fully qualified, and adequately trained."

"It is at the beginning and the end of the elementary school period that the new Education Act appears likely to have the greatest amount of influence upon elementary schools in the near future," he wrote, and it is with Nursery Classes, of which Manchester was the pioneer, and with Selective Central Schools, where she followed the example of the L.C.C., that Spurlay Hey's name will always be associated.

Although the infant schools in Manchester had, as we saw, always been open to children under five—one of the good legacies of the industrialization of the district, with its demands for married women's labour—the babies' rooms were not usually up to the standard that educational opinion was beginning to demand for children of three and four years old. In 1911¹ Margaret McMillan opened her Nursery School at Deptford, and in 1917 the Manchester headmistress of an infant school in the heart of Hulme² asked permission to experiment with a Nursery Class. The surrounding area, one of the most crowded districts of Manchester, was completely built up. There was no possibility of a separate Nursery School in a new building; she did not want to make a break for the children at five, but there was a room in the school which could be adapted and set apart for a small number of the children who crowded into the ordinary babies' class. Twenty-five children, under a specially trained teacher, in a room where it was possible to provide special washing arrangements, small chairs and tables, space for free play, and for sleep in separate beds in the afternoon formed the first Nursery Class, and remained the pattern upon which later ones were based.

There were then forty thousand children between the ages of two and five in Manchester, and the Director calculated that provision should ultimately be made for half of this number in the schools. Eight thousand were then in the babies' classes of the ordinary infant schools, and he turned his attention first to these. He pointed out that with all the demands from the other parts of the service, it would be impossible to provide for these children in

¹ *Margaret McMillan*, by Albert Mansbridge, p. 95.

² Miss Trapp, headmistress of the Mulberry Street Infants' School, Hulme

separate Nursery Schools of fifty, even if sufficient sites had been available near their homes which, in the parts of the city where they were most needed they certainly were not. He also felt that it would be a cardinal mistake to cut these children off from all connection with the elementary school, to which they would have to go at five years of age, and he most emphatically did not share the Nursery School enthusiasts' distrust of the head teacher of the infants' school. On the contrary he held, and proved, that the successful head teacher of an infants' school, who had kept up with modern methods of teaching, had qualities which young women fresh from a training college, however well equipped with the latest Montessori theory, could not be expected to possess, but which were essential to the successful handling of these children.

He proposed that the Committee should aid the two voluntary Nursery Schools, build a few new ones of its own to serve as models and as standards for the work, but that as a general policy and for the mass of the children it should provide Nursery Classes in infant schools, where the conditions were suitable. These conditions have been rigidly adhered to in the sixty Nursery Classes now existing, and in all new buildings special provision for Nursery Classes has always been included.¹ The standard of staffing, too, has been rigidly maintained. Where there are more than twenty-five children (there are never more than forty) the teacher has the help of two student nurses who are going later to train either for hospital or for private nursing.

Manchester's policy in this respect was violently attacked by the "whole hogger" supporters of Nursery Schools, but until a few years ago there were more children in the Manchester Nursery Classes² than in all the Nursery Schools in England and Wales. If Manchester had waited until she could provide a separate home for every group of from twenty-five to fifty children she would not have made much progress with the problem even after twenty years.

One model Nursery School has been built by the Education Committee in Palmerston Street, Ancoats, which provides for one hundred children.

¹ This involved a controversy with the Board when Lord Euston Percy, the then President, held that such provision was not necessary in a well-to-do suburb (Chorlton-cum-Hardy). Eventually, however, the provision was allowed.

² The sixty classes accommodate 1,600 children.

The controversy, once so bitter, is now practically dead. Although there are enthusiasts who still maintain the extreme position, probably the lines taken by the Report on Infant Schools and Infant Classes by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education,¹ meets with general agreement. This recommended that where housing and social conditions are bad, Nursery Schools should be provided and designed primarily for those children who needed careful attention to their physical welfare, longer hours at schools, and meals, but that for the normal child Nursery Classes in infant schools should eventually prove the type of provision. These recommendations, fifteen years after the opening of the controversy in which Spurlley Hey was the protagonist of Nursery Classes, follow closely upon his recommendations in 1918.

The position with regard to secondary education in Manchester in 1918, even if no worse than in the country as a whole, was not satisfactory. There were four municipal secondary schools with accommodation for 2,800 pupils,² and four schools under independent governors, which were then applying to the Education Committee for grants, under the increased powers given by the new Act.³ The total provision from both these sources was 4,500 places, of which about 25 per cent were taken by children outside the area. As there were at this date 65,000 children between the ages of eleven and sixteen in Manchester, this provided little more than the "fringe of secondary education."

However, the first post-war economy campaign put off the provision of extra schools, and, following London's example, the Selective Central school was developed. The existing District Central Schools were reorganized as "selective" schools to which children gained admission at the same age and on the same entrance examination as to the secondary schools.

Again, as with Nursery Classes, Spurlley Hey laid himself open to the charge of adopting the second best. Again, he answered on the basis of the immediate problem: "There is the problem—no less than the sheer, accumulated, educational waste of some of the best brain power in our schools, the deprivation from many children

¹ Published 1933.

² The Central High School for Boys, the Central High School for Girls, Whalley Range High School for Girls, Harpurhey High School for Girls.

³ The Manchester Grammar School, the Hulme Grammar School, the Manchester High School for Girls, and the Withington High School for Girls.

of a better opportunity of training for citizenship, and the condemnation of many to circumstances from which better education alone could lift them. . . . What is the remedy? It is an alternative to the single choice of ordinary elementary school or secondary school; the Central School provides an excellent alternative. Educational administration cannot for the next twenty-five years content itself with merely those whose only policy is to wait for either a raising of the elementary school age to sixteen, or a quadrupling of secondary school provision, or some combination of both policies. It is a feeble proceeding to inform those children who are being denied a more advanced education to-day that what this generation denies them they will find satisfaction in providing for their successors. The wastage is here and now, and demands an immediate remedy."¹

But again, as in the case of the Nursery Classes, he was not content merely with providing a second best. The Central Schools were not to be pale copies of the traditional secondary schools, but were to provide various types of post-primary education, some having a commercial and some having a technical, which included a domestic bias.

Increased supply of secondary school places from 1,900 in 1918 to 4,043 in 1934, half in maintained and half in grant-aided schools, combined with the provision of reorganized senior schools has diminished the demand for Central Schools in Manchester, and instead of twenty² there are now eleven, with 4,200 pupils.

The battle between the school and the factory for possession of the child, which began in 1833, had ended with the Fisher Act in the victory of the school. Children were safe at least until fourteen. The next stage, as Spurlley Hey pointed out, is being fought over the adolescent. "The battle will be shorter but the result will be the same,"³ he wrote in 1924 with splendid optimism.

Reorganization did not appear in Manchester so early as in some areas, neither did she "reorganize in a week-end," as was unkindly said of more rapidly moving authorities. This was due to two reasons: Spurlley Hey's dislike of "mass transference" of

¹ *The Central School*, by Spurlley Hey, p. 11.

² The fact that some of the vacated central schools have been used as senior schools shows that what Spurlley Hey demanded with respect to equipment, building, etc., for five Selective Central Schools is now the standard that Manchester demands for senior schools.

³ *The Central School*, by Spurlley Hey, p. 5.

children by age, without a uniform standard of attainment, with which he had experimented at Rotherham long before the Hadow Report was issued, and the distribution in Manchester of children between the denominational and Council schools which complicated the problem. But when, in 1928, the Board of Education, in its pamphlet called *The New Prospect in Education*, accepted the principle, Spurlley Hey realized that reorganization must come. He then determined that if children were to be subject to "mass transference" the schools must be so well equipped and well staffed that they should get the best possible chance in their new environment. Manchester, he felt, must still lead, and so almost his last work was setting the standard for senior schools—a site of eight acres for six hundred children, a building with a hall, library, dining-room and gymnasium, with special rooms for art, science, handicrafts and domestic subjects, and a staff that included fifteen full-time specialists. The first senior school built for the purpose at Gorton included all these requirements, and was appropriately named, after his death, the Spurlley Hey Senior School. There was considerable difficulty with the Board over the gymnasium, and the next economy period, 1931, happening just afterwards, no further senior schools were able to have gymnasia. Now, 1937, the Board, in its new-found enthusiasm for physical training, is urging the Committee to add gymnasia to all senior schools at, of course, a considerably greater cost than if they had been provided when the schools were built—so short-sighted are "economy stunts."

Up to date eight completely new senior schools have been built, and although the separate dining-hall has had to be sacrificed as well as the gymnasium, the other amenities of the Spurlley Hey school have been provided. Twenty-four senior schools are in adapted premises. They all have an assembly hall, accommodation for science, arts and crafts, domestic subjects or manual training. A room for a library has been provided in eight schools, and a separate geography room in others.

When Manchester started to reorganize there were 65,000 children in Council schools, 25,600 in Church of England schools and 20,000 in Roman Catholic schools. The Church of England propose to provide senior schools in certain districts, but otherwise to transfer their children to the Council schools, in which religious instruction is given on a syllabus agreed between the Committee,

the teachers, and representatives of the Church of England and of the Nonconformists.¹

The Roman Catholics, who at first objected strongly to the break-up of the parish all-age school, have gradually come to accept the principle. The decision of the Education Committee to make grants up to 75 per cent towards the cost of new senior schools under conditions specified by the Act of 1936 has eased the position, and Roman Catholic senior children will, in time, be grouped in Roman Catholic senior schools. Since 1929 nineteen of the thirty-two districts into which the city was divided for this purpose, have been reorganized, which means that 68 per cent of the children attending Council schools, or 38 per cent of all school children, are now in reorganized schools.

During the last of the three periods, 1918-1938, education has suffered heavily from the curse that has haunted it ever since public money was first spent on it, namely, periodical fits of economy. At intervals, since the war, there have been first the Geddes Axe,² which chopped into the fine advance of 1918, and then the "crisis" of 1931, which came hot upon the heels of the expansion under the Labour Government of 1929. The effects of the last stoppage are still being felt locally, although the Board of Education itself is now encouraging advance—an advance which, under the present conditions of grant, means that the lion's share of the cost falls upon the ratepayer.

Education suffers more than the other social services from alternations of advance³ and halt, because it, unlike Public Health, is always subject to the inquisition, naturally more severe when times are bad, as to whether we are really getting "Value for Money."⁴ "Since Education is a movement in which the *outlet* is measured in terms of cash, the *results* in terms of humanity,"⁴ it is not an easy question to answer, and it is accompanied in the minds of those who ask it most insistently, namely the well-to-do taxpayer who sends his own children to expensive schools, by a fear that the children educated at the public expense may actually be

¹ This was settled in 1925 and is now undergoing revision.

² In 1922.

³ Procedure by programme was instituted by the Board of Education in 1924, under its first Labour President, Sir Charles Trevelyan, and Manchester was the first authority to submit a programme covering ten years' development. Later, the Board called for three-yearly programmes.

⁴ *Value for Money*, by Sprucey Hey, p. 14.

getting a better education than his own, and therefore be better able to compete for the higher posts in industry and in the professions.

But although in the last third of the century education in Manchester has been hampered by financial considerations, the period has undoubtedly seen the greatest advance along all lines. Increase of secondary schools, the experiment of Selective Central Schools, Nursery Classes, reorganized senior schools with, when the age is raised, almost unlimited possibilities for humanistic education; development of the School Medical Services to include, amongst other things, a Child Guidance Clinic; a Remand Home and an Approved School under the Education Committee; new buildings of the single-storey, open-air type in larger playgrounds than ever before; swimming and games, for which many teachers give up their spare time, including Saturdays; the long-needed extension of the College of Technology; Junior Technical Schools in close connection with industry on the one hand, and with the College of Technology on the other; maintenance allowances for children in Central and secondary schools, in training colleges and at the universities; and, above all, a well-qualified staff—all this marks the progress of the last twenty-four years.

The most urgent need preparatory to the next advance is a change of financial policy, locally and nationally. Manchester suffered severely from the Board's economies in 1931, when the guarantee given by the Fisher Act that 50 per cent of expenditure should be met from Government grants was abolished. The percentage grant of 1919 had made a considerable difference to the Manchester ratepayer. In 1917-18, before it was instituted, Government grants were only 46 per cent of the total expenditure. In 1930 they were 50·5 per cent. In 1934, after the abolition of the 50 per cent guarantee, they had fallen to 46·7 per cent. In 1937 there was a slight recovery to 47·4 per cent. Until the Government readjusts this burden, progress will inevitably be hampered. The situation plays into the hands of the local economists who are so concerned to keep down the rates that they have severely restricted the necessary expansion of a service that can never be stationary.

"Education," said Spurley Hey, "will always be necessary, it will always be costly and there will always be critics."¹

¹ *Value for Money*, by Spurley Hey, p. 17.

THE ART GALLERY

The movement which began in Manchester in 1823 and which resulted in the building of the present Art Gallery was both enthusiastic and determined. In October of that year a public meeting was convened, from which sprang a society called "The Manchester Institution for the Promotion of Literature, Science and the Arts." The appeal for funds was so successful, £16,000 having been received, that the original plan of merely altering existing premises was abandoned in favour of the erection of a new building. A plot of land in Mosley Street was bought, after other sites, including the present Piccadilly site and the site of the Reference Library, had been considered. Royal patronage was obtained, and a gift of £500 was received from Sir Benjamin Heywood, the income from which was to form each year a reward for the most worthy production of science or art submitted to the Institution. The Royal Manchester Institution, which still exists, has as one of its activities the carrying out of the conditions attached to this gift.

The plans accepted for the Art Gallery were those designed by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Barry, and in December 1824 the Committee set to work to get estimates and then to erect the building. Exhibitions were opened in the meantime in temporary premises, and in 1834 the new building was finished. The activities of the Institution consisted mainly of exhibitions and lectures. As one way of increasing the annual income, it was decided in 1853 to rent part of the premises to societies with kindred aims. The School of Design, now the Manchester School of Art, immediately took advantage of this facility, and was accommodated in the basement until its own premises at All Saints were provided in 1881.

In 1880 the difficulty of finance was hampering the Art Gallery's influence and usefulness, and it was felt that the time had arrived when the building and its contents should be transferred to the Manchester Corporation. The offer was accepted by the Council and the terms of transfer finally arranged. An annual grant of £2,000 was to be made by the Corporation for the purchase of works of art during the twenty years after the transfer and not, as

the Institution had first asked, in perpetuity. One-third of the Art Gallery Committee was to be selected by the Governors of the Royal Manchester Institution and two-thirds by the Corporation, its proceedings to be submitted to the Council for approval, as in the case of all other committees. These terms were embodied in the Manchester Corporation Act of 1882, and the Art Gallery was transferred to, and vested in, the Corporation of Manchester.¹

The Art Gallery Committee continued the annual and occasional exhibitions which had previously been held by the Royal Manchester Institution. In 1897, however, the permanent collection had encroached upon the space available for exhibitions to such an extent that the question of extending the building on its existing site was considered, and the plot of land between George Street and the present building was acquired. Before anything further was done, the question arose of the possibility of building a new Reference Library and an Art Gallery on the Infirmary site, as the Infirmary was anxious to move further out and, in 1903, the Corporation bought the Infirmary site for £400,000. So began the discussion of a question still, after forty years, undecided.

The years which followed were years of controversy regarding the use to which the Piccadilly site should be put. The Libraries Committee were anxious to proceed with the erection of a reference library as they had made arrangements to sell the building in King Street, while the restriction of accommodation was having an increasingly crippling effect upon the Art Gallery. In 1906 a report was submitted from a deputation, including the Lord Mayor and Councillor Butterworth, who visited Continental art galleries and museums. Of the towns visited, it was stated that only two, Berlin and Hamburg, were as large as Manchester in population. "Yet none has restricted its art collections to one school of painting and a little sculpture, as Manchester has done in its central municipal gallery. Towns of but half the population, such as Cologne, strive

¹ In 1902 the twenty years' agreement between the Corporation and the Governors of the Royal Institution, as provided for in the 1882 Act, came to an end and an arrangement was arrived at by which the seven members who were not elected by the Corporation were to be nominated as follows: Three by the Royal Manchester Institution, two by the Manchester Whitworth Institute, and two by Owens College. This was effected by a clause in the Act of 1902 together with a provision giving the Corporation discretion to provide out of the rates a yearly sum of £2,000 for the purchase of pictures or other works of art.

to include all periods of painting and sculpture and collections of every kind of art work.¹

At a public meeting of the citizens convened by the Lord Mayor and held in the Town Hall on May 7, 1907, a resolution was carried that the City Council should consider some scheme whereby the present Infirmary building could be adapted for the purpose of an Art Gallery, a Reference Library and Municipal Offices. However, the City Architect reported that the building was not suitable for adaptation to these purposes, and this was confirmed by an outside architect. In December 1907, therefore, in spite of considerable opposition, the Council instructed the Special Committee on the Infirmary site to prepare a scheme for a new building to serve as an Art Gallery and Reference Library combined.

This proposal was side-tracked for a time by suggestions that the Infirmary site should be used for a new Exchange, a Tram Station, or, alternatively, left as an open space. The fact that this last proposal, which is the one that, though never formally adopted, has been in effect accepted by the Council, emanated from one of the spasmodic ratepayers' associations, suggests that it was prompted by a desire to save the cost of a building rather than by enthusiasm for open spaces. However, in 1910, the report of the Special Committee submitting the general outline of a scheme for the erection of a Library and Art Gallery was presented, and after several amendments had been moved, the report was approved and a competition for a design for the combined buildings was held. In the meantime, permission was given to the Libraries Committee to erect a temporary structure on the site to house the Reference Library.²

There was still so much uncertainty as to the fate of the site that at the end of 1912 it was levelled, sown with grass seed, provided with cross paths, and made into an open space. A year later it was decided to defer consideration of the whole matter of the utilization of the site until the Tramways Committee had presented their report on Traffic Congestion. The war years then intervened and the question was postponed. At the end of the war the Art Gallery Committee and the Libraries Committee came to the decision that their requirements could not be met by the erection of a combined building, and the Libraries Committee relinquished their

¹ See below, p. 281.

claim to the Piccadilly site. In October 1918 the Special Committee on the Infirmary Site were instructed to obtain competitive plans for the erection of an Art Gallery. An open competition was held, and the first prize was awarded to Mr. E. Berry Webber, A.R.I.B.A., of London. But, partly for reasons of economy, partly because opinion was still divided on the matter, the scheme was not proceeded with, and in 1931 the Council decided, in view of the urgent call for economy, to postpone it for five years. At the end of that period, in February 1936, again on the plea of economy, the scheme was postponed for a further period of five years. Meanwhile, the railings have been removed and the gardens beautifully planted, and the ordinary man, who cannot visualize a non-existent building, feels that the site would be ruined if half or three-quarters of an acre were used for an Art Gallery. No serious attempt has been made to find a more suitable site, and it looks as if Manchester will reach her bi-centenary before she possesses an Art Gallery worthy of a great city.

"What in the world do you want with art in Manchester? Why can't you stick to your cotton spinning?" So a noble duke is said to have inquired, when asked for a contribution from his gallery to the Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857. It would seem that the Manchester Council shares this view. Manchester, in spite of some good individual buildings, is undeniably an ugly city, and each generation of citizens accepts the fact, or at least does nothing to alter it. It is not that Manchester cares only for material things; libraries, education and to some extent music, she is ready to pay for, but pictures, sculpture and design evidently seem to her a waste of money. During the economy period of 1931 the annual expenditure of £2,000 on works of art, which had never been increased since 1882, was cut out for five years, and even after that period only half of the grant was restored. In the realm of art, Manchester has hardly progressed in the hundred years. What was good enough for her in 1838 is still considered good enough for her to-day, whereas she soon outgrew the first Reference Library.

The small annual expenditure and many generous gifts have enlarged the scope of the Gallery, but owing to the restricted space, its possessions cannot be shown to advantage.¹ The com-

¹ The ratepayers have never spent a penny of capital in connection with the Gallery.

paratively small contents of the Institution, when handed over in 1882, consisted almost entirely of paintings and sculpture. Now, in addition to a large collection of pictures (mainly of the English school but including a number of foreign examples) and sculpture, there is a fine group of early English water-colours and representative sections of Chinese, Continental and English pottery and porcelain, Chinese jade, English glass, silver and furniture, Oriental arms and armour, Eastern and European embroideries and English costumes. There is also an Old Manchester and Salford Collection, and an exhibition of dolls, toys and dolls' houses which is of particular interest to children. Modern craftwork is also represented, and a beginning has been made with a collection of industrial art.

The Rutherford bequest¹ of over a thousand pieces of modern art deserves notice, because from it loans are made to schools in the city, and to Art Galleries and Schools of Art and secondary schools in Lancashire and Yorkshire. This "lending library" of works of art is the only one in existence, and is much appreciated.

Most of the branch galleries came to the Committee as a result of the activities of the Parks Committee. Where a house was included with the park, as at Queens Park, Heaton Park, Platt Fields, Wythenshawe, Fletcher Moss gardens, it was handed over for the Art Gallery Committee to run as a branch gallery, some with permanent, and some with temporary exhibitions. The Horsfall Art Museum, which only came under the control of the Art Gallery Committee in 1918, had a different beginning. It was initiated by Mr. T. C. Horsfall under the inspiration of John Ruskin in 1877, years before there was a municipal art gallery. It consists chiefly of a collection of pictures for school children made by Mr. Horsfall, and was for a time housed in some disused rooms at the top of the Town Hall, but in 1886 it was moved to Ancoats Hall, where it has remained ever since. There is a full-time curator who also runs a children's theatre, in which a play is produced every week by the Ancoats children. The idea of the founder that the museum should be a place of entertainment, as well as a help to education, has always been in the minds of those responsible for it.

In 1895 the Board of Education—or, as it was then, the Committee of Council for Education—allowed visits by children to

museums under the charge of a teacher to count as attendance at school. This was largely due to the action of the Manchester Museum¹ Committee and the Manchester School Board. During the war, visits to museums and art galleries were extended, and now form an integral part of the children's education.

In these ways Manchester tries to make up to some extent for not having an up-to-date building large enough to house permanent and temporary exhibitions of pictures, sculpture, craftwork and industrial design.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

If Manchester had lost any reputation it had a hundred years ago as a lover of art, its record with regard to Public Libraries is perhaps some compensation. In August 1851 "A Bill for enabling Town Councils to establish Public Libraries and Museums" by levying a rate not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the £. was passed. It was a permissive measure, that is to say, it had to be adopted by a town before it came into operation, and it gave no sanction for the purchase of books, although the Council could incur a lavish expenditure for buildings and bookcases. This was, in the case of some individual towns, as in that of Manchester, remedied by powers obtained in a local Act² and was remedied nationally in 1855, when the limit was raised to 1d. rate.

Before the Act of Parliament was passed, a public subscription had been started in Manchester in the autumn of 1850 by Sir John Potter, then Mayor, the son of the first Mayor of Manchester. At a dinner "the subscription list, opened on the Exchange, went round the table with the wine and was rapidly and liberally filled up,"³ and before any appeal was made to the public, Sir John Potter had already collected the sum of £4,300. A committee was appointed to canvass for further subscriptions, and to organize the institution, with Dr. John Watts, later one of the first members of the Manchester School Board, and Dr. John Leigh, later the first

¹ The Manchester Museum is not a municipal institution but part of the University.

² Manchester New Streets Act, 1853.

³ *Free Lending Libraries*, by Edward Edwards, p. 65.

Medical Officer of Health, as secretaries. Subscriptions came from all sections of the population.

At a meeting of this committee in January 1851, it was decided to appoint Edward Edwards as Librarian. He had previously been an assistant at the British Museum, where his appointment had terminated in May 1850. He was one of the great pioneers of the free library movement, and had given evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the subject in 1849. The building known as the Hall of Science in Campfield, which had been the meeting place in 1840 of the followers of Robert Owen, was purchased and adapted, and 18,000 volumes bought.

A fortnight before the library was opened,¹ a poll was taken of the ratepayers on the question as to whether or not a rate should be levied for the maintenance of the library. Out of a third who voted, only forty were against the proposal. The Free Library at Manchester was transferred to the Corporation on September 1, 1851, and Sir John Potter was elected the first Chairman of the Library Committee.

To Manchester goes the honour of maintaining the first library under the Act of 1850. Small but useful collections of books had previously been formed, chiefly by donation, at Warrington and at Salford, as appendages to museums maintained under the provisions of "The Museums Act" of 1845, Warrington having adopted this Act in 1848 and Salford in 1849.²

The inaugural ceremony of the Manchester Free Library took place on September 2nd, and Charles Dickens and William Thackeray were both present.

The Manchester Free Library was not only the first library established under the Act of 1850,³ but was the first institution in the country which combined a Free Reference Library open to all comers, without introduction or recommendation of any kind, with a Free Lending Library, open to all persons who produced a voucher signed by two burgesses of either Manchester or Salford who were willing to become guarantors for the return of the books lent. This system was new in England. No lending library had ever before made its books so accessible, nor had any rate-purchased

¹ September 2, 1851.

² *Memoirs of Libraries*, by Edward Edwards, vol. i, p. 794.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 792.

books ever before been placed in a library, either for borrowing or for reference purposes.

Four days after the opening, the rooms were thronged with readers and within the first year 61,080 volumes had been issued in the Reference Department.

In 1857 the resources of a penny rate now being available, the Council established three branch lending libraries in Ancoats, Hulme and Ardwick.¹ The next few years were years of progress both in the building of branch libraries and in the increasing issue and circulation of books. The dangerous state of the building at Campfield, in addition to the inadequacy of the accommodation, made it necessary to seek fresh premises, and when the present Town Hall was opened (1877), the Reference Library was offered accommodation in the vacated Town Hall in King Street.

In 1885 and the years following, Manchester was engaged in extending her boundaries, and in order to provide libraries in the new districts, powers were taken in the Manchester Corporation Act of 1891 to raise the rate for library purposes from 1d. to 2d.²

The question of the extension of the Reference Library had been under consideration for several years, but had presented so many difficulties that each plan submitted had been found open to serious objections. In 1897³ the Council agreed to the Committee's suggestion of the sale of their present building, the old Town Hall, and the building of a new library on another site. Then began the long controversy about the Infirmary site and the possibility of a joint Art Gallery and Reference Library on it.⁴ The site in King Street was sold to Lloyds Bank for £161,415 and had to be handed over by 1913. As no conclusion had, by 1911, been reached about the use of the Infirmary site, the Council allowed the Libraries Committee to erect a temporary building on a portion of it.

The war years further postponed a decision, but in 1919 the temporary building being overcrowded and in every way unsuitable, the Council decided to combine the new library with the extension to the Town Hall, and the open competition was won by Mr. E. Vincent Harris. The fine new library was built

¹ Manchester City Council Minutes, May 13, 1857.

² In 1919 Manchester applied to the Local Government Board for a provisional order to amend this Act and substitute 3d. for 2d. but before it came into operation the General Libraries Act, 1919, abolished the limit to the rate.

³ Council Minutes, October 20, 1897.

⁴ See above, p. 275.

first and was opened in 1934. It contains nearly 800,000 volumes; a Commercial Library, the Henry Watson Music Library, with about 60,000 volumes, 20,000 copies of sheet music and 138,000 part-songs and anthems and which holds a unique position in this field; the Central Lending and Foreign Libraries, together with special rooms for research workers, an exhibition hall, a theatre and lecture rooms.

The arrangement, begun in 1878, of placing in the custody of the Reference Library authorities the collections of various local societies has been continued and extended since that time, and the deposit libraries now include, for instance, the collections of such societies as the Ancient Monument Society, the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, the Manchester Literary Club, the Manchester Repertory Theatre.

There are to-day twenty-three branch libraries, in addition to a travelling library to some of the new housing estates, and to libraries accommodated temporarily in schools. Last year 3,820,000 volumes were issued in the Lending Libraries.

The following table shows, in ten-year periods, from 1877 when figures were first available, the percentage of fiction and non-fiction issued from the branch libraries:

VOLUMES ISSUED FOR HOME READING		1877	1887	1897	1908	1921	1927	1937
Fiction	..	56·08	68·27	81·03	82·69	74·72	77·49	64·81
Non-Fiction	..	43·92	31·73	18·07	17·31	25·28	22·51	35·19

Dividing the home-reading issues into fiction, non-fiction and children's books,¹ we find that to-day the highest percentage of fiction is issued by East Gorton (67·5 per cent) and the lowest by Rackhouse (52·3 per cent). The highest percentage of non-fiction is issued by Didsbury (32·2 per cent) and the lowest by Bradford (15·1 per cent), Ancoats (15·4 per cent) and Benchill (15·6 per cent). The highest percentage of children's books is issued by West Gorton (22·2 per cent) and the lowest by Openshaw (11·4 per

¹ We have omitted the Central Lending Library as no children's books are issued there. It is intended largely for the kind of reader who makes use of the Reference Library, so it is not surprising that it has the lowest fiction issues (40·2 per cent) and the highest non-fiction (59·3 per cent). The total issues have increased by 33·6 per cent since it was opened in 1934.

cent), Wilbraham (11.2 per cent) and Longsight (11.8 per cent).

The children's rooms, which have for many years been a feature of the branch libraries, started accidentally. "During the Cotton Famine in the early sixties of the last century the children used to crowd into the Deansgate branch to get warm, and there were so many that a special room was set apart for them. It was not until 1879 that the first proper juvenile room was opened at the Ancoats branch."¹ After the war, during which time they were closed, the children's rooms were re-opened and children, on the recommendation of their teacher, were admitted. A quiet place for reading, shelves containing special books for children and occasional talks by the assistant, attract many children to these rooms, which have flowers on the table and pictures on the walls. Co-operation between the schools and the Branch Librarian means that these two branches of the education services are linked together, and children are encouraged while at school to read for enjoyment and to get into the habit of using the libraries when they leave school.

The Library services cost the ratepayer 4½d. in the £, and not even the Ratepayers' Association suggests any reduction.

¹ *Manchester Evening News*, November 29, 1919. Report of paper by Mr. Ernest Axon on "Schools and Libraries."

CHAPTER VIII

HOUSING, PARKS AND TOWN PLANNING

HOUSING

As we saw in Chapter I, Manchester, like other rapidly increasing industrial cities, had grown without any plan or any regard for the health and convenience of its inhabitants. The growth had been so rapid that the necessity for housing the large populations that poured into the newly developed industrial centres had blinded men's eyes to the evils that were being created. Many of the evils of crowding human beings so closely together with insufficient air and light arose, too, from the necessity, when trams were non-existent and streets badly paved and lit, for the workers in each mill to live near their work. The mill-owners, who were so much praised by visitors from Europe and other parts of England, the Ashworths at Turton, the Ashtons at Hyde and the Giegs at Sial, were those who had formed a colony round their mills, situated on a country stream. The mill, the owner's and manager's houses, cottages for workers, a school or at least a Sunday school, a recreation room and playing fields forming a close community, were survivals of the period of country mills worked by water power. When mills were transferred to the towns, the land round about them was hastily seized by the speculative builder and as many workers as possible were housed on it. It was not until the bad results of this uncontrolled activity were manifest that public opinion began to try to exercise some control.

There were some attempts to control building even in 1792, when the Police Commissioners for Manchester took powers in their local Act to insist on party walls.¹ This was in order to prevent the spread of fire, which was responsible for great loss of property in the days when a plentiful and available supply of water was non-existent and an efficient force of firemen was almost as necessary as an efficient police force. But in those early days of

¹ 32 Geo. III, c. 69.

the Police Commissioners there was hardly any staff to see that the regulations were carried out. Fifty years later, members of the Town Council stated that this regulation had not been observed. In any case it only applied to the township of Manchester.

In 1830 the Manchester Commissioners made another attempt to regulate building. This time it was a provision that no street or court should be laid out of a less width than eight yards, the width to be measured beyond all areas, steps, windows or other projections. This meant a real advance, for previously it was only the main streets that had been regulated and, as it was easier to control the laying out of streets than the insulation of party walls, the regulation was enforced and was considered so valuable that this section was re-enacted in the Manchester Improvement Act of 1851.¹

When the new Council settled down after the four stormy years of the fight for its existence, one of its first acts was to tackle the state of the poorer districts of the town. Several of the leading members, the Mayor, Thomas Potter, and the young Town Clerk, Joseph Heron, had served on the Special Board of Health appointed to deal with the cholera epidemic in 1831-32. Although as we saw,² the scientific knowledge of that day was unable to explain the way in which cholera and the various "miasmatic fevers" were propagated, that there was a close connection between the worst overcrowded and filthy dwellings and the number of victims was soon realized by the doctors, like Dr. Kay, who attended the cases in their homes, and by the members of the Board, who themselves visited some of the worst of the hovels which a writer later said "cannot be visited by any save those who possess the firmest of hearts and the strongest of stomachs." They never forgot what they had seen. As soon as they had the larger powers given to them by the Town Council, with a reasonable area to control, they set to work energetically to deal with what they realized was an urgent problem.

The first local Act obtained by the new Council³ was more comprehensive and in some ways more important than any that have since been obtained. This was partly due to the fact that at that date there was no general legislation dealing with public

¹ Section 50.

² See above, p. 163.

³ Manchester Police Regulation Act, 7 & 8 Vic., c. 40.

health or housing, and Liverpool in 1842 and 1846 and Manchester in 1844 got powers in their local Acts which were not made general until later. Even so, as we shall see, some of the regulations were more stringent in the Manchester Act than in the Public Health Act of 1848.

Amongst the many and varied provisions of the 1844 Act, which incorporated all the useful parts of preceding Acts of the Commissioners for Manchester and for the various townships, the ones that concern us here are those dealing with back-to-back houses.¹

The greatest evil that arose from the crowding together of houses before there was any system of main drainage was that of the disposal of refuse, personal as well as household. Privy middens and ashpits, which was the accepted method even in the houses of the well-to-do, were far too few. In the working class parts of the town, one privy for twelve buildings inhabited by seventy-eight people was common, in fact about a third of the whole population of Manchester lived under these conditions.² The reason that there were so few of these conveniences was that they had to be put outside the house, and land being so valuable for building, the owners did not want to waste any that could not bring in rent. There had been no regulations to force the builder to provide a backyard, a privy or ashpit for each house, and, in fact, builders had evolved the highly ingenious system of making two houses out of a plot of land that would normally hold one. A building with two fronts and no backs had a wall down the middle which divided it into two houses, each containing usually two rooms, one up and one down. There was no through ventilation, no backyard, no conceivable place for the privy and the ashpit. One of these conveniences would, therefore, be provided for a row of these back-to-back houses either at the entrance to the court, if they were built in courts, or somewhere in the street.

These privies and ashpits, as can well be imagined, soon became so full that the contents overflowed over the seat into the road, and oozed into the cellars and ground floors of the adjoining houses, for they were usually placed right up against the walls of

¹ Manchester Police Regulation Act, Sections 65 and 66.

² Report of Building and Sanitary Regulations Committee of Manchester Council, 1846.

a house to save space. They were supposed to be emptied at night, and as the manure was valuable, those who took it away asked little payment. But "it is a notorious fact that in Manchester the parties who engage to empty these places are thieves. They go to a place and engage to empty it for perhaps a shilling. They take away that which they can make money of and leave the rest, so that in point of fact the place is in a worse state after they have done what they call emptying it, than before."¹

In order to cope with this problem, the Council got power from Parliament to do two things. In future no house² was to be built without a privy with proper doors and coverings and an ashpit, either in the house or in a yard attached to the house (except that with the consent of the Council, houses built in courts might use some privies in common), and, more stringent still, owners of existing houses³ to which no sufficient privy and ashpit was attached had to provide one to the satisfaction of the Council.

It is interesting to compare this regulation with the sections in the Towns Improvement Clauses Act, 1847, and the Public Health Act of 1848, by which privies and ashpits were only to be provided "if there be room without disturbing any building." This proviso was in the Manchester Bill when it came before the Council, but the words were struck out on the initiative of Abel Heywood and William Neild, and in opposition to the advice of the Mayor, Alexander Kay, who said that this proposal would rouse powerful opposition from property owners. Curious though it seems to us now, when threatened private interests organize themselves so effectually, the opposition did not materialize and the clause also went through Parliament unopposed. The result of this legislation was that from 1844 the building of back-to-back houses ceased within the municipal borough of Manchester, although it continued in outlying districts such as Bradford and Openshaw, which were not added to the city until later. Back-to-back houses were not peculiar to Manchester and were not prohibited by general legislation until 1925.⁴

As soon as the 1844 Act came into force, the Council set up a Building and Sanitary Regulations Committee to deal with the

¹ Evidence of Town Clerk before House of Lords Committee on Manchester Improvement Bill, 1845.

² 7 & 8 Vic, c. 40, s. 66.

³ *Ibid.*, s. 65.

⁴ Housing Act, 1925.

housing regulations. This Committee consisted of eleven members and the Mayor. They tackled their formidable job with enthusiasm. They decided to meet every week, on Thursday at six o'clock, but after three months changed to fortnightly meetings at an earlier hour. There was an average attendance of six members, and the record of the work of the first year is startling. 9,400 dwellings (8,182 houses and 1,218 cellars), containing a population of 47,000 people, 19 per cent of the total population, had been inspected and dealt with. Before the alterations there was one privy for twelve dwellings and sixty people, afterwards there was one for every three dwellings and twelve inhabitants. It does not now seem a high standard, but it meant a real advance in sanitation in those days.

The Committee received reports from the Inspector of Nuisances of buildings without proper privy accommodation, and appointed four sub-committees to visit, where necessary, the properties in the various parts of the town. A surveyor was appointed to prepare plans, and printed copies of the regulations were distributed to builders. Sometimes the owners made the necessary alterations willingly by pulling down a house and erecting a privy; sometimes there were difficulties which were settled by the Committee. Occasionally an owner was summoned before the magistrates if he remained obdurate. The cost of the privies varied between £3 and £10, and often a cottage worth £40 and £50 had to be pulled down to make four privies!¹ It is little wonder that property owners were roused to opposition, and even more remarkable that so much was accomplished with no charge at all to the rates.

The other part of the Committee's work consisted in passing plans of new buildings so far as the "conveniences" were concerned, and this must have been no small task when new houses were being erected all over the town, sometimes at the rate of 2,000 a year.

The work of the Committee slackened speed after the first magnificent attack owing to opposition and legal obstructions, but by 1851, six years after its work had begun, the Committee had dealt with 17,927 dwellings, over 35 per cent of all the dwellings in Manchester, at the rate of 2,980 a year. This record of "reconditioning," which has been particularly Manchester's method

¹ The Improvement of Manchester—a Report setting forth the plan proposed by the Town's Improvement Company, 1845, p. 32.

of dealing with slums in the past, rather than the more spectacular and expensive method of clearance, was not reached again until 1910-13, when an average of 2,500 houses a year were dealt with: although, of course, reconditioning in the later years meant something much more thorough than an increase in the number of privies and ashpits.¹

When the Council found that in some of the worst parts of the town more drastic action was necessary than the provision of extra privies, a special sub-committee was appointed to visit and report. They found "alleys and entries not more than one yard to four yards wide," while the "fronts of the cottages are bounded by high walls which form the backs of the other cottages," and as an aggravation of these evils, "these courts and alleys have no outlet at one end." "The arrangements (if such they can be called) of the privies and other conveniences are of the most disgusting character . . . and the inhabitants of these crowded places are doomed to familiarize themselves with scenes degrading to humanity." As they say, "the removal of a wall, or a shed, or a privy, no matter for what object, is an interference with the rights of property;" the Council resolved to promote a Bill giving the Corporation the necessary powers of compulsory acquisition. Manchester was one of the first authorities to be given this power.² There was, however, no power to levy a rate for this purpose, and the only available money was that provided by profits from the gas undertaking.

We do not wish to exaggerate the results of these early efforts at "reconditioning." Apart from the important fact that the 1844 Act prevented the building of any more back-to-backs in the municipal borough of Manchester, the Committee merely succeeded in improving slightly the abominable existing sanitary conditions. Much more drastic action—a supply of water to each house, water closets, a main drainage system, which, as we saw,³ Manchester was late in adopting—was necessary before the standard reached anything that we should now consider satisfactory; but the determination to tackle the problem, and to get such drastic powers from Parliament in advance of general legislation, shows the spirit of those early councillors.

¹ See below.

² Manchester Improvement Act, 1845, § 8 & 9 *Vite*, c. 141

³ See above, p. 182

Unfortunately this spirit did not last, and for the next forty years Manchester, instead of leading the country in housing, fell behind public opinion as it was manifested in the various Acts of Parliament that resulted from the disclosures made by Royal Commissions.

Manchester did not get power to abolish cellar dwellings until 1853.¹ It had been calculated twenty years before that there were about 5,000 cellars with a population of 15,000² and this had increased with the rush of population to the town. In 1853 a report³ had been made on overcrowding in cellars and houses. In eight cellars in a workers' tenement in Oldham Road, sixty-five people were sleeping, mostly on the ground, and in one cellar where ten people were found, the father, mother and grown-up daughter shared a bed. In the same building there were five dwellings consisting each of two rooms, one up and one down. In these, sixty people were sleeping, eighteen of them being in one house.

But the energetic action of the Building and Sanitary Regulations Committee had roused the property owners, who first made their appearance under the title of the "House Owners' Guardian Association." Although an attempt to get compensation for the cellar owners—some of whom were members of the Council—failed, the Association forced the Council to modify its regulations, so that only those cellars that were deemed to be public nuisances could be closed; others could be re-opened, if satisfactory alterations were made. After six years only 176 cellars had been closed. "No doubt," as the Building and Sanitary Committee, which had been authorized to carry out the work, said, "the desire not duly to interfere with the owners . . . has induced the Committee hitherto to sanction very moderate conditions in relation to cellars."⁴ New regulations were then adopted, though they were still less stringent than those under the Public Health Act of 1848.⁵

There was a spurt of housing activity in the 'sixties, due to two causes. In 1866 there was again the fear of a cholera epidemic in England which, however, did not visit Manchester. But, in order

¹ Manchester Corporation New Streets Act, 1853.

² Manchester Statistical Society, Report on Conditions of the working classes in the Large Towns, 1834, 1835, 1836, pp. 8 and 9.

³ Report on the sanitary condition of certain parts of Manchester, by A. T. Watts, 1853.

⁴ Council Minutes, January 6, 1861.

⁵ This act was not in force in Manchester.

to be prepared if it should come, the Guardians of the Chorlton Union called for reports of the sanitary conditions in the Union. The accounts of parts of Ardwick, Chorlton-on-Medlock and Hulme show that in spite of the work of the Building and Regulations Committee, conditions were appalling.

In the same year the Social Science Conference, which was devoted entirely to housing, met in Manchester. It was presided over by Lord Shaftesbury who, in his opening address, vigorously attacked slums: "The master evil which nullifies every effort for the benefit of the working people, which leaves us no rest, the evil that embraces and intensifies all the others, the hotbed of pauperism, immorality, disease and drunkenness, the evil that is negative in preventing any improvement and positive in maturing every mischief, that lies at the bottom of nineteenth-century of the corruptions that beset our social state and forms the crowning abomination of the whole, is the domiciliary condition of many thousands of our people. There are hundreds where there should be tens, and thousands where there should be hundreds. The overcrowding is frightful; it disgusts every physical and moral sense: and the more so when we see it as a growing, not a declining evil."¹

Two Manchester men, A. Ransome and W. Royston, members of the Sanitary Association, gave a report on the health of Manchester and Salford, in the course of which they described the conditions of housing in Ancoats, and said that "no real change for the better can be made without a complete remodelling of the sanitary department of the Corporation and the appointment of a responsible Medical Officer of Health."²

When challenged in the Council to reply to these attacks, the Chairman of the Sanitary Committee said that the statements in Mr. Ransome's paper were too true. He indicated that the Committee was held up by the Council.

The result, however, was that by-laws, for which power had been obtained in 1865, were finally adopted. These insisted upon a back yard of 70 square feet for each house. By-laws were also adopted for common lodging-houses and for houses let in

¹ The Social Science Congress in Manchester, *Manchester Guardian*, October 4, 1866.

² Power to appoint a M.O.H. had been given by the Public Health Act of 1848, and Liverpool by a private Act in 1842 had been the first city to appoint one, in 1846.

lodgings in order to control overcrowding and cleanliness, and a Medical Officer of Health was at last appointed in 1868. He tackled the cellar problem, and by 1874 was able to report that all except a few occupied by old people had been closed.

A surprising clause was inserted in the Manchester Waterworks and Improvement Act, 1867,¹ by which houses certified as unfit for habitation by two inspectors, or by the Medical Officer of Health, could be closed without compensation; and the Council also worked under the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act of 1868, so far as that gave powers to insist upon structural alterations or demolition where houses were unfit. A Health Committee was set up which took over the work of the Buildings and Sanitary Regulations Committee.

The reforming zeal of the Council, mostly urged from without, did not last long. One of the first actions of the new Medical Officer of Health was an attempt to insist upon a reconstruction of ashpits and privies, and the provision of a ventilating shaft to carry off the fumes, particularly in new houses. Immediately a deputation from four associations of property owners and ratepayers came to the Health Committee to demand withdrawal, and this was followed by a petition to the next meeting of the Council, signed by 500 property owners. The Council bowed to the storm and curtailed its activities for a time. It succeeded, however, in setting up a direct labour department to carry out the alterations for which the owners paid. They found this cost them less than if they had to engage a private builder to do the job. The Health Committee, against whose activities a continuous campaign was kept up by some of the leading members of the Council, could only proceed very slowly with closing orders, whether of cellars or of houses declared unfit for human habitation.

Although the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act of 1875 gave power to demolish a slum area and to rebuild on the site, the Health Committee decided to continue their policy of gradual reconditioning instead of attempting more drastic action. The Medical Officer of Health made a map of all the houses in the city, coloured according to the age of the buildings. He felt that the inner ring needed more drastic treatment than reconditioning, but doubt as to the advantages of barrack buildings, as tenements were

¹ Section 41

called, and a calculation that seven or eight million pounds would be necessary to clear and rebuild the whole of the inner zone, decided the Committee to continue on its previous course.

Meanwhile slum clearance had been most effectually carried out as a by-product of the commercial development of the city. The railway companies had done some noble work unconsciously. The Central Station and Oxford Road Station were built over that part of the curve of the Medlock described in the first chapter. Victoria Station and London Road Station replaced more unsavoury areas. As Dr. Leigh wrote, "the exigencies of commerce and the spirited policy of the Improvement Committee, aided by the funds supplied by the Gas Works, have swept the greater part of them away, and palatial warehouses occupy the sites where, some years ago, fever dens alone were found."¹

But bad conditions still remained, and the demolition of houses whether by the Council or by outside agencies, intensified the problem of overcrowding. So far, Manchester had made no attempt to provide for the people displaced, and there had always been strong opposition to the suggestion that it should do so. Private enterprise, the Council was sure, could and would provide. The Medical Officer of Health pointed out that it was no more Socialism to provide houses at rents that the people could pay than to make roads, drainage schemes, or to build harbours. But he was before his time when he said, "If helping the poor in this way—doing for them what they cannot do for themselves, or aiding them to do what they cannot accomplish alone—be socialism or communism, the more we have of it the better, when wisely and judiciously administered."² So long as compensation had to be paid, so long, he realized, the existing Acts would be a dead letter. This was certainly the heyday of *laissez-faire* as applied to housing, but Manchester does not deserve more blame than other cities. The cost of clearance and rebuilding was so great, and the loss in letting tenements at rents which the poorest people could pay, was so large that the 1875 Act soon became a dead letter all over the country.

The continual pressure from without, the excellent reports by the Medical Officer of Health, and the passing in 1885 of a new

¹ Medical Officer of Health's Report, 1878.

² *Ibid.*, 1884.

Housing Act which somewhat reduced the heavy compensation burden, roused the Council to action. It appointed the Unhealthy Dwellings Committee with Alderman Walter Smith as chairman, the veteran reformer Abel Heywood, and the energetic Councillor Goldschmidt—father of the present Alderman—as members. There was still great opposition and much obstruction in the Council, and the Committee had to go slowly, but it continued to close houses unfit for human habitation without compensation. As it had no power to demolish but only to close, it placated its opponents by paying £15 for each house that was pulled down. It also contributed towards the cost of sanitary alterations that were necessary to make the house fit. New building by-laws were demanded by the Sanitary Association, and the Medical Officer of Health said: "The old houses are rotten from age and neglect. The new houses often commence where the old houses leave off and are rotten from the first. It is quite certain that the working classes are largely housed in dwellings which would be unsuitable even if they were not overcrowded."¹ Two years later, in his farewell report to the Council, he reviews the housing situation. "Let anyone accustomed to a better condition in life put his head into one of them and he will be met with a mephitic atmosphere, the like of which is not to be found in the domicile of any other animal. . . . No animal could live in them and flourish. To describe their nauseous character, I have sometimes said, in a bantering spirit, put a pig into one of them and feed him on the best for a twelvemonth, and he will come out a lean pig; and yet industrious men and women and little children live in these, and the weak frames and pallid faces tell their surroundings. . . ."²

All this at last had some effect. In 1890 new building by-laws, insisting upon a damp-proof course and preventing a building density of more than forty to the acre were adopted. The houses built under these by-laws "belong to the better type of working-class houses found in the outlying districts. They are still in long rows, in not very wide streets, and have no gardens. They are narrow fronted, but some have bay windows, and five-roomed houses became more common. The third small bedroom is found over the projecting scullery. Baths are rarely found in these houses.

¹ Medical Officer of Health's Report, 1886.

² *Ibid.*, 1888.

But the sanitary arrangements are reasonably good: they have water closets and water laid on in the houses."¹

In the same year a few areas were cleared, and Pollard Street, Rochdale Road, Oldham Road Dwellings were erected on the sites. Reconditioning now went on energetically, about 1,000 houses a year were dealt with, but overcrowding was beginning to cause the authorities concern.

The belief in private enterprise, even when free from competition by rate-aided schemes, had received some bad shocks. By 1904, for instance, 6,000 houses, mostly back-to-backs, had been closed under the 1867 Act, but less than 3,000 had been substituted by the owners on or near the sites. The opposition in the Council to the policy of closing found the argument that closing merely increased overcrowding, an effective election cry, and for a time the work slowed down. The number of new houses built each year had been declining, and this undoubtedly intensified the problem.

In 1901 the Council bought 238 acres at Blackley, and proposed to build 200 houses as a small effort to deal with overcrowding. This was the first experiment by the Council at building a housing estate, and a Citizens' Association, led by Mr. T. C. Hoisfall, who had done so much for the cause of town planning and housing in England, made suggestions about the lay-out and types of houses. As a result of these suggestions the plans were altered, and instead of all the houses being two up and two down, the majority were planned as three-bedroomed houses with baths. The lay-out was also amended so as to allow for more sunshine in the houses. This promising scheme was delayed on the ground of economy, and the first lot of houses were only built in 1905.

This Citizens' Association, with T. R. Marr as secretary, carried out an exhaustive survey of housing conditions in Manchester and Salford in 1904. Selected districts in Ancoats, St. John's Ward, Angel Meadow and Ardwick were surveyed in detail, in the way that recent surveys have made familiar to us. Photographs of back-to-back houses, courts, culs-de-sac, showing closets and water taps used in common by inhabitants of many houses, give a vivid picture of the slums fifty years ago. In one street in Angel Meadow, forty houses were dependent upon one water tap. Out of 136 houses, only twenty had water closets—the rest pail closets. "In

¹ *The Re-building of Manchester*, by E. D. Simon and J. Inman, p. 12.

several streets the closets are placed, as is usual with back-to-back houses, in a group and are entered directly from the street. Used as they are by members of more than one household, and by casual visitors from the streets, the sense of responsibility for keeping the closets clean and wholesome seems to have departed from the district. The doors stand open and frequently display a reeking, filthy and sickening accumulation which reflects not only on the dwellers in the district, but on the citizens at large who allow such things to exist."¹

The Report urged a comprehensive housing policy for the whole of Manchester and Salford areas—an anticipation of Town Planning schemes. This should also provide, it said, not only for the demolition of unhealthy dwellings, but a statutory obligation to re-house the tenants. It also urged the two Councils to make more use of their powers under the Housing Acts of 1890 and 1900, and to "erect in different parts of the town and country contiguous to the towns, groups of working-class cottages, with adequate yard space and with small gardens." This is the first mention of gardens in connection with municipal housing, which hitherto, as we have seen, had been confined to tenement buildings in the centre of the town. These groups of cottages would not only provide part of the necessary supply of working-class houses, but raise the standard for other builders. It is interesting, in the light of later developments, to find that at that date even so advanced a reformer as Mr. Marr felt that it was far beyond the power of the Council to supply all the necessary working-class houses.

Once again the Council had been stimulated from without, but this time the publication of the Report was followed by the election of T. R. Marr, its secretary, to the Council.² The most ambitious reconditioning campaign was now launched and brought to a successful close. This was also helped by the action of the Health Committee, which had entered upon a programme of rapid conversion of pail closets to water closets.³ In the course of this work, the sanitary inspectors found many houses that should have been closed as unfit under the 1867 Act, and reported them to the Unhealthy Dwellings Committee, of which Councillor Marr had become chairman.

¹ *Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford*, by T. R. Marr, p. 62, 1905.

² See above, p. 183.

Between 1910 and 1913, 7,700 houses were dealt with. Back-to-back houses, which had numbered 10,000 in 1885, were reduced to under 100, and altogether nearly 25,000 insanitary houses were dealt with in eighteen years.

The Council had, in 1906, decided no longer to pay the owner for demolishing insanitary property, and this decision enabled the work to proceed more quickly and more cheaply. The saving to the rates in one year was calculated at £6,000.

Agitation outside the Council, together with the enthusiasm and determination of a small group of reformers, chiefly the new Labour members on the Sanitary Committee, kept the problem of housing in the forefront. Whilst the development of the Blackley estate was held up with all the arts of obstruction, and the Rate-payers' Association objected to any housing schemes that entailed a charge on the rates, the policy of reconditioning forged ahead. The Committee met once a week—as its predecessor in 1844 had done—and dealt with houses at the rate of 2,500 a year, the highest average that had ever been reached.

The record of persistent reconditioning since 1844 is the brightest spot in the history of Manchester housing. Although it was subject to ups and downs, to periods of greater and lesser activity, it was pursued systematically for seventy years, and the standard gradually rose. The fact that the small amount of enthusiasm available for housing reform—characteristic of the whole of the country—was never squandered in Manchester as in some cities on spectacular schemes of demolition, acquisition and rebuilding which, at a time when there was no subsidy from national funds, cost the rates so much that reaction was inevitable, meant that advance, though less heroic, was more continuous. The result is that, bad though our present slums are, there is nothing in Manchester to equal conditions that can be found in other large cities such as London, Liverpool, Birmingham and Glasgow.

But the Council as a whole refused to face the problem of overcrowding, and in other ways was hardly enthusiastic about housing. A few small re-housing schemes had a stormy passage through the Council. One was cancelled because its opponents found that there were many empty houses in the city, although very few of them were available at rents which the poorest and most overcrowded tenants could pay.

Re-housing schemes in Rochdale Road, Temple Estate and Barrack Street, Hulme, were held up for years by opposition in the Council, and it was only pressure from the residents in the areas that eventually forced them through.

Although the building of houses practically stopped during the war years, the interest in housing, as in other social problems, was quickened. Sir Edward Holt, a man of great public spirit, whose party had opposed the housing schemes, referred to his change of heart. He said: "One of the larger problems you will have before you will be the question of housing. I, for one, have always opposed housing by the Council, because the Council have never been able to make it pay. Why not, I do not know. But my opinions are changing. . . . Housing is a question that vitally concerns the health of the people; the health of your people concerns your pocket, because a life saved means so much money in the pocket of the nation, for life is worth so much money, looked at in a commercial sense. . . . It will be your duty to see whether you can carry out some scheme of housing that will meet the necessities of the poorest of our working classes. . . . Whether it raised our rates or not, we shall have to do our best to alter the state of things in connection with the housing of this city."¹

A special committee to inquire into the housing conditions of Manchester and to make recommendations for the provision of a sufficient supply of suitable houses was appointed. Unfortunately, the committee consisted of a majority of councillors who were more concerned with the fate of private enterprise than with a bold solution of the problem. It reported in 1918. It pointed out how private enterprise, before it was hampered by by-laws, high local rates and high sanitary requirements, the Finance Act of 1909-10 and the Rent Restriction Act, had provided adequately for the public, but said it appeared as if State aid was now necessary to help private enterprise, and subsidized rents, although "unsound in principle and unfair in practice," were possibly inevitable during the transition period after the war. It recommended the Sanitary Committee to see how far it could co-operate with private builders in securing the provision of houses for the working classes.² It little thought that the following year would find the Council, in

¹ Council Minutes, October 11, 1916. Speech on receiving the Freedom of the City.

² Council Minutes, October 30, 1918.

common with local authorities all over England, launched upon a policy of municipal building, of which the end is not yet in sight.

During the war years the condition of the slums had been getting worse, as reconditioning stopped, new houses had not been built even at the pre-war level, and overcrowding was therefore much greater. The Tudor Walters Committee which reported in 1918 had set a completely new standard of working-class housing, as anyone can see who compares the municipal housing estates with the rows of houses with no gardens, mostly containing only two bedrooms, and many without a bath, which were built in the years preceding the war.

But this new standard, coinciding with the high post-war costs of building, made a subsidy from national funds essential if the houses were to be available for the working classes.

The enthusiasm with which Mr. Lloyd George launched his "Homes for Heroes" campaign, coupled with the bribe to local authorities of the payment from national funds of all expenditure over a 1d. rate, induced the Manchester Council, with others, to venture upon municipal building. Land was bought in the suburbs for estates to be laid out on the Tudor Walters plan. Manchester's partiality for private enterprise was shown, however, in the policy adopted in 1919, and maintained ever since, of limiting municipal building to houses to let. She not only refused to sell her working-class houses, for the sound reason that it was the prime duty of the municipality to provide for those—by far the largest number—who could not afford to buy houses, but also prevented opposition from private builders by leaving that field to them. The 1923 Housing Act gave a subsidy to private builders, as well as to local authorities, and the Manchester Corporation made full use of its powers to lend money on mortgage to those who wished to buy their houses.

The Public Health Committee, as the Sanitary Committee was now called, had dealt with housing for many years, but it was soon realized that building on an unprecedented scale demanded a special committee. The Housing Committee was therefore set up in 1919 to deal with the building of houses, although the management and letting of them was retained by the Public Health Committee until 1932. After a keen fight, a Housing Director was appointed who could give his whole time to the work.

With the exception of Wythenshawe, to which we refer later, the record of Manchester's post-war housing has not been remarkable. The following table shows the number of houses built up to date by Birmingham, Liverpool, Nottingham and Manchester since 1919, and the number of those built under the Slum Clearance Act, 1930.

	Population ¹	Total Number of Dwellings Built 1919-1930	Number of those for Slum Clearance
Birmingham	1,038,000	47,265	6,708
Liverpool	867,110	32,317	3,913
Nottingham	283,030	15,092	2,686
Manchester	766,311	27,426	5,705

It will be seen that in proportion to their population the other towns have built more houses than Manchester, although the difference between it and Liverpool is slight. But, as regards slum clearance, Manchester has done as well as any, except Nottingham. Manchester has already re-housed a population of 22,000 from slum clearance areas, and a further 5,000 dwellings are now being built.

Differential rents have to be given under the Slum Clearance Act, so the poorest people—if they inhabit a slum area—are now being catered for. The Housing Act of 1935, dealing with overcrowding, is at last an attempt on the part of the Government to prevent what has invariably been the result of all previous clearance schemes, namely, increased overcrowding in the neighbourhood. The Act hopes to prevent this by insisting upon the building by the municipality of the necessary houses at suitable rents, so that those who persist in allowing overcrowding can then be prosecuted. It is unfortunate that the standard of overcrowding adopted by the Government is lower than that known as the "Manchester standard." The standard of overcrowding usually employed by local authorities was more than two persons per room, excluding the scullery but counting in the sitting-room, and counting children under two as half a person. This took no account of the separation

¹ From the *Municipal Year Book, 1937*. The figure for Manchester's population differs from that quoted elsewhere, which is that estimated by the M.O.H. The figure from the *Municipal Year Book* is given here so that it can be compared with those of other cities.

of the sexes. In 1920 Manchester, on the initiative of E. D. Simon, who was then a member of the Public Health Committee, adopted a higher standard—not more than two persons per bedroom, the separation of the sexes over ten, and a separate bedroom for the parents. The reason that this standard is not generally adopted is said to be the difficulty of applying it to those places where it is customary to use a living room as a bedroom, but there can be little doubt that it sets a standard to which all national effort should be directed. The difference between the two standards was shown most strikingly when the survey of overcrowding in Manchester called for under the 1935 Act was published. This showed that only 2.1 per cent of the families in Manchester were overcrowded on the Government standard, and that 1,566 new houses would meet the need. This so obviously bore little relation to the condition that was known to exist according to any decent standard, that the Council demanded another survey on the Manchester standard. A sample was done, and the overcrowding was shown to be 11.3 per cent. It is hoped that Manchester will insist upon building enough houses—and getting grant from the Government on them all—to eliminate overcrowding on its own standard.

The case in which Manchester went ahead of public opinion in post-war housing was in its acquisition and development of the Wythenshawe Estate. An area of over 5,000 acres, 60 per cent of which is owned by the Corporation, on the south side of the River Mersey, was incorporated in the city in 1930, and is being developed as a satellite garden town. Under the control of Mr. Barry Parker, who had made his name as the town planner of Letchworth Garden City, this estate has been laid out to house eventually 100,000 people living both in municipal and in private enterprise houses. Two factory areas, shopping centres, open spaces, playing fields, cinemas, improved public-houses, are provided. An agricultural belt surrounds the area, on part of which a municipal golf course is planned. The Wythenshawe Special Committee, of which Alderman Jackson, the originator and the most active promoter of the scheme, was the first chairman and is still the most influential member, acts as landlord, and the other committees of the Council provide the necessary services. It is confidently anticipated that when the estate is fully developed, the return from ground rents will more than repay the cost of the capital invested by the rate-

payers. Although there was considerable opposition to this scheme, certainly the boldest that any municipality has yet embarked upon, from the Conservative party—with one or two important exceptions—the second and successful attempt to get the area incorporated in the city in 1930 put an end to all but factious opposition that finds no support in the Council. Members of all parties have co-operated to make Wythenshawe the success that it is rapidly becoming. This was recognized by the Departmental Committee on Garden Cities¹ when it recommended that the most hopeful line of garden city development lay in action by municipalities.

The position with regard to housing in Manchester can be expressed in figures. In April 1937 there were 201,381 houses in the city, of which 56,000 were built before the by-laws of 1868. Reconditioning can do no more and these must all be cleared.

When the Council has finished clearing the 12,000 with which it is now dealing, it will still have the biggest part of its task before it. When the Government speaks of nearing the end of its slum clearance programme, it must have overlooked Manchester.

Of the total number of houses in the city over 27,000 have been built by the Corporation since 1919. Most of these are built at 12 to the acre on estates laid out on the now familiar Tudor Walters plan. Seven thousand of these are in Wythenshawe. Flats have been built near the centre of the city and the internal arrangement of the municipal houses owes much to the recommendations of the Women's Advisory Committee. Some 17,792 houses have also been built since the war by private enterprise for those citizens who are able and who wish to own their houses.²

One of the black spots in Manchester's housing is the number of large houses previously occupied by the well-to-do and now let off in rooms, often single rooms, to working-class families. At present there are 7,000 of these on the official register of houses let in lodgings, and there may be more of them. It is not a new problem, but that it still exists proves, more than anything else, the shortage of housing accommodation at rents that the people can afford.

In the last few years, surveys of housing conditions in Manchester

¹ 1935.

² A large number of these houses lived in by Manchester people are just outside the city boundaries.

have again been made by public-spirited citizens—two, covering areas in Ancoats¹ (1928 and 1930), one behind London Road station (1931), one in Red Bank, and one in Chorlton-on-Medlock.² One of the areas surveyed in Ancoats was the same as that described in *Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford in 1904*. It is possible, therefore, to assess the improvement made there in the intervening quarter of the century.

The density has been reduced from 47 houses per acre to 44·8 owing to the demolition of unfit houses and the reconditioning of back-to-backs. But there were still a few cases of only one water closet and one yard between two houses. Both surveys agree in condemning the monotonous, mean streets, lack of open spaces and green trees.

Reconditioning only affects the individual house; slum clearance on a large scale with a proper redevelopment scheme is the only hope for improvement of the areas as a whole.

Under the Arches, the London Road survey, deals with an area in which much of the property was built as far back as 1740, and although it had all been reconditioned, "it is not too sweeping a generalization to say that, with a few bright exceptions, the property throughout the area under consideration is damp, dismal, and dilapidated and can only relatively be considered fit for human habitation." It is some consolation to know that this is included in the Ancoats Slum Clearance scheme. Another scheme covers the area of Red Bank. But the areas in Ancoats and Chorlton-on-Medlock are not yet scheduled. They will, however, all be demolished when the Housing Committee has accomplished its programme of the inner ring of houses—considered by Dr. Leigh as long ago as 1878 to be suitable only for demolition. The existence after a hundred years of such houses is a reminder that we have still far to go before we can feel happy about the conditions under which many of our fellow citizens and large numbers of young children are still living. But, whereas the descriptions given by Dr. Kay and Engels were typical of the working-class areas a hundred years ago, those described in the modern surveys apply only to selected black spots. The execrable sanitary conditions at least have disappeared. Although baths are few and far between

¹ By the Manchester and District Regional Survey Society.

² By the Manchester and Salford Better Housing Council.

in the pre-1890 houses, each house has its own water supply, and practically every one has a separate back yard and water closet. The standard of working-class housing has improved beyond recognition. There are still intolerably bad spots that are a disgrace to a city of the size and importance of Manchester, but at least they are all known and marked down for clearance.

When we compare the post-war housing estates, and especially Wythenshawe, with conditions a hundred years ago, we can see the full effect of the century's progress in housing. There is still much to be done before every citizen is housed either in a separate cottage with a garden, or in a flat with green belts near at hand for gardens and allotments and playing fields. The Manchester of 2038 will probably be as different from the Manchester of to-day as this is from the city of 1838. Our ideas will change, our standard rise, and progress should be much more rapid.

PARKS

Manchester in the thirties was described as lacking any public walks and places for open-air recreation. The only walks were said by Dr. Kay to be along the turnpike roads, "alternatively dusty or muddy," and although this statement somewhat exaggerated the situation there was certainly no effort by the authorities to provide for the recreation of the people. Building operations were rapidly destroying country lanes and fields like those described by Mrs. Gaskell in *Mary Barton* at Greenheys. The township of Hulme which had only 5,000 houses in 1841 had over 10,000 by 1851.

Meanwhile Parliament had given a lead, and in 1840 a sum of £10,000 had been voted to provide, by means of grants in aid of voluntary sums, public walks throughout the country. Mr. Mark Philips, the progressive member of Parliament for Manchester, brought this grant to the notice of the Town Council,¹ and promised his assistance to help to secure "the advantage of some public walks or places of recreation for our overworked and underfed population."

A public meeting at which the Mayor presided was held, and a Public Parks Committee was set up. £32,000² was collected, to

¹ Minutes of Council, May 10, 1843.

² *Manchester Courier*, August 26, 1846.

which Sir Robert Peel, Mark Philips, Sir Benjamin Heywood, Lord Francis Egerton and Thomas Potter largely contributed, and £3,000 was received from the Government grant. Three properties were purchased and laid out, in Harpurhey, Bradford—both outside the municipal area—and in Salford. These were appropriately called Queen's Park, Philips Park and Peel Park. Two years later, 1845, the Public Parks Committee transferred the parks to the Corporation, and a Parks Committee of seven members was set up to manage them, and to let the refreshment houses, which had already been provided by the temporary committee. They were opened to the public in 1846. Peel Park was transferred to the Salford Corporation in 1851.

Until the Towns Improvement Clauses Act of 1847 there was no general power to enable Councils to spend the rates on parks, but Manchester had obtained such powers in 1844.¹ It seems to us now, looking back, that the Council was guilty of great lack of foresight over this question. When some members of the public first woke up to the situation, the only open space of any size near the centre of population was in Bradford, which was outside the municipal boundaries. It was clear that Manchester was growing fast, yet the Council did not take the precaution of buying up land on the outskirts for the future needs of the inhabitants. If it was then too late to save open spaces in Ancoats and Chorlton-on-Medlock, it would still have been possible to buy land in Hulme. Although the Council was prepared to take over the annual charge of the parks, purchased by voluntary contributions, it was apparently not ready until many years later to make use of its powers to incur any capital cost. In spite of the rapid growth of the city nothing more was done for twenty years.

In 1864, the year of the great distress in Lancashire from the cotton famine, the Government was prepared to lend money on very easy terms for works of public utility to be undertaken by local authorities. Manchester took advantage of this opportunity to borrow money for a park which was demanded by the ratepayers of Chorlton-on-Medlock and Hulme, by then almost entirely built up. Owing to the difficulty of finding a site that satisfied both townships, the matter hung fire for four years. At last, in 1868, sixty acres of land were purchased from the then Lord Egerton at

¹ 7 & 8 Vic., c. 46, s. 48.

the rate of £400¹ an acre, and Alexandra Park came into being. In the same year Ardwick Green, which had been taken over by the Corporation as far back as 1842, but continued as a private open space to which only subscribers had access, was opened to the public.

In 1876, on the motion of Councillor (later Sir) James Haewood, the Parks Committee was instructed "to report on the vacant plots of land or open spaces available within the city or suburbs, which it may appear desirable to acquire for recreation grounds," but nothing resulted from this hopeful beginning.

In 1884 the energetic Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association turned its attention to the need for playgrounds for school children. It also suggested that Birch Fields should be secured by the city. The Parks Committee replied with a defensive report. During the last few years, they said, the expenditure of the Council on sanitary reform had increased considerably; there was now the School Board Rate, and "regard must also be had to the fact that much of this money has to be provided by shopkeepers and small tradesmen, who have as much as they can do to bear their present burdens." As for themselves they had not been idle; they had managed to secure five small open spaces, they had planted trees and shrubs as an experiment in Piccadilly, All Saints and St. George's, Hulme. The smoke nuisance was so serious that tree planting was almost a failure, the price of land was so prohibitive that extensive purchases were impossible, but they would be glad to consider reasonable offers. Finally they said it was the duty of local boards to acquire open spaces in their areas, and Rusholme should deal with Birch Fields. However, better counsel prevailed, and on the eve of the amalgamation of Rusholme with Manchester, Birch Fields was acquired—Manchester paying the cost.

The next year some public-spirited citizens promised contributions towards the cost of acquiring Ardwick Polygon, an area of 12½ acres. The total cost was £30,000, and the Council would have had to find £20,000. Immediately the Ratepayers' Association objected, and "begged to solicit the Council that under the present circumstances, and pending the return of more prosperous

¹ That the landlord drove a good bargain with the Corporation can hardly be denied, seeing that fifty years later his successor received £400 an acre for land which now forms the Wilbraham Housing Estate.

times, it will refuse to entertain the purchase of such estate." This was decisive, and still the only open space in that area is Ardwick Green.

In the nineties the Booth Hall estate and Boggart Hole Clough, 14½ acres, were bought for £10,000, and a part of the estate was laid out as a northern cemetery. A few small open spaces were acquired, some by gift and some by purchase. This was, however, a poor offset to the loss at the same time of the Trafford Park estate, which was offered to the Corporation by the owner, Sir Humphrey de Trafford, between 1893 and 1896. This estate of 1,180 acres, including Trafford Hall, the deer park of 700 acres, and an ornamental lake, was bounded by the newly-built Ship Canal for three miles of its length. Far-sighted members of the City Council, Alderman Thompson, Alderman Gibson and Councillor Needham—the chairman of the Parks Committee—were anxious to secure it for the city. The price asked was £350,000, but there was reason to think that the owner, who was anxious that the Corporation should buy it, would reduce the price. For three years the Council debated, appointed special committees and endorsed their recommendations not to buy, because of the distance from the city, because of the high price, because it was outside the city boundary, and because of the already heavy engagements of the City Council. Deputations of prominent ratepayers went to the Lord Mayor, and proposals to consult with Salford, Stretford and Eccles were considered but never materialized. Finally a definite offer from a London syndicate to buy the whole estate for £260,000 made an immediate decision necessary. The Committee felt that it could not commit the Council and summoned a special meeting of the Council, but the day before it met information was received that the syndicate's offer had been accepted. So a great opportunity of securing a magnificent park and of developing a trading estate was lost by the municipality. The success of the venture under the management of the Trafford Park Estate Company has proved that those members of the Council were right who predicted that the estate could be made to pay. If, too, the Council had acquired the estate it would probably have had little difficulty in including not only it but Stretford also within the city boundaries. No ratepayer to-day can but regret that the opportunity of securing such valuable rateable property was missed through lack of the ability

of the majority of the Council to look ahead a quarter of a century, a mere nothing in the life of a rapidly developing city.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the Whitworth Park was given to the city by the trustees of Sir Joseph Whitworth, and Heaton Park, the largest of all the parks, approximately one square mile in area, and situated on the northern boundary of the city, was bought by the Corporation. The purchase of this estate from the Wilton family is the first instance of imaginative large-scale buying of park land by the Council. Unfortunately it is the only instance. Although when the park was first offered¹ the price was considered too high, a satisfactory bargain was struck five years later, and the park of 650 acres, with another 28 outside its walls, was acquired for £230,000 (£237 per acre). There seems to have been remarkable unanimity on the part, not only of the Council, but of the public for the purchase.² The fact that Manchester with its 411 acres of parks compared unfavourably with Liverpool (763), Leeds (881) and Glasgow (1,087) was at last realized. Also the failure to buy Trafford Park a few years before meant that this was the last obtainable park in the neighbourhood of the city.

Platt Fields, which adjoins the densely populated areas of Chorlton-on-Medlock and Hulme, was acquired as the result of a public meeting in 1907. Although the Ratepayers' Association again objected, "on account of the present high rates in the city," the Retail Traders' Association approved "on the understanding that some portion of the same is developed for revenue purposes." The Council this time, largely owing to the strenuous efforts of William Royle, a public-spirited citizen of Rusholme, disregarded the Ratepayers' Association and purchased the estate of 90 acres for £60,000.

After the war the necessity for parks and open spaces for all citizens, and not merely for those living in congested areas, was at last realized, and the interim town planning scheme for the south of Manchester specified certain areas as suitable for open spaces. Chorlton Park and Fog Lane Park were acquired to provide for the new population brought to that district by housing development and Wythenshawe Hall and Park, of 250 acres, the home of

¹ 1896

² Mr. Hubert Phillips of the Manchester Sanitary Association did much to stir up public opinion on this question.

the Tatton family for six hundred years, was presented to the city in 1926.¹ It was then outside the civic boundaries, but was included in the city in 1930, with the whole of the area of the three parishes which now make up the Wythenshawe Ward.

The early conception of a park was ground laid out with ornamental beds, and walks with seats. The idea that games should be played, or that some part of a park should be left with its grass and trees untouched, was slow in developing. It is true that horizontal bars and swings for children had been provided in Queen's Park and Philips Park since 1859, but the first bowling green was not opened until 1871,² and tennis, football, cricket and golf made their appearance later still. The great development by which the parks cater for all sections of the populations, old and young, playets and picnickers, lovers of gardening and experts in horticulture, dates from just before the war. This policy was actively pursued by the late superintendent, Mr. Pettigew, and by Alderman Fox and Alderman Melland, two members of the Council who made the Parks Committee their chief concern. Particularly are the needs of those who cannot afford to pay any rent for playing fields catered for, although the pitches laid out and maintained by the Committee are sadly insufficient for the crowds of applications that come from the densely populated parts of the city.

The proper observance of Sunday in the parks is a question that has agitated the Council since 1856, and it is not yet settled. In that year a voluntary society provided bands to play in the parks on Sundays. But the Council received angry protests from Sunday schools and ministers of religion, and although Alderman Heywood presented a counter petition signed by 15,000 ratepayers a resolution requesting their withdrawal was passed by nine votes, the Council apparently being doubtful of its powers legally to exclude them. After this somewhat ungracious request the Chairman of the Bands Committee withdrew them under protest, and it was not until 1899, after band performances had been given in some of the parks regularly on weekdays, that they were allowed again on Sundays. Even then the bands were only allowed to play sacred music. Now there are band performances throughout the summer in most of the parks on Sundays, Saturdays, in Whit Week and on Bank Holidays.

¹ By Sir E. D. and Lady Simon.

² In Alexandra Park.

At intervals the question of allowing games on Sundays is raised and hotly debated. On every occasion the proposal has been defeated because the opponents—again chiefly ministers of religion and those interested in Sunday schools—have organized their forces, and those who want to play games on Sundays have failed to do so. It is difficult, therefore, to say whether any strong demand exists, although the tennis courts, bowling greens, etc., are so full on Saturdays that we should imagine that many of the players would like to play on Sundays, as do members of private clubs. The opening of the children's playgrounds on Sundays went through the Council unopposed,¹ and the use that is made of them on that day proves that, given the opportunity, it is taken. Yet presumably children are exactly those members of the general public for whom Sunday schools are provided.

With the growth of the Labour Party in the city, and the entry of Labour members to the Council, the question of holding Socialist meetings in the parks was hotly debated. Finally in 1896 the Council decided to make by-laws allowing meetings and demonstrations, on permission being granted by the Council. By one vote the Council forbade the Parks Committee to allow any meetings under any circumstances on a Sunday. This prohibition has now been withdrawn.

There are now 400 tennis courts, 79 bowling greens, 150 football grounds, 75 cricket pitches, 48 hockey grounds and 24 children's playgrounds with swings and other playing equipment. There is also a municipal golf course at Heaton Park, another projected at Wythenshawe, and 16 putting greens. Many of the pitches in the parks are used during school hours by those schools which have nothing but an asphalted playground of their own. This arrangement means that in the summer a hundred and sixty-five and in the winter a hundred and seven schools can arrange organized games three times a week. Football, cricket, rounders and netball are the favourite games.

Clubs formed by young people over school age are allowed to reserve pitches for their own use without any payment. Adults who form bowling clubs or tennis clubs can also reserve grounds upon payment of a small fee for the season.

It is now generally agreed that every town should have 10 per

¹ May 15, 1913.

cent of its area in the form of parks, playing fields and open spaces. For Manchester that should mean 2,725 acres. There are at present 2,465 acres, including 350 acres of playing fields in the Wythenshawe Ward not yet in use.¹ There is, therefore, a shortage of 260 acres. But Manchester's open spaces are not evenly distributed throughout the area. The inner ring, which contains 33 per cent of the population, has only 2.4 per cent of the open spaces, and the outer ring, Crumpsall, Blackley and Moston on the north, Gorton and Levenshulme on the east, and Withington, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Didsbury and Wythenshawe on the south, with 38 per cent of the population, enjoys 84 per cent of the open spaces. But that is not all. The population which lives in Hulme, Ancoats, Ardwick, Collyhurst, Miles Platting, has less than 4,000 acres to live on, whereas that which lives in the outer ring has 17,800 acres—four times as many.² It seems clear, therefore, that the extra 260 acres should be provided in the crowded inner ring, where individual gardens are impossible, and where re-housing is taking place in flats. The redevelopment of the city under the Town Planning Act gives an opportunity for turning some of the area from which the closely packed, verminous houses are cleared back into green spaces, which should never have been so recklessly destroyed. The high price of the land, £5,000 to £6,000 an acre, deters the Council from doing what every member knows it should do if Manchester is ever to be healthy and a beautiful city. Playgrounds for children, a quiet garden for the old folks, a place where bowls can be played without travelling to an already overcrowded green some distance away is not much to ask, but so far practically none of the land cleared of houses has been allocated for open spaces.

Much effort still has to be expended in making the best of a bad situation. Thanks to a voluntary society which provides the treats, and to the co-operation of the Parks, Education and Transport Committees, between ten and twelve thousand children spend a day in Heaton Park during the summer holidays. The children are those whose parents are unable to take them for a day's outing on their own to the parks.³ That there should be so many of these

¹ Manchester has not been so generously endowed by private gifts as some of its sister cities. It has only received 19 per cent of its total parks and open spaces by gift, whereas Birmingham has received 29 per cent and Sheffield 48 per cent.

² 1936 figures. ³ *Handbook of the Parks and Recreation Grounds, 1929*, p. 30.

children is the strongest argument for a bold policy of replanning of the city. Although the Housing Committee has made some provision for children in the Smedley Lane and Kirkmanshulme Flats, in Collyhurst, it is building about a thousand flats around the existing Willert Street recreation ground instead of providing more open space. This one of just over an acre is the only open space in the whole of the Collyhurst Ward, which has a population of 17,456¹ and an average density of 75 to the acre.

The policy of the Parks Committee of turning old churchyards, St. John's and All Saints, into open spaces with a children's playground in each, is admirable. The crowds of children who gather there is proof, if proof be needed, of the desperate lack of such places. The closing of some streets by the Watch Committee to make safe playing places for children, copied from Salford, is another palliative. It is not a really satisfactory solution. The residents in the closed streets have to put up with much noise and occasional broken windows, and the fact that they are ready to agree to the closing shows how much they appreciate the urgency of the problem. But it is not fair that failure on the part of the ratepayers generally to provide adequate and safe playgrounds for children should have to be made good by a minority of citizens, most of whom return after a strenuous day's work to homes where they have a right to expect peace and quiet.

The removal of the railings from the Piccadilly Gardens has proved such a success that it is to be hoped that the Parks Committee will soon remove the railings from all the parks and uproot the shrubbers which hide the green lawns and flower beds from the passers-by in the street.

TOWN PLANNING

The city of Manchester is the outstanding example of a city that has never been planned.² Its rapid growth in the nineteenth century was unregulated except that there were by-laws in some of the

¹ Medical Officer of Health's Report, 1936, p. 23

² In 1857 a private venture in town planning was made in Rusholme, when the Victoria Park Company was formed. This residential estate, which is still managed by a trust, has become popular as a site for nursing homes, halls of residence, as well as for private houses. Richard Cobden lived here from 1845 to 1848.

townships regulating the width of main streets. The various extensions of the city and the exclusion from its boundaries of Salford have resulted in a long, unwieldy area, almost completely covered with buildings in the centre, and with practically all its open spaces in the intermediate and outer rings where the density of population is much less.

The power to plan an area, that is to determine the lines of its development by the local authority which does not own the land, dates back to the first Town Planning Act, 1909, but only un-built-on land could then be dealt with. Under that Act the Council made schemes for the rapidly developing south Manchester and, after the war, for the north of the city. A Regional Town Planning Committee which covers an area of 67,474 acres has its headquarters in Manchester, with Alderman W. T. Jackson as chairman.

The Town Planning Act of 1932 gave local authorities power, subject to compensation to owners, to replan built-up areas. Coming at the same time as the big drive for slum clearance, this means that for the first time in the hundred years Manchester has the power to retrieve the mistakes of her past, and can control her future development.

The 56,000 houses that were built before 1870, before, that is, the building by-laws of 1868, will all have to be demolished. If anyone thinks this proposal too drastic he should remember that Dr. Leigh in 1878 described them as such "that can never be brought up to the condition of those outside the ring, that the streets are narrow, the courts numerous, small and ill-ventilated, the houses generally old, out of repair and saturated with human exhalations." Reconditioning gave a new lease of life for nearly sixty years, and many of them are only now being closed. If the Housing Committee builds at the rate of three thousand new houses a year, this inner ring could be demolished in twenty years. By then the houses built after 1870, some of which will be nearly ninety years old, will be ripe for demolition. The Council has therefore a magnificent chance—which will not occur again for another hundred years—to bring back to the centre of the city grass and trees which vanished before the speculative builder more than a hundred years ago.

The new ring roads should be parkways like that at Wythenshawe

and all the roads should be replanned and reconstructed from the point of view of rapid and safe transport.

Of course the high price of land, £6,000 an acre in Hulme and £4,000 to £5,000 in Collyhurst, is the stumbling-block. But the price of land in the city is high because there is such a demand for industrial and commercial purposes—in other words, because the city is so rich. We are sometimes told that to acquire land for open spaces we must wait until the price falls, but the price will only fall because the city is becoming poorer, and then there will be protests from ratepayers who, with diminished incomes, will be asked to carry heavier burdens than the ratepayers of to-day. It is impossible for Manchester to sue in *forma pauperis* when the existence of the high prices for land in her centre is an index of her wealth. We are now planning the city for the next hundred years and building flats. Yet we contemplate throughout that time denying to the thousands of families the sight of grass and trees or of parks in which to play and rest, such as those who live a little farther out are able to enjoy. People live in flats in the centre rather than in cottages with gardens on the outskirts because they cannot afford heavy transport charges or the time involved in getting to and from work. But this is their—and their children's—misfortune, not their fault, and if we really want to give equal chances to all citizens we should at least see that the outlook of those families is not limited to bricks and mortar and high chimneys.

If Moscow¹ and Berlin² are prepared to spend money on making their cities beautiful, convenient and healthy, can Manchester afford to lag behind?

There could be no more fitting celebration of the centenary and nothing more likely to earn the gratitude of succeeding generations than a bold re-design of the face of Manchester.

¹ See *Moscow in the Making*, by E. D. Simon and others.
² *Manchester Guardian*, January 13, 1938.

CHAPTER IX

THE CARE OF THE DESTITUTE

IN 1838, as we have described on page 49, the care of the destitute in the township of Manchester was still in the hands of the Churchwardens and Overseers.

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834,¹ which reorganized the administration of relief, was the result of a Royal Commission which had been appointed by the Parliament of 1832. The rise in the poor rates that followed the Napoleonic wars, and the revolutionary changes that were taking place in the structure of industry, had caused alarm. The Act set up a Board of Poor Law Commissioners of which Edwin Chadwick, a native of Manchester, was secretary.² The Commissioners were given power to make rules and regulations covering the granting of relief, and in order to spread the cost of relief over a wider area than the parish or township which had hitherto been the responsible authority, the Commissioners were to create new areas—Poor Law Unions—consisting of several parishes. Within these unions Guardians were to be elected to raise a rate and administer the poor law.

Although this Act was passed only one year before the Municipal Corporations Act, the qualification of the voters was different. The municipal franchise was intended to be enjoyed by any ratepayer who had occupied premises and paid rates for three years,³ but the Poor Law Guardians were elected on a system of plural voting based on property. The poor must be relieved but the rates must be kept down—the latter, rather than the former, was the spirit in which many Boards of Guardians, all members of the middle classes, approached their task.

Strenuous opposition to the introduction of the new Poor Law

¹ 4 & 5 William IV, c. 76.

² He had been a member of the Royal Commissions on Poor Laws and largely responsible for its report.

³ Owing to the practice of compounding, and the long period of occupation, this resulted in the municipal electorate being smaller in Manchester than the Parliamentary on the £10 franchise. See Appendix I.

was offered in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire, not by the working classes only. The Churchwardens and Overseers, who had hitherto administered poor relief, were, as in the township of Manchester, employers of labour who had themselves experienced bad times, bankruptcy, failures of the banks, and all the vicissitudes of business in the thirties. Although their misfortunes could not be compared with those of the operatives to whom a few weeks' unemployment meant starvation or the workhouse, they were in closer touch with the realities of the situation than were Poor Law Commissioners in London or Boards of Guardians in the agricultural south.

The administration of the Poor Laws by the Churchwardens and Overseers of Manchester cannot have been lavish, or they would not have received such praise from the visiting Commissioner. "The system of visitation at the abodes of the poor so indispensable to a right disposal of cases in large towns is brought to great perfection here; relief is never refused without visitation, and each visiting Overseer,¹ having a limited district, acquires an accurate knowledge of the conditions of the poor; it is part of his duty to be present at the board sitting for relief and to assist in regulating the amount. The cases of applicants for relief are carefully considered at the boards and disposed of, as it appeared to me, with discrimination and liberality."² Many of the applicants for relief were handloom weavers whose services since the introduction of machinery were becoming more and more redundant. The system followed in Manchester with regard to out-relief for the handloom weavers was to ascertain their actual earnings from the employers and then to make up the deficiency to 2s. per head for each member of the family. Widows with families and aged and infirm people were often given help to enable them to keep shops.

The workhouse, which housed the aged, the sick and the children, did not seem to the Commissioners to be economical, as the cost worked out at £13 3s. 3d. per head per annum. But, as a chaplain with a salary and a paid surgeon who looked after the inmates and also visited out of the house were employed, they realized that "the expenses of so complete an establishment are

¹ We should call him a Relieving Officer.

² Extracts from information ordered by H.M. Commissioners on the administration and operation of the Poor Laws, 1833, pp. 260-365.

necessarily heavy," and as "admission is rather a matter of favour little use can be made of the workhouse as an alternative to repel improper applications for relief."

In spite of this testimonial the Churchwardens and Overseers were not satisfied with the treatment of children in the workhouse, and it is interesting to see that all through its subsequent career when, under a Board of Guardians, it was famous throughout England for its strict administration of out-relief, the Manchester Union dealt more kindly with the children than did many other Boards.

From the report in January 1839¹ of a sub-committee appointed by the Manchester Churchwardens to inquire into the matter, it appeared that the education given to the 173 children in the poor-house was very defective. The master and mistress were selected from among the paupers, and their qualifications for the office were at most the ability to teach writing, reading and plain sewing. The children were in school for only four and a half hours each week, in addition to one hour spent in church. The sub-committee recommended the provision of a new and larger schoolroom, the lengthening of the school time, and the appointment of a competent master at a salary of from £50 to £70 per annum who, when not employed in the school, would be useful in the office of the governor in writing, book-keeping, etc.; the schoolmistress was still to be one of the paupers.

Manchester, too, dealt more generously with the problem of the Irish poor than did other towns. Workers from Ireland had been welcomed when the rapid demand for workers could not be satisfied from local sources, and later employers imported Irish labour to break strikes. When they had served their purpose, and when depression followed a boom, many of them, usually the poorest and most thriftless part of the town's inhabitants, would have starved but for poor relief. As they were not "settled" in the township Manchester could have refused this and applied to the justices for their removal. Owing to a more humane policy for which, as we saw on page 59, the Stipendiary Magistrate was at one time responsible, Manchester had made no distinction between Irish and English in giving relief, although from time to time she was criticized on the ground that her policy tended to attract the

¹ Manchester Churchwardens and Overseers Board Book, January 31, 1839.

Irish poor from the surrounding towns. In one week in 1827 the number of Irish cases compared to English cases in Manchester was one in seven, whilst in the surrounding towns of Oldham, Wigan, Preston, etc., it was only one in forty-four. By 1838 the number in Manchester had greatly increased.

Opposition to the new Poor Law by the Chartists and by mass meetings of the workers was supported by the Manchester Churchwardens and Overseers, partly because in those times of unrest and riots in the manufacturing districts they feared the result of a harsh administration of relief, and partly because, like all public bodies, they objected to being abolished. As we saw, the Churchwardens and Overseers went on from year to year arranging for their successors to be elected by the vestry and appointed by the justices, a happy group of men¹ of the same religion and politics, managing their affairs with no interference from Government and little from the magistrates. To have to submit to union with other parishes, to election, and above all to the strict control of the Poor Law Commissioners was not a pleasant prospect. They sent a deputation to the Government in 1834 asking for a clause to be inserted excluding Manchester from the Poor Law Bill, and although this was refused they stated afterwards that they had received assurances that it was never intended to apply the Act to Manchester, "it being known how efficiently the Poor Laws were managed there." In 1839, when the first tentative suggestion that the new system should be introduced had been made, they wrote to the Poor Law Commissioners expressing the hope that "the township of Manchester may be spared the calamity attendant upon the excitement which the agitation of the question might produce."²

Their next protest to Lord John Russell produced the reply that the new Poor Law was not to be introduced for the time being, and it was, in fact, postponed until the end of 1840. Meanwhile no serious difficulties had been encountered in the out-townships, and the Chorlton Board of Guardians, including Chorlton-on-Medlock, Ardwick, Hulme—all to be incorporated with the township of Manchester for municipal purposes the following year—and

¹ The large and beautiful Spode jug presented to the Churchwardens by one of their number in 1839 and now on show at Wythenshawe Hall shows that their meetings were not strictly confined to business.

² Churchwardens and Overseers Board Book, February 3, 1839.

thirteen others, was formed in 1837. For some years the proceedings of the Guardians were watched with jealousy and suspicion by those of the public who opposed the new regime, but gradually the opposition died down, and when the Manchester Churchwardens and Overseers also gave way the new system became generally accepted.

The table on page 320 shows the alterations that were made in the constitution of the various Poor Law Unions until in 1915 one Union for Manchester was achieved.

After two years, during which the township of Manchester was joined with twelve townships outside its area in one Poor Law Union, a return was made to the original boundaries in 1850. The out-townships—many of them rural—objected to the expenditure that Manchester considered necessary for the poor within her boundaries, and by mutual consent the uncomfortable union was dissolved, the out-townships being formed into the Prestwich Union.

One of the first subjects that engrossed the attention of the newly elected Board of Guardians for the Manchester Union was that of the children. In spite of the improvements introduced a few years before by their predecessors, they found 436 boys and girls in the workhouse, many of them living in adult wards and receiving about three hours' teaching a day in the three R's. There were also about 168 children boarded out whose only education was what they could get at Sunday schools, and there were many children belonging to widows who were receiving out-relief—because there was not enough accommodation in the workhouse—getting no education. A separate establishment for all these children under fifteen was proposed. Meanwhile the Chorlton Union had built a workhouse in the Stretford Road to hold 300 inmates, including children, who interspersed their hours of schooling with pin heading, except on those days when the Guardians met at the Workhouse, when the noise of the operation was too great.

Both Boards united to send a deputation to see the model Poor Law Schools for children at Norwood, and on their return recommended that similar provision should be made in Manchester. The building known as the Swinton Schools was the result. Concern for the children in their charge had been quickened by reading *Oliver Twist*, which appeared in 1838, and that the Boards were

ready to spend £54,000 on a building which was in advance of any other provision made for pauper children at that time was largely due to the influence of Dickens, who had many admirers in the city that he criticized so freely.¹

Household Words of July 13, 1850, contains an article by him on these schools: "In some states of English existence Ruin is the road to Fortune. . . . In Manchester the high road to fortune is to be both a pauper; should especially orphanhood, either by death or desertion, ensue. The structure [of the Swinton Schools] is not only elegant but extensive: it is in the Tudor style of architecture, with a frontage of four hundred and fifty feet. . . . Two winding flights of steps in the centre lead to a handsome entrance hall, above which rise two lofty turrets to break the outline of the extensive roof. The depth of the edifice is great—its whole proportions massive. Pleasure gardens and playgrounds surround it. . . . The stranger gazing upon the splendid brick edifice with its surrounding territory is surprised when he is told that it is not the seat of an ancient dukedom but that it is a modern palace for pauper children. . . .

"To enliven the routine of school duties the master's cur takes part in them. He is a humorous dog, with an expressive countenance, and a significant wag of the tail. In the intervals of lessons, his duty—which is also his pleasure—consists in jumping over the benches or threading the labyrinths of little legs under them. Now he darts with wild glee into a spelling class; now he rushes among an alphabet group and snarls a playful 'r-r-r' as if to teach the true pronunciation of the canine letter; now he climbs up behind a seated urchin, puts his forepaws on the favourite's shoulders, and with a knowing look towards the master recommends his friend for promotion to a monitorship. It was surprising to find that the pupils took not the slightest notice of the antics of the master's dog. They heeded nothing but their lessons; but we learned that the dog was a part of the discipline. He accustomed the children to startling eccentricities and unexpected sounds; he presented a small, extraneous, but wholesome difficulty in the pursuit of knowledge. . . .

"The training of the juniors is conducted mainly *viva voce*; for the mass of them are under six years of age. The class was opened thus:

¹ As Cocktown in *Hard Times*.

"What day is this?"
"Monday."
"What sort of a day is it?"
"Very fine."
"Why is it a fine day?"
"Because the sun shines and it does not rain."
"Is rain a bad thing, then?"
"No."
"What is it useful for?"
"To make the flowers and the fruit grow."
"Who sends rain and sunshine?"
"God."
"What ought we to do in return for His goodness?"
"Praise Him?"

"Let us praise Him, then," added the master.
"And the children, all together, repeated and then sang a part of the 149th Psalm. A lesson on morals succeeded. . . ."

"By this time some of the very young children showed symptoms of lassitude. One fat little mortal had fallen asleep, and this class was consequently marshalled for dismissal. . . ."

The children were occupied alternately in the workshops and in the schools—labouring for one afternoon and the next morning and then attending their classes in school for the next afternoon and morning. The girls from these schools were eagerly sought after as domestic servants, while the boys were apprenticed to various trades. Both boys and girls on leaving were furnished with two complete sets of clothes and their subsequent progress and conduct was periodically inquired into. The disadvantage, if it had one, the article concluded, was that it succeeded too well. It placed the position of the child pauper above the level of the industrious.

Only a few children were sent to these schools by the Chorlton Guardians who, when they bought the Withington site, housed their children in a block separate from the workhouse. In 1897 they moved them to the new Cottage Homes at Stryal. In 1915 the Swinton schools were given up and all the children housed at Stryal.

As part of the changes in 1929 these Stryal Homes came under the care of the Education Committee. The numbers have decreased, not only because of the drop in the child population, but because of

a gradual change of policy. Not only have unemployment insurance and widows' pensions enabled families that formerly had to apply for out-relief to manage without it, but out-relief scales now enable recipients of public assistance to keep their children with them. For those children who are orphans, or for whom suitable homes cannot be provided, boarding-out is replacing institutional care, wherever possible. There are now only three hundred children in the cottage homes, and some part of the surplus accommodation is being used as a residential school for physically defective children.

Pressure of accommodation upon the old workhouse in New Bridge Street had necessitated the use of buildings in other parts of the Township. In 1850 an estate at Crumpsall was bought and a workhouse erected in 1855. An infirmary on the same site followed in 1878. Three years after the purchase of the Crumpsall estate by the Manchester Board, the Chorlton Guardians, also pressed for new accommodation, bought the site at Withington for a workhouse and infirmary. This purchase of twenty-four acres at £180 an acre was the cause of much criticism, and, as a result, the Chorlton-Medlock Ratepayers' Association sprang into being. Succeeding generations of ratepayers, however, have reason to thank the far-sighted Guardians eighty years ago who bought sufficient land for future developments before its price had increased. Five years after the infirmary had been opened, it had to be enlarged in order to prevent infectious diseases from being indiscriminately mingled with others in the wards. The new hospital—the result of much thought on the part of the Guardians and in face of the same short-sighted criticism from some ratepayers—was the first in the country to be built on the pavilion system.¹ This method ensured that different blocks of buildings, appropriated to different diseases, were separated from one another, and a space per patient of 1,350 cubic feet, double the minimum required by the Poor Law Board, and about treble that allowed in some of the large London poor law hospitals, was provided.

The first real test of the principles of the new Poor Law came in Lancashire, during the cotton famine in the 'sixties. The conditions under which out-relief could be given to able-bodied men, although modified since 1852 so that the workhouse test was not insisted

¹ Manchester Statistical Society: Account of the "Pavilion Hospital at Chorlton Union Workhouse," by Thomas Worthington, 1867.

upon, allowed only half the amount to be given in money, and the other half in kind, and insisted that the recipients were to be set to work under the Guardians.

The flood of unemployment in manufacturing towns like Blackburn and Preston made it impossible for the Guardians to keep to the regulations, and although they appealed in vain to the Poor Law Board to suspend the order, evasion was winked at by authority.

The distress, although not nearly so great in Manchester, by now more a commercial than a manufacturing centre, was considerable. Appeals were made there for a relaxation of conditions of out-relief, but as a contemporary remarked: "The Manchester Board of Guardians is distinguished by a resolute following of the letter and a faithful adherence to the principle of the Poor Law."¹ In spite of this rigidity, the Manchester Board was the first to give a more reasonable interpretation of "work" which had to be exacted in return for relief. It started sewing schools for women, and educational centres for men, where they were not only taught trades but ordinary school subjects. As, at that date, so few had attended school in their childhood, this was appreciated by many. "It sometimes caused a shade of melancholy to see an old, grey-haired man leaning over his desk and poring through a sum in Reduction and Practice, but even this was relieved by being told by a frank-spoken spinner in his own hearty manner while showing the sketches of geography and what he was reading, 'they could not give us work and so God put it into their hearts to give us the next best to it.'"² The Manchester Guardians were not so successful, however, with a farm on which one thousand men were employed, since the bailiff had to be assisted by the police.

The Relief Funds, one in London and one in Manchester,³ provided for a large number of those who were in need, and both funds worked on the principle of not supplementing out-relief, but of giving alternative aid.

The fundamental principle of poor law administration—that of making the position of people who applied for relief less eligible

¹ *The History of the Cotton Famine*, by A. Arnold, p. 110. ² *Ibid.*, p. 185.
³ This was preceded by relief given by the Manchester, Salford and District Provident Society, whose organization of district committees in Manchester and Salford since 1833 formed the pattern for relief committees in the surrounding cotton towns.

than that of the independent working man, and yet of caring for them adequately—had broken down in the case of the children. Dickens realized that the pauper child in the Swinton Schools was better cared for than thousands of under-fed and badly housed children of Manchester whose parents were working. Its failure in the case of the sick was not so fully realized until much later. From 1846, as we saw,¹ the Government had made a grant in aid of the salaries of Poor Law medical officers, including a district medical officer and cost of medical appliances, but outbreaks of diphtheria, cholera and typhus in parts of the country between 1862 and 1865 led to overcrowding of Poor Law hospitals. The revelations made about the condition of many of these institutions led to a change of policy on the part of the Poor Law Board,² which was further developed when that body was merged with the Local Government Board (1871). Insistence was laid on the necessity for adequate care of the sick. Complaints made about the Manchester Workhouse Infirmary led to an inquiry by the inspector, who reported that more nurses were necessary and that there should be a changed attitude towards the treatment of sick paupers. Manchester, however, considerably behind the Chorlton Board in this respect, refused to comply, and did not build its infirmary at Crumpsall until 1878.

At one time the trained nurse in a workhouse was an unknown quantity, the paupers in the institution providing what sick nursing was required. As late as 1864, a consulting medical officer was recommending for the Withington Workhouse as an improvement, a staff which only worked out at one trained nurse for every 80 or 90 patients and an under-nurse for every 15 patients. The under-nurse was herself an inmate chosen as being "able-bodied and intelligent," but with no training and usually little aptitude for the task. Even in 1885 the nursing staff at Withington only consisted of twenty-one nurses, which meant that there was only one nurse for each ward for day and night, the other necessary assistance being obtained from the pauper inmates. Not until 1897 was an order made by the central authority prohibiting the pauper nursing of the sick.³ Even then the employment was

¹ See above, p. 137.

² *Poor Law History—The Last Hundred Years*, by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, vol. 1, p. 317.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

permitted of pauper inmates as attendants in sick wards, under the supervision of trained nurses. The Nursing Order of 1913 was the next step forward, when inmates were forbidden to be actually employed in nursing the sick.

Following a Local Government Board circular drawing attention to the large increase in the amount of out-relief, the Manchester Board in 1875 adopted new by-laws for its own guidance, putting additional restrictions on the grant of outdoor relief. These by-laws were highly approved of by the Poor Law inspectors, who carried them from Board to Board, and when again in February 1878¹ the Local Government Board issued a "Memorandum relating to the Administration of Out-Relief" it referred to, and quoted, the rules devised by the Manchester Board of Guardians and since adopted by many other unions. These regulations seem to have had some effect in decreasing outdoor relief in the Manchester Union. In June 1874, the percentage of the population of the township in receipt of outdoor relief was 1.27, and in June 1875, when these regulations had been in operation for four months, the percentage had gone down to 0.87.² This reduction, as the Annual Report of the Local Government Board stated, was not achieved by increasing the number of indoor paupers. It was not claimed that the whole of the decrease had resulted from the operation of these regulations, but statistics showed that the decrease throughout the country in out-relief had been about one-fifth of the rate of decrease in the Manchester Union.

Severe unemployment at the beginning of the twentieth century was met in Manchester by the City Council's undertaking special work:³ roads, parks, etc., and by funds for relief of the unemployed collected by a Distress Committee, but the complete breakdown of the old principles of Poor Law relief was caused by the post-war slump from 1920 onwards. Until then it was rare for able-bodied paupers to be given out-relief, but the flood of unemployment swept away this policy. Thousands of men with dependants were given almost unconditional relief⁴ on scales that were relatively

¹ Fifth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1875-6.

² *Ibid.*

³ Under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905.

⁴ The regulation that only half the amount of out-relief must be given in money and the rest in kind was not observed in Manchester, and the Ministry of Health took no steps to enforce it.

high. The machinery worked with difficulty under the strain. Although nominally three or four Guardians elected for the district were supposed to sit on the various sub-committees which dealt with applications for relief, often only one could be there for the whole time, and when the work was transferred to the City Council the position became more difficult as the councillors had other committees besides that of Public Assistance to attend. Their work was further increased in 1931, when the Government put upon them the work of administering, but not of providing the money for, transitional benefit on the Means Test. This was taken away again when the Unemployment Assistance Board was set up in 1934, and this Board has gradually assumed responsibility for the remaining section of able-bodied unemployed. The Public Assistance Committee still has the care of those families in sickness and the complete responsibility for non-able-bodied unemployed, namely those who are no longer eligible for work. The average number of people in receipt of out-relief in 1937 was 32,887.

The Council at first refused to take advantage of the power to co-opt outside people to help with this work, but later the experiment was tried. However, a much bigger experiment—that of appointing whole-time adjudicators to administer relief according to regulations issued by the committee—was begun in 1937¹ and the co-opted members were no longer necessary.

The break up of the Poor Law, advocated by Mrs. Sidney Webb in her Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law in 1910, was accomplished in 1929, when the same Act² that instituted derating of industry and the substitution of a block grant for many services hitherto aided by percentage grants, abolished the Boards of Guardians and handed their work over to county and county borough councils. This meant that the various classes of people formerly dealt with by the Guardians because of their destitution could now be handed over to the committees of the Council already dealing with the same classes of people who were not destitute. The care of the children in the Styal Homes came to the Education Committee, that of the sick in the Withington and Crumpsall Infirmary to the Public Health Committee which

¹ It is too early to say how the new system will work, but it has reduced considerably the work of the members of the Public Assistance Committee.

² Local Government Act, 1929.

already administered the infectious diseases hospitals and the sanatoria for tuberculosis. A new committee of the Council, the Public Assistance Committee, was set up to administer the Casual Ward at Tame Street and out-relief. Time was allowed by the Act before all the changes should become operative, but Manchester broke up the Poor Law with resounding strokes. From the day that the workhouse infirmaries came over to the Public Health Committee, all cases of illness have been dealt with under the Public Health Regulations and not under those of the Poor Law.

The Public Health Committee also administers on behalf of the Public Assistance Committee the Poor Law Institutions at Crumpsall and Withington.

CHAPTER X

POLICE

The chief reason, as we saw, for the establishment of the Borough Council was to have one body in control of the day and night police force over the whole area. The Council appointed a police force of three hundred and twenty men, but owing to the dispute about the charter,¹ the Police Commissioners would not disband their men. When Sir Charles Shaw arrived to take control for the Government, he found two rival bodies² fighting one another instead of guarding the public.

"I found that both Brown and Blue Police gave much attention to certain properties, taking positions for the whole night close to the houses of certain individuals, and I invariably found that the property most carefully, may I say exclusively watched, was that of Commissioners of Police or Local Authorities, thus forcing one to suspect that the much famed system of self government was in reality *selfish government*. . . . In addition to this the streets of the wealthy were much better watched and lighted than those inhabited by the poor." About the same time "a policeman on duty in Hulme saw two men fighting in a field opposite the end of Boundary Street. On closer inspection the combatants turned out to be the Chief of the Police Force of Chorlton-on-Medlock, and an Inspector of Nuisances for the same township."³

But never since the days of the notorious Joseph Nadin—Chief of the Police Force under the Court Leet in the early part of the nineteenth century—has a chief constable emulated his conduct. He bequeathed to his son—a lawyer—a wonderful collection of silver tankards which, rumour said, he took from the thieves before he let them go.⁴

In 1842, the police force was handed back to the Council, whose legal position was now established, and in 1849 the Fire Brigade,

¹ See above, p. 101.

² The police under the Constables of the Court Leet were also still in existence, but they were only day police.

³ *Manchester Guardian*, July 18, 1839.

⁴ Private information.

which had formerly only operated in the township of Manchester, was given powers over the whole borough.

During these early years, when bad times and the high price of bread caused unrest, strikes, Chartist demonstrations and occasional riots, the police were reinforced by special constables, and also by the military. The following account by Absalom Watkin, a leading business man and one of the first Borough Magistrates, of the strikes in 1842, gives a vivid picture of the responsibilities of the magistrates in those days.

"August 9th: A mob of about 5,000 persons came from Hyde and Ashton to Manchester, and turned out the people of several mills and workshops. The police and military were rather observers than anything else. The borough magistrates were not assembled. The Mayor¹ is in London. The boldness of the mob was increased by their apparent impunity. They attacked Birley's, and the Oxford Road Mills, and Stirling and Beckton's. Birley and Stirling and Beckton's resisted. Windows were broken and the doors injured, and it was not until the soldiers appeared and cleared the streets that the mob ceased their violence. I saw Mr. Kershaw, who at first was disinclined to act. Then I sent to Mr. Higson to say that I thought the magistrates ought to be called together. He answered that it should be done in the morning. Kershaw and Armitage went up to Cook's Mill at night.

"August 10th: Met the Mayor and magistrates at the Town Hall at 10. The Mayor had only arrived from London at 6, and was evidently fatigued. The outrages of the mob continue. Those who have been turned out joined with them, and shops have been plundered in the town, and money extorted. Message after message arrives for assistance. I am sent with Mr. Stuart and Mr. Higson to confer with Sir Charles Shaw. We found him at Kennedy's Mill (which is at work), with about 150 or 200 policemen, and nearly as many soldiers, taking, as he says, a military view of the matter, and concentrating his force to be ready to move where it may be urgently wanted: the usual patrols are withdrawn from the streets and all left exposed. He objects to scatter his force. We return. Colonel Wemyss objects to scatter the military and refuses to supply us with dragoons for patrol. In the meantime the gas-works are attacked, and the police stationed there are beaten. A

¹ Alderman Neild.

police station in the neighbourhood is pulled down. Mr. Callender goes with some dragoons and rifles, disperses the mob, and occupies the gas-works in force. While this was going on, the mob proceeded in different parts of the town to turn out the hands at mills and workshops, and in some cases to help themselves to bread, etc., from the shops.¹

The magistrates attended at the Town Hall day and night for about four weeks, and two or three of them slept at the York Street Hotel, next door, to be ready for emergencies. It was not until after the visit to London by the Mayor that the Government sent 1,500 cavalry. This reinforcement gave the magistrates the force necessary to support a proclamation making all meetings illegal for the time being.

A Commission of the Peace and a Court of Quarter Sessions were granted in 1839, and the first local Act, the Police Act of 1844,² determined that both the Clerk to the Justices and the Clerk to the Peace should be paid by salary instead of by fees, as had been the custom hitherto. The Justices settled the salary, but it was paid by the Council, as were all the expenses of the Police Courts. Fines were paid over to the City Treasurer and after the expenses were paid the balance went in relief of rates. This practice has continued ever since.

The salary of the Stipendiary Magistrate, which had previously been shared by Manchester and Salford, was now paid entirely by Manchester, and Mr. Maude became stipendiary for Manchester alone. The new borough owed much to him and to J. F. Foster, Chairman of the County Quarter Sessions, during the first few years, when the dispute about the validity of the charter was carried on in the Courts, and there was bitter rivalry between the new borough magistrates and many of the county Justices of the Peace. That the dispute left no lasting mark upon the legal side of the new borough's work was mainly due to these two men, who did their best, not only to deal out justice but to win public recognition and respect for the new Courts. This was not easy with a borough bench ignored by the majority of the county bench, and the county bench itself divided between those who, like Sir Thomas Potter and eight others, were both county and borough magistrates and were supporters of the Corporation,

¹ *Abraham Wakelin: Extracts from his Journal*, p. 215. ² 7 & 8 Vic., c. 40.

and the remaining eighty-three, who were county Justices of the Peace and were mostly in sympathy with the anti-incorporators. Daniel Maude lived to see the Corporation firmly established; he continued as stipendiary until 1860.

A borough gaol was built in Hyde Road,¹ but although the Council had petitioned since 1842 for Assizes to be held at the New Bailey Court, as the nearest were at Liverpool, it was not until 1858 that this was granted. Manchester and Salford united to build Assize Courts and provide judges' lodgings, and the new Assize Courts were opened in 1864.² Two years later Strangeways Gaol replaced the New Bailey prison, Ducie Bridge, which had been built in 1790 according to the ideas of the prison reformer, John Howard, with separate cells for the prisoners.

Gradually a police force was built up which was capable of keeping order without the aid of the military. It is interesting to recall that when, in 1890, the War Office decided to remove the troops which were stationed at the Hulme Barracks, the City Council protested on the grounds that although difficulties very seldom arose in Manchester, "the very fact that a troop of cavalry could sweep any of our streets in a few minutes had certainly a wholesome influence."³ The venerable Alderman Heywood, who had been a member of the Council for forty-seven years, supported the War Office's proposal. He pointed out that cavalry had not been used in Manchester since 1848, when they had been called in to clear the streets of working men's demonstrations in favour of political representation. Since that had been granted he could see no further necessity for keeping the military in Manchester.

The next problem was that of the relations of the central Government to the locally controlled forces. Manchester, under her energetic Town Clerk, led the opposition to Lord Palmerston's attempt in 1854 to get some control over provincial police forces by offering a percentage grant in return for the right to inspect them, and to approve of the appointment of the Chief Constable. This was described as the "most unconstitutional interference with the power and privileges of municipal boroughs," and "subversive

¹ 1850.

² In 1868 the Manchester and Salford Courts of Record were amalgamated and the salaries of the judge and other officials were paid by the Borough of Manchester.

³ *Manchester City News*, March 8, 1890.

of the independence and right of local self-government."¹ Other boroughs supported Manchester, and the Bill was withdrawn. Two years later another Bill on the same lines was as strongly opposed, although Alderman Neild, Chairman of the Watch Committee, did not share the objection to inspection by the Government. This Bill passed, however, after alterations that Manchester wanted had been made, and she accepted the grant and inspection.

The first report² stated that the force consisted of 522 officers and constables, and "was composed of a remarkably fine and effective body of men, most of them in the prime of life and health." One of the many debts that Manchester owed to William Neild was his share, as chairman for many years of the Watch Committee, in one of the most difficult of all the early tasks of the Council, that of building up a satisfactory police force. The realization that only good pay and fair conditions of work would attract and keep the right men, caused the Watch Committee in 1861 to give each policeman one day's holiday every fortnight, and when this inducement proved insufficient a higher rate of pay was offered, as well as an annual week's holiday with pay.

During the 'nineties, the Manchester police force went through a difficult time, the echoes of which lasted long after the people concerned had been dismissed or retired.

An unsavoury scandal arose out of the close connection between a superintendent called Bannister and a man and woman who kept a disorderly house. He was accused of having shielded them from arrest until other members of the force took matters into their own hands and raided the house. The Watch Committee accepted the superintendent's resignation, but it was not until the magistrates had sent a resolution urging the withholding of his pension that that further step was taken. So great was the public agitation that the Council finally agreed to ask the Home Office to hold an inquiry, the report of which was published on July 20, 1897. It transpired that the source of the trouble dated from 1882, when, in opposition to the advice of the Chief Constable,³ the Watch Committee had promoted Bannister, who proved to be both unscrupulous and immoral, to be superintendent. Complaints about his conduct, his drinking and his immoral relations with a woman who kept a public-house in Hulme led to an inquiry by a sub-

¹ Council Minutes, January 2, 1861.

² 1857.

³ Malcolm Wood.

committee of the Watch Committee in 1893, three years before the scandal broke, and the sub-committee and the Chief Constable recommended that he should be asked to resign. Unfortunately the Watch Committee, by a majority, refused this solution, and decided that he should only be reprimanded. "A more lamentable miscarriage of justice can scarcely be conceived," said Mr. Dugdale, K.C., in his report. When the Watch Committee's Minutes came before the Council Sir John Harwood moved that the matter should be deferred for a month in order that the Council might have more information. However, Alderman Mark, who was then Chairman of the Committee, and as an ex-Lord Mayor carried great weight in the Council, had threatened to resign if the amendment, which he called a vote of censure on the Committee, were carried. This threat had the desired effect, and the amendment was defeated, which was an encouragement to Bannister.

Although the Chief Constable was exonerated from blame by the Home Office report, he obtained six months' leave of absence for ill-health, and never returned. Mr. Robert Peacock was appointed in his place.¹

A resolution moved in the Council that the whole Watch Committee should resign was defeated, members of the Committee themselves voting on it, but the following November, when Alderman Mark had resigned from the Council, a new committee was elected by ballot. Mr. Peacock had the task of clearing up this mess, and he also found "a deplorable state of things" existing in another division under a superintendent who had been seen drunk on duty, and who was frequently drinking in public-houses with his men. There was also a common practice in two of the divisions for inspectors to receive Christmas presents from brewery companies. An end was put to all this, but the new Chief's work was not made easier by the fact that on one occasion several magistrates turned up, as if by accident, and sat on the Bench when licenses whom they knew were being prosecuted. He made a report to the Watch Committee, and was cross-examined on it by the magistrates. The upshot was the resignation of the magistrates.

Although the late Councillor Ross Clyne gained considerable notoriety by making allegations against the police and the Watch Committee, these were proved on inquiry² by the Council to be

¹ 1898.

² Council Minutes, April 5, 1905.

groundless, and Sir Robert Peacock¹ had the satisfaction of passing on to his successor a thoroughly efficient force. Although the Watch Committee, and not the Chief Constable as under county councils, is the body to make appointments and promotions, it does so on the advice of the Chief Constable. It is inconceivable to-day that the Committee would promote any man against the Chief's advice.

It is a long time now since the functions of the police have been restricted merely to the maintenance of law and order. The arrest of vagrant or neglected children, who were then sent to industrial schools, had always been part of their work, and when Manchester obtained powers to prohibit street trading by children under twelve and to require boys and girls under sixteen engaged in street trading to be licensed, the police, instead of taking the children who broke the law before the magistrates, brought them and their parents before a sub-committee of the Watch Committee, where the cases could be dealt with in a much more informal way.

The change in the functions of the police is one of the most marked features of the last hundred years. One of the most striking signs of the change is their shepherding of school children across the streets, which now universal practice is said to have started in Manchester. Their participation in the administration of the various Children's Acts brought them in close touch with the activities of the Education Committee and with other branches of social work. But perhaps the war years had most to do with this change. Not only were there then many extraneous duties put upon the police which brought them into contact with members of the general public, but for the first time ordinary business men enrolled as special constables, working side by side with the police in their regular duties. Previously in Manchester special constables had only been enrolled in times of unrest to help to quell riots, now they were taking the place of policemen who had joined the forces. This day-to-day companionship not only brought the police into closer contact with ordinary members of the public, but they, in their turn, learnt something of the varied duties of the police, and were able to appreciate their qualities.

In 1881 the then Chief Constable, writing of the difficulty of attracting the right type of men to the force, said: "There is a

¹ He was knighted in 1919.

tedium and monotony inseparable from the life of a policeman from which other employments are exempt. . . . He is at the beck and call of everybody, and his temper is frequently severely tried by the remarks passed on him by the lower orders."¹ Few of the men in the present police force would recognize this as a true description of their life. Motor traffic, with its multitude of problems, ambulance work, modern methods of detection of crime, systems for linking up the force within the city area, and with other areas, and the work with children that we have already described, have brought variety and opportunity into the service.

The policeman of to-day is not only a better paid official—since 1929 salaries and conditions of service are settled nationally—but a more highly educated one. The recruit to the force has to pass an education test, then he goes to a police school for three months, then he has to pass another education test, and then if successful he is admitted to the force on probation for two years.

Manchester has not followed the lead of London and many other towns and included women as part of the police force. There are "policewomen" who carry out duties concerned with women prisoners, and who take statements from children in cases of indecent assault. But in spite of the untiring efforts of Alderman Annie Lee, the only woman who has ever been a member of the Watch Committee, the policewomen are not "attested," and cannot take cases into court. Neither are they now employed on patrol, although at one time this duty was assigned to them. In view of the success of policewomen as part of the regular force in many other cities, it can only be a question of time before the male conservatism of the Watch Committee gives way to what is, after all, not such a very advanced proposal.

As the result of the labours of Alderman Lee, a woman police surgeon was appointed² in 1927. She examines women and children in all cases of alleged sexual offences, and gives evidence in the police court and, when necessary, at the Assizes. It is curious that the practice of having a woman as one of the police surgeons is not even yet more widespread.

A hundred years ago the police force was conceived purely as an instrument to keep order and to apprehend criminals. Keeping order at that time meant suppressing Chartist demonstrations,

¹ Council Minutes, April 3, 1861.

² Dr. Nesta Wells.

strikes and riots, which was the only way by which the working class could protest against wage cutting, unemployment, and the often bestial conditions under which they lived. The police were the allies of the employers, and we found this so much appreciated by Captain Jebb that he felt justified in excluding the names of small ratepayers from the petition against the municipal charter as he felt that they would naturally not be anxious for an efficient police force.¹

To-day the position is completely altered, and when we consider the variety of their functions we find it difficult to calculate whether the residents in Hulme or those in Didsbury benefit most from the existence of the force.

¹ See above, p. 90.

PART IV

CHAPTER XI

MARKETS

In more primitive communities than ours markets played a most important and most necessary function. Here people could exchange their produce for the produce of others, and thus the markets formed the centre of the life of those who lived around them. To-day their place is largely taken by the shops, and their chief function is to act as a centre for the wholesale supply of goods to tradesmen—90 per cent of the trade in the Manchester markets is now wholesale trade—whereas a hundred years ago the housewife did most of her daily shopping there.

A market every Saturday, and a fair on the eve, feast and morrow of St. Matthew were granted to Manchester by the king in 1227, and primitive trading was carried on in the region near what is now known as Market Street. The manorial rights passed to the Gresley family, and later the De La Warre family held them until 1579, when the markets were mortgaged for £2,000. They passed in 1596 to Sir Nicholas Mosley, an alderman of the City of London, for £3,500, who became Lord of the Manor of Manchester.¹

Although there were certain defined markets, such as the Shambles, the Apple Market, Poultry Market, etc., any person could set up a stall in any part of the township so long as he paid toll to the Lord of the Manor. Most of the stalls were in the vicinity of an existing market, because the buyers congregated there.

So frequent were the privileges vested in the Lord of the Manor a source of litigation and disagreement between him and the town, particularly with respect to the control of the markets, that in 1808 a committee was appointed at a public meeting to take into consideration the question of purchasing the manorial rights. At that time the tolls and income arising from the property amounted to £2,500 per annum, and the sum of £90,000 was asked by Sir Oswald Mosley as the purchase price. The committee advocated its purchase, but the inhabitants of the town thought the price excessive and would not buy.

¹ He lived at Hough End Hall.

As soon as the Corporation was firmly established it began to think about acquiring the manorial rights from Sir Oswald Mosley. Its chief object was to deal with obstruction in the streets, which was every year becoming more and more intolerable. It was to the interest of the Lord of the Manor, himself living away from Manchester, to allow, or rather to encourage, traders to set up extra booths in the streets near the markets, as each booth meant an increase in tolls to him, but these increasing obstructions were of great inconvenience to the people and business men of Manchester.

Power to buy the manorial rights was given to the Council by the Manchester Police Act of 1844,¹ and the Corporation became the purchaser under an agreement entered into on June 24, 1845, for the sum of £200,000. They were conveyed to it by deed dated May 5, 1846, just two hundred and fifty years after their purchase by Nicholas Mosley.

Although the Council had been in existence eight years, and the Police Commissioners had been absorbed by it three years before, the old form of manorial government by the Court Leet for the election of Borough Reeve and Constables, and for the prosecution of certain nuisances continued until the Corporation purchased the manorial rights. The Borough Reeve's charities were then transferred to the Mayor, the Court Leet records passed into the care of the Corporation, and the method by which the citizens of the township of Manchester had been governed for over six hundred years was ended.

The receipts from the markets were stated to be £9,214, leaving a profit, when all expenses had been paid, of about £2,500 a year. By the terms of the purchase Sir Oswald and his descendants received a lump sum of £5,000 and an annual payment in liquidation of the capital of £4,000 a year, with interest at 3½ per cent on the outstanding debt. The payments finally ceased in 1894.

That the Corporation had made a good investment was proved by the fact that ten years after the transfer the receipts had increased from £9,200 to over £18,000. Money had to be spent on enlarging and improving the existing markets, and it was not until 1868 that the Committee was able to contribute from its profits to the relief of rates.

In 1846 the Corporation obtained a Markets Act conferring

¹ 7 & 8 Vic., c. 40, s. 31.

upon it enlarged powers for the better management of the markets. Provision was also made for altering the tolls and stallage.

An ambitious project to build a new large market between Deansgate and Cross Street had to be given up owing to the bad times which followed the failure of the potato crop in Ireland. Money had also to be spent on urgent repairs as, during the negotiations, the Lord of the Manor had allowed his property to deteriorate, so instead of a new market extensions were made to the Smithfield Market.

In the following thirty years the old markets were gradually discontinued and new ones opened. The Shambles and the Arcade Market at the corner of Deansgate and Bridge Street were sold, and when the wholesale meat market in Water Street was opened the pork and carcass market in Lower King Street was closed.¹ The ancient Smithy Door Market, which stood on the site of the present Victoria Hotel, was also closed. Of the other markets which exist to-day, Smithfield Market, now the largest, was originally built in 1822, covered over in 1854, and extended many times. A wholesale fish and game market adjoining it was opened in 1873. Knott Mill Market, on the old fairground at Campfield, was begun as a daily market in 1877. The stone building—the upper floor of which is the Coal Exchange—extending from the Market Place to Victoria Street, became a retail fish, flower, fruit and vegetable market.

Although in its progressive and comprehensive Police Act of 1844 the Council had taken powers to erect municipal abattoirs, it did not exercise them for more than twenty years, and contented itself with appointing inspectors of slaughter-houses and of meat. In 1869 the Medical Officer of Health reported so strongly on the insanitary state of the private slaughter-houses that the Markets Committee decided to refuse any further licences and to erect public abattoirs instead. In spite of protests from the Butchers' Guardian Association, the Committee persisted in their proposal, and in 1872 the abattoirs and wholesale meat market in Water Street were opened.²

To-day about 95 per cent of the animals slaughtered within the city boundaries for human food are killed at the municipal abattoirs, where they are inspected by qualified officers. The remaining 5 per

¹ 1875.

² Edinburgh and Middlesbrough already had public abattoirs.

cent are killed in the private slaughter-houses. This meat is also subject to inspection, but naturally it is much more inconvenient to examine carcasses in scattered slaughter-houses than at a centralized depot.

In addition to the animals slaughtered in the city, carcasses of animals slaughtered elsewhere are brought to the market, and it is found that the percentage of seizures of unwholesome meat in such cases is very much higher than in the case of animals killed within the city boundaries. This rather suggests that the inhabitants of Manchester are much better protected than many others in regard to this important item of their diet.

In addition to the ancient *Acres Fair*, many others had been held in Manchester, but in 1876 the Markets Committee reported that these fairs no longer served the purpose for which they were originally instituted, and that the establishment of weekly markets for the same purpose had made them unnecessary. As they tended to cause a nuisance in the neighbourhood, the Council applied to the Home Secretary for an Order¹ for the abolition of the fairs, and this was accordingly granted.

When the holding of fairs was discontinued, it was decided to cover the two plots of ground at the easterly and the westerly end of St. Mathew's Church, Deansgate, and to hold daily general markets there. In 1909 the Lower Market was leased to an exhibition company on the demolition of St. James's Hall in Oxford Street. This is now the City Exhibition Hall. The Upper Market, in addition to being used for miscellaneous market purposes, is occupied as a saleroom for imported fruit and vegetables brought via the Manchester Ship Canal to Manchester and to other ports.

During the 'seventies and 'eighties there was a period of trouble and anxiety for the Markets Committee. Numerous lawsuits challenged the exclusive right of the Corporation to hold markets, most of which, however, ended in a victory for the Corporation, but at the same time the Markets Committee was having difficulty with its tenants.

Under the Acts of 1846² and 1865 the Committee could either charge rent per square yard or tolls on each article sold. In the wholesale meat market tolls were charged. It was an easy matter to

¹ Under the Fairs Act of 1871.

² Manchester Markets Act, 1846, and Manchester Improvement Act, 1865.

count the number of carcasses exposed for sale, but with fruit and vegetables it was more difficult. There was not so great a demand for the stalls as to enable the Committee to charge the maximum rent allowed by the Acts, and it seems to have secured what in its opinion represented the fair value of the privilege by charging tolls from ½d. to 2d. on each packet of fruit or vegetables in addition to rent, although this does not seem to have been intended by the Acts. Owing to the difficulty of determining what goods had been previously exposed for sale, it charged a toll every day on all the goods. It was alleged by the Smithfield tenants that there were cases of packages having to pay toll seven or eight times over. The year that the controversy started, 1878, the Markets Committee had paid £25,000 towards the relief of rates, an increase of £5,000 over the previous year, and the market tenants naturally seized upon this in support of their plea for lower charges.

The Markets Committee contended that Liverpool made higher charges than Manchester, and that as so many of the purchasers lived outside the city they contributed in this way to the rates. Members of the Council were divided over the policy of the Markets Committee, Alderman Harwood supporting the tenants, who formed a committee with a paid secretary and held numerous meetings to protest against "the Manchester Food Tax." The tenants said that if tolls were abolished they would willingly pay higher rents. For several years the controversy raged—in the Council and in the Press. At the municipal elections in November 1881 the tenants returned one of their number to the City Council, and in the elections two years later they managed to defeat a councillor who was hostile to their interests.

Even so the Markets Committee struck to their guns and it was not until 1883 that the Council tried to put an end to the not very creditable struggle by deciding to seek powers in the next session of Parliament to enable the Committee to charge higher rents corresponding with the present value of the land, and to substitute as far as possible the principle of charging rent in place of tolls.

This decision to seek new statutory powers had barely been taken when an action was commenced by Henry Lawlor, on behalf of himself and the other market tenants, for an injunction restraining the Corporation from insisting upon the payment of tolls in addi-

tion to rent. In November 1883 Vice-Chancellor Bristow, giving judgment, decided that the Corporation was not entitled¹ to levy toll in addition to rent or stallage. The plaintiff was awarded the costs of the action, but fortunately for the Corporation was refused any compensation for the past.

Even when the Draft Provisional Order was submitted, there was further obstruction in the Council, and agreement was not reached until April 1884. Rent was to be charged in the place of tolls to the largest practicable extent. A maximum rent of 1s. per square yard per week was fixed, with a proviso that if, after one year's experience the sum payable from the markets in aid of the city rates exceeded £20,000, the scale of charges should be revised.² All distinction in charges between trades were abolished; the schedule of tolls was to apply to casual sales only, and in the case of disputes the market tenants were to have the right of appeal to the Markets Committee. This agreement conceded practically the whole of the demands of the market tenants. The recommendations were unanimously approved by the Council, and a Provisional Order was granted in August 1884.³

To-day there are vacant stalls both in the wholesale fruit and vegetable market and in the retail fish market. This is partly due to the movement of population from the centre of the city, and to the tendency for the producer of fruit and vegetables to by-pass markets and sell direct to the retail shops.

A retail market at the civic centre at Wythenshawe is a possibility for the future, when the population in that area has become

¹ Under the schedule of the Manchester Improvement Act, 1865, which had replaced the schedule authorized by the Markets Act of 1846.

² This proviso only applied to the first year's working of the new system. Since 1885 there has been no obligation to reduce rents or charges, however large the contribution to the rates.

³ In 1908 the Corporation obtained powers to increase the maximum of 1s. per square yard per week referred to in the 1884 Provisional Order to 1s. 6d., and again in 1924 it obtained powers to charge a maximum of 2s. 3d. per square yard per week, with certain increased powers regarding stallages. Although in these two cases the tenants strenuously opposed the desire of the Markets Committee to increase their powers, the negotiations were carried on in quite a harmonious manner.

Since those increased powers were obtained there have been five general revisions of rents of stalls in the Smithfield Markets, in addition to which, of course, individual rentals are considered on charges of tenancy. At the present time the rents of the stalls vary according to position, and some are charged at the maximum rent of 2s. 3d. per square yard per week.

large enough to support it, as well as the shops, which, unlike those in the centre of the city, also belong to the Corporation.

The purchase of the markets was paid for mainly out of the revenues, but for the first few years the balance came out of the general city fund. It had even been necessary to borrow money for the repair and reconstruction of the markets at first, and the payment of the purchase money was a heavy charge. However, the receipts increased from £9,000 in 1846 to £159,650 in 1937, and since 1868 the Committee have contributed over £1,000,000 to the rates.

At the beginning of the century the average yearly contribution was about £14,000, but when in 1906 Alderman McCabe was elected chairman he altered the policy. He felt that development of the markets was being sacrificed to the desire to make as large a contribution as possible to the relief of rates, and for the next few years the contribution was reduced to £1,500, the rest of the profits being spent upon the properties. A renewals fund was formed, and since that time the annual contribution has been the largest sum that the Committee could contribute, after making the necessary provision for renewals and development. In 1937 £23,500 went to the relief of rates.

The opening of the Ship Canal, by means of which Manchester became the third port of the county, combined with her position as an important railway centre, contributed to the rapid growth of the markets.

The first municipal cold air stores in this country was opened in Elm Street, adjacent to the city abattoirs and wholesale meat market in 1895. A second cold air store was opened in 1904 at Smithfield Market.

The markets to-day cover an area of twenty-seven acres and are valued at £1,200,000. The principal markets comprise the Smithfield wholesale and retail fruit, vegetable, flower, fish and poultry markets and the wholesale meat market adjoining the city abattoir. These markets are the largest of their kind in the provinces, and supplies are received from all the producing countries in the world. In addition there is the fruit auction saleroom at Campfield and the cattle market, which was opened at Mode Wheel in 1931 on the closing down of the Salford cattle market.

Markets have been the one form of municipal trading about

which there has never been any dispute. It has always been accepted that this essential service should be a monopoly, and that it should be owned by the citizens. The Markets Committee since the stormy times of fifty years back have managed their affairs quietly and efficiently, and so long as they produce a steady income in relief of rates can be sure of no interference from the Council.